Theodor Mommsen:
An Enduring Legacy of Rome's Past

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This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes.

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Abstract

Pompey's representation suffers from a hostile modern historical tradition. Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* selectively crafted a portrait of Pompey which was loosely based on the ancient source tradition that resulted in a devaluation of his political, military, and personal capacity. This interpretation originated from Mommsen's nineteenth century Prussian context, wherein Romanticism, Historicism, Militarism, and the 'Great men' reading of history dictated historical discourse. Accordingly, Mommsen adapted and refined Niebuhr's pro-Caesar reading of the late republic, which prioritised and celebrated Caesar's legendary portrayal in his *Commentaries*. These conclusions determined modern approaches to Pompey in the Germanic and Anglophone traditions, which perpetuated the misleading construct.

This thesis investigates these issues by re-evaluating the ancient literary evidence for Pompey's character and career. It then compares the characterisations of the ancient authors and Mommsen, thereby highlighting the ways in which his selective and determinist methods created an anti-Pompey construct. Following this, this thesis diachronically analyses how subsequent Anglophone scholarship, particularly in the popular genres of narrative history and biography, have adapted aspects of Mommsen's Pompeian paradigm which perpetuated his negative reading.

By outlining and addressing the methodological problems inherent within Mommsen's scholarly legacy and interrogating the ancient evidence, this thesis demonstrates that the common view of Pompey is the product not of the nuanced and diverse ancient evidence but rather the product of the long term acceptance of a Mommsenian construct. This is symptomatic of a wider issue in late republic scholarship which, often inadvertently, reproduces these unverified assertions without consideration of their origins.

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Introduction

> For his ruthlessness in destroying Sulla's enemies in Sicily and Africa he acquired the nickname teenage butcher; for his selfish ambition he earned the distrust of his own side. From the dictator, who had treated him as an exception to his own rules and allowed him to command legions when he had not held public office, Pompey extorted a triumph. After being cut out of Sulla's will for supporting Lepidus, he then suppressed Lepidus' rebellion and used his troops to extort the Spanish command from the Senate. In Spain he managed to steal the limelight from Metellus Pius, who was already making headway against the rebel general Sertorius, and then returned to Italy to do the same to Crassus. After dealing with some fugitives from the rising led by the gladiator Spartacus, Pompey wrote to the Senate that Crassus had conquered the slaves but that he himself had extirpated the war.
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> Miriam Griffin, 'Cicero and Rome', in Boardman, J., Jasper Griffin, and Oswyn Murray (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Classical World* (Oxford, 1986), 391.

This passage is a profound example of the negative discourses prevalent in the nineteenth and twentieth century scholarship concerning Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus. Pompey is frequently characterised as treacherous, cruel, stupid, vain, incompetent, and weak to name but a few, despite his famous military campaigns and dominance in the senate for over twenty years. The negative stereotypes have their origins in the ancient evidence, but the force with which they are presented here owes more to the influence of Theodor Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*. Mommsen's monograph displays selective usage, subtle manipulations, and outright fabrication of the ancient evidence to craft a Pompey that suited his nineteenth century Prussian perspective, itself shaped by various notions of determinism, Romanticism, militarism, and the 'Great Men' reading of history. These frameworks interacted with each other in forming Mommsen's portrayal of Julius Caesar as the embodiment of the ideal statesman, both for ancient Rome and as an answer to Prussia's turbulent political climate. Negative readings of Pompey are the consequence of mythologising Caesar. Yet, as Griffin's passage demonstrates, Mommsen's views continue to be disseminated throughout subsequent scholarship even though scholars have moved on from his optimistic reading of Caesar.

This thesis addresses the problem of unfavourable representations of Pompey in the modern scholarship by assessing the nature of the ancient evidence and interrogating the influence of Mommsenian and Prussian historiography. Its foremost aim is to highlight the existence of a tradition and how it shaped scholarly approaches, particularly accessible historical genres, such as biographies and narrative histories. It combines textual analysis, discourse theory, reception studies, and historiography to investigate methodological issues in modern scholarly approaches to Pompey. Its scope is limited to English works and key German monographs, because a broader survey would have required a longer treatment than the current project allowed.

Chapters One and Two conduct a diachronic analysis of the evidence for Pompey in the ancient historical discourse ranging from the first century BC to the third century AD. The discourse comprises multiple diverse literary genres such as epic poetry, letters, speeches, histories, biographies, and commentaries from Roman, Greek, and Jewish authors which attests the breadth of varied evidence concerning Pompey. This catalogue of assorted evidence provides a mixed and highly nuanced portrayal that varies according to author, historical context, motive, and genre. This reinforces the contested tradition concerning Pompey which should have made it impossible to reduce his character to a black and white interpretation. Accordingly, this chapter demonstrates the diversity of the ancient evidence and the importance of contextualisation.

Chapter Three assesses the influence of historical context, scholarship, methods, and philosophical theories during 1789-1848 upon Mommsen's scholarly approach. It thus examines the historical context for Mommsen's negative generalisations of Pompey, providing a general overview of the nature, and composition of Prussian society as well as contemporary philosophical and historical movements with a specific focus upon Historicism, Determinism, and Nationalism. It pays close attention to four key Germano-Prussian thinkers: Hegel, Herder, von Humboldt and von Ranke. It then considers the influence of Niebuhr who was the first classicist to popularise an anti-Pompeian reading which Mommsen adopted and refined. The key theoretical framework is Determinism: a philosophical doctrine which proposed that history is guided by the virtue of necessity, and therefore outcomes are inevitable. It was based on strict notions of causality, diminishing the significance of rational agents. It assumed that free will cannot exist; events, rather, are essentially an unbroken chain of circumstances for which no single link can be altered. This has consequences for figures such as Pompey, who ultimately lost the Civil War. If individuals are assessed by their inevitable failure, then their historical legacy is rarely treated fairly. For Niebuhr and Mommsen, knowing the outcome of the war between Caesar and Pompey meant that it would have been pointless to champion the defeated instead of the victor. The advantage of hindsight encouraged the view that Caesar, the winner, was the ultimate embodiment of Roman virtues; he could thus be held up as an example of the ideal statesman. This determination, however, was far from clear to Caesar's contemporaries, who were uncertain about the inevitability of his military success. Ultimately, determinist readings defy logic. If Pompey had known that defeat was certain then he would have avoided the conflict. Indeed, Cicero lamented the unpredictability of the civil war and its outcomes:

> …the wonder is that such events could happen rather than that we did not see them coming and, being but human, could not divine them. (*…ut magis mirum sit accidere illa potuisse quam nos non vidisse ea futura nec, homines cum essemus, divinare potuisse*.)[1]

Determinist readings are based on picking and choosing between various pieces of ancient evidence. Passages that provide more favourable images of Pompey's generosity, capacity for military leadership, intelligence, and political acumen are passed over in favour of evidence which reinforces a negative image. This habit is examined in Chapter Four which provides a

[1] Cic. *Fam.* 15.15.2. (SB 174).

close analysis of the characterisation of Pompey in Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*. It concentrates on three key techniques intrinsic to Mommsen's methodology: selectivity, distortion, and over interpretation. Such techniques allowed Mommsen to construct a picture of Pompey which consistently diminished his significance and his talents. The reception of the *Römische Geschichte* extended its influence over nineteenth-century audiences.

Chapter Five assesses the First Wave of Scholarship after Mommsen (1865-1910), concentrating on the works of Ihne, Fowler, Froude, and Heitland who directly cite or reference him. These specific works are chosen because they were considered accessible and popular. They gave general audiences a broad (and Mommsenian) overview of Roman history. By deconstructing and assessing each author's specific treatment of Pompey, this chapter demonstrates the continuation of Mommsen's negative judgement. Each author, however, focuses on different aspects of Mommsen's Pompey. For instance, Ihne concentrates on Pompey's cruelty rather than his stupidity while Heitland focuses on his stupidity and marginalises his cruelty.

Chapter Six assesses the Second Wave of Scholarship with a focus on Gelzer, Syme, and Scullard. The direct references to Mommsen in these works are scant, but the legacy of his anti-Pompey paradigm endures. The influence of Mommsen demonstrates how the image moved from one scholarly generation to the next in different ways. Gelzer's academic career demonstrates both direct and indirect influences on both generations of scholarship. Syme, however, rejected Mommsen's deterministic view of the Roman Empire, but maintained the hostility to Pompey. Scullard's narrative history became a standard textbook. It reduced the history of the Roman Republic and the onset of the Julio-Claudian dynasty to one volume, but even so adopted Mommsen's judgement of significant characters, including Pompey.

Chapter Seven covers later 20th Century biographies, including those of Leach, Seager, and Greenhalgh. Each author is assessed independently because each work has markedly different approaches and motives. Leach composes a biography that uses predominantly ancient evidence with limited recourse to the modern scholarship. Leach's intention is to recount Pompey's life faithful to the ancient evidence and to remove modern prejudices. However, he fails to deal adequately with the polarised nature of the ancient evidence. Seager's biography acknowledged its immense debt to Gelzer and, by proxy, to Mommsen through its blatant reiteration of his anti-Pompeian paradigms. On the other hand, Greenhalgh completely inverts this tradition through a redemptive interpretation of Pompey's life. The inherent issue with his reactionary approach is its extreme nature whereby Pompey's positive characteristics are exaggerated beyond the scope of historical proof. Greenhalgh is Mommsen in reverse, and just as problematic.

The purpose of this thesis is not to redeem Pompey as a historical figure. Rather, it examines an enduring tradition that promotes a skewed reading of Pompey as a combination of vices, ineptitudes, and failures based on Mommsen's selective reading of the ancient evidence. The image of Pompey left behind by the ancient literary record is based on strong and diverse views of Pompey during his lifetime and after his death. Accordingly, the evidence shifts between

positive and negative assessments which reflect more than one turbulent political context. Mommsen's simplification produced an attractive and authoritative narrative that avoided the complexities and suited his pro-Caesar reading of late republican history. What emerges from this examination is the multifaceted interaction between modern scholars, their ancient evidence, and the legacy of the scholarly discourse.

Chapter One: The Ancient Evidence (Latin Authors)

It is important to begin this study with a brief outline of the surviving ancient evidence and its relation to Pompey before considering his portrayal within this evidence. This will lay the foundation for a subsequent analysis of the ways that modern scholarship manipulates Pompey's portrayal.

On the surface, the state of the ancient evidence regarding Pompey appears plentiful. Numerous works, spanning multiple genres, reference him throughout the late republic onwards. Among contemporaries, Pompey appears in the speeches and letters of Cicero, the memoirs of Caesar, and the histories of Sallust. Pompey is further referenced in multiple non-contemporary sources that were recorded after his death. Plutarch's *Lives* dedicates an entire volume to him. Several first and second century histories mention him – including Appian's *Civil Wars*, Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, Velleius Paterculus' *Roman History*, and briefly in Tacitus' *Annals*. Pompey is an important tragic figure in Lucan's poetic epic *Pharsalia*, a frequent arbiter of strong moral character in Valerius Maximus' *Memorable Deeds and* Sayings, and even appears in Pliny's *Natural History* for his exploits and discoveries in the East. It is clear that Pompey's presence throughout the corpus of extant late republic and early imperial literature is highly diverse. This frequency, however, does not equate to a portrayal of much depth.

What modern readers know about Pompey is more myth than reality. Pompey is a notoriously enigmatic figure in both the contemporary and non-contemporary ancient evidence and this issue is consequently carried into the modern scholarship. His mysteriousness stems from the contradiction between Pompey's great influence on late republican Roman politics and his shallow portrayal throughout the corpus of extant evidence. Pompey frequently appears in the contemporary works of Cicero, Caesar, and Sallust, but his portrayal is often limited to circumstantial evidence or political motive. Cicero is somewhat of an exception. He offers some detail about Pompey's character, though his opinion is commonly determined by the context of his remarks. As a result, Pompey's portrayal varies throughout Cicero's works, often with great fluctuations over brief periods. While this is problematic, a cautious approach, which considers all the evidence, can yield a balanced outcome. Unfortunately, Cicero's letters have been abused by posterity to formulate a selective negative portrayal of Pompey. This is not the only source to suffer this type of mistreatment.

This problem is amplified by the relative shortage of first-hand evidence for Pompey. Unlike Caesar and Cicero, Pompey did not leave posterity a literary corpus. A few letters, written in correspondence with Cicero, survived him. However, the editing and selection process for these letters cannot be determined, so their usefulness is limited. Furthermore, the contents of these letters reveal little about Pompey's character. Some have argued that they support Pompey's harshness, particularly regarding his political friendships, though this is debatable.

The general state of the ancient evidence means that little is known about Pompey beyond what non-contemporary sources ascribed to his persona. Plutarch is the most influential source in

this regard, as his work elucidates a large swathe of Pompey's career and offers direct commentary regarding Pompey's character. This also applies to Appian and Dio's histories, which occasionally offer personal verdicts on Pompey's career that reflect their conceptualisation of his nature. However, modern audiences must acknowledge that the opinions within these sources were influenced by the advantage of hindsight and were consequently determined by knowledge of Pompey's entire career and his ultimate demise. These works accordingly reflect a continuous desire to seek causality between events, which were distinct when they occurred. Their readings thus distort the historical record and Pompey's portrayal within it. Furthermore, modern scholars are unable to examine how greatly this affected the non-contemporary evidence because much of the primary evidence no longer survives. Hence, the available evidence must be accepted, albeit with some caution.

Most of our evidence for Pompey comes from later authors and as is well known there are a number of historiographical issues that need to be addressed to make this material useful. This work is not interested in solving these historiographical issues, but instead analyses how later historians, especially Mommsen, used the material to construct their portrayals of Pompey and investigate how their prejudices shaped these portraits.

A chronological approach that reflects on the historiographical issues within the literature and how these affect Pompey's portrayal will highlight factual contradictions and elucidate Pompey's relatively mixed portrayal throughout the extant ancient evidence. This study thus examines all available evidence which contains any discourse on Pompey and which governs modern analyses of his character. These include, in roughly chronological order: Marcus Tullius Cicero, Gaius Julius Caesar, Gaius Sallustius Crispus, Strabo of Amaseia, Valerius Maximus, Velleius Paterculus, Gaius Plinius Secundus (Pliny the Elder), Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, Flavius Iosephus (Josephus), Lucius Mestrius Plutarchus (Plutarch), Sextus Julius Frontinus, Publius Cornelius Tacitus, Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, Appian of Alexandria, Lucius Annaeus Florus, and Cassius Dio. I will split these works into two sections, which will be divided between authors writing in Latin and those writing in Greek, in order to better manage them. These traditions are interconnected nonetheless. These works vary greatly in scope, genre, as well as their literary and historical *foci*, which requires each being introduced within their specific context. While many texts survive in fragmentary or semi-fragmentary states, each is important for understanding Pompey and his perception in the ancient world. As such, all the available evidence will be considered, so that the thesis' subsequent study into modern reconstructions of Pompey can be fully informed[1].

1.1. Cicero

Cicero's letters, despite their stylistic eloquence and richness, are notoriously difficult evidence. They are heavily invested in Cicero's immediate context, which increases their value as primary evidence, but also makes them liable for misappropriation. The primary letters used

[1] I have used the Loeb editions and translations of the ancient evidence, unless otherwise specified. I have also provided the original language for emphasis when necessary.

throughout this thesis were written throughout the sixties and fifties BC. Their intended audience was mainly Atticus, a close political ally and confidant of Cicero, although several key letters were sent to other recipients, including Pompey. The letters were originally intended for private or sensitive discourse. Unfortunately, most of Atticus' and other responses to Cicero were lost in antiquity, resulting in one-sided dialogue. Some interpretation, on the part of modern scholars, is thus necessary to comprehend parts of the letters. Further modern interpretation is required when Cicero brushes over the details of a topic of conversation. This usually occurs because of circumstances, as Cicero's letters weren't originally intended for circulation, thus never offer lengthy explanations about any topic if his intended audience (the letter's recipient) was already well-informed.

Cicero's surviving speeches highlight the complex and evocative nature of Roman rhetoric in the late Republic. They exhibit Cicero's genius and ability to manipulate the emotions of an audience, thereby inducing favourable responses from them. The speeches also preserve Cicero's conceptualisation of Roman virtues and law. These are invaluable for modern scholars as they allow for a more complete conceptualisation of Roman social and political interactions and their consequences. While the speeches are essential evidence, their use of oratorical devices must be recognised as a defining literary trait. Thus, Cicero's comments, when in full oratorical flight, cannot be taken as fact. He masterfully embellishes every speech with dramatic conventions to assert his opinion. Often, this entailed bending the truth to suit his cause - which was invariably to win his audience's approval and reflect suggestions from allies and interested politicians, which likely included Pompey himself. Furthermore, the surviving speeches were edited before circulation and thus aren't perfect records of the speeches given before the senate. They consequently preserve Cicero's intended sentiments, rather than a perfect iteration of his speeches.

The *Pro lege Manilia* is the most important of Cicero's speeches for this thesis, as it entirely concerns Pompey. Other Ciceronian speeches also briefly reference Pompey, including *Pro Flacco* ('In Defence of Lucius Flaccus') and *Pro Sestio* ('In Defence of Sestius'). These will be included in the ensuing analysis when relevant.

It is fortunate that both Cicero's letters and speeches have survived antiquity, because the intimacy of Cicero's letters counterbalances the hyper-positivity of Cicero's *Pro lege Manilia*. Together they consequently allow for a balanced interpretation of Pompey's persona at various points in his career. Importantly, this chapter demonstrates the diversity of Pompey's portrayal in Cicero's letters, which range from inseparable political ally[2] to despotic Sullan tyrant[3]. Furthermore, this polarity is demonstrated as a reflection of Cicero's immediate circumstances.

[2] Cic. *Fam.* 5.7.2-3. (SB 3). "I have no doubt that if my own hearty goodwill towards you does not suffice to win your attachment, the public interest will join us in confederacy…Not to leave you in ignorance of the particular in which your letter has disappointed me, let me speak plainly, as becomes my character and our friendly relations."

[3] Cic. *Att*. 4.9.3. (SB 174). "For our Gnaeus is marvellously covetous of despotism on Sullan lines. *Experto crede*; he has been as open about it as he ever was about anything."

Cicero's works thus present a foundational representation of Pompey's character, which can be compared against subsequent contemporary and non-contemporary sources.

Cicero and Pompey's Friendship

Cicero and Pompey shared a close relationship, both politically and socially, throughout most of their careers. Cicero outlines their friendship in May 62, where their political opponents label Pompey 'Gnaeus Cicero'[4] to jeer at their close relations. This letter highlights their mutual respect and closeness. Cicero references Pompey's distanced disposition[5] later in that same year. When considered alone it suggests that Pompey was cold, and this is how modern scholars choose to interpret the letter. However, Cicero's distress at Pompey's demeanour highlights the importance of their friendship and the unusualness of Pompey's behaviour[6]. It thus reinforces the strength of their bond as they subsequently resumed pleasantries. Furthermore, Cicero's loyalty to Pompey is apparent even when their relations were strained, as he does not allow circumstances to alter his kindly disposition to Pompey in the letter's opening passage[7]. Thus, the friendship was valuable to Cicero, though there are some doubts as to whether Pompey reciprocated this sentiment at this time. However, there are other occasions where Pompey's political goodwill is very much on show. For example, Cicero highlights Pompey's strenuous efforts to aid his ally P. Lentulus Spinther in 56[8], stressing the importance of his affections. Cicero's positive portrayal is reinforced by his intimate personal interactions with Pompey. This is best exemplified by their habitual dining in each other's company[9]. In other instances, Cicero exhibits a deep respect for Pompey's political opinion. For example, Cicero comments that what Pompey deemed best for himself was also best for the state[10] in 55. He reiterates this sentiment in a letter to Caelius in 51, stating that Pompey "was a very good patriot, ready in spirit and plan for every political contingency against which we have to

[4] Cic. *Att.* 1.16.11. (SB 16). "There is a further point: this wretched starveling rabble that comes to meetings and sucks the treasury dry imagines that I have no rival in the good graces of our Great One. And it is a fact that we have been brought together by a good deal of pleasant personal contact, so much so that those conspirators of the wine table, our goateed young bloods, have nicknamed him Cn. Cicero." ("*accedit illud, quod illa contionalis hirudo aerari, misera ac ieiuna plebecula, me ab hoc Magno unice diligi putat; et hercule multa et iucunda consuetudine coniuncti inter nos sumus, usque eo ut nostri isti comissatores coniurationis, barbatuli iuvenes, illum in sermonibus Cn. Ciceronem appellent.*)." Shackleton Bailey comments on Cicero's denouncement of these ruffians and their fashionable affectations. See: Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero: Letters to Atticus,* Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press (London, 1965), 310.

[5] Cic. *Fam.* 5.7.2-3. (SB 3).

[6] Shackleton Bailey asserts that Pompey's behaviour was hardly a shock, considering the behaviour of Metellus Nepos, but that Cicero was slighted by Pompey's absolute lack of niceties. He further comments that Cicero's measured letter highlights his desire to retain this friendship and important political ally. See: D. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero: Epistulae ad Familiares,* Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press (London, 1977), 279.

[7] Cic. *Fam.* 5.7.2-3. (SB 3).

[8] Cic. *Fam*. 1.1.2. (SB 12). "…both in day-to-day conversation and publicly in the Senate he (Pompey) has pleaded your (Lentulus Spinther's) cause as eloquently, impressively, zealously, and vigorously as anybody could possibly have done, with the fullest acknowledgement of your services to himself and his affection for you."

[9] Cic. *Fam*. 1.2.3. (SB 13).

[10] Cic. *Fam*. 1.8.1. (SB 19). "My inclination, indeed my affection for Pompey is strong enough to make me now feel that whatever is to his advantage and whatever he wants is right and proper. Even his opponents would in my opinion make no mistake if they gave up fighting, since they cannot be a match for him."

provide."[11] Moreover, this letter dismisses Caelius' comment earlier in the correspondence with Cicero that Pompey "is apt to say one thing and think another, but is usually not clever enough to keep his real aims out of view."[12] While the letters certainly prove that Pompey and Cicero's relationship ebbed and flowed, they are not indicative of Pompey having a deficient character or of any permanent hostility or coldness between them.

Cicero's frequent praise for Pompey's virtuousness and kindliness[13] in his private discourse is reinforced by his portrayal throughout the speeches, which were public declarations of their friendship and Pompey's abilities. This is most evident within *Pro Lege Manilia*, which sought to justify Pompey's elevation to the command against Mithridates in the East according to the proposed Manilian Law (*Lex Manilia*). To accomplish this, Cicero outlines Pompey's previous successes, particularly his swift removal of piracy from the Mediterranean. He intertwines his commentary on Pompey's achievements with frequent references to his strong moral character[14] and remarkable abilities, which made him an ideal candidate for the command[15]. However, this pro-Pompeian sentiment also resulted from Cicero's political ambitions, wherein Pompey's promotion to the command would also aid Cicero's career. It thus highlights Cicero's immense efforts to win Pompey the Eastern command and a close alliance with Pompeius himself. Cicero also outlines his friendship with Pompey in *Pro Sestio*, which he delivered in 56. He remarks that Pompey was an illustrious man who showed him friendliness when the senate were treating him with contempt[16]. He adds that Pompey attempted to protect him from the tribune Clodius, but that Clodius' despicable character and illegal aspirations undermined him[17].

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[11] Cic. *Fam*. 2.8.2. (SB 80).

[12] Cic. *Fam*. 8.1.3. (SB 77).

[13] Cic. *Fam*. 1.8.1. (SB 19). "He has performed on your (Lentulus Spinther's) behalf every friendly service that affection, sagacity, and industry could render." Bailey highlights Cicero's continued gratitude for Pompey's friendship. However, the letter also underlines Cicero's indebtedness to Pompey at this time. See: D. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero ad Familiares*, 306.

[14] Cic. *leg.Man*. 36-9. Highlights Pompey's financial honesty.

[15] Cic. *leg.Man.* 1.3. Trans. H. Grose Hodge (Cambridge, 1927). "For it is mine to speak of the unique and extraordinary merits of Gnaeus Pompeius, and a speech upon that topic is harder to end than to begin; so that my task as a speaker lies in the search not for material but for moderation."

[16] Cic. *Sest.* 15. "Gnaeus Pompeius, a most illustrious man and most friendly to me when many persons were setting themselves against me, had bound him (Clodius) by every kind of guarantee, agreement, and solemn oath that he would do nothing against me during his tribunate." (*Hunc vir clarissimus mihique multis repugnantibus amicissimus, Cn. Pompeius, omni cautione, foedere, exsecratione devinxerat nihil in tribunatu contra me esse facturum*.)

[17] Cic. *Sest.* 15-6. "But that abominable wretch, sprung from the offscourings of every sort of crime, thought that his bond would not be properly violated unless the very man who guaranteed another from danger should be threatened with dangers of his own. This foul and monstrous beast, although the auspices had bound him, although ancient custom had tied him down, although the fetters of the *leges sacratae* held him fast, a consul suddenly released by a resolution of the curiae either (as I suppose) because he had been over-persuaded, or (as some thought) because he was angry with me, but certainly not knowing and not expecting the great crimes and troubles that were hanging over our heads."

Negative Portrayals of Pompey

In a letter written as early as 59, Cicero portrays Pompey as impetuous and angry, particularly when tormented by inferiors[18]. In this same letter, he pities Pompey's political impotence and notes that his career has taken a remarkable downward turn[19]. Neither portrayal is flattering. Cicero's feeling of helplessness[20] regarding the republic's welfare dictates this letter's disposition. He wrote it soon after Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus' political compact, which largely undermined the senate's authority. Thus, Cicero's frustration toward Pompey is fuelled by current political tensions, which soon passed.

Cicero famously attacked Pompey's character in March 49, during the opening movements of the civil war. He labelled Pompey a monster[21], referencing a passage from Homer's *Odyssey*[22], and subsequently criticised Pompey's Sullan aspirations[23] - an assertion loaded with connotations of tyranny. Firstly, these comments are undeniably negative. Nonetheless, Pompey's portrayal is somewhat salvaged by contemporary political circumstances and Cicero's perspective. The letter illuminates Pompey's brooding mood and in the lead up to the civil war, when he was under immense pressure and entirely aware of Caesar's military capabilities. While this does not exonerate Pompey, his demand for control during this time of crisis is understandable. Furthermore, Cicero's tone throughout this entire letter to Atticus is

[18] Cic. *Att.* 2.21.4. (SB 41). "To me I must say they (Clodius and his associates) are unpleasant, both because they torment too savagely a man for whom I have always had a regard and because I am afraid that impetuous as he is, a fierce fighter not accustomed to insults, he may give free rein to his mortification and anger."

[19] Cic. *Att.* 2.21.4. (SB 41). "So there is our poor friend, unused to disrepute, his whole career passed in a blaze of admiration and glory, now physically disfigured and broken in spirit, at his wits end for what to do. He sees the precipice if he goes on and the stigma of a turncoat if he turns back. The honest men are his enemies, the rascals themselves are not his friends. See now how soft-hearted I am. I could not keep back my tears when I saw him addressing a public meeting on 25 July about Bibulus' edicts. How magnificently he used to posture on that platform in other days, surrounded by an adoring people, every man wishing him well! How humble and abject he was then, what a sorry figure he cut in his own eyes, to say nothing of his audience!"

[20] Cic. *Att.* 2.21.1. (SB 41). "The republic is finished. Its plight is all the sadder than when you left because at that time it looked as though the authoritarian regime was agreeable to the masses and, though odious, not actually lethal to their betters; whereas now it is all at once so universally detested that we tremble to think where it will erupt."

[21] Cic. *Att.* 4.9.7. (SB 174). "…but I am afraid of causing Pompey embarrassment and of his turning on me the Gorgon's head, monster most terrible. "

[22] Hom. *Od.* 11.634. Trans. A.T. Murray, Rev. G.E. Dimock.

[23] Cic. *Att.* 4.9.7. (SB 174). See also: Cic. *Att.* 4.10.7. (SB 198). "This is a fight for a throne. The expelled monarch (Pompey) is the more moderate, upright, and clean-handed, and unless he wins the name of the Roman people must inevitably be blotted out; but if he does win, his victory will be after the Sullan fashion and example. Therefore in such a conflict you should support neither side openly and trim your sails to the wind. My case however is different because I am bound by an obligation and cannot be ungrateful."

Cic. *Att.* 4.8.2. (SB 161). "…our statesman's object is the happiness of his countrymen – to promote power for their security, virtue for their good name. This is the work I would have him accomplish, the greatest and noblest in human society. To this out Gnaeus has never given a thought, least of all in the present context. Both of the pair have aimed at personal domination, not the happiness and fair fame of the community."

dictated by his foul mood and feelings of hopelessness[24]. This is rarely mentioned by modern authorities[25].

Another letter, written on the fourth of March 49, powerfully exemplifies Cicero's occasional disdain for Pompey. As with the previous letter, Cicero was frustrated with the breakdown of civil order and feared the looming civil war. He vents his frustration in a letter to Atticus, where Pompey was demonised for his role in the events, as well as his continual decision to ignore Cicero's advice. Cicero brought Pompey's decisions under scrutiny and denounced outright Pompey's abilities as a statesman and general[26]. He is extremely critical of Pompey's decision to flee Italy[27], whilst also highlighting Pompey's fear-mongering tactics with the senate[28]. Yet, even at this low point, Cicero raises points that are favourable to Pompey. He refers to Pompey's former immense popularity among the towns of Italy[29], especially those who prayed for his swift recovery from illness. Although Cicero continues by stating that the people's favour was now shown to Caesar, allusions to Pompey's popularity exist nonetheless. This letter typifies how greatly Cicero's mood affects this intimate evidence. Cicero was outraged at the course of transpiring events, which he believed should have been handled differently. His venomous tone and denunciation of Pompey alludes to a political break between the two, or, at the very least, a heated disagreement. Consequently, Cicero rejects Pompey's influence, instead stating that his decision to leave Italy was guided by the counsel of Philotimus, who informed Cicero that the Optimates were vehemently attacking him in public[30]. When considered alone, this letter suggests that Pompey and Cicero had reached a political rift in early March 49. Fortunately, however, Cicero's letter to Atticus two days later (the sixth of March) offers an entirely different account. Here Cicero mentioned that the current state of politics was a source of great anxiety, which was cured only by his allegiance and trust in Pompey. In direct opposition to his former letter, Cicero attributed all his actions to the respect and friendship he shared with Pompey[31].

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[24] Cic. *Att.* 4.9.7. (SB 174). "I realise that we shall never have a free state in the lifetime of those two or of one singly. So I have no longer any hope of a quiet life for myself and I am ready to swallow every bitter pill."

[25] See Kathryn Welch, 'Sons of Neptune: Serving the Res Publica Between 49 and 46', in *Magnus Pius: Sextus Pompeius and the Transformation of the Roman Republic*, ed. K. Welch, Classical Press of Wales (Swansea, 2012), 43-91.

[26] Cic. *Att.* 8.16.1 (SB 166). "I already knew him (Pompey) to be a hopeless failure as a statesman, and I now find him an equally bad general."

[27] Cic. *Att.* 8.16.2 (SB 166). "I mean news of his (Pompey's) disgraceful flight and the victor's (Caesar's) return—his route and destination."

[28] Cic. *Att.* 8.16.2 (SB 166). "Jurors of the panel of 360, who were our Gnaeus' especial admirers (I see one or other of them every day), are shuddering at certain threats of his."

[29]Cic. *Att.* 8.16.2 (SB 166). "As for the towns, they make a god of him (Caesar), and no pretence about it either, as there was when they were offering their prayers for Pompey's recovery."

[30] Cic. *Att.* 8.16.1 (SB 166).

[31] Cic. *Att.* 9.1.4. (SB 167). "I shall do this for Pompey; it is what I owe him. No one else influences me, neither the honest men's talk (there are no honest men) nor the cause, which has been conducted without courage and will be conducted without scruple. I do it simply and solely for Pompey, who does not even ask it of me and is, so he says, fighting not for himself but for the country." Shackleton Bailey comments that Cicero's argument was flimsy, at least in Atticus' eyes. Moreover, he questions Cicero's assertion that he goes for Pompey's sake. After all, if Pompey was not fighting for himself, this was all the less reason for Cicero to join him on personal

The contrast in tone and content between these two letters highlights the difficulties that arise when using Cicero's letters as evidence. It demonstrates that one Ciceronian comment alone cannot be used to illuminate his attitude because it is so frequently a result of a particular mood or reaction. Hence, scholars who pick and choose Cicero's letters risk seriously misinterpreting the information that Cicero is providing.

1.2. Caesar

Caesar's *Civil War* is a politically charged masterpiece of literary invective. It offers an exhilarating and detailed account of the civil war and its major figures, which was unsurpassed in stylistic purity and substance by its ancient literary peers. Two notable fields that exemplify its exceptional qualities are Caesar's engaging, personable, and honest literary style[32], and, his unmatched level of detail concerning military matters, which stemmed from his immense expertise in this field. These factors, alongside Caesar's seemingly accomplished military career and fame[33], constitute a formidable legacy that survives into the modern world.

The work was a commentary (*Commentarius*), which had two primary functions: to affirm a person's achievements or defend their actions[34], and to supplement future historical endeavours as source material. In composition, their style was typically austere, which served to provide a sense of honesty. Caesar's account achieved both these aims, as illustrated by Cicero's assertion:

> "(They are) Admirable indeed!" (Cicero); "they are like nude figures, straight and beautiful; stripped of all ornament of style as if they had laid aside a garment. His (Caesar's) aim was to furnish others with material for writing history, and perhaps he has succeeded in gratifying the inept, who may wish to apply their curling irons to his material; but men of sound judgement he has deterred from writing, since in history there is nothing more pleasing than brevity clear and correct.[35]

Importantly, Cicero emphasises that Caesar's commentaries were so well written any historian of sound judgement was deterred from attempting to outstrip this monumental piece of literature. However, Cicero presented this speech while Caesar was dictator in 46 and this likely affected its tone and contents.

Caesar's intended audience and literary aspects of the work reveal much about his literary style. Caesar's primary audience was Rome's most important political figures, whose help he would

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grounds. See: D. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, Vol IV, Cambridge University Press (London, 1968), 360.

[32] Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.114. "As for Julius Caesar, if he had devoted himself wholly to the forum, no other of our countrymen would have been named as a rival to Cicero. There is in him such force, such perspicuity, such fire, that he evidently spoke with the same spirit with which he fought. All these qualities, too, he sets off with a remarkable elegance of diction, of which he was peculiarly studious."

[33] See: *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter: The War Commentaries as Political Instruments*, eds. Kathryn Welch and Anton Powell, The Classical Press of Wales, (London, 1998).

[34] W.W. Batstone and C. Damon, *Caesar's Civil War*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 2006), 10.

[35] Cic. *Brut*. 262.

need to administer the post-war state. Thus, the *Civil War* was composed to justify his actions and offer this audience, which largely comprised of senators who voted for the final decree against Caesar, a narrative of the war which facilitated their cooperation. It also had two other target audiences. Firstly, it wished to acknowledge the loyalty of Caesar's initial adherents, which also illustrated the benefits of Caesar's goodwill. Secondly, it informed both learned provincials and posterity of the war's basic narrative. This last group were marginally significant as Caesar was more concerned with the immediate political and military climate. Due to his audience, Caesar was meticulous with his stylistic approach and content throughout the work. As noted by Batstone and Damon, Caesar employed a more careful and sensitive method when writing the *Civil War* than that utilised in his *Gallic War*. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, his adversaries in the *Civil War* were no longer uncivilised Gauls and Germans, but respected and influential Roman senators. Secondly, most of his audience – particularly the upper-class public figures – had their own view of the events detailed[36], which were based on epistolary dialogue and first-hand experience. Thus, Caesar could not exaggerate or create a fraudulent account because its deception would be obvious to his audience. Instead, he subtly manipulated the war's portrayal to promote a negative representation of his adversaries' vices, namely their warmongering[37], threats[38], and cruelty[39]. These same concerns are exhibited in Cicero's letters during this period[40], though Cicero equates cruelty to the fundamental nature of civil war[41].

Caesar uses various direct and indirect techniques to undermine Pompey's position. For example, his negative representation of the Pompeians (particularly Labienus[42] - Caesar's former officer - and Metellus Scipio[43] - Pompey's new father-in-law) are, by proxy, an attack against Pompey who was their commander. However, Caesar also had particular grudges with

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[36] W.W. Batstone and C. Damon, *Caesar's Civil War*, 90.

[37] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 1.2.3. "…Caesar, he (M. Calidius) said, was afraid lest it should be thought that Pompeius, having **extorted** two legions from him, was holding them back and retaining them near Rome with a view to imperilling him…" Here Pompey's decision to recall the two legions from Caesar, under the premise that they be sent to protect the Eastern provinces, is construed as deliberately provocative. See also: Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 1.4.5. "Stirred, too, by the discredit attaching to his (Pompey's) diversion of two legions from their route by Asia and Syria and his appropriation of them for his own power and supremacy, he was eager that the issue should be brought to the arbitrament of war."

[38] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 1.2.5-6. "All these speakers were assailed with vehement invective by the consul L. Lentulus. He absolutely refused to put the motion of Calidius, and Marcellus, alarmed by the invectives, abandoned his proposal. Thus most of the senators, compelled by the language of the consul, intimidated by the presence of the army and by the threats of the friends of Pompeius, against their will and yielding to pressure, adopt the proposal of Scipio that Caesar should disband his army before a fixed date, and that, if he failed to do so, he should be considered to be meditating treason against the republic."

[39] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 1.2.8. "Opinions of weighty import are expressed, and the more harsh and cruel the speech the more it is applauded by the personal enemies of Caesar."

[40] Pompey's overconfidence and warmongering, see: Cic. *Att.* 7.8.4-5. (SB 131).

[41] Cic. *Att.* 9.10.2 (SB 177); 9.14.1 (SB 182).

[42] W.W. Batstone and C. Damon, *Caesar's Civil War*, 109. "If in creating his portrait of Labienus Caesar had in mind the desertion with which Labienus began the civil war, he succeeded in drawing a man who continued to act in character. Caesar's Labienus is fundamentally unreliable."

[43] W.W. Batstone and C. Damon, *Caesar's Civil War*, 113. "The dominant features of his portrait are selfishness and a failure to comprehend the nature and purpose of military command. Such is the man in whose hands, while Caesar is writing the *Civil War*, lies the direction of the forces gathering against him in North Africa."

both of these men, particularly Labienus, who had served as his right-hand man in Gaul and had deserted him soon after the outbreak of the civil war. To support his negative portrayal of the Pompeians, Caesar continually contrasts his approach to the civil war against his enemies. Caesar is always merciful to vanquished foes and rewards the loyalty of his supporters[44], while Pompey is cruel and harshly punishes malfeasance. Curio's direct speech, the longest of its kind in the C*ivil Wars*, embodies this binary opposition. He states that Caesar encourages loyalty by showing trust to his inferiors[45], while the Pompeians seek to betray Caesar's trust in his troops and implicate them in an unspeakable crime for their own advantage[46]. This moral point – that supporting Caesar is virtuous, while supporting Pompey involves crime - is reinforced by Caesar's important military victories in Spain[47]. Caesar thus manipulates every facet of the civil war's major events, which perpetuates positive representations of his ambitions coupled with a detrimental portrayal of Pompey's cause. This was particularly so for events in 48 and thereafter when Caesar became consul and could represent himself as the proper legal commander of the entire Roman force.

This reductionist approach, whereby he carefully selects the level of detail and inclusion of events, offers his audience a narrowed perspective of the civil war. It establishes broad characterisations and themes throughout the work, which culminate in Caesar's success over the unjust and war-mongering Pompeians. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in his specific portrayal of Pompey.

In book one of Caesar's *Civil Wars*, Pompey is defined by his overconfidence[48], stubbornness to accept peaceful terms[49], and cruelty[50]. In book three, situated at the civil war's climax, Pompey's record as a commander is mixed. He achieves some successes, as at Dyrrachium[51], but these are embellished with important Caesarian moral victories. The best example of this is post-Dyrrachium, where Caesar encourages his men by stating that their defeat will flush the enemy with confidence and allow them to risk open battle[52]. Naturally, this forms a prelude for the battle of Pharsalus, where Caesar achieved victory over Pompey. More importantly, this book characterises Pompey's central failures and flaws. Caesar highlights Pompey's

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[44] Even in instances where his subordinates (i.e. Curio) failed, but showed loyalty. See: Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 2.42.4.

[45] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 2.32.3. "Caesar entrusted me, whom he holds very dear, to your loyalty, as well as a province—Sicily and Africa—without which he cannot keep Rome and Italy safe."

[46] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 2.32.4. "Granted, there are people (the Pompeians) who urge you to defect. Well, what more can they desire than causing trouble for us while simultaneously involving you in an unspeakable crime? Or what harsher feeling can angry men have about you than that you should betray those who judge that they owe everything to you, and come into the power of those who think that you brought about their ruin?"

[47] W.W. Batstone and C. Damon, *Caesar's Civil War*, 100.

[48] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 1.4.4-5.

[49] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 1.9.1-6. Carter outlines the context, though favours Caesar's perspective in J.M. Carter, *Julius Caesar: The Civil War – Books 1 and 2*, Aris and Phillips, (Warminster, 1990), 166-7.

[50] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 1.2.8.

[51] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.69.

[52] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.73.6. "If this is done, the damage will turn into advantage, as happened at Gergovia, and those who before now were afraid to fight will offer themselves for battle of their own accord."

arrogance[53] and inability to grasp victory at Dyrrachium[54]. Subsequently, Pompey yields to his underlings and engages in open battle at Pharsalus[55]. Caesar provides a speech, laced with literary devices, which justifies this decision in Pompey's voice[56]. Here, Pompey's rationale, as depicted by Caesar, is questionable from the outset. His relationship with his troops is odd, as he persuades - not orders - the cavalry to follow his orders. Furthermore, Pompey's confidence throughout the speech is extremely misguided. He foolishly believes victory will be easily accomplished because of his advantage in numbers, which will force Caesar's veteran army to lose heart. Finally, it closes with an allusion to defeat, which Caesar obviously knew was imminent in hindsight. Here Pompey asserts that the troops' demand for battle was met and they should now not disprove the opinion that he and everyone else has of them[57]. This passage casts uncertainty over Pompey's leadership and further presages his defeat by Caesar. It also highlights Caesar's method of constructing the historical record from his own perspective, wherein its conclusions inevitably favour him. As the author, Caesar controls Pompey's depiction to justify his own decisions throughout the civil war. This passage best exemplifies how Pompey is cast as Caesar's inferior throughout the commentaries. Elsewhere in book three, Caesar shows Pompey to be dishonest. In the moments before the battle of Pharsalus, Caesar shows his enemy's leaders, Pompey included, swearing not to return from the field unless victorious.

> Having said this, he (Labienus) swore that he would not return to the camp except as conqueror and exhorted the rest to do the same. Pompeius, commending this, took the same oath, nor was there any one of the rest who hesitated to swear. Such were their proceedings at this council, and they departed with general rejoicing and high expectation.[58]

Pompey soon after betrays this oath when he witnesses his men, from whom he expected victory, fleeing the field of battle[59]. He thus returns to his camp and deceptively orders his troops to defend it at all costs while he makes a circuit of the gates to shore up the defences[60].

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[53] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.45.6. "It was at this time that Pompeius is said to have made the boastful remark to his friends that he did not object to be considered a worthless commander if Caesar's legions should succeed in retiring, without the most serious loss, from the place to which they had rashly advanced." See also: 3.82.1. "Pompey arrived in Thessaly a few days later. In an address to the whole army he thanked his men and encouraged Scipio's soldiers: since victory was already in hand, they should agree to share the booty and rewards."

[54] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.70.1. "Pompey, fearing an ambush, did not dare approach the fortifications for quite some time—in my view, because things had turned out contrary to the expectation of a man who had seen his men running away from their camp shortly before—and his cavalry was slowed down in its pursuit by the narrow space, particularly since it was held by our men." J.M. Carter emphasises Caesar's commentary on luck in Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 68.1. See: J.M. Carter, *Julius Caesar: The Civil War – Books 1 and 2,* 191-2.

[55] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.86.1.

[56] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.86.2-4. "I know that I am making a nearly incredible promise. But here is the thinking behind my plan, so that you can approach the battle with sturdier morale. I have persuaded our cavalry—and they have assured me that they will do this—to attack Caesar's right wing on its open flank when the approach is complete. Once they have encircled Caesar's line from the back, they are going to rout the army in disarray before our men throw a weapon at the enemy. We will thus finish the war with no danger to the legions and practically without a wound. It is not a difficult matter, given how strong we are in cavalry."

[57] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.86.5.

[58] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.87.5-6.

[59] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.94.5.

[60] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.96.5-6.

Instead, he abandons his men and leaves Thessaly altogether. Here, Caesar's account is questionable, as he is unlikely to have noticed these details in the thick of battle. Thus, either they are literary embellishments or were later additions he received from Pompey's forces after the battle had already been decided. Modern scholars point out that Caesar gives physical expression to this characterization of Pompey through the removal of his insignia that marked him as a commander[61]. Caesar recognised the power of this symbolic gesture and dramatised it in his commentary [62]. Finally, Caesar's negative portrayal of Pompey culminates in his death in Egypt. Here Pompey dies with his last companion at the hands of a former beneficiary and a former soldier[63]. In a moment of poetic justice, the man who had failed his supporters was ultimately betrayed by them[64].

Caesar's account of the civil war is extremely important and offers an intimate glimpse into late republican political and military affairs. However, it also has several issues. The most evident, which was stated in the introduction of this sub-chapter, is Caesar's intent. Caesar did not record his aims in the *Commentaries*, so posterity can only hypothesise what he was trying to achieve during the civil war. The best suggestion is that Caesar was out to defend himself and the best way to do this was to attack his opponents as strongly as he could. Irrespective of this issue, Pompey suffers harsh treatment in a source composed by his military adversary throughout the civil war. To counterbalance this problem, Caesar's account cannot be held superior to other contemporary accounts. Instead, it should be contrasted with the other contemporary evidence to modify its perspective, thereby revealing Caesar's manipulative designs and intentions throughout the work. The pitfalls of Caesar's account are most evident in his selective retelling of the political anarchy in Rome before his invasion. Cicero's letters to Atticus state that the political anarchy in Rome was the result of Caesar's march into Italy[65], which forced Pompey, the two consuls, and a large portion of the senate to abandon the capital and prepare for war elsewhere. Caesar's account, however, flips this equation and suggests that the political anarchy justified his invasion. His selection and organisation of the story highlights Pompeian failure, but is chronologically false. In short, it was Caesar's march into Italy that created the chaos, not the chaos that provoked Caesar's march.

Unfortunately, many early modern scholars refused these issues as determinants shaping Caesar's commentary on the civil war. They instead maintained a positive reading of Caesar's *Civil War* even when this was rather difficult. Consequently, they believed that the *Civil War*

[61] W.W. Batstone and C. Damon, *Caesar's Civil War*, 106.
[62] J.M. Carter notes how Caesar's expression at Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.96.3 successfully provokes a sense of frantic haste in J. M. Carter, *Julius Caesar: The Civil War – Books 1 and 2*, 216.
[63] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.104.
[64] W.W. Batstone and C. Damon, *Caesar's Civil War*, 106.
[65] Cic. *Att.* 7.10 (SB 133).

was a truthful depiction of the conflict[66], including the portraits of his adversaries[67] and various battles[68]. However, these views lack critical incision and promotes Caesar as a markedly superior being. This in turn marginalises Pompey's significance and skews the narrative of the late republic. Fortunately, more recent scholars are more sceptical of Caesar's motives. In summary, Caesar propagated anti-Pompeian stereotypes throughout the *Civil* War, while simultaneously aggrandising himself. This reconstruction was later adopted by modern authors who perpetuated these portrayals for their own purposes. Therefore, Caesar's *Civil War* and the assertions in this sub-chapter about this text, are crucial to this thesis and are presented from the outset and throughout.

By contrast, Caesar also briefly mentions Pompey in his commentaries on the *Gallic War,* where at the opening of book 7 he states that Pompey's actions in the wake of Clodius' murder demonstrated his *virtus* ('Excellence)[69]. This adds a positive portrayal of Pompey, which highlights Caesar's perception of his energy and efficiency in the political arena at that time.

1.3. Sallust

Gaius Sallustius Crispus (probably 86-35 BC) was Pompey's contemporary and actively participated in the civil war. His political career was dubious, as exhibited by his expulsion from the senate in 49 for unspecified offences. Sallust was, however, held in favourable regard by Caesar due to his unwavering support during the civil war. This relationship saw Sallust re-enrolled in the senate and granted a praetorship for 47. Sallust again evinced dubious conduct as he was alleged to have extortionately governed the province of Africa Nova during his praetorship, which resulted in serious charges against him upon his return to Rome in 46. While detailed records of his praetorship are lost, the accusations levelled against Sallust must have been well supported as he only escaped conviction through the acquittal of Caesar – who was then acting as dictator. With his political career in tatters, Sallust retired from public life and spent the remainder of his life writing historical works. His history was written in the shadow of Caesar's assassination and the institution of the Triumvirate at the end of 43.

Sallust wrote three historical works during his life, two of which survive in their entirety. The surviving works are: *The Conspiracy of Catiline* and *The Jugurthine War*; while his last monograph, the *Histories*, survives in a few fragments, speeches, and letters. The latter work is of greatest importance to this thesis, despite its heavily fragmented state and occasionally controversial authorship. The surviving fragments detail Sallust's perception of Pompey and

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[66] M.L.W. Laistner, *The Greater Roman Historians*, University of California Press (Los Angeles, 1947), 37-8 states that "Even in the *commentaries on the Civil War* the unprejudiced reader will find it hard to discover deliberate falsification of evidence; but he will encounter passages where Caesar's memory of past events was at fault."

[67] M.L.W. Laistner, *Roman Historians*, 41. "Labienus was the one important officer who changed sides in the civil war; his action must have hit Caesar hard on both personal and military grounds. Yet there is no bitter criticism in his later book. Labienus' military competence is as clearly portrayed in the *Civil War* as in the *Gallic War*."

[68] M.L.W. Laistner, *Roman Historians*, 39. "Military reversals or near-disasters are not glossed over, and the attentive reader is led by sheer sequence of events to the highest degree of tension…"

[69] Caes. *Bell. Gal.* 7.6.

the events of the civil war. However, Sallust's monographs are important because they outline his historical method and purpose. Therefore, a brief analysis of Sallust's historical method within the *Conspiracy of Catiline* opens this sub-chapter to outline his intent.

Sallust's *Conspiracy of Catiline* and *Jugurthine War* were carefully selected and executed monographs which embody their creator's historical methodology and purpose. Rather than writing narrative history in an annalistic framework, Sallust chose engaging and thematically consistent episodes in Roman history for the subject of his works. For example, the *Conspiracy of Catiline* focuses on the dramatic events of 63 BC, where Catiline and his fellow conspirators were controversially executed for their designs to overthrow the Republic. The monograph embodies Sallust's belief that Roman society was in a state of moral decline. He uses several techniques to outline this process. Firstly, Sallust chose Catiline as the work's protagonist because the dissipation and corruption in Catiline's character offered a suitable contrast to Sallust's high-minded stoic morality. This was characteristic of Sallust's approach to history, whereby emphasis is placed on the personalities of history[70]. Secondly, the backdrop of political anarchy, corruption, impoverishment in rural Italy, near universal disregard for legal precedence, and social disorder, dramatically embodied Sallust's concerns for Rome's decline and future[71]. Sallust's focus on these moral issues underpins his belief in didacticism as the purpose of history. In his opinion, historical pursuits were an extension of public life and should accordingly guide the actions of future generations.

The *Histories* was Sallust's most ambitious work[72] and covered the period from 78-67 BC. It makes several brief allusions to Pompey. Book two refers to the transfer of the Sertorian command from Metellus Pius to Pompey. Meanwhile, books four and five, relate directly to Pompey. Book four records the political struggles in Rome which preceded Pompey and Crassus' joint consulship in 70, while book five documents the passing of the *Lex Gabinia* and the final phases of Pompey's war against the pirates. Unfortunately, the narrative fragments of the last two books are brief. Thus, only the longer passages which pertain to Pompey will be included in this sub-chapter. From these few fragments, however, modern scholars are able to sketch a rough outline of Pompey's character.

McGushin comments that Sallust's inclusion of Pompey's early career, as part of his introduction to the narrative proper, indicates the importance Sallust attached to Pompey[73]. It is an assertion strengthened by Pompey's character sketch in book two[74], situated immediately before Pompey takes the Sertorian command, where Sallust pauses the narrative to introduce

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[70] M.L.W. Laistner, *Roman Historians*, 55.

[71] D.C. Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust*, Cambridge University Press (London, 1961), 104-5.

[72] D.C. Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust*, 106. "As far as it goes, the evidence of the fragments of the *Historiae* indicates the same general standpoint as that behind the two earlier monographs. The one substantial modification which can be detected seems to be in the interest of greater historical accuracy…"

[73] Sall. *Hist*. 1.44-6. See too P. McGushin, *Sallust: the Histories*, Trans. and commentary by Patrick McGushin, Clarendon Press (Oxford, 1992), 17.

[74] Sall. *Hist*. 2.16-22.

him. Unfortunately, only eight lines of this sketch have survived as references in other ancient works. Yet the fragments still establish Sallust's negative portrayal. He comments on Pompey's desire for power[75], his insulting behaviour toward honourable men from young manhood[76], and his shameless character[77]. These amount to a fairly damning portrait, albeit one which appears historically objective because of its restrained delivery[78].

Included in book two of the history is a letter which Pompey addressed to the senate at the height of the Sertorian war. Its authorship is undeniably Sallustian[79], though most modern scholars accept that its tone could have originated from a Pompeian original[80] – to which Sallust likely had access. The letter adheres to Sallust's earlier portrait of Pompey, wherein Pompey's vanity and ruthless ambition were central themes. However, Sallust exaggerates these traits in the letter for dramatic effect. Consequently, Pompey's request for aid is portrayed as a thinly veiled threat[81], his vanity is highlighted through the continual reassertion of his self-importance[82], while his manipulative tendencies are illustrated in his incessant self-pity[83]. Overall, Sallust's portrayal of Pompey throughout the letter is damning[84].

This letter has interesting consequences for modern scholarly readings of Sallust. Its blatant hostility, alongside Sallust's politically motivated approach to history, has resulted in an unsurprisingly cautious treatment among modern scholars[85]. Yet this has not prevented modern

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[75] Sall. *Hist*. 2.18. "(Pompey was) moderate in all things except in his thirst for power."

[76] Sall. *Hist*. 2.19. "Nevertheless from young manhood he had behaved insultingly towards many honourable men."

[77] Sall. *Hist*. 2.17. "So that Lenaeus… savaged Sallust the historian in a bitter satire because he had written of him (Pompey) as noble of countenance, shameless in character."

[78] P. McGushin*, Sallust: The Histories*, 193.

[79] M.L.W. Laistner, *Roman Historians*, 52. "It is likely enough that Pompey sent a strongly worded dispatch to the Roman government, complaining of lack of support in the Sertorian War; but the letter reproduced in the *Histories*, though it may give the gist of what Pompey wrote, has Sallustian features."

[80] P. McGushin, *Sallust: The Histories*, 242. "It is not unlikely that Sallust had seen the original letter sent by Pompeius to the senate. His version of it, however is in keeping with his earlier portrait wherein he dealt with leading character-traits of that ambitious general."

[81] Sall. *Hist*. 2.82.9-10. "I have exhausted not only my means, but even my credit. You are our last resort; unless you come to our aid my army, against my wish but as I have already warned you, will cross to Italy and bring with it the whole Spanish war."

[82] Sall. *Hist*. 2.82.6. "Why need I enumerate battles or winter expeditions or the towns we have destroyed or captured? Actions speak louder than words: the taking of the enemy's camp at the Sucro, the battle of the river Turia… all these are sufficiently known to you. In exchange for them, grateful senators, you present me with famine and shortages." See also: Sall. *Hist*. 2.82.1. "…having exposed me to a most cruel war, you have as far as you were able destroyed by starvation, the most wretched of all deaths, me and my army which deserves your highest gratitude."

[83] Sall. *Hist*. 2.82.1. "If it had been against you and my country's gods that I had undertaken all the toils and dangers which have accompanied the many occasions since my early manhood when under my leadership the most dangerous enemies have been routed and your safety secured, you could not, Fathers of the Senate, have taken more severe measures against me in my absence than you are now doing."

[84] Ronald Syme, *Sallust*, University of California Press (Los Angeles, 1964), 201. "The document (speech) discloses chill ambition, boasting, menace and mendacity."

[85] M.L.W. Laistner, *Roman Historians*, 55. "If we reject this portrait of Pompey, as we must, it is not because it conflicts with the uncritical eulogies of Theophanes of Mytilene, traces of which survive in Plutarch, but because it cannot be reconciled with the sober contemporary evidence in the writings of Cicero."

historians from admiring Sallust as a historical writer, particularly for his ability to capture the essence of history's great characters[86]. The most notable example of this is Caesar and Cato's exchange in Sallust's *Conspiracy of Catiline*[87]. This admiration for Sallust's artistic merits has resulted in a willingness for modern audiences to accept his historical flaws. Unfortunately, this is problematic. While it is likely that Sallust's portrayal of Pompey was the product of personal disdain, merely acknowledging the issue and thereby rejecting a small portion of the evidence is deeply flawed. This does not consider the wider ramifications the letter has for Sallust's historiographic approach.

As mentioned previously, Sallust references Pompey on a few occasions in the surviving fragments of the *Histories*' later books. In book three, Pompey is mentioned in the tribune C. Licinius Macer's speech given to the general assembly in 73. Here Pompey is portrayed as an upholder of the common person's cause because he sought to reinstate the powers of the tribune of the plebs taken by Sulla[88]. These attractive features, however, do not reflect a redeeming Sallustian portrayal of Pompey. Rather, Sallust recreated the speech to reflect the views of Macer, who evidently supported Pompey's cause at that time. Unfortunately, most of the speech's context within Sallust's work is lost. It is thus impossible to situate the speech among the author's opinion on the wider events. Despite this, Sallust's negative portrait of the *Optimates* which emphasises their treachery and jealousy[89] diminishes Pompey as well because of his allegiance to them both in the time of Sulla and in the later civil war with Caesar.

Sallust's last notable comment on Pompey survives in a fragment from book three. Pompey's vanity was again the central theme, as he bowed to the sycophancy of his supporters who claimed he was the equal of Alexander. This adulation inspired Pompey to equal the achievements and plans of Alexander[90]. Sallust's vocabulary usage is telling within this

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[86] Ronald Mellor, *The Roman Historians*, Routledge Press (London, 1999), 45. "His surviving characterizations of men like Jugurtha, Marius, and Catiline may not be subtle but they are certainly forceful. These portraits are often drawn through speeches and letters – not using the precise words of the subject but, like Thucydides, constructing speeches with ideas and argument appropriate to the specific personality."
See also: Ronald Mellor, *The Roman Historians*, 41-2. "While Sallust may have seen a copy of the letter Pompey sent to the Senate in 74 BCE, his concern was likewise not to repeat Pompey's words but to provide a forceful impression of the vanity and ambition of the man. Sallust despised Pompey, whom he always saw as the bloodthirsty gangster in Sulla's employ rather than the later, far more respectable, leader of the senatorial party and defender of the Republic."

[87] Ronald Mellor, *The Roman Historians*, 37.

[88] Sall. *Hist*. 3.34.23. "For my own part I am fully convinced that Pompeius, a young man of such renown, prefers to be the leading man of the state with your consent, rather than to share in their (the *Optimates*) mastery, and that he will join you and lead you in restoring the power of the tribunes."

[89] Sall. *Hist*. 3.34.21-2. "You must guard against craft; for by no other means can they prevail against the people as a whole, and in that way only will they attempt to do so. It is for this reason that they are making plans to soothe you and at the same time to put you off until the coming of Gnaeus Pompeius, the very man whom they bore upon their necks when they feared him, but presently, their fear dispelled, they tear to pieces. Nor are these self-styled defenders of liberty, many as they are, ashamed to need one man before they dare to right a wrong or to defend a right."

[90] Sall. *Hist*. 3.84. "From his earliest youth, Pompeius had been persuaded by the flattery of his supporters to believe that he was the equal of King Alexander. Therefore he tried to rival Alexander's achievements and plans."

fragment. Firstly, he insinuates that Pompey tried to equal Alexander, thereby alluding to Pompey's failure on this count. Furthermore, Pompey's susceptibility to his supporters' flattery indicates an impressionable nature unsuited to leadership positions.

Above is a collection of the notable Sallustian evidence relating to Pompey where the authorship is uncontested by modern scholars. There are, however, other controversial works which resemble Sallust's attitudes and have certain Sallustian literary features. Most modern scholars deem them later Sallustian imitations. I will avoid taking a side in the debate about their authenticity because the question of authorship is of secondary importance here. The evidence reflects, at the very least, a subsequent author's understanding of Sallust.

This 'pseudo-Sallustian' evidence comprises a speech and letter addressed to Caesar after the civil war. The author addresses Caesar, outlining his concerns for the republic and the steps that should be taken to cure its ills[91]. Both works capture the strong moralist tone exhibited throughout Sallust's surviving works[92]. In doing so, the works polarise the characters of Pompey and Caesar. Needless to say, Pompey's portrayal is negative throughout. As with the authentic Sallustian evidence, there are several references to Pompey's insatiable desire for power[93] and his reliance on luck[94] - which also alludes to his foolishness. Pompey's portrayal is also defined by his early career and affiliation with Sulla. His cruel acts[95] thus become a centrepiece for Sallust's justification for Caesar's decision to declare war on the State. Finally, in his letter to Caesar, the pseudo-Sallustian author outlines several Pompeian flaws. He comments on the perversity of Pompey's spirit and his lowly acts, whereby Pompey prefers to put arms into the hands of his enemies than allow Caesar to restore the republic[96]. The passage concludes with Pompey as the republic's destroyer, a portrayal juxtaposed with Caesar as its restorer[97].

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[91] Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes.* 8.7. "I have set forth in the fewest possible words the conduct which I think will benefit our country and bring glory to you." See also Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes*. 3-12.

[92] Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes.* 1.7-8. "But for you it is harder than for all before you to administer your conquests, because your war was more merciful than their peace." See also Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes.* 5.5. "For it has become the custom for mere youths to think it a fine thing to waste their own substance and that of others, to refuse nothing to their won lust and the demands of their fellows, to regard such conduct as evidence of manliness and high spirit, but to consider modesty and self-restraint as cowardice."

[93] Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes.* 2.3. "For no one of them (the *Optimates*) had any share in his power, and if he had been able to brook a rival, the world would not have been convulsed by war."

[94] Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes*. 2.2. "You waged war, Caesar, with a distinguished antagonist, of great prowess, greedy for power, but not wise so much as favoured by fortune."

[95] Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes.* 4.1. "Or has oblivion destroyed the murmurs which, a short time before this warm were directed against Gnaeus Pompeius and the victory of Sulla; when it was said that Domitius, Carbo, Brutus and others were slain, not in arms nor in battle according to the laws of war, but afterwards with the utmost barbarity, while they were begging for mercy…"

[96] Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes.* 3.1. "Now, since Gnaeus Pompeius, either from perversity of spirit or because he desired above all things to injure you, has fallen so low as to put arms into the hands of the enemy, you must restore the government by the same means by which he has overthrown it."

[97] Ps.-Sall. *Epist. Caes.* 3.1.

In sum, the Sallustian evidence outlines a negative portrayal of Pompey, founded on his early misdemeanours, eventual defeat by Caesar, and personal enmity. However, the evidence is too scanty for modern scholars to analyse Sallust's opinion sufficiently, primarily due to the fragmented nature of the *Histories*. As such, Sallust's evidence for Pompey should be treated lightly. This is unfortunate, as Sallust was a contemporary of Pompey and a more complete sketch would have given Pompey's enigmatic persona greater detail. His importance is emphasised by the apparent influence that his *Histories* had on subsequent narratives concerning the period[98].

Despite the inherent issues in Sallust's works, the premise of his detestation is markedly like those contained in modern historical works concerning Pompey. Thus, despite the dismissive claims of modern historians toward his evidence, Sallust's portrayal of Pompey has had a lasting effect on modern scholarship.

1.4. Valerius Maximus

Valerius Maximus was a Roman rhetorician who worked during the reign of Tiberius, though little else is known about his familial heritage or career. He served under Sextus Pompeius, the proconsul of Asia and cousin of Gnaeus Pompeius, during his campaigns in the East in 27 and owed his career's advancement to Sextus. Valerius Maximus most important work was the *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium libri IX*, otherwise known as *Nine Books of Memorable Doings and Sayings*, which was a compilation of historical anecdotes used to educate young rhetoricians. Valerius Maximus mentions Pompey several times in the work with varying impacts and insightfulness. These references form a favourable depiction of Pompey, albeit with some contrasting negative features.

Valerius first references Pompey in book one, where he comments that Pompey was treacherously murdered by King Ptolemy[99]. While not particularly enlightening, it at least presents a sympathetic reading of Pompey's demise. Although, this might simply be a product of Valerius' Augustan times, where literature commonly demonised the Egyptians and Cleopatra[100].

Valerius next praises Pompey for his modesty in book four. Here he relates Pompey's actions after his defeat at Pharsalus. The townspeople of Larisa rush to greet him, which prompts him

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[98] Ronald Syme, *Sallust*, 178. "Sallust's presentation of those dozen years dominated subsequent writers. His trace can be detected in their arrangement of events, in the emphasis and in the colouring. Plutarch in his *Lives* of Sertorius and Lucullus is of prime value." See also: Sil. *Pun.* 10.658, for an early imperial writer lamenting Rome's moral decline and wishing that Carthage were still standing for the betterment of Roman values.

[99] Val. Max. 1.8.9. "When L. Lentulus was sailing past the shore on which the body of Cn. Pompeius Magnus, slain by the treachery of king Ptolemy (*perfidia Ptolomaei regis interempti*), was being burned with the wood of a boat cut up for the purpose, he saw the pyre for which Fortune herself should have blushed…"

[100] Propertius' poetry reflects a similar attitude during the Augustan period. See: Prop. 3.29-36. "What of her (Cleopatra) who of late has fastened disgrace upon our arms, and, a woman who fornicated even with her slaves, demanded as the price of her shameful union the walls of Rome and the senate made over to her dominion? Guilty Alexandria, land ever ready for treason, and Memphis, so often blood-stained at our cost, where the sand robbed Pompey of his three triumphs, no day shall ever wash you clean of this infamy, Rome."

to demand that they go and pay their duties to the victor[101] (*ite inquit et istud officium praestate*). Valerius praises Pompey's conduct in the advent of disaster, and for his sense of modesty when no longer able to employ his dignity[102].

Valerius further perpetuates a favourable Pompeian portrait in chapter five. He refers to Pompey's innate capacity for showing kindness, while also stressing that his demise was a pitiable example of humanity lacking in others[103]. Valerius then reiterates the debauched treachery of the Egyptians, which resulted in a demise that even Caesar pitied[104]. The theme of this passage is to relate the unpredictable and cruel role of Fortune. Valerius cites Pompey's death as a remarkable example. However, he also stresses Pompey's greatness, relating him as a man "who a little while earlier (before his death) had been looked upon as the crown of the Roman empire"[105] (*paulo ante Romani imperii columen habitum*). Valerius thus cites a positive Pompeian tradition, while offering praise for Pompey's character.

Later in book five, Valerius references negative Pompeian traits. This chapter concerns Ingrates (*De Ingratis*) who acted against their benefactors. Valerius' passage begins with a summary of Pompey's greatness, Fortune, and achievements, which is followed by his mighty downfall. He gives little detail for these events and instead humbly stresses that they were "too mighty to be approached by his hand"[106]. The passage then outlines Pompey's ill treatment of Carbo, who had helped him acquire his father's estate when he was a young man. Valerius condemns Pompey's disgraceful decision to execute Carbo on Sulla's orders, and thus betray a man who helped him reach political significance[107]. Importantly, Valerius stresses that his silence on these matters wouldn't hide Pompey's treachery, which would "be present to men's minds not without some censure"[108] (*mors animis hominum non sine aliqua reprehensione obuersabitur*). This alludes to an enduring negative Pompeian tradition, which appears widely acknowledged.

Valerius Maximus' most influential commentary on Pompey is found in book six. The chapter concerns things freely spoken or deeds freely done and outlines the countenance of famous men when impeached by their peers or inferiors. Valerius opens the section with an explanation of his intent, stating that each example is relative to its circumstances. Furthermore, he stresses

[101] Val. Max. 4.5.5.

[102] Val. Max. 4.5.5. "I should say he did not deserve to be conquered had he not been defeated by Caesar. Certainly he behaved well in misfortune. Since he could no longer employ his dignity, he employed modesty."

[103] Val. Max. 5.1.10. "How illustrious an example of humanity accorded was Cn. Pompeius and how pitiable an example of humanity found lacking!"

[104] Val. Max. 5.1.10. "… (His head) severed from its body and lacking a pyre, it was carried as the wicked gift of Egyptian treachery, pitiable even to the victor. For when Caesar saw it, he forgot the role of enemy and put on the countenance of a father-in-law and gave tears to Pompey, his own and his daughter's too; and he had the head cremated with an abundance of the costliest perfumes."

[105] Val. Max. 5.1.10.

[106] Val. Max. 5.3.5.

[107] Val. Max. 5.3.5.

[108] Val. Max. 5.3.5.

that each figure's reaction is only favourable if a positive outcome was achieved[109]. He thus places himself as an arbiter of moral righteousness. Valerius subsequently offers an unflattering portrayal of the consul L. Philippus, who spoke in hostile terms against the senate[110], and a positive portrayal of Scipio Africanus, who spoke freely against the people thereby earning their respect with his honesty[111]. These sections outline the parameters of Valerius' distinction between favourable and unfavourable outcomes. They are followed by Valerius' section on Pompey, whose immense authority is likened to Africanus'[112] which was a large honour. Valerius exhibits respect and approval for Pompey's ability not only to tolerate the criticism of his inferiors, but to endure it with unruffled countenance (*quieta fronte*)[113]. Valerius then offers some examples, including Gnaeus Piso's attack against Pompey's unjust interference in Manilius Crispus' trial[114]; the reproachful criticisms of the consul Gnaeus Lentulus Marcellinus, who accused Pompey of aspiring to tyranny[115]; and a sardonic comment by Favonius, who reproached Pompey for desiring monarchical powers[116]. This leads up to the greatest test of Pompey's exemplary tolerance, wherein Pompey is criticised by people of lowly birth. The first and most important example is that of Helvius Mancia of Formiae. Helvius was an elderly man who was accusing Lucius Libo before the Censors and thus received Pompey's ire[117]. Helvius, rather than shying away from the conflict, labels Pompey the teenage butcher (*adulescentulus carnifex*) by referencing his executions of Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, M. Brutus, Cn. Carbo, and Perperna[118]. This description is routinely revisited by later hostile Pompeian traditions as a vicious attack against Pompey, wherein his cruel demeanour was widely apparent to his contemporaries. While it suggests that anti-Pompeian sentiments existed during Pompey's lifetime, this reading ignores Valerius' intention with this passage. Firstly, Valerius opened the passage by praising Pompey's dignified patience when confronting criticism. It was thus intended to be favourable. Secondly, Valerius' subsequent commentary on Helvius' outburst strengthen this favourable outcome for Pompey. In a passage frequently overlooked by modern scholarship, Valerius attacks Helvius' insolence for recalling the

[109] Val. Max. 6.2. *praef*. "Though not inviting the freedom of a passionate spirit attested in deeds and words alike, I would not exclude it coming unasked. Located between virtue and vice, it deserves praise if it has tempered itself beneficially, blame if it has launched out where it should not."

[110] Val. Max. 6.2.2.

[111] Val. Max. 6.2.3.

[112] Val. Max. 6.2.4.

[113] Val. Max. 6.2.4. "Therefore we ought the less to wonder that Cn. Pompeius enormous authority so often struggled with such freedom, and not without great credit, since with unruffled countenance he let himself be a mockery to the license of all sorts of men."

[114] Val. Max. 6.2.4.

[115] Val. Max. 6.2.6. "Consul Cn. Lentulus Marcellinus was complaining at a public meeting of Magnus Pompeius excessive power and the whole people loudly assented. "Applaud, citizens," he said, "applaud while you may; for soon you will not be able to do it with impunity." The power of an extraordinary citizen was assailed on that occasion, by invidious complaint on the one hand, by pathetic lamentation on the other."

[116] Val. Max. 6.2.7. "To Pompey, who was wearing a white bandage on his leg, Favonius said: "It makes no odds on what part of your body you have the diadem," quibbling at the tiny piece of cloth to reproach him with monarchical power. But Pompey's countenance did not change one way or the other. He was careful neither to seem to be gladly acknowledging his power by a cheerful look nor by a sour one to avow annoyance."

[117] Val. Max. 6.2.8. "In the altercation Pompeius Magnus said that he (Helvius Mancia) had been sent back from the underworld to make his charge, casting his lowly station and old age in his teeth."

[118] Val. Max. 6.2.8.

wounds of the civil wars[119]. Moreover, he praises Pompey's composure for allowing such a lowly man, "smelling of his father's slavery"[120], to question an Imperator's decisions. The misuse of this passage has become commonplace in modern scholarly characterisations of Pompey. It is thus essential to identify the anomaly modern sources cause by misinterpreting it.

Valerius offers three further comments regarding Pompey's character. In book eight, he mentions Pompey's craving for glory[121], though subsequently adjusts this description with Pompey's generous rewards to Theophanes, who chronicled and thus preserved his famous exploits[122]. Hence, the passage promotes Pompey's generosity and, conversely, his vanity. Later in the same book, Valerius speaks about greatness and offers a resoundingly affirmative portrayal of Pompey's achievements[123], which were received with overwhelming support by the people and clamorous envy from his adversaries. Finally, Valerius mentions Pompey's insolent (*insolenter*) disregard for friendships and the law. Contrary to the generous and kindly portrayal given previously, Valerius outlines Pompey's occasional tendency to treat friends with contempt. He mentions Pompey's abhorrent treatment of Hypsaeus, a nobleman and friend, who was deemed a hindrance once he faced electoral malpractice[124]. This is followed by Pompey's shameless acquittal of P. Scipio, his father-in-law, who was both guilty of trespassing a law Pompey himself had passed, and faced an illustrious number of defendants[125]. Valerius stresses Pompey's selfishness, as "the blandishments of the nuptial bed made him violate the stability of the commonwealth"[126] (*maritalis lecti blanditiis statum rei publicae temerando*).

Valerius' *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* offers a diverse collection of Pompeian anecdotes, which reflect his contested historiographical tradition and multi-faceted character. Valerius'

[119] Val. Max. 6.2.8. "A country townsman, smelling of his father's slavery, unbridled in his temerity, intolerable in his presumption, was allowed to recall with impunity the gaping wounds of the civil wars, now overlaid with shrivelled scars."

[120] Val. Max. 6.2.8.

[121] Val. Max. 8.14.3. "Pompeius Magnus too was not averse from this hankering after glory."

[122] Val. Max. 8.14.3. "He bestowed citizenship on Theophanes of Mitylene, the chronicler of his exploits, in a military assembly and followed up the gift, ample in itself, with a detailed and well publicized speech. As a result no one doubted that Pompey was repaying a favour rather than initiating one."

[123] Val. Max. 8.15.8. "The ample and novel distinctions heaped on Cn. Pompeius assault our ears in literary memorials with choruses of approving support on the one hand and of clamorous envy on the other. A Roman knight, he was despatched as Proconsul to Spain against Sertorius with authority equal to Pius Metellus, Rome's leading citizen. Not yet having entered upon any curule office, he triumphed twice. He took the first steps in magistracy from supreme command. He held his third Consulship alone by decree of the senate. He celebrated victory over Mithridates and Tigranes, many other kings, and a multitude of communities and nations and pirates in a single triumph."

[124] Val. Max. 9.5.3. "Coming from his bath he left Hypsaeus, who was under prosecution for electoral malpractice, a nobleman and a friend, lying at his feet after trampling him with an insult. For he told him that he was doing nothing but hold up his (Pompey's) dinner; and with this speech on his mind he could dine without a qualm."

[125] Val. Max. 9.5.3. "But even in the Forum he did not blush to ask the jury to acquit his father-in-law P. Scipio as a present to himself when Scipio was answerable to the laws that Pompey himself had carried, and that too when a great many illustrious defendants were coming to grief."

[126] Val. Max. 9.5.3. "The blandishments of the nuptial bed made him violate the stability of the commonwealth."

work exemplifies how the misappropriation of evidence affects the portrayal of Pompey and how this shapes common perceptions of the past. This is particularly evident with the *Aduluscentulus Carnifex* story, which is routinely cited in modern works out of its context and erroneously promoted as a commonly accepted epithet of Pompey.

1.5. Velleius Paterculus

Marcus Velleius Paterculus (approximately BC 19 - 31 AD) was a Roman historian who lived and worked during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. His *Compendium of Roman History* consists of two books which cover the dispersion of the Greeks after the fall of Troy to the death of Livia in 29. Portions of the first book are missing today, but it was probably a sweeping overview of a large time period because the later book of the history, that is the period nearest Velleius' own times, is covered in greater detail and occupies a disproportionately large part of the work.

Velleius' introduction of Pompey is flattering and emphasises Pompey's innate purity and honesty, which was reflected in his physical appearance. In a Roman society preoccupied with considerations of physiognomics, a "personal beauty"[127] which reflected "the distinction and good fortune"[128] of his career was a compliment. His personality is further developed by positive military[129], political, and social interactions[130]. Velleius is also aware of Pompey's shortcomings, such as displaying less than temperate conduct "when he feared a rival"[131], but this is countered by subsequent acknowledgements of his forgiveness, loyalty, and restraint in regards to abuses of power[132]. Indeed, "Pompey was free from almost every fault" and Velleius stresses that, even his ambition that is elsewhere considered a flaw was excusable in respect to Roman political competition[133]. Nonetheless, this compliment is somewhat backhanded as Pompey was unable to accept an equal in a free state[134].

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[127] Vell. Pat. 2.29.2. "He was distinguished by a personal beauty, not of the sort which gives the bloom of youth its charm, but stately and unchanging, as befitted the distinction and good fortune of his career, and this beauty attended him to the last day of his life."

[128] Vell. Pat. 2.29.2.

[129] Vell. Pat. 2.29.5. "From the day on which he had assumed the toga he had been trained to military service on the staff of that sagacious general, his father, and by a singular insight into military tactics had so developed his excellent native talent, which showed great capacity to learn what was best, that, while Sertorius bestowed the greater praise upon Metellus, it was Pompey he feared the more strongly."

[130] Vell. Pat. 2.29.3. "… (He was) easily placated when offended, loyal in re-establishing terms of amity, very ready to accept satisfaction, never or at least rarely abusing his power…" See also Vell. Pat. 2.18.1. "The Mytilenians subsequently had their liberty restored by Pompey solely in consideration of his friendship for Theophanes."

[131] Vell. Pat. 2.29.4.

[132] Vell. Pat. 2.31.4.

[133] Vell. Pat. 2.29.4. "Pompey was free from almost every fault, unless it be considered one of the greatest of faults for a man to chafe at seeing anyone his equal in dignity in a free state, the mistress of the world, where he should justly regard all citizens as his equals."

[134] Vell. Pat. 2.29.4.

Velleius' portrayal of Pompey is inconsistent throughout the history. Seager suggests that this is perhaps explained by Velleius' personal interest in Pompey[135], as his grandfather had been appointed as a juror and also served under Pompey as *praefectus fabrum*[136]. Several comments throughout Velleius' work contradict his glowing introduction for Pompey. For example, Velleius criticises Pompey's ruthless ambitiousness upon his assumption of the Eastern command[137], despite previously excusing this flaw[138]. He is also inconsistent with remarks about Pompey's popularity. Velleius stresses that Pompey was widely unpopular for attempting to steal the triumphs of Lucullus and Metellus[139], yet later portrays Pompey as Italy's foremost citizen and an icon who received the entire country's prayers in hope of his full recovery from illness[140]. Furthermore, Velleius muddles this portrayal by referencing Pompey's indisputable greatness[141], as demonstrated by successes in the East[142], which thereafter became the source of both Lucullus and Metellus' envy[143] and disdain. This, however, contradicts Velleius' prior explanation for Pompey's political disagreements with Lucullus and Metellus, wherein Pompey unjustly attempted to steal their triumphs[144]. Instead, Pompey is accused of stealing Metellus' captive generals, which was not previously mentioned.

Velleius next references Pompey's demise at the end of the civil war, wherein he pauses the work's narrative flow to dramatise Pompey's end. He emphasises the role of fortune in

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[135] Robin Seager, *PAENE OMNIUM VITIORUM EXPERS, NISI…*: Velleius on Pompey, in *Velleius Paterculus: Making History*, ed. Eleanor Cowan, Classical Press of Wales (London, 2011), 287.

[136] Vell. Pat. 2.76.1.

[137] Vell. Pat. 2.33.3. "No one was ever more indifferent to other things or possessed a greater craving for glory; he knew no restraint in his quest for office, though he was moderate to a degree in the exercise of his powers. Entering upon each new office with the utmost eagerness, he would lay them aside with unconcern, and, although he consulted his own wishes in attaining what he desired, he yielded to the wishes of others in resigning it." See also: Vell. Pat. 33.2. "The law was passed, and the two commanders began to vie with each other in recriminations, Pompey charging Lucullus with his unsavoury greed for money, and Lucullus taunting Pompey with his unbounded ambition for military power. Neither could be convicted of falsehood in his charge against the other."

[138] Vell. Pat. 2.29.4.

See: R. Seager, Velleius on Pompey, 297-8. "The first (narrative technique) is the dislocation between political intrigue and military or administrative action, between the way in which a man secures a command or magistracy and the way in which he exercises it."

[139] Vell. Pat. 2.34.2. "Gnaeus Pompeius could not refrain from coveting some of this glory also, and sought to claim a share in his victory. But the triumphs, both of Lucullus and of Metellus, were rendered popular in the eyes of all good citizens not only by the distinguished merits of the two generals themselves but also by the general unpopularity of Pompey."

[140] Vell. Pat. 2.48.2. "…at the time when he was attacked by a serious illness in Campania and all Italy prayed for his safety as her foremost citizen, fortune would have lost the opportunity of overthrowing him and he would have borne to the grave unimpaired all the qualities of greatness that had been his in life."

[141] Vell. Pat. 2.31.1. "The personality of Pompey had now turned the eyes of the world upon itself, and in all things he was now regarded as more than a mere citizen." See also: Vell. Pat. 2.40.2. "Then, after conquering all the races in his path, Pompey returned to Italy, having achieved a greatness which exceeded both his own hopes and those of his fellow-citizens, and having, in all his campaigns, surpassed the fortune of a mere mortal."

[142] Vell. Pat. 2.38.6. "Syria and Pontus are monuments to the valour of Gnaeus Pompeius."

[143] Vell. Pat. 2.40.4-5. "Greatness is never without envy. Pompey met with opposition from Lucullus and from Metellus Creticus, who did not forget the slight he had received (indeed he had just cause for complaint in that Pompey had robbed him of the captive generals who were to have adorned his triumph)."

[144] Vell. Pat. 2.34.2.

Pompey's fall[145], despite subsequently linking Pompey's defeat to an impulsive decision[146] contrary to the opinions of his peers[147]. This later amendment highlights Pompey's vanity. Furthermore, he laments how differently Pompey would be perceived had he fallen to illness two years prior to his death[148]. Velleius then reiterates Pompey's greatness in contrast to his unworthy death by the orders of an "Egyptian vassal" (*Aegyptium mancipium*)[149].

Velleius' history underlines the contested historiographic tradition of Pompey's character. Moreover, it typifies how ancient authors reacted to Pompey's legacy on a personal level. As stated previously, Velleius was particularly interested in Pompey's character and achievements because his grandfather had served him. This consequently affected Velleius' portrayal of Pompey, which was split between eulogy and disparagement. In addition, Velleius' history has shaped modern stylistic approaches to Pompey. His reflective obituary after Pompey's assassination became a prototype for modern scholarship, alongside the sentiment that Pompey's legacy would be different had he died before the civil war.

1.6. Pliny the Elder

Pliny was a Roman author, naturalist and philosopher who lived during the first century AD. His 'Natural History' (*Naturalis Historiae*) is an encyclopaedic work which collected and investigated both natural and geographic phenomena. The work includes analyses of extraordinary biological phenomena, which extends from anomalies in the animal kingdom to noteworthy historical figures that excelled their peers. A relatively long chapter on Pompey's greatness is included, which outlines his success in both the military and political spheres.

The chapter opens with resounding praise for Pompey's conquests, which concerned the glory of the entire Roman Empire. Pliny states that Pompey's successes not only matched Alexander's in brilliance but even almost those of Hercules and Father Liber[150]. Pliny subsequently outlines Pompey's other victories in quick succession. These included: the "recovery of Sicily" (*Sicilia recuperata*) and conquest of the "entire African continent" (*Africa tota subacta*), which aided Sulla's rise to becoming the champion of the Republic; his decisive action to crush the potential for civil war in Spain, which earnt him his second triumph as a Knight, and was unheralded as he was also commander-in-chief twice before even serving in

[145] Vell. Pat. 2.53.1-2. "Such was the inconsistency of fortune in his case, that he who but a short time before had found no more lands to conquer now found none for his burial."

[146] Vell. Pat. 2.52.2. "Then Caesar marched with his army into Thessaly, destined to be the scene of his victory. Pompey, in spite of the contrary advice of others, followed his own impulse and set out after the enemy."

[147] Vell. Pat. 2.52.2. This tradition runs entirely contrary to all other evidence, particularly Plutarch, which suggests that Pompey was hindered by his inferiors.

[148] Vell. Pat. 2.48.2. "Had Pompey only died two years before the outbreak of hostilities, after the completion of his theatre and the other public buildings with which he had surrounded it, at the time when he was attacked by a serious illness in Campania and all Italy prayed for his safety as her foremost citizen, fortune would have lost the opportunity of overthrowing him and he would have borne to the grave unimpaired all the qualities of greatness that had been his in life."

[149] Vell. Pat. 2.53.2.

[150] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.95.

the ranks[151]; before finally receiving two prestigious commands, against the pirates and Mithridates respectively, from which he returned with "titles without limit for his country" (*infinitos retulit patriae titulos*[152]). Pliny's passage focuses on the sum of Pompey's successes rather than questioning his individual decisions. For example, Pliny is unconcerned by either Pompey's allegiance to Sulla or his decision to execute Carbo, two instances where other sources are critical[153]. Instead, he focuses solely on the breadth of Pompey's political and military achievements. Pliny's positive portrayal thus suggests that he rejected aspects of the anti-Pompeian tradition. This is reinforced by Pliny's inclusion of a Pompeian text which summarises his campaigns and was placed with a dedication at the shrine of Minerva[154]. Pliny offers no criticism of Pompey for his destruction in the East[155], in contrast to his criticism of Caesar, whose wars were a "wrong inflicted on the human race"[156]. Moreover, he asserts that Pompey deserved greater credit for capturing 846 ships from the pirates than Caesar received for his slaughter of the Gauls.[157] Pliny's preference for Pompey is reiterated in the chapter's summarising comments. After citing an extensive list of the places Pompey conquered[158], Pliny states that Pompey's crowning achievement was to found Asia, the most remote of Rome's provinces, as an important centre for his power[159]. He subsequently rejects the pro-Caesarian sentiment, which is alluded to by the phrase "anybody on the other side" (*si quis e contrario*)[160], that Caesar's achievements were greater things than Pompey's. Pliny concedes that Caesar appeared superior (*qui maior illo apparuit*)[161] because he won the civil war, but stresses that outdoing Pompey's achievements was a "task without limit" (*quod infinitum esse conveniet*)[162].

Pliny's *Natural History* also portrays Pompey positively in other chapters. For example, Pliny emphasises Pompey's respect for both Greek culture and intellectual pursuits in an anecdote

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[151] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.96. "…after erecting trophies in the Pyrenees he added to the record of his victorious career the reduction under our sway of 876 towns from the Alps to the frontiers of Further Spain, and with greater magnanimity refrained from mentioning Sertorius, and after crushing the civil war which threatened to stir up all our foreign relations, a second time led into Rome a procession of triumphal chariots as a Knight, having twice been commander-in-chief before having ever served in the ranks."

[152] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.97.

[153] See: K Welch and H. Mitchell, 'Revisiting the Roman Alexander', in *Antichthon*, Vol. 47 (2013), 80-101.

[154] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.97. "Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, Commander in Chief, having completed a thirty years war, routed, scattered, slain or received the surrender of 12,183,000 people, sunk or taken 846 ships, received the capitulation of 1538 towns and forts, subdued the lands from the Maeotians to the Red Sea, duly dedicates his offering vowed to Minerva."

[155] Plin. NH. 7.26.97. "…*fusis fugatis occisis in deditionem acceptis hominum centiens viciens semel lxxxiii…*"

[156] Plin. *NH.* 7.25.92. "…for I would not myself count it to his glory that in addition to conquering his fellow-citizens he killed in his battles 1,192,000 human beings, a prodigious even if unavoidable wrong inflicted on the human race, as he himself confessed it to be by not publishing the casualties of the civil wars."

[157] Plin. *NH.* 7.25.93. "It would be more just to credit Pompey the Great with the 846 ships that he captured from the pirates…"

[158] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.98.

[159] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.99.

[160] This may stem from Pompey's own description of his triumph.

[161] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.99.

[162] Plin. *NH.* 7.26.99.

concerning the abode of Posidonius – the famous Greek philosopher[163]. This theme is repeated when Pompey rewards Varro, a Roman intellectual, with a naval crown for his exploits in war[164]. This portrayal directly challenges Oppius' account, as preserved in Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*[165]. In this source, Oppius accuses Pompey of executing Quintus Valerius out of envy of his immense intellect. Pliny's account states that Pompey rewarded intellectuals, rather than maligning them.

Pliny is hostile to Pompey in book 37 of his *Natural History*, where he outlines how Pompey's victory over Mithridates made fashion "veer to pearls and gemstones"[166]. According to Pliny, pearls and gems were used to decorate an ornament for Pompey's triumph over Mithridates, including a portrait of Pompey "rendered in pearls"[167] which captured his youthful handsomeness. However, Pliny detests this extravagant display and adds that pearls were "wasteful things meant only for women"[168]. Moreover, the pearls mar an otherwise noble portrait of Pompey and thus symbolise his oriental splendour and vanity. However, Pliny concludes that the rest of this triumph was worthy of Pompey, a "good man and true"[169].

1.7. Lucan

Marcus Annaeus Lucanus was born at Corduba in AD 39. His family was highly distinguished in Spain and their talents had secured wide recognition and wealth in Rome[170]. This was primarily based around their considerable literary heritage and political influence: Lucan's uncle was the younger Seneca, the son of the elder Seneca. Lucan was brought to Rome at an early age and was quickly drawn into Roman social and political life. He shared a relationship with the emperor Nero, though the extent of its intimacy is unknown, as Suetonius reports that he was recalled from his studies in Athens to become part of Nero's imperial *cohors amicorum*[171]. This relationship later soured in AD 64 when Nero forbade Lucan from engaging in poetic recitations or advocacy in the law courts[172]. This ban spelled an end for Lucan's career and was likely imposed as punishment for something Lucan had written and presented publicly against Nero. While the details of this period are relatively unclear, Lucan soon afterwards (in early AD 65) joined a conspiracy to assassinate Nero. However, the plot was discovered and Nero forced the conspirators to either commit suicide or be executed. Lucan committed suicide soon afterwards in April AD 65 at the age of 25.

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[163] Plin. *NH.* 7.30.112. "Roman leaders also have borne witness even to foreigners. At the conclusion of the war with Mithridates Gnaeus Pompey when going to enter the abode of the famous professor of philosophy Posidonius forbade his retainer to knock on the door in the customary manner, and the subduer of the East and of the West dipped his standard to the portals of learning."

[164] Plin. *NH.* 7.30.115.

[165] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.4.

[166] Plin. *NH*. 37.6.14.

[167] Plin. *NH*. 37.6.14.

[168] Plin. *NH*. 37.6.15.

[169] Plin. *NH*. 37.6.16.

[170] Frederick M. Ahl, *Lucan: An Introduction*, Cornell University Press (London, 1976), 36.

[171] Suet. *Poet.* 332.9-10.

[172] Tac. *Ann.* 15.49; Cass. Dio. 62.29.4.

In the scope of his brief life, Lucan left a large and prodigious literary legacy. References to his various works of poetry[173] highlight his versatility and industriousness as a writer. The brief account of Lucan's political career, included above, serves two purposes: to stress the influence that the political climate had on his literary activity[174] and to outline Lucan's immense talent demonstrated by an oeuvre created over five years combined with political activity. Unfortunately, only his incomplete *Pharsalia*, concerning the events of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey, survives today. The work is essential for this thesis as it offers a fascinating, albeit dramatic, depiction of Pompey.

The poem was composed in dactylic hexameter, known as the metre of epic, though its themes and harsh portrayals of several main figures reflect an 'anti-epic' sentiment[175]. Modern scholars attribute two contributing factors to this portrayal, agreeing that Livy was Lucan's primary historical source for the events of the war[176] and that this shaped the poet's pro-republican outlook[177], and, that Lucan's political career, the oppressive intellectual climate[178] and eventual personal break with Nero shaped his perception of the principate and Caesar - its antecedent[179]. Lucan's *Pharsalia* thus laments the republic's demise[180] and the ensuing tyranny of his times. Caesar's portrayal is accordingly unflattering[181], a depiction some modern scholars have attempted to refute[182]. As a result of Lucan's outlook and perception of the civil war, Pompey's portrayal is relatively positive. However, Leigh correctly asserts that Lucan's portrayal of Pompey is double-edged[183]. Hence, Lucan's depiction of Pompey cannot be reduced to rigid

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[173] Frederick M. Ahl, *Lucan: An Introduction*, 333.

[174] Frederick M. Ahl, *Lucan: An Introduction*, 39. "The intensity, compactness, and brevity of Lucan's experience make nonsense of attempts to isolate Lucan the politician from Lucan the poet."

[175] W.R. Johnson, *Momentary Monsters: Lucan and his Heroes*, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, 1987).

[176] R. Pichon, *Le Sources de Lucain*, Ernest Leroux (Paris, 1912), 51-105.

[177] R. M. Ogilvie*, A Commentary on Livy*: *Books I-V*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 1965). For ancient perspectives, see Tac. *Ann.* 4.34. "Titus Livius, pre-eminently famous for eloquence and truthfulness, extolled Gnaeus Pompeius in such a panegyric that Augustus called him Pompeianus, and yet this was no obstacle to their friendship." and Sen. *Controv.* 10. Preface 5.

[178] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.432-48; 7.638-46.

[179] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.641. "All future generations doomed to slavery (under the principate) were conquered by those swords (at the battle of Pharsalus)." See also Frederick M. Ahl, *Lucan: An Introduction*, 49. "But more important: his *Pharsalia* is not about Nero himself. It is an ideological onslaught on Caesarism rather than a personal attack on the latest of the Caesars. Clearly generalized attacks on Julius Caesar and the Caesars can hardly avoid encompassing Nero."

[180] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.638-46.

[181] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.592-6. "You will achieve nothing on this occasion though you are aiming for the throat of Caesar. For he has not yet attained the pinnacle, the height of human power when everything is crushed beneath him."

[182] Frederick M. Ahl, *Lucan: An Introduction*, 45. "Both Heitland and Bruère imply that these expressions of anger and disgust on Lucan's part are either irrelevant or nonsensical. If they are right, then Lucan is hardly worth reading." See also: Lucan, *Pharsalia*, ed. C.E. Haskins, with an introduction by W.E. Heitland, G. Bell & Sons (London, 1887), xxxii-xxxiv and R.T. Bruère, 'The Scope of Lucan's Historical Epic', *Classical Philology* 45. (1950), 217-35.

[183] Matthew Leigh, *Lucan: Spectacle and Engagement*, Clarendon Press (Oxford, 1997), 115. "It is therefore almost inevitable that, however much one part of Lucan can celebrate the philosophical dignity of Pompey's retreat from ambition, that other part which can never give up the fight should be troubled by a commander who

labels that are positive or negative, as these are dishonest to the complexity of the work's subject matter. Two key passages perfectly demonstrate this tension. The first instance occurs in book one, where Lucan metaphorically juxtaposes Caesar and Pompey at the commencement of the civil war[184]. The second is found in book seven at the height of the battle sequence when Pompey decides to flee the battlefield to save his fellow citizens[185].

Book one of Lucan's *Pharsalia* is a lengthy introduction to the context of the civil war, its causation, and combatants. In its introduction, Lucan outlines Pompey's persona, achievements, and involvement in the civil war, which are all directly contrasted with Caesar. Pompey's portrayal is highly nuanced throughout. He is represented as a weary and aged combatant, who had grown accustomed to praise and relied upon his former greatness[186]. The passage of primary concern alludes to Pompey's vanity, a vice mentioned by the aforementioned ancient evidence[187]. However, Lucan mitigates this vice by outlining Pompey's clear popularity and meritorious achievements[188] which, despite being rooted in the past, continued to exist nonetheless[189]. The negative component of this representation was guided by Lucan's source material. As noted previously, Pompey's vanity was a recurrent theme among his contemporaries and Lucan's literary integrity would be compromised if he failed to acknowledge this. However, the rest of this portrayal was governed by retrospection and dramatic poetic conventions. With the benefit of hindsight, Lucan knew that Pompey was ultimately defeated by Caesar[190]. He thus established a tragic portrayal of Pompey's demise early in the work, wherein his death symbolizes the end of the republic. This depiction is supported by Lucan's ensuing metaphor, wherein Pompey is likened to an aged oak-tree whose roots have lost their toughness and which stands by its weight alone[191]. Pompey's enduring influence is represented by the bare boughs of the oak-tree which casts a shadow with its trunk, a symbol of the tree's former growth, rather than its leaves – on which its continued survival and progress depends[192]. The metaphor is not, however, one of complete desolation. Lucan asserts that the fruits of Pompey's labours remain, as the oak towers in a fruitful field[193]. Furthermore, he cites Pompey's enduring influence, whose achievements alone are worshipped despite numerous worthy peers[194]. Pompey's impending doom is signalled toward the end of

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turns his back on the battle and rides away." See too: W.R. Johnson, *Momentary Monsters: Lucan and his Heroes*, 85. "Lucan's Pompey is an unintelligible compound of innocence, folly, and bad luck."

[184] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1. 135-157.

[185] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.647-711.

[186] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.129-35. "The one was somewhat tamed by declining years; for long had he worn the toga and forgotten in peace the leader's part; courting reputation and lavish to the common people, he was swayed entirely by the breath of popularity and delighted in the applause that hailed him in the theatre he built; and trusting fondly to his former greatness, he did nothing to support it by fresh power."

[187] Sall. *Hist.* 3.84; Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.45.6.

[188] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.131-3. "…courting reputation and lavish to the people, he was swayed entirely by the breath of popularity and delighted in the applause that hailed him in the theatre he built…"

[189] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.135. "The mere shadow of a mighty name he (Pompey) stood."

[190] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.129. "The two rivals were ill-matched."

[191] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.138-9.

[192] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.139-40.

[193] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.138-9.

[194] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.142.

the passage, where the oak tree is destined to fall at the first gale[195]. This line pre-empts Caesar's metaphoric portrayal as a bolt of lightning driven forth by wind through the clouds and spreading its destruction far and wide[196].

Lucan respects the longevity and grandeur of Pompey's political and military achievements, despite the negative elements of Pompey's portrayal in book one [197]. His decision to represent Pompey as an oak-tree alludes to an enduring physical presence which exists in harmony with its context. By contrast, Lucan presents Caesar as an overpowering lightning bolt. Whilst a powerful phenomenon, it is ephemeral and only brings change through the destruction of its surrounds[198] and does so with utter indifference to the laws of society and its environs. This reading is contrary to W.R. Johnson's assertion that Lucan was not moralising Caesar or Pompey in this metaphor, a statement from which he quickly retreated[199]. Pompey thus emerges from the introduction of Lucan's *Pharsalia* with greater positive attributes than negative[200], contrary to the portrayals of Sallust and Caesar, and roughly agreeing with Cicero's overall conception of Pompey.

As in book one, Pompey figures as a heroic figure in book seven of Lucan's work. Book seven outlines the climax of the civil war, wherein Caesar and Pompey's forces engage at the battle of Pharsalus. It begins with a Pompeian dream sequence. Here Pompey's greatest source of happiness, the joyful lamentations of the multitude[201], is contrasted against an allusion to his imminent defeat[202]. This sets the groundwork for the ensuing battle sequence which graphically emphasises the horrors of civil war and its consequences[203]. At a critical moment during the battle, Lucan shifts the audience's perspective from the soldiers to Pompey, which adds further dramatic tension to the sequence of events. Here Pompey reflects on the cost of the war and its

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[195] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.141.

[196] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.143-57.

[197] As cited above, these stemmed in part from Sallust. Lucan's familiarity with Sallust, possibly through his appreciation for Livy, is highlighted by the moral undertones attributed to Rome's decline at Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.158-82.

[198] For Lucan's portrayal of Caesar as a destructive force, see: Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.786-99.

[199] W.R. Johnson, *Momentary Monsters: Lucan and his Heroes*, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, 1987), 74-5. "He (Caesar) is a bolt of lightning destroying whatever happens to be in its way, including, of course, tall oak trees. Although there is no suggestion of moralizing here (the lightning is as innocent as the doomed oak), Lucan reveals more than a trace of admiration."

[200] W.R. Johnson completely refutes a positive Pompeian portrayal in: W.R. Johnson, *Momentary Monsters: Lucan and his Heroes*, 67-100.

[201] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.9-12. "He dreamed that he was sitting in his own theatre and saw in a vision the countless multitudes of Rome; and that his name was lifted to the sky in their shouts of joy, while all the tiers vied in proclaiming his praise."

[202] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.7-8. "That night, the end of happiness in the life of Magnus, beguiled his troubled sleep with a hollow semblance."

[203] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.617-30. "(Pharsalus) Where a whole world died, it were shame to spend tears upon any of a myriad deaths, or to follow the fate of individuals and ask, through whose vitals the death-dealing sword passed, who trod upon his own entrails poured out upon the ground, who faced the foe and dying drove out with his last gasp the blade buried in his throat… One man pierced a brother's breast, and then cut off the head and hurled it to a distance, that he might be able to rob the kindred corpse, while another mangled his father's face and tried by excess of fury to convince the eye-witnesses that his victim was not his father."

futility[204], displaying a highly uncharacteristic nobility and selflessness[205]. He laments the death of his fellow citizens and recoils at their costly sacrifice[206], wishing not to draw all things into destruction with him[207]. Pompey finally offers prayer to the gods[208] and flees the field of battle, not through fear of his enemy, but with courage toward his final doom[209]. At this critical juncture, Lucan offers Pompey resounding praise. He denounces any suggestion of Pompey's loss of dignity after the battle. Instead, he asserts that the ensuing sorrow was what Rome deserved from Magnus, whom they had treated so poorly[210]. Finally, Lucan emphasises Pompey's static countenance. Pompey was unmoved by the battle's result, as victory had never lifted him, nor should defeat ever see him cast down[211]. Losing the adoration of the people was the only path to Pompey's destruction, and his decision to flee absolved him of this guilt and responsibility[212]. The final portion of this passage completes Pompey's portrayal as a dramatic hero[213]. He accepts treacherous Fortune's decision[214] and seeks a land suitable for his death[215].

Lucan's conception of victory and defeat throughout this passage subverts traditional norms. While most of this representation is explained by the passage's Pompeian perspective, Lucan injects his own opinion in several cases. For instance, he uses rhetorical questions to indicate both the advantage Pompey obtained from fleeing[216] and the bleakness of Caesar's task after

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[204] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.647-711.

[205] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.666-72. "Thus he spoke, and rode round his army and the standards and the troops now shattered on every hand, recalling them from rushing upon instant death, and saying that he was not worth the sacrifice. He lacked not the courage to confront the words and offer throat or breast to the fatal blow; but he feared that, if he lay low, his soldiers would refuse to flee and the whole world would be lain upon the body of their leader…"

[206] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.649-53. "Far off on a rising ground he stayed, to see from there the carnage spread through the land of Thessaly, which the battle had hidden from his sight; he saw all the missiles aimed at his life, and all the prostrate corpses; he saw himself dying with all that bloodshed."

[207] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 654-5. "But he desired not, as the wretched often do, to draw all things in destruction after him and make mankind share his ruin."

[208] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.659-66.

[209] Luc. *Bell. Civ*. 7.677-9. "Thus Magnus rode swiftly from the field, fearing not the missiles behind him but moving with high courage to his final doom."

[210] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.680-2.

[211] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.682-4; Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.708. "The world must bow before Pompey in his misfortune as they bowed before his success."

[212] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.689-91. "Let him flee from the fatal field, and call Heaven to witness that those who continue the fight are no longer giving their lives for Pompey." Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7. 693-4. "…so most of the fighting at Pharsalia, after Pompey's departure, ceased to represent the world's love of Pompey or the passion for war…"

[213] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.207-13. "It may be their own fame that ensures the memory will survive amidst distant races… And when these wars are read about, hope, fear, and doomed prayers will still move the readers, and all will be shaken as they hear of this destiny as if it is still to come, not a story of the past; and they will still, Great Pompey, take your side." See also Matthew Leigh, *Lucan: Spectacle and Engagement*, 149. "It is therefore worth noting that a consistent feature of Lucan's narrative is to compromise the constitutional Pompey by decking him out in the trappings of epic."

[214] Luc. *Bell. Civ*. 7.685-6.

[215] Luc. *Bell. Civ*. 7.709-11.

[216] Luc. *Bell. Civ*. 7.698-9. "Is it not happiness to you, Pompey, to have withdrawn defeated from the battle, without witnessing that horror to its close?"

the war, as necessitated by victory[217]. Per this representation, Pompey was victorious, as the cost of civil war only spells defeat. Lucan openly asserts this toward the end of the passage[218]. This passage of the *Pharsalia* has been interpreted as a dichotomous representation of Pompey. While conceding that Pompey receives some favourable treatment, he also cites the inherent tension between Pompey's heroic portrayal and his decision to flee the battle. To support this claim, Pompey's justification for flight is deemed delusional and counter-intuitive, particularly for a general well versed in the arts of Roman warfare. Leigh, for instance, defends this standpoint by referencing other moments of *devotio* in Livy's history[219], which assumes that this shaped Lucan's poem. Leigh raises some valuable issues with Lucan's heroic Pompey, which diminishes a positive reading of Pompey. However, his argument ignores Lucan's humanising representation of Pompey which extends far beyond his capabilities as a general. Thus, Lucan does not deny Pompey's failure as a military commander at Pharsalus. Rather, he re-evaluates the civil war and its climactic moment to challenge Caesar's reading of the civil war. Pompey's demise is thus explained by both Fortune's unavoidable decision to turn against him, as even Pompey could not avoid Fortune's decisions, and he is redeemed by the moral victory he won by rejecting civil war and its worst horrors.

Regarding the other ancient evidence, Lucan's heroic Pompey, who fled the field of battle to save his people in an act of *devotio*, stands in direct contrast to that provided by Caesar[220]. In Caesar's account, Pompey's flight is cowardly and exhibits disloyalty to his troops. This is hardly surprising given the context of Caesar's remarks. The contrast between the two representations highlights how each narrative is governed by its author's perspective. Lucan lived and worked under the constraints of Nero's principate and envisaged freedom's demise coinciding with Caesar's rise. Consequently, he did not base his *Pharsalia* on Caesar's commentaries. Instead, he utilised Livy's Roman history, wherein Pompey received a favourable portrayal. Lucan thus sculpted Pompey as his work's tragic hero, albeit one marred by flaws[221].

While Lucan's portrayal of Pompey does not match others from antiquity, his characterisation of Pompey sheds light on several Pompeian traits otherwise lost. Pompey is portrayed as selfless, emotive, and passionate throughout the *Pharsalia*; traits lacking among the representation in either Caesar or Sallust. Most modern scholars either dismiss this portrayal altogether or identify it as a product of Lucan's imagination. This is a harsh treatment which seeks to justify anti-Pompeian perspectives. Unsurprisingly, there are few scholars who accept

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[217] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.699-702. "Look back on the ranks reeking with carnage, and the rivers darkened by the inrush of blood, and then pity your kinsman. With what feelings will he enter Rome, owing his good fortune to yonder field?"

[218] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.706. "…victory was worse than defeat"

[219] Matthew Leigh, *Lucan: Spectacle and Engagement*, 125-34.

[220] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.94.5. "As for Pompey, when he saw his cavalry routed and realized that the unit he trusted most was terrified, having no confidence in the rest he left the line and rode immediately to his camp."

[221] Modern scholars often impose a particularly negative reading of Lucan's Pompey. See: W.R. Johnson, *Momentary Monsters*, 72. "Yet he (Pompey) has his own vice, which is as fatal to freedom as the lust for tyranny or the venom of self-righteousness: he is stupid from small vanities and from indolence. He is complacent; he wants only popularity, comfort, and calm. He is, in short, supremely banal…"

the positive elements of Pompey's portrayal in the *Pharsalia*. Cicero, for example, offers elements of Lucan's portrayal in his letters, though these are counterbalanced by his negative portrayal of Pompey at other times. The greatest issue is that the relevant passages of Livy, which we know were favourable to Pompey, are lost. Should these have survived, modern readings of Lucan would undoubtedly be different. Irrespective of these issues, Lucan's portrayal of Pompey indicates that a favourable tradition existed and that this gained traction during Nero's principate.

1.8. Quintilian

Marcus Fabius Quintillianus was a Roman rhetorician from the province of Hispania who lived during the first century AD. His only surviving work is the 'Institutes of Oratory' (*Institutio Oratoria*) which is a twelve-volume textbook on the theory and practice of rhetoric, and includes references to Quintilian's education and development as an orator.

Quintilian mentions Pompey several times throughout the work. He references Pompey's oratorical abilities, stating that he exhibited the oratorical eloquence of a general or triumphant conqueror and was "a very eloquent narrator of his own deeds" (*sicut Pompeius abunde disertus rerum suarum narrator*[222]). This opposes other ancient evidence which states, or which modern readers have interpreted to suggest, that Pompey was a mediocre orator[223].

Quintilian also passingly comments on Pompey's position during the civil war. The passage concerns Tubero, a man who accuses Ligarius of fighting against Caesar's cause, despite himself also being guilty of these charges – his father fought on the Pompeian side. Quintilian mentions Pompey when explaining the war's broader context. He states that Pompey and Caesar were engaged in a contest for personal status and that each believed they were acting to preserve the state[224]. Although brief, Quintilian's comment highlights that each side promulgated justifications for the civil war, and that neither was more convincing[225].

1.9. Sextus Julius Frontinus

Sextus Julius Frontinus was a distinguished Roman senator who lived in the late first century AD. He held several importance offices, including the governorship of Britain and the Water Commissioner of the Aqueducts (*curator Aquarum*), which exhibit his high social standing. He also wrote several works, the chief being 'The Aqueducts of Rome' (*De Aquis Urbis Romae Libri II*) which was an official report to the Emperor on the state of the aqueducts in Rome.

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[222] Quint. *Inst.* 11.1.36. "Some things are becoming for rulers, which one would not allow in others. The eloquence of generals and triumphant conquerors is to some extent a thing apart; thus Pompey was a very eloquent narrator of his own deeds…"

[223] Cic. *Att.* 2.21.4. (SB 41). See also: Vell. Pat. 2.29.2-3. "He was a man of exceptional purity of life, of great uprightness of character, of but moderate oratorical talent…"

[224] Quint. *Inst*. 11.1.80. "Tubero says that he went as a young man accompanying his father, who had been sent by the senate not to make war but to buy corn, and abandoned their side as soon as he could, whereas Ligarius stayed there, and took the side not of Pompey (whose struggle against Caesar was for personal status, because both of them wished to preserve the state)"

[225] This likely originates from Cic. *leg*. *Man.*

Moreover, Frontinus wrote a theoretical treatise on military science, which is lost, and the 'Stratagems' (*Strategemata*), which is a collection of military stratagems from Greek and Roman history that informed generals on sound military conduct. The last text frequently references Pompey's campaigns, successes, and defeats. Importantly, it also references earlier histories, for example Livy[226], as source material, which illustrates Frontinus' interaction with the wider corpus of available historical evidence.

Frontinus references Pompey on fifteen occasions throughout the *Stratagems*. These form a generally positive depiction of Pompey's military capabilities and generalship. Eight of the fifteen passages refer to successful military encounters[227], including Pompey's conduct in Spain[228], in the East[229], and during the civil war[230]. These demonstrate Pompey's sound

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[226] Frontin. *Strat.* 2.5.31. "According to Livy, ten thousand men were lost in Pompey's army, along with the entire transport"

[227] Frontin. *Strat.* 2.2.14. "When Gnaeus Pompey was fighting in Albania, and the enemy were superior in numbers and in cavalry, he directed his infantry to cover their helmets, in order to avoid being visible in consequence of the reflection, and to take their place in a defile by a hill. Then he commanded his cavalry to advance on the plain and to act as a screen to the infantry, but to withdraw at the first onset of the enemy, and, as soon as they reached the infantry, to disperse to the flanks. When this manoeuvre had been executed, suddenly the force of infantry rose up, revealing its position, and pouring with unexpected attack upon the enemy who were heedlessly bent on pursuit, thus cut them to pieces."

[228] Frontin. *Strat.* 2.5.32. "Pompey, when warring in Spain, having first posted troops here and there to attack from ambush, by feigning fear, drew the enemy on in pursuit, till they reached the place of the ambuscade. Then when the opportune moment arrived, wheeling about, he slaughtered the foe in front and on both flanks, and likewise captured their general, Perperna."

[229] Frontin. *Strat.* 2.1.12. "Gnaeus Pompey, desiring to check the flight of Mithridates and force him to battle, chose night as the time for the encounter, arranging to block his march as he withdrew. Having made his preparations accordingly, he suddenly forced his enemy to fight. In addition to this, he so drew up his force that the moonlight falling in the faces of the Pontic soldiers blinded their eyes, while it gave his own troops a distinct and clear view of the enemy." Frontin. *Strat.* 2.2.2. "In Cappadocia Gnaeus Pompey chose a lofty site for his camp. As a result the elevation so assisted the onset of his troops that he easily overcame Mithridates by the sheer weight of his assault." Frontin. *Strat.* 2.5.33. "The same Pompey, in Armenia, when Mithridates was superior to him in the number and quality of his cavalry, stationed three thousand light-armed men and five hundred cavalry by night in a valley under cover of bushes lying between the two camps. Then at daybreak he sent forth his cavalry against the position of the enemy, planning that, as soon as the full force of the enemy, cavalry and infantry, became engaged in battle, the Romans should gradually fall back, still keeping ranks, until they should afford room to those who had been stationed for the purpose of attacking from the rear to arise and do so. When this design turned out successfully, those who had seemed to flee turned about, enabling Pompey to cut to pieces the enemy thus caught in panic between his two lines. Our infantry also, engaging in hand-to-hand encounter, stabbed the horses of the enemy. That battle destroyed the faith which the king had reposed in his cavalry." Frontin. *Strat.* 2.11.2. "Gnaeus Pompey, suspecting the Chaucensians and fearing that they would not admit a garrison, asked that they would meanwhile permit his invalid soldiers to recover among them. Then, sending his strongest men in the guise of invalids, he seized the city and held it."

[230] Frontin. *Strat.* 1.5.5. "When Gnaeus Pompey at Brundisium had planned to leave Italy and to transfer the war to another field, since Caesar was heavy on his heels, just as he was on the point of embarking, he placed obstacles in some roads; others he blocked by constructing walls across them; others he intersected with trenches, setting sharp stakes in the latter, and laying hurdles covered with earth across the openings. Some of the roads leading to the harbour he guarded by throwing beams across and piling them one upon another in a huge heap. After consummating these arrangements, wishing to produce the appearance of intending to retain possession of the city, he left a few archers as a guard on the walls; the remainder of his troops he led out in good order to the ships. Then, when he was under way, the archers also withdrew by familiar roads, and overtook him in small boats." See also: Frontin. *Strat.* 3.17.4. "Gnaeus Pompey, when besieged near Dyrrhachium, not only released his own men from blockade, but also made a sally at an opportune time and place; for just as Caesar was making a fierce assault on a fortified position surrounded by a double line of works, Pompey, by

judgement as a general and his ability to use the surrounding environment to his advantage. However, some of these passages also exhibit traits which may be deemed negative. Pompey's cunningness, for example, is evident in his distrust toward the Chaucensians, whose city he deceptively seized to ensure the safety of his army. While some of the ancient evidence is critical of Pompey's deceptive nature[231], which continues into the modern discourse, Frontinus does not frame Pompey in this light. He instead focuses on Pompey's successes, ensuring that the end always justified the means.

Three other references exhibit Pompey's control over his troops[232] and strict discipline[233], which further highlight his qualities as a commander and ability to relate to the common soldier. Thus, eleven of the fifteen passages portray Pompey favourably.

Of the remaining four passages, one fleetingly mentions Pompey's conduct in Spain. It relates Metellus' conduct in Spain against Sertorius, wherein he withdrew from battle out of fear of Sertorius' army. Frontinus comments that Pompey was likewise forced to retreat because only their joint forces could challenge Sertorius[234]. It thus reveals little about Pompey's nature, beyond his awareness of the stakes against Sertorius.

The three remaining passages outline Pompeian defeats. In the first instance, Pompey is outsmarted by Sertorius and convincingly defeated[235]. Frontinus emphasises the defeat's importance to the war alongside the casualties sustained by the Pompeian forces. This is the

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this sortie, so enveloped him with a cordon of troops that Caesar incurred no slight peril and loss, caught, as he was, between those whom he was besieging and those who had surrounded him from the outside."

[231] See Tac. *Hist*. 2.38; Val. Max. 5.3.5.

[232] Frontin. *Strat.* 1.4.8. "When Gnaeus Pompey on one occasion was prevented from crossing a river because the enemy's troops were stationed on the opposite bank, he adopted the device of repeatedly leading his troops out of camp and back again. Then, when the enemy were at last tricked into relaxing their watch on the roads in front of the Roman advance, he made a sudden dash and effected a crossing."

[233] Frontin. *Strat.* 1.9.3. "When the senate of Milan had been massacred by Pompey's troops, Pompey, fearing that he might cause a mutiny if he should call out the guilty alone, ordered certain ones who were innocent to come interspersed among the others. In this way the guilty came with less fear, because they had not been singled out, and so did not seem to be sent for in consequence of any wrong-doing; while those whose conscience was clear kept watch on the guilty, lest by the escape of these the innocent should be disgraced." Frontin. *Strat.* 4.5.1. "When the soldiers of Gnaeus Pompey threatened to plunder the money which was being carried for the triumph, Servilius and Glaucia urged him to distribute it among the troops, in order to avoid the outbreak of a mutiny. Thereupon Pompey declared he would forgo a triumph, and would die rather than yield to the insubordination of his soldiers; and after upbraiding them in vehement language, he threw in their faces the fasces wreathed with laurel, that they might start their plundering by seizing these. Through the odium thus aroused he reduced his men to obedience."

[234] Frontin. *Strat.* 2.1.3. "When the same Metellus had joined forces with Pompey against Sertorius in Spain, and had repeatedly offered battle, the enemy declined combat, deeming himself unequal to two. Later on, however, Metellus, noticing that the soldiers of the enemy, fired with great enthusiasm, were calling for battle, baring their arms, and brandishing their spears, thought it best to retreat betimes before their ardour. Accordingly he withdrew and caused Pompey to do the same."

[235] Frontin. *Strat.* 2.5.31. "When Pompey led out his entire army to help the legion, Sertorius exhibited his forces drawn up on the hillside, and thus baulked Pompey's purpose. Thus, in addition to inflicting a twofold disaster, as a result of the same strategy, Sertorius forced Pompey to be the helpless witness of the destruction of his own troops. This was the first battle between Sertorius and Pompey. According to Livy, ten thousand men were lost in Pompey's army, along with the entire transport."

closest to criticism that Frontinus offers throughout the work. The second reference highlights Pompey's failed siege of Asculum, wherein the inhabitants deceived the Romans and subsequently put them to flight[236]. Finally, the third passage comments on Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus from Caesar's perspective[237]. It explains Caesar's ingenious subversion of Pompey's superiority in cavalry, which ultimately won the battle.

Frontinus is not critical of Pompey's decisions, even when they lead to failure. The passages instead focus on the ingenuity of the victor, rather than the errors of the defeated, thereby embodying Frontinus' intention – to highlight exemplary generalship throughout history. In doing so, Pompey's failures are not explicitly criticised.

1.10. Tacitus

Tacitus was a Roman historian and senator who wrote extensively about the early imperial period, covering the period from Augustus to the Jewish wars. His two most significant works are the 'Histories' (*Historiae*) and the 'Annals' (*Ab Excessu Divi Augusti*), which survive with several significant lacunae. These only briefly mention Pompey because they focus on later periods of Roman history. It should be noted that Tacitus' sparse writing style allows for significant creative licence with modern translators. As a result, certain aspects of the ensuing translations stretch the bounds of Tacitus' Latin.

Tacitus first references Pompey in his *Histories*, during a tirade against the decline of Roman virtues and character at the end of the Republican period. He conjures a dystopian outlook through selective vocabulary and rolling verses of negativity[238], citing the defeat of Rome's greatest military threats as the foundation for its moral demise[239]. Thereafter he cites a list of tyrannical dissidents, beginning with Marius "who had sprung from the dregs of the people"[240] (*mox e plebe infirma*), and followed by Sulla "the most cruel of nobles that defeated liberty with arms and turned it (the Republic) into a tyranny"[241]. These precedents foreshadow Pompey's introduction, wherein Tacitus uses the comparative to emphasise Pompey's amoral character. He states that Pompey was no better than these men, but concealed his true nature

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[236] Frontin. *Strat.* 3.17.8. "As Pompey was about to assault the town of Asculum, the inhabitants exhibited on the ramparts a few aged and feeble men. Having thus thrown the Romans off their guard, they made a sortie and put them to flight."

[237] Frontin. *Strat.* 4.7.32. "Since in the army of Pompey there was a large force of Roman cavalry, which by its skill in arms wrought havoc among the soldiers of Gaius Caesar, the latter ordered his troops to aim with their swords at the faces and eyes of the enemy. He thus forced the enemy to avert their faces and retire."

[238] Tac. *Hist.* 2.38. "The old greed for power, long ingrained in mankind, came to full growth and broke bounds as the empire became great. …men were free to covet (*concupiscere*) wealth without anxiety, then the first quarrels between patricians and plebeians broke out. Now the tribunes made trouble (*turbulenti)*, again the consuls usurped too much power (*modo consules praevalidi*); in the city and forum the first essays at civil war were made." Trans. Clifford Moore.

[239] Tac. *Hist.* 2.38. "When resources were moderate, equality was easily maintained; but when the world had been subjugated and rival states or kings destroyed, so that men were free to covet wealth without anxiety, then the first quarrels between patricians and plebeians broke out."

[240] Tac. *Hist.* 2.38.

[241] Tac. *Hist.* 2.38. "…*et nobilium saevissimus L. Sulla victam armis libertatem in dominationem verterunt.*"

more cleverly (*Post quos Cn. Pompeius occultior non melior*[242]). Tacitus thus insinuates that Pompey was like his power-mongering predecessors, only sneakier, and was consequently the worst of a bad group. Tacitus' comment also references Pompey's vanity and feigned contentment in the absence of commands and power. This tradition is commonly cited, as illustrated by the later works of Plutarch[243] and Appian[244]. Within these narratives, Pompey avoided appearing over-ambitious and maintained a reserved distance from leadership, wishing to receive commands if contemporaries conferred them onto him. Pompey thus concealed his true purpose, the desire to hold supreme power, to escape allegations of aspiring to a dictatorship.

Tacitus also briefly references Pompey in the *Annals*. While outlining the succession of sole power in the late republic period, Tacitus comments that Pompey and Crassus' powers were quickly yielded, or in some translations 'forfeited', to Caesar[245]. This is a dismissive remark which understates Pompey's importance. Tacitus' comment fits into an outline of the rapid transition of power through the late republic and into the imperial period, which stresses the transitory nature of this period, and insinuates that the vanquished were inferior[246]. It is thus laden with negative intentions and actively diminishes Pompey's significance.

1.11. Suetonius

Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus was a Roman historian of the equestrian order, who wrote during the early imperial period. He began his career as a teacher of rhetoric, but later served as the emperor Hadrian's private secretary. His most famous work was the *Lives of the Caesars*, which was a collection of biographies about Rome's first emperors and their progenitor: Julius Caesar. His *Lives* are filled with anecdotes and the gossip of the imperial court and thus preserve an invaluable perspective for the early imperial period.

Pompey features in the 'Life of the Deified Julius' (*Divus Iulius*), primarily as Caesar's triumviral partner and eventual adversary in the civil war. Suetonius' comments about Pompey are brief and usually inform his audience of Caesar's wider political context. Therefore, there is no reference to Pompey's early career or political successes, because these did not relate to Caesar. Furthermore, Suetonius routinely emphasises the political primacy of Caesar throughout his *Life*, which relegates Pompey to a position of secondary influence. For example, Suetonius first references Pompey during the formation of the 'triumvirate'. He states that Caesar formed the 'triumvirate' after being slighted by the senate, who wouldn't allow him a command in the provinces. He thus courted the goodwill of Pompey, who was also at odds

[242] Tac. *Hist.* 2.38. "After them came Gnaeus Pompey, no better man than they, but one who concealed his purpose more cleverly…"

[243] Plut. *Pomp.* 30.6.

[244] App. *Bell. Civ*. 2.3.20. Trans. H. White.

[245] Tac. *Ann.* 1.1. "…Pompey and Crassus quickly forfeited their power to Caesar…" (*et Pompei Crassique potentia cito in Caesarem cessere*) Trans. C.H. Moore and J. Jackson.

[246] Tac. *Ann.* 1.1. "Neither Cinna nor Sulla created a lasting despotism: Pompey and Crassus quickly forfeited their power to Caesar, and Lepidus and Antony their swords to Augustus." *(non Cinnae, non Sullae longa dominatio; et Pompei Crassique potentia cito in Caesarem, Lepidi atque Antonii arma in Augustum cessere...)*

with the senate for not ratifying his acts after his return from the East, for his own benefit. Furthermore, Caesar mended Pompey's relationship with Crassus and made a compact with each, which stated that no step should be taken unless it suited all three men[247]. Suetonius subsequently highlights Pompey's importance with Caesar's decision to promote him to the first speaker in the Senate house, a privilege which previously belonged to Crassus[248]. Suetonius again portrays Caesar as the driving political force in Rome, when he compelled (*conpulit*) Pompey and Crassus to confer with him in Luca[249]. Caesar thus succeeded in his political aims, whereby he was granted a five year extension to his proconsulship in Gaul.

Suetonius' description of the civil war is favourable for Pompey. He does not criticise Pompey's political oversight in 52, wherein he passed a law forcing candidates for elections to appear at Rome, but in the clause whereby he excluded absentees from candidacy for office he had forgotten to make a special exception in Caesar's case. Suetonius states that Pompey hereafter corrected this, but only after the law had been inscribed on a bronze tablet and deposited in the treasury[250]. Furthermore, he is not cynical of Pompey's motives. Suetonius subsequently focuses on Caesar's will to ultimate power; as Caesar already believed himself the first man in the state[251], and had wished for despotism his entire life[252]. Pompey's motives aren't mentioned in the text. Suetonius, however, does record his opinion of Caesar prior to the civil war, wherein he stated that Caesar's means were insufficient and that he desired a state of

[247] Suet. *Caes.* 19.2. "Thereupon Caesar, especially incensed by this slight, by every possible attention courted the goodwill of Gnaeus Pompeius, who was at odds with the senate because of its tardiness in ratifying his acts after his victory over king Mithridates. He also patched up a peace between Pompeius and Marcus Crassus, who had been enemies since their consulship, which had been one of constant wrangling. Then he made a compact with both of them, that no step should be taken in public affairs which did not suit any one of the three." Trans. J.C. Rolfe.

[248] Suet. *Caes.* 21. "And after this new alliance he began to call upon Pompey first to give his opinion in the senate, although it had been his habit to begin with Crassus, and it was the rule for the consul in calling for opinions to continue throughout the year the order which he had established on the Kalends of January."

[249] Suet. *Caes.* 24.1. "Caesar compelled Pompeius and Crassus to come to Luca, a city in his province, where he prevailed on them to stand for a second consulship, to defeat Domitius; and he also succeeded through their influence in having his term as governor of Gaul made five years longer."

[250] Suet. *Caes.* 28. "…since Pompeius subsequent action [*i.e.*, in correcting the bill after it had been passed and filed, as explained in the following sentence] had not annulled the decree of the people. And it was true that when Pompeius proposed a bill touching the privileges of officials, in the clause where he debarred absentees from candidacy for office he forgot to make a special exception in Caesar's case, and did not correct the oversight until the law had been inscribed on a tablet of bronze and deposited in the treasury."

[251] Suet. *Caes.* 29. "Greatly troubled by these measures, and thinking, as they say he was often heard to remark, that now that he was the leading man of the state, it was harder to push him down from the first place to the second than it would be from the second to the lowest…"

[252] Suet. *Caes.* 30. "It was openly said too that if he was out of office on his return, he would be obliged, like Milo [who had been accused and tried for the murder of Publius Clodius], to make his defence in a court hedged about by armed men. The latter opinion is the more credible one in view of the assertion of Asinius Pollio, that when Caesar at the battle of Pharsalus saw his enemies slain or in flight, he said, word for word: "They would have it so. Even I, Gaius Caesar, after so many great deeds, should have been found guilty, if I had not turned to my army for help." Some think that habit had given him a love of power, and that weighing the strength of his adversaries against his own, he grasped the opportunity of usurping the despotism which had been his heart's desire from early youth."

general unrest and turmoil[253]. The first comment may have been a miscalculation on Pompey's behalf, but the second comment proved true by the ensuing political turmoil in Rome.

Suetonius' closing comments about Pompey are underwhelming in their brevity. The events of the civil war are summarised in the space of a few paragraphs, while the battle of Pharsalus is mentioned in a mere sentence. He mentions that Caesar travelled to Macedonia and blockaded Pompey for four months before finally routing him at Pharsalus. The vanquished then travelled to Egypt and was slain[254]. The passage is unceremonious, as Suetonius was not interested in outlining the political and military history of the period. He instead perpetuated a sense of Caesar's character, which was not necessarily defined by his great military exploits.

1.12. Lucius Annaeus Florus

Lucius Annaeus Florus was a Roman historian who lived during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian (AD 98-138). Little is known about Florus' personal life and career. Consequently, he is often identified as Publius Annius Florus, the Roman poet, rhetorician, and friend of Hadrian. Florus' surviving history, *Epitome of Roman History*, provides a brief sketch of Roman history from the founding of the city to the closing of the temple of Janus (25 BC) and is based on Livy's history - the full title being: *The Two Books of the Epitome, Extracted from Titus Livius, of All the Wars of Seven Hundred Years* (*Epitomae De Tito Livio Bellorum Omnium Annorum DCC Libri II*). The work is written in rhetorical style as a panegyric to Rome's greatness and its representation of Rome's past is thus frequently exaggerated. As well as this, it frequently contains chronological errors, which further diminish the work's integrity as unquestionable historic evidence. Despite these flaws, the history preserves several important references to Pompey, particularly in relation to his campaigns in the East and against the pirates. Florus employs a confusing chronological order throughout the work, which reflects Appian's approach, and places Pompey's commands against the pirates and Mithridates in book one, before his efforts in the Sullan civil war, against Sertorius in Spain, and the civil war against Caesar in book two. He thus separates the history between wars fought against foreign enemies and those fought against Roman commanders. Rather than follow this thematic framework, this chapter will discuss Pompey's representation according to the chronological order of his commands.

Florus' commentary on the Marian Civil War is long, but only alludes to Pompey's involvement once. Florus references Carbo's insulting end (*ludibrio fata – fata* is in the plural because it refers to both Carbo and Soranus) at the chapter's conclusion, though abstains from giving further detail because it would be 'tedious' (*longum*) after relating so miserable a civil

[253] Suet. *Caes.* 30. "Gnaeus Pompeius used to declare that since Caesar's own means were not sufficient to complete the works which he had planned, nor to do all that he had led the people to expect on his return, he desired a state of general unrest and turmoil."

[254] Suet. *Caes.* 35. "Returning thence to Rome, he crossed into Macedonia, and after blockading Pompeius for almost four months behind mighty ramparts, finally routed him in the battle at Pharsalus, followed him in his flight to Alexandria, and when he learned that his rival had been slain, made war on King Ptolemy…"

war[255]. While Florus does not mention Pompey, he acknowledges that Carbo's end was insulting, thereby illustrating awareness of the criticism Pompey received for executing Carbo.

The Sertorian war is given little attention in Florus' history. It is situated after Florus' account of the Sullan civil war and was deemed an inheritance from the Sullan proscriptions[256]. Florus mentions Pompey twice throughout the brief chapter. Firstly, he comments that Pompey was sent to assist Metellus. The ensuing passage lacks flattery because Florus recognises Sertorius' ability as a general, which resulted in an extended struggle for victory[257] and entailed several military disasters[258]. Furthermore, he hints that Pompey and Metellus' victory was only accomplished because Sertorius was treacherously murdered by his followers[259]. However, Florus admits that both generals forced this political outcome with their attrition tactics whereby one laid the country to waste while the other destroyed its cities[260].

In the passage concerning the Mithridatic war, Florus emphasises Mithridates' political and military significance as a threat to Rome's expanding empire in a rhetorical and laudatory manner. Mithridates is cited as the greatest of Pontus' rulers, who resisted Roman domination for forty years until "he was brought to nought by the good fortune of Sulla, the valour of Lucullus and the might of Pompeius."[261] Pompey is thus recognised as the final victor over Rome's greatest military threat. More importantly, Florus does not mention the political dispute between Lucullus and Pompey over the accession of the command. He subsequently outlines the details of the military campaign, focusing on Pompey's good fortune[262] in the battle which saw Mithridates' final defeat[263]. Florus then summarises Pompey's other Eastern exploits,

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[255] Flor. *Epit.* 2. 21.9.26. "It would be tedious after this to relate the insulting end of Carbo and Soranus…" (*Longum post haec referre ludibrio habita fata Carbonis et Sorani*…) Trans. E.S. Forster.

[256] Flor. *Epit.* 2. 22.10.1. "What was the war with Sertorius except an inheritance from the Sullan proscription?"

[257] Flor. *Epit.* 2. 22.10.6. "The fighting continued for a long time, always with doubtful result; and his defeat was due not so much to operations in the field as to the crime and treachery of his own followers."

[258] Flor. *Epit.* 2. 22.10.7. "The first engagements were fought by lieutenant-generals, Domitius and Thorius commencing operations on one side and the Hirtulei on the other. After the defeat of the latter at Segovia and of the former at the River Ana, the generals (Pompey and Metellus) themselves tried their strength in combat and suffered equal disasters at Lauro and Sucro."

[259] Flor. *Epit.* 2. 22.10.6. "Gnaeus Pompeius was therefore sent to help Metellus. They wore down his forces, pursuing him over almost the whole of Spain. The fighting continued for a long time, always with doubtful result; and his defeat was due not so much to operations in the field as to the crime and treachery of his own followers."

[260] Flor. *Epit.* 2. 22.10.8-9. "Then one army devoting itself to laying waste the country and the other to the destruction of the cities, unhappy Spain was punished for Rome's quarrels at the hands of the Roman generals, until, after Sertorius had been brought low by treachery in his own camp and Perperna had been defeated and given up, the cities also of Osca, Termes, Ulia, Valentia, Auxuma and Calagurris (the last after suffering all the extremities of starvation) themselves entered in allegiance with Rome. Thus Spain was restored to peace."

[261] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 40.5.1-3. "*inde Mithridates, omnium longe maximus. Quippe cum quattuor Pyrrho, tredecim anni Annibali suffecerint, ille per quadraginta annos restitit, donec tribus ingentibus bellis subactus felicitate Sullae, virtute Luculli, magnitudine Pompei consumeretur*."

[262] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 40.5.22. "…and coming up with the king as he was fleeing through the middle of Armenia, defeated him, with his usual good luck (*quanta felicitas viri*), in a single battle."

[263] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 40.5.23-4. "…and the moon took sides in it (the battle); for when the goddess, as if fighting on Pompeius side, had placed herself behind the enemy and facing the Romans, the men of Pontus aimed at their

wherein he pacified the restless remnants of Asia: defeating the Armenians and Iberians, pardoning the Albanians, passing undisturbed through Syria, and finally defeating the Jews[264]. The fast-paced narration emphasises the decisiveness and swiftness of Pompey's victories. Finally, Florus summarises these successes and directly attributes them to Pompey. He also refers to Pompey's notable and lasting reorganisation of these provinces[265].

Florus' subsequent chapter, 'The war against the Pirates' (*Bellum Piraticum*), erroneously places Pompey's command against the pirates after that of Mithridates[266]. This is chronologically incorrect. The Gabinian law, which granted Pompey his command against the Pirates, was passed in 67BC, while the Manilian law, which granted Pompey the Mithridatic command, was passed the following year. Despite this glaring error, Florus offers a flattering account of Pompey's campaign. He stresses the monumentality of Pompey's task, which was achieved in forty days[267] - a superhuman (*divino quodam*) effort by any standards[268]. Importantly, Florus does not solely attribute this victory to fortune, but also praises Pompey's generalship and clemency[269]. Finally, he mentions Pompey's disagreement with Metellus, who was then proconsul of Crete, over the surrender of the Cretans to Pompey in 67. The account lacks context and ignores the political hostility between the two commanders, but rightly concludes with Metellus' decision to ignore Pompey's demand[270]. In sum, Florus' depiction of this dispute is more positive than in other accounts[271].

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own unusually long shadows, thinking that they were the bodies of their foes. That night saw the final defeat of Mithridates; for he never again effected anything…"

[264] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 40.5.30. "The Jews attempted to defend Jerusalem; but this also he entered and saw the great secret of that impious nation laid open to view, the heavens beneath a golden vine."

[265] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 40.5.31. "Thus the Roman people, under the leadership of Pompeius, traversed the whole of Asia in its widest extent and made what had been the furthest province into a central province;[2] for with the exception of the Parthians, who preferred to make a treaty, and the Indians, who as yet knew nothing of us, all Asia between the Red and Caspian Seas and the Ocean was in our power, conquered or overawed by the arms of Pompeius."

[266] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 41.6.7. "Cilicia was, therefore, deemed worthy of being conquered by Pompeius and was added to his sphere of operations against Mithridates."

[267] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 41.6.15. "In this victory what is most worthy of admiration? Its speedy accomplishment—for it was gained in forty days—or the good fortune which attended it—for not a single ship was lost—or its lasting effect—for there never were any pirates again?"

[268] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 41.6.8. "Pompeius, determining to make an end once and for all of the pest which had spread over the whole sea, approached his task with almost superhuman measures."

[269] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 41.6.13-4. "However, they did no more than meet the first onslaught; for as soon as they saw the beaks of our ships all round them, they immediately threw down their weapons and oars, and with a general clapping of hands, which was their sign of entreaty, begged for quarter. We never gained so bloodless a victory, and no nation was afterwards found more loyal to us. This was secured by the remarkable wisdom of our commander, who removed this maritime people far from the sight of the sea and bound it down to the cultivation of the inland districts, thus at the same time recovering the use of the sea for shipping and restoring to the land its proper cultivators."

[270] Flor. *Epit.* 1. 42.7.5-6. "So severe were the measures which he (Metellus) took against the prisoners that most of them put an end to themselves with poison, while others sent an offer of surrender to Pompeius across the sea. Pompeius, although while in command in Asia he had sent his officer Antonius outside his sphere of command to Crete, was powerless to act in the matter, and so Metellus exercised the rights of a conqueror with all the greater severity and, after defeating the Cydonian leaders, Lasthenes and Panares, returned victorious to Rome."

[271] Plut. *Pomp.* 29.1. "Well, then, his maligners found fault with these measures, and even his best friends were not pleased with his treatment of Metellus in Crete."

This is not the case with Florus' account of the Civil War against Caesar, which sees Pompey given a position of subsidiary importance unlike the earlier sections. Florus identifies the formation of the 'triumvirate' as the origin of the conflict and thus begins his account here. He considers Pompey's allegiance with Caesar and Crassus a necessity born from the envy of his peers[272], who did not accept his new excessive power or the good fortune which caused it. He then briefly summarises the elements of the 'triumvirate', and its downfall, which was inevitable with the political motives of absolute power and control guiding each triumvir[273]. Florus subsequently states that the balance of power was destroyed with the deaths of Crassus and Julia, which eradicated any cause for allegiance between Pompey and Caesar. Hence, the growing power of Caesar "inspired the envy of Pompey, while Pompey's eminence was offensive to Caesar"[274]. Furthermore, "Pompey could not brook an equal or Caesar a superior"[275]. This is Florus' perspective throughout the account, which he strengthens by consistently exhibiting Pompey's military inferiority to Caesar. For example, Pompey's decision to flee Italy is "shameful"[276] and is dramatically emphasised with Florus' description of Pompey's battered and storm-beaten ship[277]. Furthermore, Pompey only marginally saved himself from defeat without any bloodshed[278], whereby Florus implies that Pompey's disorganisation was so great that he nearly failed to meet Caesar's challenge all together. Florus places Caesar at the centre of the work[279] and follows his decisive victories in Italy, Marseille,

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[272] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.8-9. "The cause of this great calamity was the same which caused all our calamities, namely, excessive good fortune. In the consulship of Quintus Metellus and Lucius Afranius, when the majesty of Rome held sway throughout the world and Rome was celebrating in the theatres of Pompeius her recent victories and her triumphs over the peoples of Pontus and Armenia, the excessive power enjoyed by Pompeius excited, as often happens, a feeling of envy among the ease-loving citizens… Metellus, because his triumph over Crete was shorn of its splendour, and Cato, who always looked askance upon those in power, began to decry Pompeius and clamour against his measures. Annoyance at this drove Pompeius into opposition and induced him to seek support for his position."

[273] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.10-11. "…but Pompeius occupied a higher position than either of them. Caesar, therefore, being desirous of winning, Crassus of increasing, and Pompeius of retaining his position, and all alike being eager for power, readily came to an agreement to seize the government." (*Pompeius tamen inter utrumque eminebat. Sic igitur Caesare dignitatem conparare, Crasso augere, Pompeio retinere cupientibus, omnibusque pariter potentiae cupidis de invadenda re publica facile convenit.*)

[274] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.14. "*Iam Pompeio suspectae Caesaris opes et Caesari Pompeiana dignitas gravis*."

[275] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.14. "*Nec ille ferebat parem, nec hic superiorem*."

[276] Flor. *Epit.* 2.20.

[277] Flor. *Epit.* 2.20.

[278] Flor. *Epit.* 2.19-21. "The war would have terminated without bloodshed if Caesar could have surprised Pompeius at Brundisium; and he would have captured him, if he had not escaped by night through the entrance of the beleaguered harbour. A shameful tale, he who was but lately head of the senate and arbiter of peace and war fleeing, in a storm-beaten and almost dismantled vessel, over the sea which had been the scene of his triumphs. The flight of the senate from the city was as discreditable as that of Pompeius from Italy."(*et peractum erat bellum sine sanguine, si Pompeium Brundisii opprimere potuisset. Et ceperat; sed ille per obsessi claustra portus nocturna fuga evasit. Turpe dictu: modo princeps patrum, pacis bellique moderator, per triumphatum a se mare lacera et paene inermi nave fugiebat. Nec Pompei ab Italia quam senatus ab urbe fuga turpior…*)

[279] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.37-8. "…he (Caesar) was so impatient that, though a gale was raging at sea, he attempted to cross in the depth of the night alone in a light reconnoitring boat to keep them off. His remark to the master of the vessel, who was alarmed at the greatness of the risk, has come down to us: "Why are you afraid? You have Caesar on board."

This passage, aside from outlining the boldness of Caesar, clearly echoes a determinist reading of the late republic, wherein Caesar was destined to claim victory.

and Spain, before recounting the battles of Dyrrachium and Pharsalus. Some credit is given to Pompey's war of attrition tactics, which were "salutary"[280]. However, circumstances did not allow this approach to become the defining factor in the war, as Florus cites the complaints of the soldiers, allies, and nobles as the reason for the ill-advised battle at Pharsalus. The account of the battle also focuses on, and mythologises, Caesar's movements. Florus states that Pompey's superiority in cavalry should have resulted in a comprehensive victory, but that Caesar's genius tactics reversed this, thereby allowing his troops to surround Pompey[281]. The battle culminates in a resounding victory for Caesar, and a disgraceful defeat for Pompey. The latter suffers even greater disgrace with his survival from the battlefield, as he is eventually executed on the orders of a most 'contemptible' king, with the advice of a eunuch, and the sword of a deserter from his own army[282]. Florus thus pities Pompey's demise and is disdainful toward the Egyptians who caused it. He is equally clear, however, that Caesar deserved to win the war. Florus' account of Pharsalus reflects Caesar's narration of events and thus rejects other readings which favoured Pompey. This is significant, because Florus' account is usually thought to follow Livy's history, which appears to have been favourable for Pompey. Hence, Florus' account either reflects Livy's hostility toward Pompey in this section of his history, or, it follows Caesar's narrative for this section of the civil war narrative.

[280] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.43. "But Pompeius salutary plan did not avail him very long; the soldiers complained of his inactivity, the allies of the length of the war, the nobles of the ambition of their leader." (*Nec diutius profuit ducis salutare consilium. Miles otium, socii moram, principes ambitum ducis increpabant*.)

[281] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.47. "Nor was the issue of the campaign less wondrous; for although Pompeius had such a superiority in cavalry that he thought he could easily surround Caesar, he was himself surrounded."

[282] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.52. "As it was, Pompeius survived his honours, only to suffer the still greater disgrace of escaping on horseback through the Thessalian Tempe; of reaching Lesbos with one small vessel; of meditating at Syedra, on a lonely rock in Cilicia, an escape to Parthia, Africa or Egypt; and finally of dying by murder in the sight of his wife and children on the shores of Pelusium, by order of the most contemptible of kings and by the advice of eunuchs, and, to complete the tale of his misfortunes, by the sword of Septimius, a deserter from his own army."

Chapter Two: The Ancient Evidence (Greek Authors)

2.1. Diodorus Siculus

Diodorus Siculus (80-20BC) was a Greek historian from Agyrium in Sicily. He was an uncritical compiler of evidence, but used good sources and recreated them faithfully[1]. He wrote forty books of world history, titled *Library of History*, in three volumes. These covered the mythical history of Greeks and non-Greeks up to the Trojan War, history to Alexander's death (323 BC), and history to 54 BC. The books covering Roman history survive in a heavily fragmented state, but offer some information on Pompey's early career.

Diodorus references Pompey in book thirty-eight during a fragmentary commentary on the Sullan civil war. He first praises Pompey's exemplary inurement to the hardships of warfare and commitment to developing his abilities in war from an early age[2]. He also emphasises Pompey's restraint from luxuries, which subsequently garnered the respect of the soldiery and allowed Pompey to raise an army quickly despite his young age[3]. This allowed him to actively participate in the civil war and curry Sulla's favour. Diodorus hereafter comments on Sulla's admiration for Pompey, who had just defeated M. Junius Brutus[4] in his first battle, maintained the trust of his army despite his age, and had proven his commitment to Sulla's cause[5].

[1] Charles Muntz, 'The Roman Civil Wars and the Bibliotheke', *Diodorus Siculus and the World of the Late Roman Republic*, Oxford University Press, (Oxford, 2017).

[2] Diod. Sic. 38.9. "Gnaeus Pompeius devoted himself to a military life, and inured himself to the hardships and fatigues of war, so that in a short time he was acknowledged as an expert in military matters. Casting off all sloth and idleness, he was always, night and day, doing something or other that was useful for the conduct of the war."

[3] Diod. Sic. 38.9. "He was very sparing in his diet, ate his food sitting, and altogether refrained from baths and other such luxurious activities. He allotted fewer hours for sleep than nature demanded, and spent the rest of the night in the concerns of a general, relating to the problems that he faced during the day; so that, by his habitual planning for the uncertain events of war, he became most accomplished in military activities."

[4] Diod. Sic. 38.9.

[5] Diod. Sic. 38.10. "Gnaeus Pompeius got a fine reward for his virtue, and gained distinction for his valour. He continued to act in accordance with his previous achievements, and informed Sulla by letter of the increase in his power. Sulla admired the youth for many other reasons, and berated the senators who were with him, both reproaching them and urging them to be equally zealous. Sulla said that he was amazed that Pompeius, who was still extremely young, had snatched such a large army away from the enemy, but those who were far superior to him in age and reputation could hardly keep even their own servants in a dependable alliance."

Diodorus outlines Pompey's involvement in the dispute between Aristobulus and Hyrcanus in book forty.[6] The account closely resembles Josephus' depiction of the same events. Diodorus also lists Pompey's victories and achievements in the East[7].

Diodorus' work offers a positive portrayal of Pompey's early career, as well as his political acumen and ability to command. Moreover, it contrasts with Pliny's account of Pompey's opulence, highlighting his sparing diet and restraint from luxuries.

2.2. Strabo

Strabo (BC 64/63 – 24 AD) was a Greek geographer, philosopher, and historian, who lived during the transitional period from the Roman republic to Empire. His most notable work was the *Geographica* which was composed in Greek and outlined the history of various known regions of the world in his era. Fortunately, much of the *Geographica* survives today. Pompey features frequently throughout the work, due to his successful Eastern conquests which fundamentally altered Rome's interactions with and influence on the region.

Strabo's references to Pompey are typically fleeting and do not reflect any facet of Pompey's character. Instead, they outline the wide scope of Pompey's military commands across three theatres of war. Strabo does, however, reference several major political occurrences. For instance, he mentions Pompey and Lucullus' conference in Galatia, on Pompey's assumption of the Eastern command, though Strabo's account is entirely void of the hostility mentioned in other sources[8]. Furthermore, he notes that Pompey's reorganisation of the East was largely

[6] Diod. Sic. 40.2. "While Pompeius was staying near Damascus in Syria, he was approached by Aristobulus the king of the Jews and his brother Hyrcanus, who were in dispute over who should be king. The most eminent of the Jews, more than two hundred in number, met the imperator and explained that their ancestors, when they rebelled from Demetrius, had sent envoys to the senate. In response, the senate granted them authority over the Jews, who were to be free and autonomous, under the leadership not of a king but of a high priest. But their current rulers, who had abolished their ancestral laws, had unjustly forced the citizens into subjection; with the help of a large number of mercenaries, they had procured the kingship through violence and much bloodshed. Pompeius postponed a decision about their dispute until later; but he strongly rebuked Hyrcanus and his associates for the lawless behaviour of the Jews and the wrongs they had committed against the Romans. He said that they deserved a stronger and harsher reprimand, but in conformity with the traditional clemency of the Romans, if they were obedient from now onwards, he would grant them forgiveness."

[7] Diod. Sic. 40.4. "Pompeius Magnus, son of Gnaeus, imperator, freed the coasts of the world and all the islands within the Ocean from the attacks of pirates. He rescued from siege the kingdom of Ariobarzanes, Galatia and the territories and provinces beyond there, Asia and Bithynia. He protected Paphlagonia, Pontus, Armenia and Achaïa, also Iberia, Colchis, Mesopotamia, Sophene and Gordyene. He subjugated Dareius king of the Medes, Artoles king of the Iberians, Aristobulus king of the Jews, and Aretas king of the Nabataean Arabs, also Syria next to Cilicia, Judaea, Arabia, the province of Cyrenaica, the Achaei, Iozygi, Soani and Heniochi, and the other tribes that inhabit the coast between Colchis and Lake Maeotis, together with the kings of these tribes, nine in number, and all the nations that dwell between the Pontic Sea and the Red Sea. He extended the borders of the empire up to the borders of the world. He maintained the revenues of the Romans, and in some cases he increased them. He removed the statues and other images of the gods, and all the other treasure of the enemies, and dedicated to the goddess {Minerva} 12,060 pieces of gold and 307 talents of silver."

[8] Strab. 12.5.2. "…and third, Danala, where Pompey and Lucullus had their conference, Pompey coming there as successor of Lucullus in command of the war, and Lucullus giving over to Pompey his authority and leaving the country to celebrate his triumph."

effective[9] and freed the peoples of the East from tyranny[10]. Strabo's account of Pompey's siege of Jerusalem, also mentioned by Josephus[11], focuses on Pompey's astute generalship[12].

Though the *Geographica* avoids moralising Roman political history, Strabo abandons his neutral tone when outlining the place of Pompey's burial[13]. He uses evocative language to intensify the injustice of Pompey's death. Strabo's use of the passive reinforces his indignation that Pompey was slain (ἐσφάγη) by the Egyptians, which he immediately reiterates with the passive participle having been treacherously murdered (δολοφονηθεὶς).

Finally, Strabo references Pompey's authoritative demeanour while recounting the renowned natives of Ionia. In this passage, Pompey exiled Aeschines the orator for speaking freely before him[14]. Strabo stresses that Aeschines spoke beyond moderation (πέρα τοῦ μετρίου), thereby implying that his punishment was merited. This contrasts with Valerius Maximus' story, wherein Pompey tolerated calumny from his inferiors[15].

2.3. Josephus

Titus Flavius Josephus, born Joseph ben Matityahu, was a first-century Romano-Jewish scholar, historian, and historiographer, who was born in Jerusalem. He originally led Jewish forces in Galilee which resisted Roman occupation, though subsequently defected to the Roman side and was kept as a slave and interpreter by the emperor Vespasian. He later received his freedom under Titus and assumed the emperor's family name of Flavius. Several of Josephus' works survive today. Two of these works, *Jewish Antiquities* and *Jewish Wars*, reference Pompey.

Both the *Jewish Antiquities* and *Jewish Wars* recount Pompey's exploits in Judea after he defeated Mithridates. Their portrayals are similar but emphasise different aspects of Pompey's

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[9] Strab. 12.3.28. "For as a whole the mountainous range of the Paryadres has numerous suitable places for such strongholds, since it is well-watered and woody, and is in many places marked by sheer ravines and cliffs; at any rate, it was here that most of his fortified treasuries were built; and at last, in fact, Mithridates fled for refuge into these farthermost parts of the kingdom of Pontus, when Pompey invaded the country, and having seized a well-watered mountain near Dasteira in Acilisenê (nearby, also, was the Euphrates, which separates Acilisenê from Lesser Armenia), he stayed there until he was besieged and forced to flee across the mountains into Colchis and from there to the Bosporus. Near this place, in Lesser Armenia, Pompey built a city, Nicopolis, which endures even to this day and is well peopled."

[10] Strab. 16.2.18. "Now Byblus, the royal residence of Cinyras, is sacred to Adonis; but Pompey freed it from tyranny by beheading its tyrant with an axe…"

[11] Joseph. *BJ.* 7.1-4.

[12] Strab. 16.2.40. "Pompey seized the city, it is said, after watching for the day of fasting, when the Judaeans were abstaining from all work; he filled up the trench and threw ladders across it; moreover, he gave orders to raze all the walls and, so far as he could, destroyed the haunts of robbers and the treasure-holds of the tyrants."

[13] Strab. 16.2.33. "Casius is a sandy hill without water and forms a promontory; the body of Pompey the Great is buried there; and on it is a temple of Zeus Casius. Near this place Pompey the Great was slain, being treacherously murdered by the Aegyptians."

[14] Strab. 14.1.7. "…in my time, Aeschines the orator, who remained in exile to the end, since he spoke freely, beyond moderation, before Pompey the Great."

[15] Val. Max. 6.2.8.

time in Judea. In the *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus prioritises Pompey's piety as illustrated by his respect for Jewish culture and religious observances, and cites Strabo, Nicolas of Damascus and Livy as sources for these events[16]. He comments that Pompey committed a great sin when he entered the sanctuary of the temple in Jerusalem, a place only accessible to the high priest, and witnessed its many sacred riches. However, he atoned for this when he left everything undisturbed[17] and demanded that the temple's servants cleanse the temple "in a manner worthy of his virtuous character" (ἀλλὰ κἀν τούτῳ ἀξίως ἔπραξεν τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν ἀρετῆς)[18]. The *Jewish Antiquities* also outlines how deeply the Jews respected Pompey's military capabilities. The Nabatean leader Aristobulus submitted to Pompey's demands[19], despite wishing to maintain independence, because his advisers warned of the Romans' wrath and abilities in warfare[20]. Aristobulus' subsequent war-mongering, against the advice of his inferiors, brought defeat, as Pompey successfully led the Romans against the Jews and captured Jerusalem[21].

The *Jewish Wars* also chronicles these events, but portrays Pompey more favourably. This work emphasises Pompey's importance as an active political and military agent, who wrought change with his decisions, rather than associating Roman success to the vague threat of the Romans[22] - as in the *Jewish Antiquities*. Pompey's military capacities are central to this portrayal. As in the *Jewish Antiquities*, Aristobulus fears Pompey[23] and willingly submits to his demands[24]. Josephus shows that Pompey exhibited sound generalship by pursuing Aristobulus to Jerusalem, which was spurred on by mistrust for his motives[25]. These are subsequently justified by Aristobulus' displays of cowardice and trickery in an attempt to fulfil

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[16] Joseph. *JA.* 14.4.3. "And that this is not merely a story to set forth the praises of a fictitious piety, but the truth, is attested by all those who have narrated the exploits of Pompey, among them Strabo and Nicolas and, in addition, Titus Livius, the author of a History of Rome."

[17] Joseph. *JA.* 14.4.4. "But though the golden table was there and the sacred lampstand and the libation vessels and a great quantity of spices, and beside these, in the treasury, the sacred moneys amounting to two thousand talents, he touched none of these because of piety…"

[18] Joseph. *JA.* 14.4.4.

[19] Joseph. *JA.* 14.3.4. "Pompey, however, commanded him to deliver up his strongholds and give the orders therefor to his garrison commanders in his own handwriting—for they had been forbidden to accept orders in any other form,—and so he obeyed, but retired resentfully to Jerusalem and set about preparing for war." See also Joseph. *JA.* 14.4.1. "And Aristobulus, thinking better of his plan, came to Pompey and promising to give him money and admit him into Jerusalem, begged him to stop the war and do as he liked peaceably."

[20] Joseph. *JA.* 14.3.4. "Thereupon Aristobulus, whom many of his men urged not to make war on the Romans…"

[21] Joseph. *JA.* 14.4.2-3.

[22] Joseph. *JA.* 14.3.4.

[23] Joseph. *JA.* 1.6.3. "Three hundred talents offered by Aristobulus outweighed considerations of justice; Scaurus, having obtained that sum, dispatched a herald to Hyrcanus and the Arabs, threatening them with a visitation from the Romans and Pompey if they did not raise the siege." See also: Joseph. *JA.* 1.6.6. "Terrified at his approach, Aristobulus went as a suppliant to meet him, and by the promise of money and of the surrender of himself and the city pacified Pompey's wrath."

[24] Joseph. *BJ.* 1.6.5. "He (Aristobulus) gave way, came down to Pompey, and after making a long defence in support of his claims to the throne, returned to his stronghold… Torn between hope and fear, he would come down determined by importunity to force Pompey to deliver everything to him, and as often ascend to his citadel, lest it should be thought that he was prematurely throwing up his case. In the end, Pompey commanded him to evacuate the fortresses and knowing that the governors had orders only to obey instructions given in Aristobulus' own hand, insisted on his writing to each of them a notice to quit. Aristobulus did what was required of him, but indignantly withdrew to Jerusalem and prepared for war with Pompey."

[25] Joseph. *BJ.* 1.6.6. "Pompey, allowing him no time for these preparations, followed forthwith."

his ambitions. Josephus also illustrates Pompey's clemency throughout the sequence of events. He allowed Aristobulus several chances to submit to his will without punishment, though finally grew indignant at Aristobulus' treacherous treatment and besieged Jerusalem[26]. Pompey's military capabilities are further stressed in the ensuing siege. After some initial indecision[27], Pompey recognised the military advantage offered by Jewish religious practice. He noted that the Jews abstained from all manual work on the Sabbath, including offensive countermeasures[28], and thus ordered his troops to avoid combat on these days and complete the siege's earthworks instead. This arduous task was thus completed without hindrance and eventually led to the capture of the temple district[29]. Josephus emphasises Pompey's capacity for military ingenuity, which differed to his portrayal in the *Jewish Antiquities* where the advantage was instead apparent to all the Romans[30]. Finally, the *Jewish War* represents Pompey's respectfulness toward Jewish culture similarly to the *Jewish Antiquities*. Pompey entered the holy sanctuary within the temple and witnessed its treasures, but left its contents untouched and insisted that the temple be cleansed and the customary sacrifices resume[31].

2.4. Plutarch

Plutarch, called Lucius Mestrius Plutarchus after receiving his Roman citizenship, was a historian, essayist, and biographer who lived during the first and early second centuries (approximately AD 46-120). Details concerning Plutarch's formative years are sparse and can only be inferred from allusions made throughout his various works[32]. He was, however, born into a wealthy equestrian family in Chaeronea (Greece) and received a good education. Plutarch taught philosophy in Chaeronea and became a well-respected writer in his lifetime. Towards the end of his life, under Trajan and Hadrian, he received notable honours, including the insignia of a consul (which was a great distinction for an *eques*) and a post as procurator of Greece, whereby he was nominally in charge of all imperial properties in the province. His reputation as a charming and engaging writer, alongside his immense corpus, left him a well-respected philosopher and scholar in his times. His reputation grew after his death, as attested by his immense popularity among Byzantine scholars and subsequently the Renaissance era.

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[26] Joseph. *BJ.* 1.6.6. "Indignant at this treatment (Πρὸς ταῦτα ἀγανακτήσας), Pompey kept Aristobulus under arrest and, advancing to the city, carefully considered the best method of attack."

[27] Joseph. *BJ.* 1.7.2. "However, during his long period of indecision, sedition broke out within the walls; the partisans of Aristobulus insisting on a battle and the rescue of the king, while those of Hyrcanus were for opening the gates to Pompey."

[28] Joseph. *BJ.* 1.7.3. "…for on the sabbaths the Jews fight only in self-defence."

[29] Joseph. *BJ.* 1.7.3. "Indeed, the labours of the Romans would have been endless, had not Pompey taken advantage of the seventh day of the week, on which the Jews, from religious scruples, refrain from all manual work, and then proceeded to raise the earthworks, while forbidding his troops to engage in hostilities; for on the Sabbaths the Jews fight only in self-defence."

[30] Joseph. *JA.* 14.3.3. "Of this fact the Romans were well aware, and on those days which we call the Sabbath, they did not shoot at the Jews or meet them in hand to hand combat, but instead they raised earthworks and towers, and brought up their siege-engines in order that these might be put to work the following day."

[31] Joseph. *BJ.* 1.7.6. "Pompey indeed, along with his staff, penetrated to the sanctuary, entry to which was permitted to none but the high priest, and beheld what it contained… However, he touched neither these nor any other of the sacred treasures and, the very day after the capture of the temple, gave orders to the custodians to cleanse it and to resume the customary sacrifices."

[32] R. Lamberton, *Plutarch*, Yale University Press (New Haven, 2001), 4.

Plutarch lived in a dualistic society, split between its Greek heritage and the strong Roman influences occasioned by Greek cultural adherence to the Roman Empire, and this shaped his conception of the world and the past. As noted by Lamberton, Plutarch lived in a society where Roman military dominance was long acknowledged. Octavian was the last Roman general that consolidated Roman power in Greece through violence and this was some seventy years before Plutarch's birth. Thus, it was clear for families like Plutarch's that living under Roman hegemony could be prosperous and that this stable social system need not be overturned[33]. Despite the established importance of Roman culture in his lifetime, Plutarch did not learn Latin until later in life[34]. Furthermore, he did not enjoy Latin literature as much as its Greek counterparts, a circumstance partially attributable to his immersion and interaction with Greek literature from an early age. These realities affected his approach to, and understanding of, Roman history. Plutarch wrote exclusively in Greek, as exhibited by his two surviving works the *Moralia* and *Parallel Lives*. Despite this, his works were written for both Roman and Greek intellectuals, who were almost always bilingual and thus equally capable of accessing the material in this period.

Plutarch's contextual backdrop, within which the confines of Empire were long established, highlights an apparent paradox within his works. Plutarch frequently admires leaders and statesman of the past, whose lives determined entire ages, and yet, his own period was devoid of politics and only allowed for military excellence in remote theatres of the empire – places in which he himself had little interest. This paradox, however, is explicable by Plutarch's aims as a writer. He believed that history's role was didactic and his various works reflect this with their protreptic and moral frameworks. Thus, Plutarch's strong moralistic themes, underpinned by Platonic philosophy, aimed to inspire the betterment of their audience[35]. While this is blatant in the *Moralia*, a collection of essays and philosophical treatises reflecting Plutarch's beliefs and world outlook, it is equally central to his biographical writings. These works, collectively known as the *Parallel Lives*, are a collection of biographical writings which comparatively portray the lives of great Greeks and Romans. Thus, each Greek politician, statesman, and/or general, has a Roman counterpart with whom Plutarch believed had shared characteristics. These were general themes, including: wisdom as lawgivers, courage, perseverance, eloquence, a period of exile, or a great fortune[36]. For example, Alexander's life parallels Caesar's, as both men fundamentally altered the geo-political landscape of their societies. Likewise, Pompey is compared to the Spartan king Agesilaus, as each were successful generals

[33] R. Lamberton, *Plutarch*, 1-2.

[34] Plut. *Dem.* 2.2. "But as for me, I live in a small city, and I prefer to dwell there that it may not become smaller still; and during the time when I was in Rome and various parts of Italy I had no leisure to practice myself in the Roman language, owing to my public duties and the number of my pupils in philosophy. It was therefore late and when I was well on in years that I began to study Roman literature. And here my experience was an astonishing thing, but true." Trans. Bernadotte Perrin.

[35] Plut. *Per.* 1-2. Trans. Bernadotte Perrin. See also: T. Duff, *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice*, Clarendon Press (Oxford, 1999), 45-9.

[36] Donald Russell, 'The Arts of Prose: The Early Empire' in *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 1986), 668.

that extended their cultural sovereignty into the East. However, Plutarch also seems to have considered comparing Pompey and Alexander's lives, but decided against this because of Pompey's demise[37].

Plutarch's biographies highlight some of the virtues and vices of great figures, not merely to inform in a historical fashion, but to educate and inspire his audience[38]. Hence, Plutarch was not interested in giving a continuous history of events[39], but wished to analyse the fundamental character[40] (*ethos*) of Greek and Roman figures as exhibited by their actions – conspicuous or not. This is made clear in his introduction to the Parallel lives of Alexander and Caesar, where he outlines the methodology of the biographies[41]. Thus, Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* are valuable as they focus on the details of character, thereby illuminating elements and events of each life which would otherwise be ignored by historians.

The *Parallel Lives*, particularly those concerning the last years of the Republic, are crucial for this thesis. They record Plutarch's interpretation of Pompey's character, life, context, and achievements. Consequently, they lay the foundations for subsequent interpretations of Pompey's character, which are routinely central in modern political and military histories of the Late Republic. Naturally, the Life of Pompey is most relevant for this thesis, but Plutarch's biographies concerning Pompey's contemporaries also offer important perspectives and points of contrast. Thus, Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*, while uniquely crucial for understanding Pompey, is most valuable when considered in the wider schema of Plutarch's biographies.

Plutarch's source material has long been debated by modern scholarship. There are some instances where he directly cites works, but they otherwise remain fairly elusive. Plutarch directly cites two sources, namely Gaius Oppius[42] and Theophanes of Mytilene[43], throughout the *Life of Pompey*[44]. The former was a close political ally of Caesar, thus hostile to Pompey, while the latter was Pompey's close confidant and personal historian.

Plutarch's portrayal of Pompey is generally favourable throughout the biography. For example, Plutarch's depiction of the Carbo incident, which receives harsh treatment in other sources,

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[37] Plut. *Pomp.* 46.1.

[38] T. Duff, *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice*, Clarendon Press (Oxford, 1999), 17. "Plutarch presents himself as, like a painter, shaping the biographies he is writing, through careful attention to details. But life (βίος) also refers to the real lives of Plutarch's readers, whom he hope (sic) to influence and morally improve ('shape') by his work."

[39] C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies*, The Classical Press of Wales (Swansea, 2002), 102. "Plutarch feels no responsibility to give a continuous history of events, which the reader can find elsewhere."

[40] Plut. *Nic.* 1. Trans. Bernadotte Perrin.

[41] Plut. *Alex.* 1. Trans. Bernadotte Perrin.

[42] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.

[43] Plut. *Pomp.* 37.

[44] I have refrained from speculating on this debate, which has polarised modern scholarship, and instead commented on works which Plutarch cites. One major disagreement concerns Asinius Pollio's supposed influence, but this work was lost to posterity and cannot be verified as a source. See: C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History*, 13.

was shaped by favourable evidence and stood against a more negative tradition[45]. Modern scholars are more certain about the basis of this positive reading. Plutarch cites Theophanes of Mytilene's history of Pompey's campaigns, thereby asserting that it contributed a favourable[46] reading for Pompey's career. Plutarch stresses that Theophanes was favourably disposed toward Pompey as they were personally intimate. This relationship is also attested in Cicero's letters[47]. While this modern theory is flawed, namely that it relies on the supposition that one citation represents Theophanes' influence throughout the entire biography, it does explain Plutarch's favourable portrayal of Pompey. I have thus subscribed to this theory in the absence of any other evidence. Plutarch's *Life of Pompey* treats each historical tradition equally, which results in a rounded depiction. However, Plutarch's other lives modify these views, as they focus on different aspects of Pompey which result from his subsidiary importance. They are thus important as supplementary evidence for the *Life of Pompey*.

The ensuing analysis considers key aspects of Plutarch's presentation of Pompey, which demonstrably shape modern interpretations. An in-depth analysis of Plutarch's *Pompey* unfortunately is not possible, as this is a large topic which justifies more space than this work affords. The key aspects which are included focus on defining moments in Pompey's career. These include his role in the Sullan civil war, his commands against Sertorius, the Pirates, and Mithridates, and the civil war against Caesar. These notable events embody Plutarch's conceptualisation of Pompey, as filtered from the ancient historiographic tradition. Plutarch supplements these depictions with detailed descriptions of Pompey's character throughout the work. The most notable of these are found in the biography's introduction. As a result, this section also requires some consideration.

Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*, Sections: 1-45

Plutarch's *Life of Pompey* opens with a dramatic and powerful contrast between Pompey and his father Strabo. He derides Strabo as a despicable figure, feared for his military prowess, but despised for his insatiable appetite for wealth. Pompey, on the other hand, was adored by the populace, through prosperity and adversity, to a degree unlike any other Roman[48]. Plutarch

[45] Herbert Heftner, *Plutarch und Der Aufstieg des Pompeius*, Europäischer Verlag der Wissenshaften (Frankfurt am Main, 1995), 106. "Eine Kurzfassung desselben Vorwurfes bringt Argument, mit dem die pompeiusfreundliche Uberlieferung jene Tat zu entschuldigen versuchte: [Pompeius wird direkt angeredet] (See: Val. Max. 5.3.5.) ".

[46] Plut. *Pomp.* 37.2-3. "Moreover, Theophanes says there was found here an address of Rutilius, which incited the king to the massacre of the Romans in Asia. But most people rightly conjecture that this was a malicious invention on the part of Theophanes, perhaps because he hated Rutilius, who was wholly unlike himself, but probably also to please Pompey, whose father had been represented as an utter wretch by Rutilius in his histories."

[47] Cic. *Att.* 2.17. "But if you do come as you say you will, would you kindly fish out of Theophanes how our Arabian Prince (Pompey) is disposed towards me? You will of course make your inquiries as a relative, and bring me a prescription as it were from him on how to conduct myself. We shall be able to get some inkling of the general situation from what he says."

[48] Plut. *Pomp*. 1.1-3. See too Plut. *Regum.* 89. "Gnaeus Pompeius was as much beloved by the Romans as his father was hated. When he was young, he wholly sided with Sulla, and before he had borne many offices or was chosen into the senate, he enlisted many soldiers in Italy. When Sulla sent for him, he returned answer that he

outlines numerous praise-worthy traits which constituted Pompey's character, including his modesty, skill in warfare, trustworthiness, honest countenance[49], and generosity without arrogance[50]. This portrait is subsequently maintained throughout Pompey's early career, as he leaves his father's shadow and exceeds all political and military expectations. Various anecdotes pre-empt Pompey's ensuing greatness; Pompey is granted a command and labelled 'Imperator' by the dictator Sulla - despite not being a senator[51], he receives a triumph despite not being a praetor or consul[52], and finally received the consulship without holding any preceding offices[53].

Plutarch ensures that several facets of Pompey's early career are recorded, including those with which he does not agree. For instance, he outlines frequent criticisms Pompey faced under Sullan hegemony, particularly when dealing with Carbo who was an important political enemy captured during the civil war. Pompey's morally questionable actions are recorded in the passive voice throughout the passage to exonerate Pompey from the decisions[54]. Plutarch distances himself from the hostile tradition by alluding to inferences made against Pompey[55]. Furthermore, he stresses instances where Pompey showed kindness to the vanquished[56]. Where Plutarch cannot openly defend Pompey's actions, he attributes them to circumstance. Thus, Pompey's seemingly cruel gesture, where he dragged the former consul Carbo to trial, while being contrary to usual practice, was not done with malicious intent. Plutarch stresses that the events were perceived poorly by its audience, but that Pompey was following legal precedent and offering Carbo a chance to be acquitted[57]. As it transpired, this was not granted and Carbo was subsequently led away to execution[58]. Plutarch's dissociation with the anti-Pompeian tradition is increasingly evident with the ensuing reference, whereby Gaius Oppius' account

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would not muster his forces in the presence of his general, unbloodied and without spoils; nor did he come before that in several fights he had overcome the captains of the enemy."

[49] Plut. *Pomp.* 2.1-2.

[50] Plut. *Pomp.* 1.3. "…his modest and temperate way of living, his training in the arts of war, his persuasive speech, his trustworthy character, and his tact in meeting people, so that no man asked a favour with less offence, or bestowed one with a better mien. For, in addition to his other graces, he had the art of giving without arrogance, and of receiving without loss of dignity."

[51] Plut. *Pomp.* 8.1-3.

[52] Plut. *Pomp.* 14.1-6.

[53] Plut. *Pomp.* 22.1-3.

[54] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.1. "Against these men Pompey was sent with a large force."

See too: 10.2. "For if it was necessary, as perhaps it was, to put the man to death, this ought to have been done as soon as he was seized, and the deed would have been his who ordered it."

[55] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.3. "Moreover, he was thought to have treated Carbo in his misfortunes with an unnatural insolence."

[56] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.2. "Perpenna at once abandoned Sicily to him, and he recovered the cities there. They had been harshly used by Perpenna, but Pompey treated them all with kindness except the Mamertines in Messana. These declined his tribunal and jurisdiction on the plea that they were forbidden by an ancient law of the Romans, at which Pompey said: "Cease quoting laws to us that have swords girt about us!""

[57] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.3. "But as it was, Pompey caused a Roman who had thrice been consul to be brought in fetters and set before the tribunal where he himself was sitting, and examined him closely there, to the distress and vexation of the audience."

[58] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.3.

for Pompey's cruelty is summarily dismissed[59]. He compounds this with his summation of the period, whereby Pompey's clemency is illustrated through the kindness he showed to all but Sulla's most eminent enemies[60]. Finally, it is important to note how Plutarch introduces Carbo to the *Life*. Plutarch treats Carbo with great contempt, portraying Carbo's ascendance over the deceased Cinna as an act where one tyrant was replaced by another more capricious tyrant[61]. He thus establishes a negative portrayal of Pompey's victim from the outset which softens, though does not excuse, Pompey's actions. Moreover, Plutarch emphasises in the *Life of Sertorius* that Pompey's deeds under Sulla were valiant, and fairly earned him the cognomen *Magnus*[62].

Plutarch continues to perpetuate a favourable Pompeian reading with his account of Pompey's numerous commands, which included the war against Sertorius in Spain, the war against the pirates, and the campaign against Mithridates in the East. He outlines the Sertorian war by giving contextual information which explains Pompey's extraordinary appointment to command. He states that Sertorius, the leader of the revolt in Spain, was among Rome's most competent generals and exhibited his prowess by defeating several armies sent against him. He became an increasingly threatening presence in Italy during and after the Sullan civil wars which required an immediate resolution by the mid 70's BC. Pompey assumed the command in 76 after Lucius Philippus proposed the motion to the senate, who duly agreed. Plutarch outlines the war's arduous nature and exhibits Pompey's success after great turmoil[63]. Interestingly, Plutarch stresses that this was only possible because Sertorius was treacherously murdered by his inferiors. Pompey's feat was noteworthy nonetheless, particularly because it had long remained unaccomplished by various predecessors, including Metellus. Plutarch concludes that this victory was unquestionably Pompey's[64], unlike his successful involvement in the third servile war[65], wherein he claimed victory over the remnants of Spartacus' forces and demanded a victory.

[59] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.5.

[60] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.5.

[61] Plut. *Pomp.* 5.2. "When Cinna had come to such an end, Carbo, a tyrant more capricious than he, received and exercised authority."

[62] Plut. *Sert.* 18.2.

[63] Plut. *Pomp.* 18-21.

[64] Plut. *Pomp.* 21.2.

[65] Plut. *Pomp.* 21.1-2. "…he (Pompey) led his army back to Italy, where, as chance would have it, he found the servile war at its height. For this reason, too, Crassus, who had the command in that war, precipitated the battle at great hazard, and was successful, killing twelve thousand three hundred of the enemy. Even in this success, however, fortune somehow or other included Pompey, since five thousand fugitives from the battle fell in his way, all of whom he slew, and then stole a march on Crassus by writing to the senate that Crassus had conquered the gladiators in a pitched battle, but that he himself had extirpated the war entirely. And it was agreeable to the Romans to hear this said and to repeat it, so kindly did they feel towards him…"

During his next command, Plutarch states that Pompey was decisive and swiftly concluded the war against the pirates through ingenious planning, clemency[66], and meticulous organisation[67]. Yet these are not Plutarch's main focus. Instead, he concentrates on Pompey's dispute with Metellus on Crete. The altercation is treated in some detail and reflects Plutarch's educational *modus operandi*. It highlights two Pompeian vices, namely his jealousy and lust for power. Plutarch used these to shape his account for this period and consequently overshadowed Pompey's achievements against the pirates. His outward disapproval is founded on the unanimity of the evidence against Pompey's mistreatment of Metellus, as even Pompey's closest friends were supposedly displeased with his actions[68].

Likewise, Pompey's inheritance of the Eastern command against Mithridates is set amidst the backdrop of his power-mongering tendencies. Pompey joyously receives the command at the behest of popular opinion, despite a feigned attempt to modestly decline[69]. Plutarch's account of Pompey's Eastern campaigns is lengthy and deservedly occupies twelve chapters of the *Life.* It displays a basic outline of Pompey's administrative prowess alongside various military successes, wherein he displays sound judgement. Like the preceding chapters, this section primarily focuses on Pompey's demeanour. The political scuffle between Pompey and Lucullus in the East typifies this. Plutarch reports that Pompey's accession to the Eastern command unfairly appropriated Lucullus' impending success[70]. Neither is offered a flattering portrayal and each is characterised by respective vices, Pompey for his love of power (φιλαρχία), Lucullus with this love of money (φιλαργυρία)[71]. Plutarch's characterisation highlights Pompey's innate cutthroat ambitions and the spiteful measures used to realise them. In particular, Pompey belittles Lucullus' war effort, deeming his successes up to that point as lazy efforts against 'mimic and shadowy kings' (σκιαγραφίαις πεπολεμηκέναι βασιλικαῖς)[72]. In retaliation, Lucullus describes Pompey as a carrion-bird feeding on the remnants of scattered

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[66] Plut. *Pomp.* 27.4. "Some of the pirate bands that were still rowing at large begged for mercy, and since he treated them humanely, and after seizing their ships and persons did them no further harm, the rest became hopeful of mercy too, and made their escape from the other commanders, betook themselves to Pompey with their wives and children, and surrendered to him. All these he spared, and it was chiefly by their aid that he tracked down, seized, and punished those who were still lurking in concealment because conscious of unpardonable crimes."

[67] Plut. *Pomp.* 28.2. "The war was therefore brought to an end and all piracy driven from the sea in less than three months, and besides many other ships, Pompey received in surrender ninety which had brazen beaks."

[68] Plut. *Pomp.* 29.1. "Well, then, his maligners found fault with these measures, and even his best friends were not pleased with his treatment of Metellus in Crete."

[69] Plut. *Pomp.* 30.6. "Alas for my endless tasks! How much better it were to be an unknown man, if I am never to cease from military service, and cannot lay aside this load of envy and spend my time in the country with my wife! As he (Pompey) said this, even his intimate friends could not abide his dissimulation; they knew that his enmity towards Lucullus gave fuel to his innate ambition and love of power, and made him all the more delighted."

[70] Plut. *Pomp.* 31.2-3. "And since both were very great and very successful generals, their lictors had their rods alike wreathed with laurel when they met; but Lucullus was advancing from green and shady regions, while Pompey chanced to have made a long march through a parched and treeless country. Accordingly, when the lictors of Lucullus saw that Pompey's laurels were withered and altogether faded, they took some of their own, which were fresh, and with them wreathed and decorated his rods. This was held to be a sign that Pompey was coming to rob Lucullus of the fruits of his victories and of his glory."

[71] Plut. *Pomp.* 31.4.

[72] Plut. *Pomp.* 31.6.

wars (εἰθισμένον ἀλλοτρίοις νεκροῖς, ὥσπερ ὄρνιν ἀργόν, ἐπικαταίρειν καὶ λείψανα πολέμων σπαράσσειν)[73] which Plutarch explicitly links to various other 'Pompeian' successes[74]. This portrayal clearly stems from a hostile source tradition as it is inconsistent with Plutarch's depiction of the Sertorian war, where he declared Pompey the deserving victor[75]. This discrepancy reflects Plutarch's ambition to moralise events and thereby educate his audience.

Plutarch's tendency to focus on character rather than historical events[76], i.e. his concerns as a biographer, results in a critical depiction through this peak period of Pompey's career. All three commands exhibited Pompey's vices despite other ancient evidence[77] deeming this the pinnacle of his abilities and achievements. This contrast reveals the flaws Plutarch deemed most significant through Pompey's career, namely his incessant desire for power and indifference toward using dishonest means to achieve dominance. It is thus surprising that in the ensuing chapter Plutarch retrospectively summarised this period of Pompey's life as his greatest. He laments that Pompey enjoyed the good fortune of Alexander up to this point, but henceforth succumbed to the illegal interests of those around him[78]. This comparison acknowledges a tradition within which Pompey was likened to Alexander. Plutarch actively dismisses these views[79] and the methods he uses to refute these claims consequently acknowledges its prevalence in his contemporary thought. Consequently, Pompey's Eastern successes echo Alexander's achievements because Plutarch frames them within this context. Hence, while Pompey's vices remain the primary focus, Plutarch certainly accepts the magnitude of Pompey's successes at this time in his life.

Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*, Sections: 46-80

Plutarch thematically divided Pompey's *Life* into two parts and distinguished these by his subject's marked turn in fortunes. The first section, chapters 1-45, reflect Pompey's most successful period. Pompey has a position of primacy with a combination of fortune and ability thereby becoming the most powerful man in Rome. Plutarch purposefully separates this section from the next, chapters 46-80, with the use of retrospect. Pompey's changing fortunes are dramatically stated as Plutarch reflects on the immense successes and contrasts them with his impending failures and immoral victories[80]. This establishes a shift in the moralistic focus of the *Life*. Pompey's desire to achieve dominance was henceforth fulfilled and, for Plutarch, it would have been better that Pompey's death occur here rather than be followed by failure and

[73] Plut. *Pomp.* 31.6.

[74] Plut. *Pomp.* 31.7. "For it was in this way that he had appropriated to himself the victories over Sertorius, Lepidus, and the followers of Spartacus, although they had actually been won by Metellus, Catulus, and Crassus."

[75] Plut. *Pomp.* 21.2.

[76] Plut. *Alex.* 1.1-2.

[77] Cic. *leg.Man*.

[78] Plut. *Pomp.* 46.1-2.

[79] Plut. *Pomp.* 46.1. "His age at this time, as those insist who compare him in all points to Alexander and force the parallel, was less than thirty-four years, though in fact he was nearly forty."

[80] Plut. *Pomp.* 46.1. "How happy would it have been for him if he had ended his life at this point, up to which he enjoyed the good fortune of Alexander! For succeeding time brought him only success that made him odious, and failure that was irreparable."

misfortune. Pompey becomes an increasingly tragic figure. The detriments to his career came from passivity. He became increasingly reliant on political allies to achieve success and they increasingly manipulate his power to enhance their own political statuses. Moreover the consequences of this dependence could not be known until it was too late. In sum, Pompey becomes a victim to the whims of contemporaries rather than a force imposing his will upon others[81]. He is a man to whom things happen[82].

Plutarch initiates the second section dramatically by forecasting Pompey's demise through metaphor. Pompey's power is shown as collapsing like a city whose strongest defences fall to an enemy and thereby add their strength to the victor[83]. The ensuing chapter fulfils this portrayal as Caesar briefly becomes the text's primary focus and Pompey is relegated to a position of secondary importance. Caesar, the intriguer[84], manipulated the political context to his benefit by bringing Crassus and Pompey together in a bid to control the Roman political sphere. Plutarch stresses that this political alliance, later known as the 'first triumvirate', was injurious to Pompey's cause and character[85]. It inconspicuously subverted Pompey's dominance making him the victim of Caesar's ambitions.

Plutarch introduces two key themes in chapter 47 which occupy the rest of the *Life*. Firstly, he foretells Pompey's demise and dramatizes its inevitable occurrence. He achieves this by foreshadowing the eventual political dissolution of the 'triumvirate', long before its occurrence, thus breaking his otherwise chronological schema. Secondly, he outlines a shift in Pompey's character which is directly imposed on him by the newly formed allegiance with Caesar. For example, Pompey displays a vulgarity and arrogance toward the senate previously unheralded[86]. The significance of this moment is not realised until Pompey's fateful[87] defeat at Pharsalus much later in the *Life*. Pompey's vanity disappears at this point and he behaves like

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[81] Pompey's treatment of Clodius perfectly typifies this shift. See: Plut. *Pomp.* 46.4-5.

[82] C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History*, 100.

[83] Plut. *Pomp.* 46.2. "That political power which he had won by his own legitimate efforts, this he used in the interests of others illegally, thus weakening his own reputation in proportion as he strengthened them, so that before he was aware of it he was ruined by the very vigour and magnitude of his own power. And just as the strongest parts of a city's defences, when they are captured by an enemy, impart to him their own inherent strength, so it was by Pompey's power and influence that Caesar was raised up against the city, and Caesar overthrew and cast down the very man by whose aid he had waxed strong against the rest. And this was the way it came about."

[84] Plut. *Pomp.* 47.1-3.

[85] Plut. *Pomp.* 47.1. "At this time Caesar had returned from his province and had inaugurated a policy which brought him the greatest favour for the present and power for the future, but proved most injurious to Pompey and the city."

[86] Plut. *Pomp.* 47.4-5. "And when he was opposed by his colleague Bibulus, and Cato stood ready to support Bibulus with all his might, Caesar brought Pompey on the rostra before the people, and asked him in so many words whether he approved the proposed laws: and when Pompey said he did, "Then," said Caesar, "in case any resistance should be made to the law, will you come to the aid of the people?" "Yes, indeed," said Pompey, "I will come, bringing, against those who threaten swords, both sword and buckler." Never up to that day had Pompey said or done anything more vulgar and arrogant, as it was thought, so that even his friends apologized for him and said the words must have escaped him on the spur of the moment."

[87] Plut. *Pomp.* 66.5. See; Christopher Pelling, *Plutarch: Caesar*, Oxford University Press, (Oxford, 2011). 353.

a man who had utterly forgotten that he was Pompey the great[88]. Plutarch thus culminates the deteriorating depiction of Pompey by giving it form through this act of madness[89]. Upon regaining his senses, Pompey soberly reflects on his defeat and flight from battle[90]. He is cast as a pitiful subject; a portrayal garnered by his absolute subjection to those around him. Plutarch moralises this shift by lamenting the power of fate which in a moment can destroy a lifetime of work[91]. More importantly, he outlines how the fundamental changes in Pompey's character during the 'triumvirate' were a precursor to his demise. Plutarch's description of Caesar's march into Italy is a poignant example of this moral trope. Pompey's mind was infected (ἀναπίμπλημι)[92] by the fear-mongering multitude of magistrates that confided in him. The use of the passive voice emphasises that, although he was voted the highest office, he was prevented from acting of his own accord[93]. Amidst the chaos, Pompey was a puppet-ruler: one who was elected to the highest political power but, in reality, was manipulated by the fears of those he was leading. Despite this, Plutarch stresses that Pompey retained the goodwill of his peers[94], including those who refused his judgements. This literary reprise conveys Plutarch's appreciation for Pompey's persona, his sympathy for the impossible circumstances, and overall conception of the period. These closing comments embody Plutarch's characterisation of Pompey. Plutarch illustrates that Pompey's defeat was the result of the tumultuous circumstances around him and that these were ultimately created by Caesar.

Plutarch's dramatic recreation of Pompey's demise closes with his flight to Egypt. Pompey acts commendably in a telling dialogue with his wife[95], Cornelia, before setting out to Egypt. He encouraged her to join him so that he might achieve greatness once again[96] rather than lament his decline in fortune. Plutarch emphasises Pompey's resolve and resilience at this low-point, which vividly highlights his virtues against his impending death, an event of which the

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[88] Plut. *Pomp.* 72.1.

[89] Plut. *Pomp.* 72.1. "After his infantry was thus routed, and when, from the cloud of dust which he saw, Pompey conjectured the fate of his cavalry, what thoughts passed through his mind it were difficult to say; but he was most like a man bereft of sense and crazed, who had utterly forgotten that he was Pompey the Great, and without a word to any one, he walked slowly off to his camp…"

[90] Plut. *Pomp.* 73.1-2. "But Pompey, when he had gone a little distance from the camp, gave his horse the rein, and with only a few followers, since no one pursued him, went quietly away, indulging in such reflections as a man would naturally make who for four and thirty years had been accustomed to conquer and get the mastery in everything, and who now for the first time, in his old age, got experience of defeat and flight; he thought how in a single hour he had lost the power and glory gained in so many wars and conflicts, he who a little while ago was guarded by such an array of infantry and horse, but was now going away so insignificant and humbled as to escape the notice of the enemies who were in search of him."

[91] Plut. *Pomp.* 73.1-2.

[92] Plut. *Pomp.* 61.2. "For it was impossible to check the reigning fear, nor would any one suffer Pompey to follow the dictates of his own judgement, but whatever feeling each one had, whether fear, or distress, or perplexity, he promptly infected Pompey's mind with this."

[93] Plut. *Pomp.* 61.2.

[94] Plut. *Pomp.* 61.4. "But even amid the actual terrors of the hour Pompey was a man to be envied for the universal good will felt towards him, because, though many blamed his generalship, there was no one who hated the general. Indeed, one would have found that those who fled the city for the sake of liberty were not so numerous as those who did so because they were unable to forsake Pompey."

[95] Plut. *Pomp.* 75.

[96] Plut. *Pomp.* 75.1.

work's audience was certainly aware. This portrayal is continued with Pompey's dignity in the closing moments of his life. He was honourable as he enters the small welcoming party's boat, quoting Sophocles[97], and retained nobility even whilst his treacherous enemies, who were formerly former comrades, murdered him[98]. Finally, Plutarch outlines Pompey's obsequies to reiterate his popularity and military success. In the powerful anecdote, an old Roman who had served with Pompey in his early campaigns helps Philip, Pompey's freedman, build Pompey's funerary pyre. The old Roman's justification for helping Philip reflects Plutarch's conception of Pompey:

> But thou shalt not have this honour all to thyself; let me too share in a pious privilege thus offered, that I may not altogether regret my sojourn in a foreign land, if in requital for many hardships I find this happiness at least, to touch with my hands and array for burial the greatest of Roman imperators (μέγιστον αὐτοκράτορα Ῥωμαίων).[99]

Plutarch consolidates this portrayal in his evaluative comparison between the parallel lives of Pompey and Agesilaus, wherein Pompey receives much praise. Plutarch commends Pompey's conduct throughout his early career, as he achieved fame and power in a righteous manner while Sulla was freeing Italy of her tyrants[100]. Pompey showed Sulla immense respect, both in life and after his death, whilst giving back equal to that which he received from the dictator. Furthermore, Plutarch attributes Pompey's demise to the ill-fortune which overtook him[101]. This turn of events was unanticipated by all Romans, which somewhat alleviates Pompey's missteps and dramatizes his demise. Despite these positive aspects, Plutarch also outlines several flaws. He comments that posterity remembers Pompey's errors in the civil war above all else, wherein he failed to achieve the task of a good general, i.e. "to force his enemies to give battle when he is superior to them."[102] This refers to Pompey's helpless situation in the civil war, where he was defined by his colleagues' actions. Plutarch, however, states that a great general wouldn't allow himself to become subject to inferior commanders[103].

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[97] Plut. *Pomp.* 78.4.

[98] Plut. *Pomp.* 79.3-4. "But at this point, while Pompey was clasping the hand of Philip that he might rise to his feet more easily, Septimius, from behind, ran him through the body with his sword, then Salvius next, and then Achillas, drew their daggers and stabbed him. And Pompey, drawing his toga down over his face with both hands, without an act or a word that was unworthy of himself, but with a groan merely, submitted to their blows…"

[99] Plut. *Pomp.* 80.3.

[100] Plut. *Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 1.1.

[101] Plut. *Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 2.1.

[102] Plut. *Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 4.1.

[103] Plut. *Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 4.2-3. "For that a youthful commander should be frightened by tumults and outcries into cowardly weakness and abandon his safest plans, is natural and pardonable; but that Pompey the Great, whose camp the Romans called their country, and his tent their senate, while they gave the name of traitors and rebels to the consuls and praetors and other magistrates at Rome, — that he who was known to be under no one's command, but to have served all his campaigns most successfully as imperator, should be almost forced by the scoffs of Favonius and Domitius, and by the fear of being called Agamemnon, to put to the hazard the supremacy and freedom of Rome, who could tolerate this? If he had regard only for the immediate infamy involved, then he ought to have made a stand at the first and to have fought to the finish the fight for Rome, instead of calling the flight which he then made a Themistoclean stratagem and afterwards counting it a disgraceful thing to delay before fighting in Thessaly."

In summary, Plutarch's *Life of Pompey* propagates a highly complex, yet undeniably relatable figure, who was driven by personal motives but determined by the actions of his peers[104]. Pompey's relatability stems from his humanising weaknesses which outline his frailty as a mere mortal[105]. This sympathetic aspect of Pompey's depiction adds a tragic element to his inevitable demise[106]. Importantly, Plutarch also critically evaluated Pompey's flaws with his usual moralising undertones. He thus perpetuated an even-handed depiction of Pompey's life, where virtues and vices are given equal standing. This is quite unlike some of the surviving evidence which preceded Plutarch. Sallust, for instance, reports that Pompey was treacherous by nature and made this an unredeemable flaw. On the contrary, Plutarch omits this representation, instead considering Pompey a lenient conqueror who through clemency alone transformed pirates, a most detestable group, into respectable citizens[107]. Plutarch is, however, critical of other Pompeian traits. He references Pompey's arrogance and tendency to transgress the law. Similar negative traits were displayed by Cicero[108], Caesar[109], and Sallust[110] at various points in Pompey's career. Thus, Plutarch in some way engaged with this tradition, though it is unclear whether he directly engaged with these works or not. Irrespective of this, Plutarch differentiated his portrayal from these sources. These undesirable traits were purposefully assigned to the latter part of Pompey's career, after the formation of the 'triumvirate', where he was shaped by external influences. This allowed Plutarch to blame Pompey's questionable actions on his familial connections, who manipulated his decisions for their own benefit[111].

Pompey in Plutarch's other Late Republic *Lives*

Pompey's portrayal in Plutarch's other *Lives* widely range between outright hostility and favour. The greatest contrast between Pompey's *Life* and those of his contemporaries, particularly Caesar, Cato, Cicero, and Lucullus, is Pompey's passivity in his own biography. In the lives of Caesar and Cato, for instance, Pompey is not a passive political force but works toward getting himself appointed dictator, despite feigning reluctance[112]. Likewise, Pompey is active throughout the *Life of Lucullus*. He successfully commands in Spain and demands the

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[104] C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History*, 101. "He (Pompey) is, indeed, a man to whom things happen, and he lets them."

[105] Plut. *Pomp.* 75.1.

[106] C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History*, 100. "It is a powerful and sympathetic psychological portrait, and the other Lives accounts of the fifties have little hint of it."

[107] Plut. *Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 3.2.

[108] Cic. *Att.* 4.9.7. (SB 174)

[109] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.86.2-4.

[110] Sall. *Hist.* 3.84. "From his earliest youth, Pompeius had been persuaded by the flattery of his supporters to believe that he was the equal of King Alexander. Therefore he tried to rival Alexander's achievements and plans."

[111] Plut. *Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 1.3. "…Pompey's transgressions of right and justice in his political life were due to his family connections, for he joined in most of the wrongdoings of Caesar and Scipio because they were his relations by marriage…".

See also: C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History*, 101. "In all this there is a pervasive contrast with Caesar. Pompey is politically inert; Caesar is always at work, even when men do not realize. His furtive, awful cleverness undermines Roman politics, even when he is absent in Gaul; he shows a deviousness quite alien to Pompey's simple and generous nature…"

[112] Plut. *Caes.* 28.7; *Cat. Mi.* 45.7.

senate's assistance[113], wins the support of the populace to receive the Eastern command[114], and schemes against the *Optimates* to control the balance of senatorial power[115]. This is linked to the other significant difference between Pompey's portrayals in the two *Lives*. Pompey's active agency eradicates Plutarch's tragic portrait in the *Pompey* where he passively endures his peers' decisions and fatefully suffers the consequences. In the *Life of* Lucullus, this manifests in Pompey's persona having sinister aspects. For example, he organises an assassination plot against himself and then forces the alleged perpetrator, Vettius, to falsely charge Lucullus with masterminding the plot before the senate[116]. This opposes Plutarch's version of events in the *Life of Pompey*. Pompey's depiction in Plutarch's *Life of Cato* is also negative. In one episode, Plutarch describes Pompey insincerely emphasising Cato's many respectable virtues for self-interest's sake, rather than friendship's sake. Plutarch stresses that Pompey's praise was disingenuous and that Pompey was actually glad when Cato went away[117]. On one hand, this episode highlights Pompey's political aptitude and ability to manipulate his peers. This contradicts the trope of Pompey's political impotence as suggested by other sources. On the other hand, it supports the treacherous aspect of Pompey's character. Plutarch later stresses Pompey's dishonesty in 55, when he shamefully dissolved the senate by falsely claiming that he had heard thunder during Cato's candidacy for praetorship. Pompey thus dishonestly used the thunder, which was an inauspicious portent, to postpone proceedings and prolonged the voting process, which thereafter allowed him to bribe senators and ensure that Vatinius won the praetorship over Cato[118].

In the *Life of Caesar*, Plutarch suggests that the failing Republic mistakenly identified Pompey as a cure for its maladies[119], when Caesar would instead prove Rome's saviour. Moreover, he states that both men were equally culpable for the war[120]. Plutarch thus builds on his earlier comment, wherein he asserted the civil war was not caused by a quarrel between Pompey and Caesar, but by their friendship[121]. In doing so, Plutarch marginalises the treacherous aspect of Pompey's deceit[122] which was mirrored by Caesar. However, he emphasises other of Pompey's vices, particularly his vanity throughout the civil war period. For example, Plutarch describes

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[113] Plut. *Luc.* 5.2-3.
[114] Plut. *Luc.* 35.7.
[115] Plut. *Luc.* 42.5.
[116] Plut. *Luc.* 42.7.
[117] Plut. *Cat. Mi.* 14.1-2. "However, Pompey himself put to shame the men who were thus neglectful of Cato through ignorance. For when Cato came to Ephesus and was proceeding to pay his respects to Pompey as an older man, one who was greatly superior in reputation, and then in command of the greatest forces, Pompey caught sight of him and would not wait, nor would he suffer Cato to come to him as he sat, but sprang up as though to honour a superior, went to meet him, and gave him his hand… And indeed it was no secret that Pompey's attentions to him were due to self-interest rather than to friendship; men knew that Pompey admired him when he was present, but was glad to have him go away."
[118] Plut. *Cat. Mi.* 42.1-4.
[119] Plut *Caes.* 28.5-6. See also: Christopher Pelling, 'Plutarch's tale of two cities: do the Parallel lives combine as global histories?', *In Plutarch's Lives: Parallelism and Purpose*, ed. Noreen Humble, 217-35.
[120] Plut. *Caes.* 28.1
[121] Plut. *Caes.* 13.4-5.
[122] Plut. *Caes.* 29.

how Pompey's vanity prevented him from preparing for the conflict[123] because of the damaging rumours which circulated about Caesar[124]. Plutarch criticises both Pompey[125] and Caesar's[126] generalship during the battle of Dyrrachium, though Caesar receives a worse portrayal[127]. Hereafter Plutarch elides Pompey's decision to ignore his colleagues[128] as given in the *Life of Pompey*. Here Pompey's peers suggested that his forces should return to Italy, the greatest prize of the war[129]. Plutarch instead dramatically outlines how Pompey was goaded[130], against his will[131], into the decisive battle at Pharsalus. Plutarch is later critical of Pompey's momentary madness, wherein he fled the battlefield "and awaited what was to come"[132], but does not offer much detail. Plutarch thus realised Caesar's defining achievement, namely his destruction of Pompey, which was presented in the introduction to Alexander and Caesar's *Lives*[133]. Moreover, Pompey was framed as Caesar's political and military inferior against whom he was destined to succumb.

Plutarch's *Life of Sertorius* illustrates important positive Pompeian characteristics. In the opening paragraph, Plutarch emphasises Pompey's daring[134] against Sertorius. He later reckons Pompey as an intimidating military presence, whose impending arrival in Spain struck fear into Perpenna's forces[135]. Plutarch hereafter references various Pompeian defeats to Sertorius which counterbalance this portrayal, but these were intended to highlight Sertorius' abilities rather than demonstrate Pompey's inadequacies. Finally, Plutarch emphasises Pompey's military capacity and maturity when he burned Sertorius' letters which incriminated several senators, thereby saving Rome from "revolutionary terrors"[136]. Moreover, Pompey's execution of Perpenna's fellow conspirators was treated as an act of justice, which further challenges Pompey's cruel portrayal[137].

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[123] Despite ambiguity in the Greek, Pelling suggests that Pompey was really misled by the rumours at Plut. C*aes.* 29.6. See: C. Pelling, *Plutarch: Caesar*, 301.

[124] Plut. *Caes.* 29.5-6.

[125] Plut. *Caes.* 39.8. "…Caesar said to his friends as he left them: "To-day victory had been with the enemy, if they had had a victor in command."

[126] Plut. *Caes.* 39.9. "Then going by himself to his tent and lying down, he (Caesar) spent that most distressful of all nights in vain reflections, convinced that he had shown bad generalship. For while a fertile country lay waiting for him, and the prosperous cities of Macedonia and Thessaly, he had neglected to carry the war thither, and had posted himself here by the sea, which his enemies controlled with their fleets, being thus held in siege by lack of provisions rather than besieging with his arms."

[127] Pelling convincingly argues that this scene reflects the distraught Pompey (Plut. *Caes*. 45.7). See C. Pelling, *Plutarch: Caesar*, 352.

[128] Plut. *Pomp.* 66.5.

[129] Plut. *Pomp.* 41.4.

[130] Plut. *Caes.* 41.

[131] Plut. *Caes.* 42.1.

[132] Plut. *Caes.* 45.7-9.

[133] Plut. *Alex.* 1.1. See: C. Pelling, *Plutarch: Caesar*, 275.

[134] Plut. *Sert.* 1.5.

[135] Plut. *Sert.* 15.2.

[136] Plut. *Sert.* 27.3. "Pompey, then, did not act in this emergency like a young man, but like one whose understanding was right well matured and disciplined, and so freed Rome from revolutionary terrors. For he got together those letters and all the papers of Sertorius and burned them…"

[137] Plut. *Sert.* 27.4.

Plutarch's portrayal of Pompey in the *Life of Cicero* is mixed. It stresses Pompey's greatness[138] and close friendship with Cicero. However, the most memorable passage highlights Pompey's betrayal of his friendship with Cicero, which saw Cicero exiled and Pompey politically compromised[139]. This portrayal is damning, as Plutarch's description of Pompey and Cicero's reconciliation hardly moderates this view. This passage supports the anti-Pompeian paradigms of treachery, coldness, and political incompetence.

Despite their antithetical differences, each of Plutarch's *Lives* that references Pompey are important. They all highlight the fundamental attributes and characteristics Plutarch deemed essential to recreate any particular event. Moreover, Plutarch's methodology always prioritised each *Life* according to the characteristics of its protagonist. While this occasionally caused historical inconsistencies[140], a wider understanding of the political and social aspects of each *Life* usually reveals a dominant picture. The *Lives* of Caesar, Cicero, Sertorius, Lucullus, and Cato have each revealed aspects of Pompey, which weren't apparent in his own *Life.* They also demonstrate the different views of Pompey Plutarch encountered in his sources, thereby indicating a highly contested memory and a divided response, which likely originated from prejudiced treatments.

2.5. Appian

Appian was a Roman historian of Greek origin, who was born in the late first century in Alexandria, Egypt. Little is known about his personal life, though he was a Greek official of the equestrian class in Alexandria, and later became a Roman citizen and advocate. He wrote twenty-four books on Roman affairs in Greek, which covered many of Rome's greatest military conquests. Eleven of these survive today, including a history of the Mithridatic wars and five books on Rome's various civil wars. These outline Pompey's most important military campaigns and personal traits.

Appian divided his history according to Rome's conquests of geographical landmasses, rather than a chronological schema. Therefore, Appian first references Pompey in his history of the Mithridatic wars, despite this command occurring later than that in Spain. I will not follow Appian's framework in this section because it would run contrary to the rest of the thesis. This sub-chapter will instead chronologically trace Pompey's career and representation throughout Appian's history. Appian presages Pompey's greatness during his commentary on the Sullan civil war. He emphasises Pompey's importance with an anecdote stating that he was the only man Sulla rose to greet upon entrance[141]. Furthermore, he illustrates Pompey's astronomical rise, as he became Sulla's right-hand man during the civil war and received a triumph over the

[138] Plut. *Cic.* 8.6-7.

[139] Plut. *Cic,* 31.2-4.

[140] Note that in Plut. *Cat. Mi.* 31.1-3, Plutarch forgets to include Crassus as a part of the 'triumvirate'.

[141] App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.9.80. "So Sulla held him (Pompey) in honour, though still very young; and they say he never rose at the entrance of any other than this youth." Trans. Horace White.

Numidians, despite being under age and still in the equestrian order[142]. These origins are cited as the reason for Pompey's subsequent commands against Sertorius in Spain and Mithridates in Pontus and his ultimate greatness[143]. This favourable representation is not persistent and shifts with Appian's account of the Sullan proscriptions. Here, Pompey was despatched to follow Carbo, who "weakly fled to Africa with his friends" (ἀσθενῶς ἔφευγε σὺν τοῖς φίλοις ἐς Λιβύην), and execute the proscribed. He achieves this, but receives Appian's ire for his treatment of Carbo. Appian stresses that Pompey treated Carbo harshly, bringing the three times former consul in chains before a public assembly (ἐπεδημηγόρησε[144]), and having him executed[145]. He thus insinuates that Pompey had cruel tendencies. This differs from Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*, wherein Plutarch highlighted that Pompey treated all political captives with these formalities, before showing the majority clemency[146].

Appian also describes Pompey's Spanish command in relation to the Sullan civil war, as Sertorius, the commander of the Spanish forces, was previously allied with Marius and Cinna. Pompey's portrayal is mixed throughout this chapter, as he repeatedly suffers defeats to Sertorius[147], who was one of Rome's greatest generals[148]. Sertorius' assassination by Perpenna, however, promptly leads to the end of the Spanish war. Without Sertorius' leadership, Perpenna's forces were unable to resist Pompey's forces in battle. Appian subsequently raises his prudent decision to execute Perpenna, who had startling revelations about the factions at Rome. Pompey thus avoided further civil strife, which "added to his high reputation" (εἰς δόξαν ἀγαθήν)[149].

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[142] App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.9.80. "When the war was nearly finished Sulla sent him to Africa to drive out the party of Carbo and to restore Hiempsal (who had been expelled by the Numidians) to his kingdom. For this service Sulla allowed him a triumph over the Numidians, although he was under age, and was still in the equestrian order."

[143] App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.9.80. "From this beginning Pompeius achieved greatness, being sent against Sertorius in Spain and later against Mithridates in Pontus."

[144] Horace White translates ἐπεδημηγόρησε as harangued, which promotes a particularly negative reading. I have followed the more common reading that Carbo was brought before a popular assembly, as this retains the shameful aspects of the display, but does not amplify the negative force of the portrayal.

[145] App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.11.96. "While the affairs of Italy were in this state, Pompey sent a force and captured Carbo, who had fled with many persons of distinction from Africa to Sicily and thence to the island of Cossyra. He ordered his officers to kill all of the others without bringing them into his presence; but Carbo, "the three times consul," he caused to be brought before his feet in chains, and after making a public harangue at him, murdered him and sent his head to Sulla."

[146] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.5.

[147] App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.13.109. "Directly Pompey arrived in Spain Sertorius cut in pieces a whole legion of his army, which had been sent out foraging, together with its animals and servants."

See also: App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.13.110. "On the other hand, Sertorius defeated Pompey, who received a dangerous wound from a spear in the thigh, and this put an end to that battle." App. *Bell. Civ.* 3. 1.13.112.

[148] Plut. *Sert.* 1.4-5.

[149] App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.13.115. "He (Perpenna) was seized by some horsemen and dragged towards Pompey's headquarters, loaded with the execrations of his own men, as the murderer of Sertorius, and crying out that he would give Pompey information about the factions in Rome. This he said either because it was true, or in order to be brought safe to Pompey's presence, but the latter sent orders and put him to death before he came into his presence, fearing, it seemed, lest some startling revelation might be the source of new troubles at Rome. Pompey seems to have behaved very prudently in this matter, and his action added to his high reputation."

Appian details Pompey's ensuing command against the Pirates prior to his account of the Mithridatic command[150]. The war's massive scope and difficulty is outlined in some detail[151] and contrasts with the swiftness of Pompey's decisive victory[152]. Appian emphasises Pompey's fear-inspiring disposition[153] which caused a war of supposedly great difficulty to be completed in a few days[154]. Furthermore, the passage highlights Pompey's clemency towards the pirates, who were forced into a piratical lifestyle because of their poverty-stricken circumstances[155].

This narrative leads into Appian's favourable account of the Mithridatic war, which was granted to him while he was still in Cilicia[156]. Appian contemplates whether Pompey's command, which granted him unprecedented powers throughout the entire Roman world, was the origin of the epithet the great (*Magnus*)[157]. There are two issues with this comment in

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[150] App. *Mith.* 12.14.91. "But when this was accomplished, and while Pompey, the destroyer of the pirates, was still in Asia, the Mithridatic war was at once resumed and the command of it also given to Pompey. Since the campaign at sea, which preceded his war against Mithridates, was a part of the operations under his command, and does not find a fitting place in any other portion of my history, it seems well to introduce it here and to run over the events as they occurred."

[151] App. *Mith.* 12.14.94. "When the Romans could no longer endure the damage and disgrace they made Gnaeus Pompey, who was then their man of greatest reputation, commander by law for three years, with absolute power over the whole sea within the Pillars of Hercules, and of the land for a distance of 400 stades from the coast. They sent letters to all kings, rulers, peoples and cities, that they should aid Pompey in all ways. They gave him power to raise troops and to collect money from the provinces, and they furnished a large army from their own muster-roll, and all the ships they had, and money to the amount of 6000 Attic talents,—so great and difficult did they consider the task of overcoming such great forces, dispersed over so wide a sea, hiding easily in so many nooks, retreating quickly and darting out again unexpectedly. Never did any man before Pompey set forth with so great authority conferred upon him by the Romans. Presently he had an army of 120,000 foot and 4000 horse, and 270 ships, including *hemiolii*. He had twenty-five assistants of senatorial rank, whom they call *legati*, among whom he divided the sea, giving ships, cavalry and infantry to each, and investing them with the insignia of praetors, in order that each one might have absolute authority over the part entrusted to him, while he, Pompey, like a king of kings, should move to and fro among them to see that they remained where they were stationed, lest, while he was pursuing the pirates in one place, he should be drawn to something else before his work was finished, and in order that there might be forces to encounter them everywhere and to prevent them from forming junctions with each other."

[152] App. *Mith.* 12.14.97. "For this victory, so swiftly and unexpectedly gained, the Romans extolled Pompey greatly…"

[153] App. *Mith.* 12.14.96. "The terror of his name and the greatness of his preparations had produced a panic among the robbers. They hoped that if they did not resist they might receive lenient treatment…"

[154] App. *Mith.* 12.14.96. "Thus the war against the pirates, which it was supposed would prove very difficult, was brought to an end by Pompey in a few days." (ὧδε μὲν ὁ λῃστρικὸς πόλεμος, χαλεπώτατος ἔσεσθαι νομισθείς, ὀλιγήμερος ἐγένετο τῷ Πομπηίῳ)

[155] App. *Mith.* 12.14.96. "Those pirates who had evidently fallen into this way of life not from wickedness, but from poverty consequent upon the war, Pompey settled in Mallus, Adana, and Epiphaneia, or any other uninhabited or thinly peopled town in Cilicia Tracheia. Some of them, too, he sent to Dyme in Achaia."

[156] App. *Mith.* 12.14.97. "For this victory, so swiftly and unexpectedly gained, the Romans extolled Pompey greatly and while he was still in Cilicia they chose him commander of the war against Mithridates, giving him the same unlimited powers as before, to make war and peace as he liked, and to proclaim nations friends or enemies according to his own judgment. They gave him command of all the forces beyond the borders of Italy."

[157] App. *Mith.* 12.14.97. "All these powers together had never been given to any one general before; and this is perhaps the reason why they call him Pompey the Great, for the Mithridatic war had been already finished by his predecessors."

This likely stemmed from a pro-Lucullan source tradition. See: App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.2.9. "In the meantime Pompey, who had acquired great glory and power by his Mithridatic war, was asking the Senate to ratify numerous concessions that he had granted to kings, princes, and cities. Most Senators, however, moved by envy, made opposition, and especially Lucullus, who had held the command against Mithridates before Pompey, and who

Appian's text. Firstly, it contradicts his earlier introduction of Lucullus' Mithridatic war. Here he stated that Lucullus' campaigns "came to no fixed and definite conclusion" (ἐς οὐδὲν βέβαιον οὐδὲ κεκριμένον τέλος ἔληξεν)[158] and that Lucullus, who was at that time Proconsul of Asia, was being criticised for unnecessarily prolonging the war for his own benefit. Secondly, the remark runs contrary to Appian's ensuing narrative, wherein he outlines Pompey's completion of the war through military and tactical genius. Appian's comment thus does not fit within his narrative. Furthermore, it propagates an anti-Pompeian sentiment which provides selective modern readings with hostile evidence.

The subsequent passages outline Pompey's manoeuvres in the East, stressing his military competence[159] (which struck fear into Mithridates), clemency[160], and respect for senatorial mandates[161]. Appian emphasises Pompey's greatness several times during this narrative. He labels Pompey one of the greatest generals of the time[162], presents in great detail the many lands Pompey conquered and administered[163], and reflects on how Pompey's successes were

considered that the victory was his, since he had left the king for Pompey in a state of extreme weakness. Crassus co-operated with Lucullus in this matter. Pompey was indignant and made friends with Caesar and promised under oath to support him for the consulship."

See also discussion above, concerning Plutarch's account of the dispute between Pompey and Lucullus in Galatia in **section 2.4.** Plut. *Pomp.* 31.2-3.

[158] App. *Mith.* 12.14.91.

[159] App. *Mith.* 12.14.99. **"**He (Pompey) passed round to the eastward of Mithridates, established a series of fortified posts and camps in a circle of 150 stades, and drew a line of circumvallation around him in order to make foraging no longer easy for him. The king did not oppose this work, either from fear, or from that mental paralysis which afflicts all men on the approach of calamity."

See also: App. *Mith.* 12.14.103.

[160] App. *Mith.* 12.15.104. "As Pompey drew near, this young Tigranes, after communicating his intentions to Phraates and receiving his approval (for Phraates also desired Pompey's friendship), took refuge with Pompey as a suppliant; and this although he was a grandson of Mithridates. But Pompey's reputation among the barbarians for justice and good faith was great, so that trusting to it Tigranes the father also came to him unheralded to submit all his affairs to Pompey's decision and to make complaint against his son."

[161] App. *Mith.* 12.16.106. "Those of Tigranes asked Pompey to aid one who was his friend, while those of the Parthian sought to establish friendship between him and the Roman people. As Pompey did not think good to fight the Parthians without a decree of the Senate, he sent mediators to compose their differences."

[162] App. *Mith.* 12.16.112. "He (Mithridates) fought with the greatest generals of his time. He was vanquished by Sulla, Lucullus, and Pompey, although several times he got the better of them also."

[163] App. *Mith.* 12.17.114. "Pompey, having cleared out the robber dens and prostrated the greatest king then living, in one and the same war, and having fought successful battles, besides those of the Pontic war, with Colchians, Albanians, Iberians, Armenians, Medes, Arabs, Jews and other Eastern nations, extended the Roman sway as far as Egypt."

received by contemporaries[164]. Finally, he asserts that Pompey deserved his credit for these exploits[165], which resonated in Appian's times[166].

Appian treats the civil war between Pompey and Caesar in greatest detail, outlining the intricate political causes for the war and their eventual outcomes. His history does not greatly differ from the narrative of Plutarch's account. However, it is worth explaining Appian's specific references to Pompey's character in the lead up to and throughout the civil war. This portrait is of greatest significance to this thesis as certain depictions are prominent throughout modern scholarship. Before recounting the civil war, Appian cites the hostile political climate in the late 60s as the backdrop and origin for the eventual formation of the 'triumvirate'. Furthermore, this coalition is recognised as a defining political phenomenon, the disintegration of which gave the civil war impetus[167]. Appian henceforth develops Pompey's portrayal in relation to the struggle for political dominance between two equal competitors[168], while also deterministically anticipating the conflict. His ensuing Pompeian portrait is somewhat balanced. He praises Pompey's administrative prowess for his management of the grain commission in 57 BC, which was necessitated by grain shortage in the capital. Furthermore, he stresses that Pompey's conduct was praiseworthy throughout and enhanced his reputation and power[169]. However, Appian also cites numerous negative Pompeian characteristics. He focuses on Pompey's deceitful tendencies and frequently remains sceptical of Pompey's

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[164] App. *Mith.* 12.17.116. "Then he (Pompey) marched to Ephesus, embarked for Italy, and hastened to Rome, having dismissed his soldiers at Brundisium to their homes, a democratic action which greatly surprised the Romans. As he approached the city he was met by successive processions, first of youths, farthest from the city, then bands of men of different ages came out as far as they severally could walk; last of all came the Senate, which was lost in wonder at his exploits, for no one had ever before vanquished so powerful an enemy, and at the same time brought so many great nations under subjection and extended the Roman rule to the Euphrates. He was awarded a triumph exceeding in brilliancy any that had gone before, being now only thirty-five years of age."

[165] App. *Mith.* 12.17.121. "Thus, since their dominion had been advanced, in consequence of the Mithridatic war, from Spain and the Pillars of Hercules to the Euxine sea, and the sands which border Egypt, and the river Euphrates, it was fitting that this victory should be called the great one, and that Pompey, who accompanied the army, should be styled the Great."

[166] App. *Mith.* 12.17.118. "Most of these people, who did not pay them tribute before, were now subjected to it. For these reasons especially I think they considered this a great war and called the victory which ended it the Great Victory and gave the title of Great (in Latin *Magnus*) to Pompey who gained it for them (by which appellation he is called to this day); on account of the great number of nations recovered or added to their dominion, the length of time (forty years) that the war had lasted, and the courage and endurance of Mithridates, who had shown himself capable of meeting all emergencies."

[167] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.2.9. "Most Senators, however, moved by envy, made opposition, and especially Lucullus, who had held the command against Mithridates before Pompey, and who considered that the victory was his, since he had left the king for Pompey in a state of extreme weakness. Crassus co-operated with Lucullus in this matter. Pompey was indignant and made friends with Caesar and promised under oath to support him for the consulship. The latter thereupon brought Crassus into friendly relations with Pompey. So these three most powerful men pooled their interests."

[168] Eleanor Cowan highlights how Pompey and Caesar are characterised by their ὑπόκρισις, in 'Deceit in Appian', in *Appian's Roman History: Empire and Civil War*, ed. Kathryn Welch, 188-94.

[169] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.3.18. "As the Romans were suffering from scarcity, they appointed Pompey the sole manager of the grain supply and gave him, as in his operations against the pirates, twenty assistants from the Senate. These he distributed in like manner among the provinces while he superintended the whole, and thus Rome was very soon provided with abundant supplies, **by which means Pompey again gained great reputation and power**."

political intentions in the years leading to the civil war. Firstly, Appian highlights Pompey's desire for a dictatorship, which he discountenanced in words but secretly wanted[170], amid the backdrop of political turmoil after Crassus' and Julia's deaths[171]. This deceptive streak continues in several other instances. Pompey later "pretended to be indignant at the mention of Caesar's name"[172] (ὁ Πομπήιος ἀμφὶ μὲν τοῦ Καίσαρος ἠγανάκτει) when confronted about his anti-corruption bill, which to many seemed to be directed against Caesar[173]. Furthermore, Appian is sceptical of Pompey even when he acts in Caesar's favour. For example, he states that Pompey only blocked Marcellus' proposal, which demanded Caesar relinquish his command immediately in place of another commander, in an attempt to be "making a pretence of fairness and good-will"[174] (ὁ Πομπήιος εὐπρεπείᾳ τε λόγου καὶ εὐνοίας ὑποκρίσει). He thus was not acting in the interests of rightfulness. Appian later stresses Pompey's cunning and manipulative facets, outlining his elaborate ruse to weaken Caesar's forces. The senate demanded that two legions, one each from Caesar and Pompey, should be recalled and sent to Syria to defend the province after Crassus' disastrous defeat. Pompey thus "artfully" (τεχνάζων) recalled the legion he previously lent to Caesar, while also receiving another of Caesar's legions. This consequently bolstered the forces in Italy, because the two legions weren't sent to the East[175]. Finally, Appian outlines Pompey's true intentions, the attainment of sole command, with a carefully structured anecdote. Appian notes that Pompey attained the command against Caesar amid the political disorder caused by Caesar's march into Italy. Pompey then promises to obey the orders of the consuls, adding the snarky comment: "unless we can do better"[176]. Appian thus frames the account to emphasise Pompey's trickery and

[170] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.3.23. "The expectation of a dictatorship Pompey discountenanced in words, but in fact he did everything secretly to promote it, and went out of his way to overlook the prevailing disorder and the anarchy consequent upon the disorder." See also: E. Cowan, 'Deceit in Appian', 188-94.

[171] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.3.18-9.

[172] App. *Bell. Civ.* 3. 2.3.23.

[173] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.3.23. "Pompey then proposed the prosecution of offenders and especially of those guilty of bribery and corruption, for he thought that the seat of the public disorder was there, and that by beginning there he should effect a speedy cure. He brought forward a law, that any citizen who chose to do so might call for an account from anybody who had held office from the time of his own first consulship to the present. This embraced a period of a little less than twenty years, during which Caesar also had been consul; wherefore Caesar's friends suspected that he included so long a time in order to cast reproach and contumely on Caesar, and urged him to straighten out the present situation rather than stir up the past to the annoyance of so many distinguished men, among whom they named Caesar. Pompey pretended to be indignant at the mention of Caesar's name, as though he were above suspicion, and said that his own second consulship was embraced in the period, and that he had gone back a considerable time in order to effect a complete cure of the evils from which the republic had been so long wasting away."

[174] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.4.26. "Moreover, he (Metellus) proposed to send successors to take command of Caesar's provinces before his time had expired; but Pompey interfered, making a pretence of fairness and good-will, saying that they ought not to put an indignity on a distinguished man who had been so extremely useful to his country, merely on account of a short interval of time; but he made it plain that Caesar's command must come to an end immediately on its expiration."

[175] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.4.30. "As the expected danger did not show itself in Syria, these legions were sent into winter quarters at Capua."

[176] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.4.31. "Pompey promised to obey the orders of the consuls, but he added, "unless we can do better," thus dealing in trickery and still making a pretence of fairness."

manipulation of the senate. However, this changes during the events of the civil war, where Appian instead portrays Pompey as a victim of Caesar's deception[177].

Appian never expresses doubts about Pompey's military capabilities, despite his cynicism toward Pompey's political dealings. His account of the battle of Dyrrachium, for example, flatters Pompey[178]. The battle's aftermath also promotes a favourable Pompeian depiction. Here, Pompey's charge against Caesar's defeated troops caused them to fall into a panic, neither letting them make a stand, nor enter the camp in good order, nor obey any of Caesar's commands[179]. Furthermore, the troops completely ignored Caesar's desperate reproaches. These circumstances further adulate Pompey, who remained far distant from their position, yet caused Caesar's disciplined legions to throw down their standards and flee against their commander's wishes[180]. Appian likewise portrays Pompey favourably in defeat throughout the civil war. Contrary to the calculating and power-mongering portrayal outlined before the civil war, Pompey heeds the advice of his senatorial counterparts and underlings. Appian frames these decisions as the work of divine forces[181], which result in Pompey's defeats. For instance, Appian states that the battle of Dyrrachium was not the civil war's final because Pompey adhered to Labienus' poor advice[182]. Yet he also implicates Pompey, who suspected a Caesarian trap and thus hesitated. This criticism is paltry, however, as it is only possible in retrospect[183] and would not have been apparent to Pompey at the time. Appian also suggests that Pompey's vanity was a possible cause for this hesitation[184]. This comment, in conjunction with Caesar's derogatory remark about Pompey's leadership[185], suggests that Appian's account

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[177] E. Cowan, 'Deceit in Appian', 194-200.

[178] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.9.61. "Nevertheless, they fought one great battle in which Pompey defeated Caesar in the most brilliant manner and pursued his men in headlong flight to his camp and took many of his standards."

[179] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.9.62. "After this remarkable defeat Caesar brought up other troops from another quarter, but these also fell into a panic even when they beheld Pompey still far distant. Although they were already close to the gates they would neither make a stand, nor enter in good order, nor obey the commands given to them, but all fled pell-mell without shame, without orders, without reason."

[180] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.9.62. "Caesar ran among them and with reproaches showed them that Pompey was still far distant, yet under his very eye some threw down their standards and fled…"

[181] Tom Stevenson comments on Appian's emphasis on the influence of divine forces throughout the *Roman History.* At Dyrrachium, he comments that Appian emphasises how Caesar's τὐχη (*fortuna*, fortune) failed him, but that Pompey was also let down by poor advice and decision making which Appian considered equally divine forces. See T. Stevenson, 'Appian on the Pharsalus Campaign: Civil Wars 2.48-91', in *Appian's Roman History: Empire and Civil War*, ed. Kathryn Welch, The Classical Press of Wales (Swansea, 2015), 259.

[182] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.9.62. "All precautions were neglected and the fortification was left unprotected, so that it is probable that Pompey might then have captured it and brought the war to an end by that one engagement had not Labienus, in some heaven-sent lunacy, persuaded him to pursue the fugitives instead. Moreover Pompey himself hesitated, either because he suspected a stratagem when he saw the gates unguarded or because he contemptuously supposed the war already decided by this battle… It is reported that Caesar said, "The war would have been ended to-day in the enemy's favour if they had had a commander who knew how to make use of victory."

[183] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.9.62.

[184] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.9.62. "Moreover Pompey himself hesitated, either because he suspected a stratagem when he saw the gates unguarded or because he contemptuously supposed the war already decided by this battle…"

[185] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.9.62. "It is reported that Caesar said, "The war would have been ended to-day in the enemy's favour if they had had a commander who knew how to make use of victory.""

for this period was supported by a hostile source tradition. This remains conjectural because Appian failed to cite his source.

Appian outlines Pompey similarly in his account of the battle of Pharsalus. Pompey is portrayed as a wise commander, who strayed from his strategy because divine forces continue to work against him[186]. These divine forces manifest in the immense pressure of Pompey's colleagues to meet Caesar's challenge[187]. Appian stresses that Pompey's adherence to them was contrary to his nature, thereby asserting that Pompey was normally measured in command. While this portrayal is somewhat sympathetic, it nevertheless questions Pompey's leadership. Appian is critical of his need for approval, which moved him from his own purpose and led him astray throughout the entire war[188]. He thus became, "contrary to his nature, sluggish and dilatory in all things, and prepared for a battle against his will, to both his own hurt and that of the men who had persuaded him"[189]. Appian subsequently highlights Pompey's grim countenance before the battle to intensify the narrative. Pompey was a commander under command, whose entire reputation was threatened by a battle he did not wish to fight, which Appian knew would cost Pompey everything[190]. Furthermore, Pompey remarks that the battle would bring great

[186] T. Stevenson, 'Appian on the Pharsalus Campaign', 260. "Thus, on the most prudent calculation, Pompeius decides to protract the war. Yet he is under the same divine infatuation which has been leading him astray during the whole of this war. The θεός of *BC* 2.62 continues to operate against him, it seems, and even though his strategy is prudent, it will be undermined by the divine elements and poor advisers."

[187] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.10.66-7. "So on the most prudent calculation he decided to protract the war and drive the enemy from famine to plague, but he was surrounded by a great number of senators, of equal rank with himself, by very distinguished knights, and by many kings and princes. Some of these, by reason of their inexperience in war, others because they were too much elated by the victory at Dyrrachium, others because they outnumbered the enemy, and others because they were quite tired of the war and preferred a quick decision rather than a sound one—all urged him to fight, pointing out to him that Caesar was always drawn up for battle and challenging him. Pompey endeavoured to shew them from this very fact that just as Caesar was compelled to do so by his want of supplies, so they had the more reason to remain quiet because Caesar was being driven on by necessity. Yet, harassed by the whole army, which was unduly puffed up by the victories at Dyrrachium, and by men of rank who accused him of being fond of power and of delaying purposely in order to prolong his authority over so many men of his own rank—and who for this reason called him derisively "king of kings" and "Agamemnon," because he also ruled over kings while the war lasted—he allowed himself to be moved from his own purpose and gave in to them, being even now under that same divine infatuation which led him astray during the whole of this war."

[188] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.10.67. "Yet, harassed by the whole army, which was unduly puffed up by the victories at Dyrrachium, and by men of rank who accused him of being fond of power and of delaying purposely in order to prolong his authority over so many men of his own rank—and who for this reason called him derisively "king of kings" and "Agamemnon," because he also ruled over kings while the war lasted—he allowed himself to be moved from his own purpose and gave in to them, being even now under that same divine infatuation which led him astray during the whole of this war."

[189] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.10.67. "νωθής τε γὰρ καὶ βραδὺς παρὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν ἐν ἅπασι γεγονὼς παρεσκευάζετο ἄκων ἐς μάχην ἐπὶ κακῷ τε αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν αὐτὸν ἀναπειθόντων."

[190] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.10.69. "Pompey, being experienced in military affairs, turned away from these follies with concealed indignation, but he remained altogether silent through hesitancy and dread, as though he were no longer commander but under command, and as though he were doing everything under compulsion and against his judgment; so deep the dejection which had come over this man of great deeds (who, until this day, had been most fortunate in every undertaking), either because he had not carried his point in deciding what was the best course, and was about to cast the die involving the lives of so many men and also involving his own reputation as invincible; or because some presentiment of approaching evil troubled him, presaging his complete downfall that very day from a position of such vast power."

evils to Rome for all future time, thus expressing his desire to maintain supreme power[191]. This comment reveals Appian's conception of Pompey's ambitions and the war's imminent negative outcome. Although this likely reflects a wider second century perception of the civil war. Appian hereafter outlines the battle sequence and Caesar's military genius. This concludes with a dramatic Pompeian depiction, wherein he is likened to the hero Ajax who acted like a madman bereft of his senses[192].

Appian's portrayal of Pompey concludes with his unfortunate death in Egypt[193]. Appian emphasises Pompey's greatness, contrary to the negative elements highlighted throughout the civil war. Pompey was a statesman who had made the greatest additions to the Roman Empire, fought in the greatest wars and thus earned the epithet 'great'[194]. Furthermore, he had never faced defeat, nor ceased to exercise power as an autocrat. Most importantly, Appian contrasts Pompey's autocratic powers with Caesar's, stating that Pompey's were democratic by contrast[195].

2.6. Cassius Dio

Dio Cassius was a Roman statesman and historian, who was born at Nicaea in Bythinia in AD 150. He entered the senate in AD 180 and was a close friend to several emperors, a fact which granted him several significant political roles, including the consulship of AD 220 and a subsequent proconsulship in Africa. His surviving legacy, The *Roman History*, was a monumental work comprised of eighty books, which covered up to fourteen hundred years of Roman history and took twenty-two years to complete. Today twenty-four of these survive, books 36-60, though several remain in a fragmentary condition. These lacunae are partly supplied by the Byzantine scholar Zonaras, whose later work relied closely on Dio's history. Pompey figures prominently in several of the surviving books. Books 36 and 37 outline Pompey's commands against the Pirates and Mithridates, while books 40-2 outline the origins,

[191] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.10.69. "Remarking merely to his friends that whichever should conquer, that day would be the beginning of great evils to the Romans for all future time, he began to make arrangements for the battle. In this remark some people thought his real intentions escaped him, involuntarily expressed in a moment of fear, and they inferred that even if Pompey had been victorious he would not have laid down the supreme power."

[192] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.11.81. "When Pompey saw the retreat of his men he became bereft of his senses and retired at a slow pace to his camp, and when he reached his tent he sat down speechless, resembling Ajax, the son of Telamon, who, they say, suffered in like manner in the midst of his enemies at Troy, being deprived of his senses by some god."

[193] T. Stevenson, 'Appian on the Pharsalus Campaign', 262. "Pompeius meets a ship by chance, sails to Mitylene and there joins Cornelia, before deciding - another fateful decision – to head for Egypt. Through the intervention of δαίμων, the wind carries Pompeius to Ptolemy, who is at Casium."

[194] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.11.87. "Such was the end of Pompey, who had successfully carried on the greatest wars and had made the greatest additions to the empire of the Romans, and had acquired by that means the title of Great."

[195] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.11.87. "He had never been defeated before, but had remained unvanquished and most fortunate from his youth up. From his twenty-third to his fifty-eighth year he had not ceased to exercise power which as regards its strength was that of an autocrat, but by the inevitable contrast with Caesar had an almost democratic appearance." See also: App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.11.72. "We are contending for liberty and country. On our side are the laws and honourable fame, and this great number of senators and knights, against one man who is piratically seizing supreme power."

events, and result of the civil war. Unfortunately, the books relating Pompey's role in the Sullan civil war and the Spanish command have been lost.

Dio's history is expansive and a complete dissection of its narrative is beyond the scope of this work. This sub-chapter thus focuses on several key areas, which address facets of Pompey's character, particularly those otherwise lacking in the ancient evidence. These passages mainly comprise Dio's summaries throughout the work, wherein he reflects on previously narrated events and offers his own opinion. They add enlightening details about Pompey's perception in the second century Roman world, as well as in Dio's source material, and thus deserve consideration.

Dio's account of Pompey's command against the pirates is brief, but his lengthy anecdote concerning Pompey's inheritance of the command reveals much about Pompey's character. Dio outlines Pompey's speech before the general assembly, wherein he made a great effort to refuse the command against the pirates. He stresses that Pompey's reluctance was a ruse[196], and that Gabinius' passionate response, which exalted Pompey as the worthy successor of the command before the general assembly[197], was arranged to ensure Pompey's accession. This episode highlights Pompey's trickery and ambition while simultaneously reporting his popularity among the people. Although it criticises aspects of Pompey's character, the passage also highlights Pompey's influence and his nous for political strategy. Dio further emphasised these traits when Pompey later received the Mithridatic command[198]. Pompey's war against the Pirates is given brief treatment, but the account stresses the emphatic nature of the victory and Pompey's clemency throughout[199].

[196] Dio. Cass. 36.24.5-6. "Pompey, who was very eager to command, and because of his own ambition and the zeal of the populace no longer now so much regarded this commission as an honour as the failure to win it a disgrace, when he saw the opposition of the Optimates, desired to appear forced to accept. He was always in the habit of pretending as far as possible not to desire the things he really wished, and on this occasion did so more than ever, because of the jealousy that would follow, should he of his own accord lay claim to the leadership, and because of the glory, if he should be appointed against his will as the one most worthy to command." See also: Dio. Cass. 36.25-26.4 for Pompey's speech beseeching the people to send another commander to the East.

[197] Dio. Cass. 36.27-29.3.

[198] Dio. Cass. 36.45.1-2. "Pompey was at first making ready to sail to Crete against Metellus, and when he learned of the decree that had been passed, pretended to be annoyed as before, and charged the members of the opposite faction with always loading tasks upon him so that he might meet with some reverse. In reality he received the news with the greatest joy, and no longer regarding as of any importance Crete or the other maritime points where things had been left unsettled, he made preparations for the war with the barbarians."

[199] Dio. Cass. 36.37.3-5. "So, after making preparations as the situation and as his judgment demanded, Pompey patrolled at one time the whole stretch of sea that the pirates were troubling, partly by himself and partly through his lieutenants; and he subdued the greater part of it that very year. For not alone was the force that he directed vast both in point of fleet and infantry, so that he was irresistible both on sea and on land, but his leniency toward those who made terms with him was equally great, so that he won over large numbers by such a course; for those who were defeated by his troops and experienced his clemency went over to his side very readily. Besides other ways in which he took care of them he would give them any lands he saw vacant and cities that needed more inhabitants, in order that they might never again through poverty fall under the necessity of criminal deeds."

Dio relates Pompey's inheritance of the command after introducing the Mithridatic war. His account contrasts with other ancient evidence, namely Plutarch[200], as Pompey is blameless in the political dispute that arose with Lucullus[201]. As with most of Dio's Pompeian portrait, however, this portrayal is multi-faceted. On the one hand, Pompey is dismissive of Lucullus' wishes which highlights his vanity. On the other, Pompey does not acknowledge this petty dispute, but nobly wishes to undertake the task for his country's benefit. Therefore, it is neither a strictly favourable nor negative reading which is open to interpretation. Dio concludes the anecdote by outlining Pompey's praiseworthy conduct. His respectful attitude and popularity earned him the respect of Lucullus' mutinous troops, a feat which further highlights Pompey's capabilities as a commander[202].

Dio praises Pompey's successes and ability to command in his summary of the Mithridatic war. Here, he emphasises the enduring achievements of Pompey[203], unrivalled by any earlier Roman. More importantly, he praises Pompey's admirable decision to disband his forces upon reaching Brundisium, despite being able to gain all of Rome's power[204]. While noble, Dio stresses that this decision later haunted Pompey, who incurred his peers' envy from this former authority but received no benefit from it[205]. This shaped the political climate and forced

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[200] Plut. *Pomp.* 31.4.

[201] Dio. Cass. 36.46.1. "Pompey, therefore, having decided that he must needs fight, was busy with his various preparations; among other things he re-enlisted the Valerians. When he was now in Galatia, Lucullus met him and declared the whole conflict over, claiming there was no further need of an expedition, and that for this reason, in fact, the men sent by the senate to arrange for the government of the districts had arrived. Failing to persuade him to retire, Lucullus turned to abuse, stigmatizing him as officious, greedy for war, greedy for office, and so on. Pompey, paying him but slight attention, forbade anybody longer to obey his commands and pressed on against Mithridates, being eager to join issue with him as quickly as possible."

[202] Dio. Cass. 36.16.3. "Hence the soldiers, as long as they prospered and got booty that was a fair return for their dangers, obeyed him (Lucullus); but when they encountered trouble and fear took the place of their hopes, they no longer heeded him at all. The proof of this is that Pompey took these same men — for he enrolled the Valerians again — and kept them without the slightest show of revolt. So much does one man differ from another."

[203] Dio. Cass. 37.20.2. "Thus he had won many battles, had brought into subjection many potentates and kings, some by war and some by treaty, he had colonized eight cities, had opened up many lands and sources of revenue to the Romans, and had establish and organized most of the nations in the continent of Asia then belonging to them with their own laws and constitutions, so that even to this day they use the laws that he laid down."

[204] Dio. Cass. 37.20.2-6. "…but the act for which credit particularly attaches to Pompey himself — a deed forever worthy of admiration — I will now relate. He had enormous power both on sea and on land; he had supplied himself with vast wealth from the captives; he had made numerous potentates and kings his friends; and he had kept practically all the communities which he ruled well-disposed through benefits conferred; and although by these means he might have occupied Italy and gained for himself the whole Roman power, since the majority would have accepted him voluntarily, and if any had resisted, they would certainly have capitulated through weakness, yet he did not choose to do this. Instead, as soon as he had crossed to Brundisium, he dismissed all his forces on his own initiative, without waiting for any vote to be passed in the matter by the senate or the people, and without concerning himself at all even about their use in the triumph. For since he understood that men held the careers of Marius and Sulla in abomination, he did not wish to cause them any fear even for a few days that they should undergo any similar experiences." See also: Dio. Cass. 37.21.1. "Consequently he did not so much as assume any additional name from his exploits, although he might have taken many."

[205] Dio. Cass. 37.49.5-6. "Pompey, therefore, when he could accomplish nothing because of Metellus and the rest, declared that they were jealous of him and that he would make this clear to the plebs. Fearing, however, that he might fail of their support also, and so incur still greater shame, he abandoned his demands. Thus he learned that he did not possess any real power, but merely the name and envy resulting from his former authority, while

Pompey into a compromising allegiance with Caesar and Crassus, the former subsequently masterminding this 'triumvirate' to obtain absolute control of Rome, according to Dio[206]. This passage marks a turning point for Dio's historical narrative. The self-serving and cut-throat ambitiousness of this period[207] becomes a theme central to Dio's interpretation of the 'triumvirate', alongside the growing dominance of Caesar. Pompey hereafter plays an increasingly subordinate role in affairs, wherein he is firstly manipulated by Caesar, and ultimately controlled by his colleagues in the lead up to and during the civil war. Dio's explanation of the final political break between Pompey and Caesar typifies this. He blames Marcellus, the consul of 49, and Curio, the tribune of the same year, for causing their final rift. However, there is a stark contrast between each side's political actions in these passages, which highlights Pompey's diminishing political control. According to Dio's account, Marcellus placed Pompey in command against Caesar without adhering to any legal formalities[208]. There is not any suggestion that Pompey plotted for this command. Dio does, however, criticise his unjust acquisition of these forces from Caesar under false pretences[209], but this does not imply that he was preparing for war. Dio's conceptualisation of Caesar and Curio's relationship directly contrasts with Pompey and Marcellus'. Caesar manipulated the political climate in so far as Curio's demand that both men should disband their forces was the desired outcome. This forced a political impasse and succeeded in making Pompey appear the wrongdoer. Caesar is thus portrayed in control of his political destiny, whilst Pompey is not. The latter is characterised by his powerlessness as a political figure who "could affect nothing in any other way, and proceeded without any further disguise to harsh measures and openly said and did everything against Caesar; yet failed to accomplish anything"[210].

Caesar's growing dominance remains central to Dio's depiction of the civil war and is contrasted with Pompey's diminishing political control and significance. For example, Dio asserts that Pompey feared Caesar's influence among the people and thus avoided his final

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in point of fact he received no benefit from it; and he repented of having let his legions go so soon and of having put himself in the power of his enemies."

Burden-Strevens notes Dio's emphasis on Caesar's decision and how it intentionally undermined Pompey's position. See: C. Burden-Strevens, *Cassius Dio's Speeches and the Collapse of the Roman* Republic, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow (2015), 119. "Caesar supported Pompeius because he wanted to make him envied for his success and thus destroy him more quickly (τὸν Πομπήιον καὶ ἐπιφθονώτερον καὶ ἐπαχθέστερον ἐκ τῶν διδομένων οἱ ποιῆσαι)."

[206] Dio. Cass. 37.56.1. "These considerations led Caesar at that time to court their favour and later to reconcile them with each other. For he did not believe that without them he could ever gain any power or fail to offend one of them some time, nor did he have any fear, on the other hand, of their harmonizing their plans and so becoming stronger than he. For he understood perfectly that he would master others at once through their friendship, and a little later master them through each other. And so it came about."

[207] Dio. Cass. 37.57.1. "For no man of that day took part in public life from pure motives and free from any desire of personal gain except Cato. Some, to be sure, were ashamed of the things done, and others who strove to imitate him took a hand in affairs now and then, and displayed some deeds similar to his; but they did not persevere, since their efforts sprang from cultivation of an attitude and not from innate virtue."

[208] Dio. Cass. 40.66.2. "These proceedings took place near the close of the year and were destined not to remain long in force, since they had been approved neither by the senate nor by the people."

[209] Dio. Cass. 40.64.4-65.4.

[210] Dio. Cass. 40.63.1. "Ὁ οὖν Πομπήιος ἐπεὶ μηδὲν ἄλλως πράττων ἤνυτε, πρός τε τὸ τραχὺ ἀπαρακαλύπτως ὥρμησε, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ προφανοῦς πάντα καὶ ἔλεγε καὶ ἐποίει κατὰ τοῦ Καίσαρος. οὐ μέντοι καὶ κατέπραξέ τι."

peace overtures[211]. There are, however, several issues with this representation. Firstly, it is contrary to Pompey's widely acknowledged rapport with the people, who were the backbone of his political influence[212]. Secondly, it seems unlikely that Pompey's support had evaporated so quickly when we consider his numerous acts for the people. These included his eradication of piracy in the Mediterranean and the restoration of Rome's grain supply, which contributed to his widely-acknowledged popularity. Lastly, Dio establishes a pre-emptive depiction of Pompey centred on his declining rationality. This portrayal anticipates Pompey's madness after his defeat at Pharsalus[213], which is only attested by much later Greek sources, namely Plutarch and Appian. Dio's historical inconsistencies highlight the historiographic issues with his rationalisation of the period, which were founded on a concise knowledge of how the events transpired. The work is thus moving toward an endpoint, wherein Caesar defeated Pompey at the battle of Pharsalus and eventually claimed sole leadership of the Roman world. However, this conclusion was not apparent to Pompey or his contemporaries. Consequently, narrating these events necessitates assumptions which marginalise Pompey's political and military abilities for the sake of simplifying the narrative.

Dio's narrative framework of the civil war centres on Caesar's military movements. It thus places the Senate's forces, led by Pompey, as subjects forced to react against Caesar's aggression. This perspective likely originated with Caesar's *Civil War* as the crucial contemporary literary evidence for Dio's understanding of this period. Importantly, it does not greatly shape Dio's portrayal of Pompey. As stated previously, Pompey's representation was characterised by his diminishing influence. Yet, Dio also frequently praises his successes throughout the war and does not criticise Pompey's failures. For example, Pompey is commended for emerging victorious at the battle of Dyrrachium, particularly because he showed immense respect and restraint to his opponent[214]. Likewise, Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus is not framed as a tactical error on behalf of the commander. Dio instead attributes defeat to the foreign composition of Pompey's army[215]. This positive approach shifts as Dio reflects on the battle's aftermath. Pompey is criticised for his lack of preparation in the event

[211] Dio. Cass. 41.6.1-2. "Pompey was frightened at this, knowing well that he would be far inferior to Caesar if they should both put themselves in the power of the people, and accordingly set out for Campania before the envoys returned, with the idea that he could more easily carry on war there."

[212] Dio. Cass. 41.6.3. "For practically all the cities of Italy felt such friendliness for him (Pompey) that when, a short time before, they had heard he was dangerously ill, they had vowed to offer public sacrifices for his safety."

[213] Dio. Cass. 42.1.1. "Such was the general character of the battle. As a result of it Pompey straightway despaired of all his projects and no longer took any account of his own valour or of the multitude of troops remaining to him or of the fact that Fortune often restores the fallen in a moment of time; yet previously he had always possessed the greatest cheerfulness and the greatest hopefulness on all occasions of failure."

[214] Dio. Cass. 41.52.1. "Pompey did not pursue him, for he had withdrawn suddenly by night and had hastily crossed the Genusus River; however, he was of the opinion that he had brought the war to an end. Consequently he assumed the title of imperator, though he uttered no boastful words about it and did not even wind laurel about his fasces, disliking to show such exultation over the downfall of citizens."

[215] Dio. Cass. 41.61.1. "At last, after they had carried on an evenly-balanced struggle for a very long time and many on both sides alike had fallen or been wounded, Pompey, since the larger part of his army was Asiatic and untrained, was defeated, even as had been made clear to him before the action."

of defeat, as this is ultimately the commander's error[216]. However, Dio also moderates this by tentatively blaming Pompey's colleagues. He remarks that Pompey had always meticulously planned his forces in the past and that this had earned him numerous victories. As such, Pompey was unlikely to change this method without external pressure. Dio thus suggests that Pompey's associates forced the lack of preparation, as they were advocates for joining battle rather than enduring a war of attrition[217]. This passage is, however, open to interpretation. Dio also comments that Pompey was possibly overconfident of victory after Dyrrachium and that this clouded his judgement[218]. In either case, the account is not flattering[219].

Finally, Dio laments Pompey's demise in Egypt while generally praising his character. The account didactically illustrates the fickleness of fortune in Pompey's demise. Dio juxtaposes the lofty heights of Pompey's career against his death, highlighting that a man who was once in charge of a thousand ships died in a tiny boat in Egypt. The entire passage is instilled with Rome's outrage towards Ptolemy and his advisors, who were duly cursed for their impious plot against Pompey[220]. Dio thus emphasises contemporary sentiments of Pompey's popularity both in Rome and among the Egyptians[221]. Importantly, Dio's Pompey was dignified in death and did not utter a word or complaint against his assassins. This noble Pompeian depiction contrasts with the earlier madman who fled Pharsalus. It thus redeemed Pompey, whose increasingly unfavourable portrayal later in his career was balanced against Dio's reiteration of Pompey's earlier achievements. Dio emphasises this, citing the divided nature of Pompey's career, wherein he first achieved the greatest successes and finally suffered the most grievous fate[222].

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[216] Dio. Cass. 42.1.2. "The reason for this was that on those occasions he had usually been evenly matched with his foe and hence had not taken his victory for granted; but by reflecting beforehand on the two possible issues of events while he was still cool-headed and was not yet involved in any alarm he had not neglected to prepare for the worst. In this way he had not been compelled to yield to disasters and had always been able easily to renew the conflict; but this time, as he had expected to prove greatly superior to Caesar, he had taken no precautions."

[217] Dio. Cass. 42.1.3. "And whereas he might have delayed action and so have prevailed without a battle, — since his army kept increasing every day and he had abundant provisions, being in a country for the most part friendly and being also master of the sea, — nevertheless, whether of his own accord, because he expected to conquer in any event, or because his hand was forced by associates, he joined issue."

[218] Dio. Cass. 42.1.2. "In this way he had not been compelled to yield to disasters and had always been able easily to renew the conflict; but this time, as he had expected to prove greatly superior to Caesar, he had taken no precautions."

[219] Dio. Cass. 42.2.1-2. "Hence Pompey, also, having considered none of the chances beforehand, was found naked and defenceless, whereas, if he had taken any precautions, he might, perhaps, without trouble have quietly recovered everything. For large numbers of the combatants on his side had survived and he had other forces of no small importance. Above all, he possessed large sums of money and was master of the whole sea, and the cities both there and in Asia were devoted to him even in his misfortune. But, as it was, since he had fared ill where he felt most confident, through the fear that seized him at the moment he made no use of any one of these resources, but left the camp at once and fled with a few companions toward Larissa."

[220] Dio. Cass. 42.3.3-4. "(the Egyptians) came in the guise of friends; but they impiously plotted against him and by their act brought a curse upon themselves and all Egypt."

[221] Dio. Cass. 42.4.4. " Now when they drew near the land, fearing that if he met Ptolemy he might be saved, either by the king himself or by the Romans who were with him or by the Egyptians, who regarded him with very kindly feelings, they killed him before sailing into the harbour. "

[222] Dio. Cass. 42.4.5-6. "Thus Pompey, who previously had been considered the most powerful of the Romans, so that he even received the nickname of Agamemnon, was now butchered like one of the lowest of the Egyptians themselves, not only near Mount Casius but on the anniversary of the day on which he had once celebrated a

Dio's tragic recreation of Pompey's death summarises both his overall conception of Pompey and source material. He summarises, stating that Pompey's foresight and preparedness had earned him victories across all known continents and this raised him to the greatest heights. Despite these victories, he was defeated without apparent reason[223].

This investigation has highlighted two key aspects of Pompey's representation in the ancient evidence. Foremost, there is a contested memory of Pompey in the ancient evidence. Plutarch's more favourable description of the Carbo incident typifies this, as it highlights how there is a divergence between Pompey's portrayal in Gaius Oppius' accounts and Plutarch's other unnamed evidence. It is also clear that the ancient evidence repeats the same stories about Pompey, but each author emphasises different aspects of Pompey's character. Pompey's death in Egypt exemplifies this issue, as it is referenced by Cicero, Strabo, Valerius Maximus, Velleius Paterculus, Lucan, Suetonius, Lucius Annaeus Florus, Plutarch, Appian, and Cassius Dio. As a contemporary to the events, Cicero laments his friend's death in a letter to Atticus[224]. By contrast, Strabo's *Geographica* references Pompey's death in relation to his place of burial and thereafter emphasises the treachery of the Egyptians who killed him[225]. Likewise, Valerius Maximus[226] and Lucius Annaeus Florus[227] moralise Pompey's death by focusing on the treachery of the Egyptians. Velleius Paterculus and Cassius Dio emphasise the role of fate in Pompey's death. Velleius Paterculus[228] laments how different Pompey's legacy would be had he died from illness in Italy two years earlier, while Dio moralises Pompey's death as a demonstration of humanity's weakness and its dependence on fortune[229]. Meanwhile, Lucan[230] and Plutarch's[231] more favourable readings of Pompey rendered his death a tragedy and reiterated his great achievements. By contrast, Suetonius' *Life of Caesar* disregards Pompey's death and comments that once Caesar "learned that his rival had been slain, made war on King Ptolemy."[232]

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triumph over Mithridates and the pirates. So even in this respect the two parts of his career were utterly contradictory: on that day of yore he had gained the most brilliant success, whereas he now suffered the most grievous fate..."

[223] Dio. Cass. 42.5.1-2. "Such was the end of Pompey the Great, whereby was proved once more the weakness and the strange fortune of the human race. For, although he was not at all deficient in foresight, but had always been absolutely secure against any force able to do him harm, yet he was deceived; and although he had won many unexpected victories in Africa, and many, too, in Asia and Europe, both by land and sea, ever since boyhood, yet now in his fifty-eighth year he was defeated without apparent reason."

[224] Cic. Att. 11.6.3-4 (SB 217). "As to Pompey's end I never had any doubt, for all rulers and peoples had become so thoroughly persuaded of the hopelessness of his case that wherever he went I expected this to happen. I cannot but grieve for his fate. I knew him for a man of good character, clean life, and serious principle."

[225] Strab. 16.2.33.

[226] Val. Max. 5.1.5.

[227] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.52.

[228] Vell. Pat. 2.48.2.

[229] Dio. Cass. 42.5.1-2.

[230] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.689-91.

[231] Plut. *Pomp*. 80.

[232] Suet. *Caes.* 35.

Chapter Three: Mommsen's Historical Context and Influences

3.1. Prussia (1789-1848)

As explained in the introduction, this thesis focuses on Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* and its portrayal of Pompey. This task requires an exploration into both the nature of the ancient evidence, as given in the previous chapter, and contemporary circumstances which shaped Mommsen's view of history and society. This exercise emphasises the importance of contemporary political and philosophical thought within Mommsen's work, thereby outlining the primary factors determining his historical output. This is particularly important as nineteenth century Prussian history is not widely familiar to modern audiences. This sub-chapter thus briefly considers the political, social, and philosophical contexts underpinning both Niebuhr[1] (1776-1831) and Mommsen's (1817-1903) lives and works. It comprises three intertwined constituents: Firstly, Prussia's political context, including its international relations with the French and Danish, the nature of the Hohenzollern dynasty, and Militarism. Secondly, Prussia's social composition and climate, particularly the significance of the *Junker* class, the emerging *Bildungsbürgertum*, and the environmental conditions which shaped contemporary social concerns. Finally, the general philosophical trends which influenced the historical and literary output throughout the period, including Hegel, Historicism, Determinism, and Nationalism. Unfortunately, the scope of this work only allows for brief insights into each thinker and movement. I will accordingly provide further reading for topics which cannot be fully explored.

The General Historical Background

The state of Prussia was the largest and most influential of the German states prior to the unification of Germany. It was ruled by the Hohenzollern house during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a monarchical government, but became increasingly bureaucratised with the growing significance and influence of Prussia's middle-class. Hohenzollern monarchs were characterised by their enlightened authoritarianist grip on society, also known as enlightened absolutism[2]. Their governments had a propensity for expenditure on the development of the military which resulted in a uniquely efficient military organisation among the Germanic states, and in turn promoted the state's aggressive militaristic tendencies and successful expansion[3]. The Hohenzollern dynasty maintained absolute control throughout this entire period, despite a serious defeat to Napoleon's forces at the battle of Jena-Auerstedt in

[1] It must be noted that Niebuhr himself also helped develop several crucial changes to mid-nineteenth century historical practice.

[2] This form of rulership originated with Frederick the Great, who introduced a civic code, abolished torture, and established the principle that the crown would not interfere in matters of justice. Consequently, their leadership wasn't traditional in its authoritarianism. It did, however, adhere to other totalitarian tropes. See: Matthew Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism: The Transformation of Prussian Political Culture, 1806-48*, Oxford University Press, (Oxford, 2000).

[3] This included numerous bordering territories such as modern Poland, Belgium, Denmark, and Russia.

1806[4], which saw Prussian national confidence crushed as the French seized all territories until the war of the sixth coalition in 1813-4.

Prussia's militaristic ventures throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries caused enduring political rifts with its geo-political neighbours, which were further fuelled by Prussia's imperialistic aspirations in the early nineteenth century. However, their defeat to Napoleon damaged faith in Prussia's military. This caused a logistical change, wherein subsequent hostilities were resolved through diplomacy and often forced compromising losses. The 'Schleswig-Holstein question' exemplifies this and is particularly relevant for Niebuhr and Mommsen who were personally tied to this geo-political region[5]. Such conflicts fuelled widespread resentment against the governing authorities and incited the German unification movement and revolutionary actions of 1848[6]. They also led many liberals to believe that a fractured Germany, which, comprised of numerous states, could not justly protect the German people who all shared cultural and social conventions. After failing to successfully resolve the 'Schleswig-Holstein question' in Prussia's favour, many believed that Prussia's government couldn't adequately protect its people. The locals, including Mommsen himself, attributed these failures to weak governmental leadership and a lack of patriotism. This belief was further strengthened by the widespread philosophical doctrine of militarism, which dictated Prussian attitudes to external threats more generally. These militaristic tendencies also fed nationalist ideals, wherein many Prussians felt that only a unified German state could successfully resist external incursion. This heightened political tensions throughout the region, and Europe more widely, and influenced the composition of Prussia's political landscape. Prussian society was thus characterised by its conservative rejection of external political ideologies, particularly from France, after the Napoleonic wars. Its primary concern was to preserve the sanctity of German cultural sovereignty and ensure that all Germanic states continued along their destined path (*Sonderweg*).

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[4] The Hohenzollern dynasty's rule remained stable through its close ties Prussia's elite class, the *Junkers*, who were a wealthy landed minority that controlled the majority of Prussia's workforce. These two orders dominated Prussia throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

[5] The Schleswig-Holstein region was contested territory between Prussia and the kingdom of Denmark throughout the nineteenth century. The two duchies were traditionally deemed Danish lands but contained a predominantly Prussian population whose first language was German and increasingly identified with Prussian nationalist sentiments. The dispute came to open conflict in 1848 and lasted until 1851 when the Danes successfully retained control of the region. Prussia thus failed in its ambitions to seize control of the region, a loss which had immense cultural and symbolic significance to all Prussians. See: Bernard Montague, *The Schleswig-Holstein Question Considered in a Lecture Delivered March 9, 1864*, John Henry and James Parker (1864), 1-64.

[6] The French revolution (1789-1799) empowered the lower echelons of French society and proved that traditional elitist power structures could be overturned. This caused much excitement amongst early nineteenth century Prussian thinkers (including Niebuhr), who eagerly awaited the long-term results of the French revolutionary movement to determine its viability for social change. However, any hopes for lasting and unquestionable benefits were soon crushed by the liberated French government's expansionist mentality, soon leading to war. Despite this, the French revolution set a lasting example for the potential of revolutionary action, and, by the middle of the nineteenth century much of Europe was in a state of revolutionary frenzy. See: M. Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism*, (2000); Phillip G. Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia, 1700-1830*, Routledge Press (London, 2014); Martin Kitchen, *A History of Modern Germany, 1800-2000*, Blackwell Publishing (Oxford, 2006); Manfred Botzenhart, *Reform, Restauration, Krise, Deutschland, 1789-1847*, Neue Historische Bibliothek (Frankfurt am Main, 1985).

Nineteenth century Prussia was also renowned for its highly developed and successful educational system. It had become an intellectual powerhouse throughout this period with increased funding to the university system, which was overhauled by Alexander von Humboldt in 1809-10 upon Baron von Stein's recommendation. Humboldt's changes saw new fields of specialisation, including philosophy and history, which were added to the available studies at the University of Berlin. These became progressively more specialised and elite as a result, placing Prussia at the forefront of scholarly endeavours. This had a particularly drastic effect on historical studies, which developed rapidly because of the increased funding. Furthermore, the professionalization of history and the new intellectual context that universities afforded, saw an increase in ideological debate and the circulation of ideas. This further increased with the growing accessibility of literature throughout the nineteenth century. In sum, Prussian scholars were increasingly encouraged to engage with their counterparts and this further increased the quality of Prussia's academic output.

These reforms had wider social repercussions. They encouraged the growth of an intellectual middle-class (*Bildungsbürgertum*) which became increasingly influential in politics, alongside the growing opportunities the Prussian government offered toward the middle of the nineteenth century. It also allowed liberal ideologies to flourish against traditional conservatism, which in turn influenced the revolutionary movements in 1848 and shaped German history hereafter. Most intellectuals, however, particularly more moderate historicists like Humboldt, remained faithful to the Hohenzollern dynasty because of the benefits they reaped from the educational reforms. They accordingly justified Hohenzollern authoritarianism[7] with a unique conceptualisation of the state[8] as a central tenet of all human achievement. According to this ideology, a strong state embodied humanity's uppermost potential: politically, militarily and socially. Hence, authoritarianism did not stifle individual rights, as liberty[9] was achievable through the increased accessibility of education and social mobility. The realities of this postulation are questionable, as they reflect only the concerns of the learned who rejoiced at their intellectual emancipation, but these freedoms weren't extended to the lower class.

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[7] G.G. Iggers, 'The Intellectual Foundations of Nineteenth-Century Scientific History', in *Oxford History of Historical Writing*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 2016), 10. "They (Prussian intellectuals) viewed themselves as liberals who wanted political reforms in the direction of a parliamentary monarchy, but after the failure of the 1848 revolution they compromised their liberalism in support of a strong Hohenzollern monarchy and later of Otto von Bismarck's blood and iron policy."

[8] G.G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present*, 2nd ed, Wesleyan University Press (Connecticut, 1983), 8. "In place of the utilitarian concept of the state, as an instrument of the interests and welfare of its population, German historiography emphatically places the idealistic concept of the state as an individual, an end in itself, governed by its own principles of life."

[9] G.G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History,* 16. "Confident in the meaningfulness of the historical process, German historians and political theorists from Wilhelm von Humboldt to Friedrich Meinecke almost a century later were willing to view the state as an ethical institution whose interests in the long run were in harmony with freedom and morality."

G.G. Iggers, T*he German Conception of History*, 20. "The young Wilhelm von Humboldt's definition of Freedom in terms of "the highest and most proportionate development of one's resources into one whole..." ["Ideen zu einem Versuch, die granzen der Wirksamkeit des staats zu bestimmen", in *Gesammelte Schriften*, I (Berlin, 1903-36), 106.]

The Composition of Prussian Society

Prussian society was composed of three general orders[10] (or classes), which were further subdivided variously across the state. Firstly, the ruling class (the Hohenzollern dynasty), who controlled the State's affairs internationally and nationally. Secondly, the *Junkers*[11] (the land-owning nobility), who oversaw the maintenance of regional and district areas and ensured the maintenance of order. Finally, the working class, which was broken up into several groups whose conditions varied across the Prussian state, but were widely oppressed and generally had few civil liberties[12]. This last group existed in feudal-like conditions and were totally dependent on the elite ruling class for subsistence. In some regions, particularly in the East[13] and outside of the state's city-centres, their conditions were largely indistinguishable from slavery. This gradually changed during the nineteenth century with the emergence of an identifiable middle-class, which rose alongside the increasing accessibility to higher education and elevated social status in Prussian society.

The growing cohort of middle-class citizenry (*Bildungsbürgertum*) hardly impacted the vast numbers that remained contained in the lowest class in Prussian society. However, they did increasingly challenge traditional ideologies upheld by the conservative elements in society, particularly by the *Junkers*. This saw an improvement in social conditions for both middle and lower class citizens over time. This process was aided by increased access of the middle-class to higher education and generally allowed Prussian thinkers greater access to the libertarian doctrines prevalent in France and England. The middle of the nineteenth century thus saw many Prussian academics rally against the traditional social hierarchy for increased civil liberties. These varied across the Prussian state, though commonly included: the emancipation of the landless peasantry, freedom of the press, and an increase in the direct political input of the learned middle-class citizens. These concerns became increasingly important as social conditions deteriorated throughout the state in the 1830s and 1840s. Prussia was slow to industrialise compared to other European states, and this shift caused great strain on the lower classes and its society's feudal-like structure. These issues were further intensified by natural

[10] Huerkamp argues that Prussian society throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were segmented as a result of eighteenth century corporate society, rather than classes. See: Claudia Huerkamp, ‚*Aufstieg Der Ärzte im 19. Jahrhundert*, Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft 68, Verlag Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, (Göttingen, 1985), 23.

[11] Niebuhr and Mommsen's depictions of the late republic reflected contemporary concerns with the Junker class in Prussia. For example, the Roman *optimates* (literally 'best men') were thought to reflect Prussia's *Junkers*, particularly in the Prussian empire's easternmost regions. Both groups maintained strict control and dominance over the financial situation of their inferiors, whilst utilising their power to influence political proceedings for their own benefit. Their contexts offer numerous distinctions, which make their comparisons questionable. For example, the Roman system of patronage allowed some financial mobility and freedom, which was lacking in Prussia's lower classes.

[12] David Blackbourn, *The History of Germany 1780-1918: The Long Nineteenth Century*, Second Edition, Blackwell Publishing (Oxford, 2003), 6. "Urban dwelllers were further divided into full citizens, who exercised all the rights possessed by the community, residents such as *Schutzbürger* (denizens), who enjoyed some rights, and the rest, who had no rights."

[13] David Blackbourn, *The History of Germany*, 4. "In Prussia east of the river Elbe, under the so-called *Gutsherrschaft* system, the lord enjoyed direct control over the peasant. In exchange for the land they worked, peasants provided labour services the lord could prescribe where they milled their grain or sold their own produce; they were not free to move without his permission."

conditions throughout the 1840s. Poor growing conditions resulted in severe crop shortages and widespread famine[14]. These strains consequently forced Prussia's middle and lower orders to question their society's social framework and challenge outdated concepts like the *Gutsherrschaft* system. Over time these growing social pressures forced the upper echelons of Prussian society to adapt and loosen Prussia's rigid social framework.

3.2. The Period's Major Philosophical and Historical Movements

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Hegel (1770-1831) was unquestionably the most influential thinker of this period. He produced numerous important philosophical works and fundamentally altered the ideological climate, previously dominated by Immanuel Kant. In relation to historical studies, *The Lectures on the Philosophy of History*[15] (*Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*) is Hegel's most significant work. It was published posthumously from his students' lecture notes in 1837 by the editor Eduard Gans. The work influenced common perceptions of historical inquiry and their wider social significance throughout the 1830s and 1840s. It presented world history in terms of Hegelian philosophy, highlighting that all history follows the dictates of reason and that the natural development of history is a result of the outworking of the absolute spirit. More generally, the concept of the absolute spirit (*Geist*) was prevalent throughout Hegelian philosophy. Hegel asserted that in order for a thinking subject to comprehend any object (this can be any literal or abstract thing, including the world or history), there must be in some sense an identity of thought and being. Regarding history, this identity could be a historical figure who embodied the fundamental nature of its historical context. In Hegel's terms, the *Weltgeist,* a means of philosophizing history, were thus effected in *Volksgeister* ('national spirits'). Hence, these select *Volksgeister*, or great men of history, were central to comprehending any historical period. This thesis will demonstrate the importance of this ideology in Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*, which places Caesar as the central political figure around whom all Late Republican Roman history revolved.

Historicism

Historicism flourished alongside Hegel's philosophy and was a watershed moment in the development of modern historical thought. It pushed a relativist notion of the world in which context was crucial to understanding the past. The historicist movement originated as a reaction against enlightenment thought, and increasingly rejected universal history, the universality of human values[16], and the natural order of life which the enlightenment movement advocated.

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[14] D. Blackbourn, *The History of Germany,* 104-5.

[15] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History,* Dover Press (London, 2004). G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, ed. Eduard Gans and Karl Hegel, Decker und Humblot (Berlin, 1848).

[16] The absolute rejection of the universality of human values was a fundamental trait unique to the Prussian nationalist-historicist tradition. However, Prussian historicists did not reject human values outright. They believed values were ever-present in human society, but were not innately transportable across different contexts. This was because beliefs were born from highly specific circumstances which could not be replicated. Nevertheless, they could be studied, understood and rationalised. This was equally relevant to the values of an individual within society, as it was the social and cultural groups themselves. On this larger scale then, the state

The main catalysts for this ideological shift were: Johan Gottfried Herder (1744 – 1803), Alexander von Humboldt (1767 – 1835) and Leopold von Ranke (1795 - 1886). Each contributed different elements to this historiographical movement and deserve a brief analysis.

Johann Gottfried Herder

Herder introduced the concepts of context and cultural relativism to western thought, particularly in his brief 'Older Critical Forestlet' [excerpt on history][17] and the more refined *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit*[18] ('This too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity'), which was written in 1784-1791. These ideas were fundamental to both Hegelian philosophy and the historicist movement. They allowed historians to conceive of the past in relation to a wider political and social framework, which many romanticists and historicists subsequently adapted to consider the 'great men' of the past in their times. Most importantly, he conceived of history as a science and instrument of the most genuine patriotic spirit.

Wilhelm von Humboldt

Humboldt adapted Herder's ideals and postulated that people were almost completely confined within their political, social and ideological framework. Change was thus only possible when the minds of the people were prepared for transformations. This was achieved through gentle psychological directives, which defied the contemporary *status quo.* Any drastic changes forced upon a context, however, would end in disastrous consequences[19]. Thus, Humboldt also laid the groundwork for a determinist reading of history, wherein society was bound by its framework and its subjects were powerless to bring about or resist change. Later thinkers, including Mommsen, conflated this idea with romanticist sentiments of the individual, thereby allowing only the greatest individuals to bring about change, but at a great cost.

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was an individual entity which exercised its will to achieve its requirements as seen fit. Hence, the use of military force could not be considered an outright evil, so long as it actively benefited the state. This resulted from the relativist aspects of historicism, whereby no act can be immoral because all decisions originate from the innermost, individual character of a being. Ironically, this fundamental relativist notion ultimately destroyed the tenability of historicism because it logically proceeded to both post-modernist and nihilist perspectives. The former marginalised historical studies with perspective becoming the quintessentially defining force in historical narratives, while the latter rejected the significance of knowledge outright. See: Friedrich Engels-Janosi, *The Growth of German Historicism*, John Hopkins Press (Baltimore, 1944).

[17] Johann Gottfried Herder, (*Older Critical Forestlet* [excerpt on history]), in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, Ed. D.M. Clarke and M.N. Forster, Cambridge University Press, (Cambridge, 2002), 258. "If history [*Geschichte*] in its simplest sense were nothing but a description of an occurrence, of a production, then the first requirement is that the description be *whole*, exhaust the subject, show it to us from all sides."

[18] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit* (*A Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity*), F.A. Brockhaus, (Leipzig, 1869).

[19] Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Ideen zu einem Versuch die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staats zu bestimmen* (*Ideas on an Attempt to Define the Limits of the State's Sphere of Action*), Verlag von Eduard Trewendt (Breslau, 1851), 239. This text was originally written in 1791.

Wilhelm von Humboldt, *The Sphere and Duties of Government (The Limits of State Action)*, Trans. Joseph Coulthard, John Chapman (London, 1854), 239.

Importantly, Humboldt later saw the state as a metaphysical reality, which rested on "manners and customs, language and literature"[20], thus emphasising the concept of *Volk* (the people) as a historical force whose only aim was to attain cultural individuality and sovereignty. This consequently resonated in historical and social studies throughout the nineteenth century. Later in his career, Humboldt deemed history a study of living and not dead matter. In this schematisation of history, a physical historical reality was comprehensible when the living's inner essence was understood in its totality. To accomplish this, one must view a historical figure under fixed conditions at a certain point in time (i.e. context)[21]. This idea was fundamental to all historicist works. A few later historians merged these ideas with Hegel's social construct, wherein an individual could embody the collective spirit of a society. Mommsen's Caesar, for example, perfectly typifies this process (see below).

Leopold von Ranke

Finally, Ranke popularised the methodological framework, which dictated historicist and all subsequent approaches to history. In a critical appendix within his *Geschichte der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (*Histories of the Romantic and Germanic Peoples from 1494 to 1514*) titled *Zur Kritik neurer Geschichtsschreiber*[22] (*On the Critique of Recent Historians*) Ranke took Niebuhr's critical principles[23], wherein primary evidence was scrutinised for its veracity, and applied them to a discussion of modern sources. He thus developed the concepts of peer review and literary criticism, which underpin modern academic discourse. This further promoted historical discourse as a scientific discipline which recorded events of the past 'as they really were' (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*)[24].

Historicism was the dominant discourse of Germanic historical writing throughout the middle and latter portions of the nineteenth century. Its dominance originated in the political and social contexts of its progenitors, who predominantly resided in and around Prussia. It developed the concept of history as an impartial discipline, which enhanced the social significance of historical thinkers. It thus influenced Niebuhr and Mommsen, despite neither of their histories, at least those considered in this thesis, being strictly historicist readings of Rome.

Determinism

Determinism was a methodological offshoot of historicism's impartial and objectivist reading of history. It is, by definition, a philosophical doctrine that espouses the idea that all events in history are guided by the virtue of necessity, and therefore inevitability. It thus relies on strict notions of causality and diminishes the significance of the past being dictated by the actions of

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[20] Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Denkschrift über die Deutsche Verfassung* (*Memorandum on the German constitution),* in *Gesammelte Schriften*, XI, (Berlin, 1813), 97. [95-112]

[21] Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über die Aufgabedes Geschichtsschreibers* (*On the Historian's Task*), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV, (Berlin, 1821), 2.

[22] Leopold von Ranke, *Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtschreiber*, G. Reimer (Berlin, 1824).

[23] G.G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History*. "When Ranke applied critical methods to modern historical texts, he was consciously indebted to Barthold Georg Niebuhr's critical approach to Roman History."

[24] H.B. Adams, Leopold von Ranke, In *American Historical Association Papers*, III (Indiana, 1888), 104-5.

rational agents. In short, it assumes that free will cannot exist and that all events are essentially an unbroken chain of circumstances of which no single link can be altered.

Nationalism

Nationalism was an important ideal for many European states throughout the middle of the nineteenth century[25]. This was particularly true in Prussia, where the Romanticist movement had strengthened the notion of German social and cultural unity and fuelled German national sentiments since the late eighteenth century. Its popularity soared after Napoleon's invasion of Prussia in 1806, which threatened German cultural sovereignty, and was potent in 1848 when Prussia was engulfed in revolutionary action. These were ultimately fuelled by fears of external incursion, as discussed previously.

Nationalist thinkers identified several key components for any unified social group. These were language, cultural practices, and social beliefs, which marginalised Germany's prior fixation on political boundaries. This deduction was aided by the metaphysical conceptualisation of society as an individual entity unto itself; a conception which stemmed from Romanticism's fixation on the importance of the individual. Nationalist intellectuals thus likened the state to the human body, as both were comprised of several constituent elements, which all needed to work in harmony for its survival. The state (and on a larger scale the nation) was thereby a conglomeration of entities[26], which, if left unprotected, would perish to external ideologies. This promoted a personal connection between citizens and state and fuelled xenophobic and militaristic tendencies. Mommsen himself was not immune to these ideologies, despite his ardent liberalism.

[25] Friedrich Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum Und Nationalstaat: Studien Zur Genesis Des Deutschen Nationalstaates*, R. Oldenbourg (Munich, 1922); Frank Lorenz Müller, 'The Spectre of a People in Arms: The Prussian Government and the Militarisation of German Nationalism, 1859-1864', in *English Historical Review*, Vol. 122, No. 495. (2007), 82-104; Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914*, Princeton University Press, (Princeton, 2014).

[26] These idiosyncrasies were prevalent throughout historicist projections of the world, irrespective of subject matter. For example, representational similarities have long been noted between Mommsen's Roman world, Von Ranke's fifteenth century Italian society, and Von Sybel's revolutionary France. See: A. Guilland, *Modern Germany and Her Historians*, Jarrold & Sons (London, 1915).

3.3. Barthold Georg Niebuhr

Barthold Georg Niebuhr[1] (1776 - 1831) was Germany's most prominent Roman historian prior to Theodor Mommsen. His most significant work was the *Römische Geschichte*[2], wherein he created a structural framework for the study of Rome's earliest history through an inductive analysis of Livy. Niebuhr also received wide praise for his critical methodology[3], which was considered the forebear to the true study of the classics. He was born in Copenhagen in 1776, the son of the prominent German geographer Carsten Niebuhr. The family moved to the kingdom of Denmark in search of work, a decision common amongst middle-lower class Prussian families living on the border between Prussia and Denmark. The nature of Prusso-Danish interaction and constitutional law during this period made this a great opportunity for educated Prussians to join the ranks of the Danish bureaucracy, thereby increasing their social status. Due to Niebuhr's childhood circumstances, his affections were divided between Prussia and Denmark (see above). This was typical throughout the region and was not culturally divisive until the middle of the nineteenth century when Prussian society was engulfed by a nationalist driven revolution. Niebuhr's early education was provided by his father. By 1794 he was already a classical scholar proficient in several languages (including Latin, Greek, German, English, French and Danish). Niebuhr was influenced by enlightenment ideology as evidenced by his reverence for the classical past, which was a product of his eighteenth-century education[4]. Niebuhr was a key historical thinker who promoted the notion that the study of the past is a process of rationalising the evidence (or lack thereof), thence formulating the likeliest conclusions. He was also considered a leader in Germany's Romantic Movement and a symbol of the national spirit in Prussia after the battle of Jena in 1806[5].

In the wake of Herder's development of the historicist method, the notion of contexts and contextualisation soared in popularity. This posed a major threat to the principles of universal history as a means of understanding the past. The historicist movement became increasingly significant throughout Niebuhr's life, although he grew progressively less comfortable with its inherent relativism. Niebuhr was also troubled by the effect that the contextualisation of the ancient past had on historical studies. He believed that it required increased specialisation, which isolated the discipline and made it inaccessible to all but the literary intelligentsia. He considered works of classicists overly critical and progressively less relatable, which detracted from the charms of studying the ancient past. By the end of his life, he felt alienated by the

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[1] Robert James Niebuhr Tod, *Barthold Georg Niebuhr, 1776-1831: an Appreciation in Honour of the 200th Anniversary of his Birth*, Printed by Nicholas Smith at the University Library (Cambridge, 1977), 1-14; Francis Lieber, *Reminisces of an Intercourse with George Berthold Niebuhr the Historian of Rome*, Richard Bentley (London, 1835); Barthold G. Niebuhr, *The Life and Letters of Barthold Georg Niebuhr. With Essays on his Character and Influence*, Harper and Brothers Publishers (New York, 1852).

[2] Barthold G. Niebuhr, *Römische Geschichte*, Verlag von G. Reimer (Berlin, 1836).

[3] Mommsen himself admitted this. Theodor Mommsen, *Reden und Aufsätze von Theodor Mommsen*, Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung (Berlin, 1905), 198. "…historians, at least those who deserve the title, are all Niebuhr's students, not the least being those who do not belong to his school."

[4] Peter Hanns Reill, 'Barthold Georg Niebuhr and the Enlightenment Tradition', in *German Studies Review* (1980), 9-26.

[5] J.L. Talmon, *Romanticism and Revolt*: *Europe 1815-1848*, Thames and Hudson (London, 1967), 121-34.

direction that the classics had taken within Prussia, despite being considered one of its founding fathers.

The *Lectures on the History of Rome*

Much like Niebuhr's general ideological stance, the *Lectures on the History of Rome* exemplifies the crossover of the enlightenment tradition with those of Romanticism and Historicism. It was an enlightenment work in its scope, which spanned a thousand years of Roman history, wherein only the most notable events are fleetingly analysed. It also has Romanticist characteristics, as it focused on the great individuals of Roman history and how Caesar shaped the Late Republic. Additionally, it foreshadowed historicist thought with its source criticism and rationalised extrapolations in the absence of evidence. These later became the cornerstones of ancient historical inquiry.

The *Lectures on the History of Rome* exhibits Niebuhr's distinct methodological approach. However, its composition was not typical. The work is an assemblage of transcribed lectures collected from the notes of his pupils, which Niebuhr gave between 1828-9 whilst professor of Roman history at the University of Berlin. Thus, its aims are immediately different to any of Niebuhr's other works. The *Lectures on the History of Rome* were posthumously published as a testament to Niebuhr's immense knowledge. It thus aimed to preserve his legacy by offering an informative overview of Roman history when he was considered Prussia's most accomplished scholar in this field. This has further implications. Because it was published in his honour, the work preserves remarks, which Niebuhr may have removed had he himself published the collection. This is particularly evident in Leonard Schmitz's English edition, wherein he stressed the importance of maintaining the work's authentic feel and character through an honest rendition of the original lectures. Niebuhr's opinions are thus preserved with all their controversy. The work has other textual flaws. For instance, it was compiled from the lecture notes of Niebuhr's students, whose attentiveness and individualised interests remain a prominent variable in regards to what has survived. This issue is somewhat mitigated by the vast collection of notes. However, doubts remain in regards to the depth of the sources, which Schmitz himself confesses in the work's introduction[6]. Finally, the editor's control over the surviving text, including its arrangement and organisation of the sources, are important. After all, the work exhibits Schmitz's interpretation of Niebuhr as much as it preserves Niebuhr's understanding of Rome. The interpretive onus ultimately rests on him[7].

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[6] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on the History of Rome, From the Earliest Times to the Fall of the Western Empire*, Vol. 2, Ed. and Trans. Dr. Leonard Schmitz, Published by Taylor, Walton and Maberly (London, 1849), viii (preface). "It is, however, not impossible that this brevity (of the last chapters) may arise from the fact, that the students on whose notes they are based, were less anxious to take down every remark of Niebuhr, and noticed only the principal events mentioned by the lecturer. Few students, moreover, were present during the concluding part of the course, so that the manuscript notes collated by the German editor, were much fewer in number than those relating to the earlier history."

[7] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on the History of Rome*¸ Vol. 2, viii (preface) "…I have divided the additional portion of the history into eight lectures, without, however, being able to answer for the correctness of that division, which will appear the more doubtful when we consider the extreme brevity of those last lectures."

Despite these anomalies, a brief glimpse into Niebuhr's conception of the late Roman republic survives in this text. Yet it is substantial enough to signify Niebuhr's opinion, methodology, and the origin of the anti-Pompeian paradigm.

Niebuhr's Pompey

Niebuhr's *Lectures on the History of Rome* was the first Roman history to perpetuate an anti-Pompeian reading of the late republic. Its perspective was fuelled by Niebuhr's Caesar-centric reading of the late Republic[8], which stemmed from contemporary Prussian politics and social concerns[9]. Caesar, more than any other Roman figure, embodied Prussia's answers to numerous contemporary social issues in Prussia (**see section 2.1-3.**). He represented Prussian liberal ideals as a populist politician, who sought to redress the injustices of his country's ailing political system and ensure that it achieved its potential. Furthermore, he was a perfect statesman. According to Niebuhr, Caesar was intelligent, pragmatic, and a highly skilled commander who through force advanced Rome's cause without impunity[10]. The Gallic war proved this, as Caesar had vanquished Rome's remaining greatest military threat and expanded the borders. These too reflected Prussia's hyper-nationalistic sentiments during the early-mid nineteenth century. Finally, Caesar also destroyed traditional Roman power structures and his successes led Rome into a golden age. These ambitions were fundamental to all Prussian liberals, including Niebuhr and Mommsen, who sought to overthrow the *Junker* system and promote governmental growth and meritocracy. Accordingly, Caesar's representation is fundamental to understanding Pompey within Prussian works of Roman history. They are without exception intertwined.

Niebuhr is brutal in his analysis of Pompey. He briefly praises Pompey's early achievements, which included the Sullan civil war, Sertorian, piratic, and Mithridatic wars, conceding that certain aspects of these were admirable[11]. Yet he also emphasises Pompey's luck in each

[8] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures On Roman History,* Vol. 3. 32. "Among the features which are particularly characteristic in Caesar, I must mention his great openness, lively disposition, and love of friendship…Great qualities and talents alone were sufficient to attract him, and this circumstance led him to form friendships with persons whose characters were diametrically opposed to his, and who injured his reputation."

[9] Hegel first determined Caesar as the embodiment of Rome's destiny. He placed Caesar as the central figure for this period. See Hegel: *Philosophy of History*, 313. "His (Caesar's) position was indeed hostile to the republic, but, properly speaking, only to its shadow; for all that remained of that republic was entirely powerless. Pompey, and all those who were on the side of the senate, exalted their *dignitas auctoritas* – their individual rule – as the power of the republic, and the mediocrity, which needed protection, took refuge under this title. Caesar put an end to the empty formalism of this title, made himself master, and held together the Roman world by force, in opposition to isolated factions."

[10] Zwi Yavetz, *Julius Caesar and his Public Image*, Thames & Hudson (London, 1983), for explanations on the modern constructs of Caesarism and its popular derivation, Bonapartism.

[11] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on the History of Rome*, Vol. 2, 403. "There can be no doubt that he had distinguished himself very much in the social war under Sulla... The war against the pirates was well planned and speedily concluded; that against Mithridates was not difficult indeed, but Pompey showed himself resolute and active in employing the means which he had at his command."

exploit, which undermined any positive aspects. Henceforth he is critical of Pompey's numerous faults[12] and suggests that these negatively affected his career. He states:

> I will not deny that I have a dislike for Pompey; for I know that, from weakness and vanity, he was a different man at different periods of his life, and that in his later years there was a great falling off in his character, which cannot have been the consequence of old age, since, at the time of his death, he was not above fifty-six or fifty-seven years old.[13]

Niebuhr subsequently uses this platform to deride Pompey's every flaw, while creating foundational negative paradigms. These representations frequently transcend and manipulate the ancient tradition beyond recognition. Moreover, they maintain a falsely logical consistency by selectively reading the evidence. For instance, Niebuhr highlights Pompey's jealousy of Caesar, his cowardly fear of the Clodian faction, his ineptitude at being a loyal friend, and his potential for cruelty[14]. Yet each comment ignores positive portrayals of Pompey, which exist in the evidence[15]. For example, Niebuhr relies on Lucan[16] and Lucius Annaeus Florus' evidence[17] for his portrayal of Pompey and Caesar's friendship, but ignores Lucan's positive representation of Pompey[18]. Otherwise, he substantiates this argument through a selective reading of circumstantial evidence. We saw in the previous chapter that the ancient record highlights Pompey and Caesar's mutual respect. It thus stressed the importance of external political factors, which saw the civil war, which Pompey and Caesar both wished to avoid, become reality[19]. These discrepancies, between the ancient evidence and Niebuhr's reading, render the *Lectures on the History of Rome* entirely subjective. Moreover, they highlight how Niebuhr's fundamentally Prussian preconceptions[20], wherein Caesar was an ideal statesman, determined the entire late republic period. Niebuhr accordingly marginalised Pompey as an

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[12] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on the History of Rome*, Vol. 2, 403. "It is very difficult to pronounce a decided opinion upon Pompey: he is not one of those characters whose outlines are clear and indisputable, as in the case of Marius, Sulla, Sertorius, and Caesar; and it is even difficult to say whether he was a great general or not: he was one of those men who, in order to be great, must be favoured by fortune, if not throughout, at least up to a certain point. He did not possess sufficient strength and greatness to act consistently throughout life, in good as well as in evil days, and to be the same under all circumstances."

[13] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on Roman History*, Vol. 2, 404.

[14] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on Roman History*, Vol. 2, 403. "If, on the other hand, we consider him in his civil proceedings, especially during the period from his triumph until the war against Caesar, it cannot be denied that he had a cowardly fear of the Clodian faction, and that he had a mean jealousy of Caesar, whom he designedly wished to keep down, and to whose superiority he would be blind, although he knew it. In the accusation of Cicero, he behaved in a cowardly way; he was in fact, never a trustworthy friend. In the time of Sulla, when he was yet a young man, he was cruel, and Cicero himself does not doubt that, if the civil war had taken a different turn, Pompey would have displayed the same cruelty as Sulla."

[15] For example, Niebuhr ignores numerous positive commentaries on Pompey's achievements. See: Cic. *leg. Man;* Val. Max. 8.15.8; Vell. Pat. 2.29.5; Plin. *NH*. 7.26.96-8; Front. *Strat.* 1.4.8; Flor. *Epit*. 41.6.13-4; Plut. *Pomp.* 28.2; 31.2-3; App. *Mith*. 14.96; Dio Cass. 37.20.2.

[16] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.125-6. "Caesar could no longer endure a superior, nor Pompey an equal."

[17] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.14. "(Caesar's growing power) inspired the envy of Pompey, while Pompey's eminence was offensive to Caesar".

[18] He later comments that Lucan's poems are bad. See: Niebuhr, *Lectures On Roman Histo*ry, Vol. 3, 32.

[19] See: App. *Bell*. *Civ.* 28.1.

[20] The right of the militarily strong over the weak was natural to a Prussian historian who wrote during a period of increased social militarisation, governmental authoritarianism, and paranoia.

inferior statesman and considered him foolish for attempting to resist Rome's destiny. He remained consistent throughout the work by emphasising Pompey's weaknesses, which in turn explained his inevitable defeat to Caesar. However, Niebuhr's reading is inherently flawed and unabashed in its prejudices. Niebuhr successfully removed political agency from all but Caesar and conveniently ignored the simple fact that Rome's politicians could not foresee the future[21]. He thus created a lasting tradition of the Roman past which flourished both because of Caesar's popular appeal and the spread of Romanticist sentiments.

Niebuhr also used physiognomics to illustrate how Pompey's physical form reflected his intellectual inferiority to Caesar. He states:

> His head in statues and busts, which we have no reason to consider spurious, shews a considerable degree of vulgarity and rudeness, whereas Caesar's head displays all his great intellectual activity.[22]

This representation is both subjective and logically flawed per modern historical standards. There are several issues with this kind of subjective attack. Firstly, Niebuhr ignores the busts original context, wherein it was a favourable reproduction of Pompey which was intended for public display. Consequently, it needed to reflect common perceptions of Pompey's physique. Plutarch states that Pompey was both attractive and charming[23], and these characteristics reflected in the bust[24]. Niebuhr equally disregards how this piece exemplifies Pompey's fame, and successes, while also exhibiting Roman concepts of virtue. Instead he imposes his notion of 'Romanness'[25], which invariably reflects both his Prussian context and appreciation for Caesar. In sum, Niebuhr failed to contextualise this bust and its purpose. While Niebuhr worked before modern practices were fully developed, his failure to include the relevant ancient evidence proves the prejudiced nature of his account. This methodology cannot be excused, as he was the progenitor of modern source criticism and analysis.

Niebuhr demonstrates his Caesar-centric perspective and how this affected Pompey during his preamble to the civil war. He states:

> He (Caesar) was perfectly free from the jealousy and envy of Pompey, but he could not tolerate an assumed superiority which was not based upon real merit. Bad as Lucan's poems are, the words in which he describes this feature in Caesar's character are truly great. Pompey could not bear to see Caesar standing beside him, and Caesar could not endure the pretension of Pompey to stand above him, for he knew how infinitely inferior he was.[26]

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[21] Cic. *Fam.* 15.15.2. (SB 174).
[22] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on Roman History,* Vol. 2, 403-4
[23] See: Plut. *Pomp*. 2.
[24] Pliny makes a similar comment. See: Plin. *NH*. 37.6.
[25] Hegel succinctly summarises Prussian preconceptions of Rome in his *Philosophy of History*. See: G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History,* 306-15.
[26] Niebuhr, *Lectures On Roman Histo*ry, Vol. 3, 32.

Here Niebuhr illustrates several underlying facets of his reading of the late republic. He highlights his determinist tendencies, wherein he maintained Caesar above his peers and marginalised Pompey, "who knew how infinitely inferior he was"[27]. As discussed previously, this perspective originated from Niebuhr's inability to read this period without working toward a determined ending (i.e. Caesar's victory at Pharsalus). Niebuhr also reveals that his polarised reading, which separated the just and unjust, was the product of a selective methodology. In sum, Niebuhr was unwilling to consider all the ancient evidence. This consequently fuelled his hostile treatment of Pompey. Moreover, Niebuhr's harsh criticism of Lucan's poetry supports this. Here Niebuhr subjectively criticises the poetry without any extrapolation, while also selecting passages within the work to support his argument. As mentioned previously, Lucan was relatively sympathetic to Pompey[28] and his poem somewhat counterbalanced other pro-Caesarian evidence. Niebuhr thus distorted this evidence to imply that Lucan considered Pompey an inferior general.

Niebuhr further exemplifies these historiographic issues with his depiction of Pompey's cruelty, wherein he states:

> In the time of Sulla, when he (Pompey) was yet a young man, he was cruel, and Cicero himself does not doubt that, if the civil war had taken a different turn, Pompey would have displayed the same cruelty as Sulla.[29]

This is a disputable claim on which the ancient evidence is polarised. Firstly, Niebuhr is selective in his use of the ancient evidence. He correctly cites Cicero's letter to Atticus in 49[30], but ignores other letters which highlight Pompey's amiability and kindliness[31]. Niebuhr's allusion to the Sullan civil wars is also removed from its context, which was characterised by its universal brutality[32]. Moreover, we have already examined the complicated picture which Plutarch presents of Pompey and Sulla during the civil war[33]. It was clarified that Plutarch dismissed the claims of cruelty, stating that Pompey allowed as many of Sulla's political enemies to escape as possible[34]. Plutarch also questioned one source, Gaius Oppius, whose veracity was disputable because of his allegiance with Caesar[35]. The other areas of Pompey's career provide mixed portrayals of his cruelty. The rest of Pompey's career attempts to redeem

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[27] Niebuhr, *Lectures On Roman Histor*y, Vol. 3, 32.

[28] See Section 1.11.

[29] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on Roman History,* Vol. 2, 403.

[30] Cic. *Att.* 9.7 (SB 174) "For our Gnaeus is marvellously covetous of despotism on Sullan lines. *Experto crede*; he has been as open about it as he ever was about anything."

[31] See: Cic. *Fam*. 1.1.2. (SB 12) and 1.8.1. (SB 19); Cic. *Att.* 1.16.11. (SB 16).

[32] For an example of Marius' cruelty toward political adversaries, see: App. *Bell. Civ.* 1.10.88.

[33] Note Plutarch's use of the passive to distance himself from this view. See: Plut. *Pomp.* 10.3. For discussion, see: section **2.4.** Compare Val. Max. 4.5.5, 5.1.10 and 5.3.5. For discussion, see section **1.4.**

[34] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.5.

[35] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.4-5. "Furthermore, Gaius Oppius, the friend of Caesar, says that Pompey treated Quintus Valerius also with unnatural cruelty. For, understanding that Valerius was a man of rare scholarship and learning, when he was brought to him, Oppius says, Pompey took him aside, walked up and down with him, asked and learned what he wished from him, and then ordered his attendants to lead him away and put him to death at once. But when Oppius discourses about the enemies or friends of Caesar, one must be very cautious about believing him."

his errors under Sulla, as these likely resonated throughout his political career. For instance, Pompey treated the pirates with clemency when he resettled rather than executed them. On his return from the East, he allayed Rome's fears by immediately disbanding his forces. Even during the civil war, he shows Roman hostages mercy and ensured that Romans only died on the battlefield[36].

This evidence suggests that Pompey suffered immensely from the accusations of cruelty levelled against him in his youth. These criticisms plainly followed him throughout his career, despite his continued attempts to prove his clemency. Nevertheless, Niebuhr's characterisation of Pompey as cruel is stagnant. It neither accounts for his attempts to change throughout his career, nor for the full breadth of ancient evidence. Niebuhr thus overstated Pompey's cruelty and relayed a simplistic reading which was blatantly hostile and didn't account for discrepancies in the ancient evidence.

Summary

Niebuhr's *Lectures on the History of Rome* created an influential approach for modern readings of late republican history. We have seen that Niebuhr's views were both inherently favourable to Caesar and vitriolic to Pompey. Moreover, his methodology was questionable throughout, as he was selective with the evidence and consequently perpetuated questionable readings. These practices remain inexcusable, even when posterity factors in the work's unusual publication process and Niebuhr's contextual differences. Despite its flaws, Niebuhr remains known as 'the father of the classics' and his opinion shaped generations of Prussian scholarship throughout the nineteenth century. Most importantly, Niebuhr laid the groundwork for Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte.* The two were certainly familiar, as Mommsen refuted Niebuhr's theory on early Republican agrarian law in his *Römische Geschichte*. Moreover, Mommsen famously proclaimed Niebuhr's importance to classical studies, stating that any 'historian' who deserves that title was a student of Niebuhr[37].

[36] Plut. *Pomp.* 65.1. Note: Pompey should not be held accountable for Juba's (the king of Numidia) decision to slaughter Caesar's defeated forces in North Africa. This decision was taken without either the Senate or Pompey's authority.

[37] T. Mommsen, *Reden und Aufsätze von Theodor Mommsen*, Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung (Berlin, 1905), 198.

Chapter Four: Theodor Mommsen

> When apparently the last eminent guest had long ago taken his place, again those three bugle-blasts rang out, and once more the swords leaped from their scabbards. Who might this late-comer be? Nobody was interested to inquire. Still, indolent eyes were turned toward the distant entrance, and we saw the silken gleam and the lifted sword of a guard of honor plowing through the remote crowds. Then we saw that end of the house rising to its feet; saw it rise abreast the advancing guard all along like a wave. This supreme honor had been offered to no one before. There was an excited whisper at our table—MOMMSEN! —and the whole house rose. Rose and shouted and stamped and clapped and banged the beer mugs. Just simply a storm! Then the little man with his long hair and Emersonian face edged his way past us and took his seat. I could have touched him with my hand—Mommsen!—think of it!...I would have walked a great many miles to get a sight of him, and here he was, without trouble or tramp or cost of any kind. Here he was clothed in a titanic deceptive modesty which made him look like other men.
>
> Mark Twain, *Mark Twain: A Pictorial Biography,* (reprint 2002)

Mark Twain's anecdote is a striking example of the peak of Mommsen's influence in 1892 when he was Prussia's most celebrated Classicist and scholar. From his first history, the *Römische Geschichte* which was published from 1854-1856, until his last, Mommsen dominated the fields of Classics and Ancient History and defined scholarly methodologies along with significant areas of study[1]. His fame and influence are demonstrated by the *Römische Geschichte* receiving the Nobel Prize for literature in 1902[2], some forty-eight years after the original publication of the first volume. Consequently, his career redefined fundamental conceptions of Roman history.

Christian Matthias Theodor Mommsen was born to German parents in Garding in the duchy of Schleswig in 1817, which was ruled by the king of Denmark (**see section 2.1.**)[3]. He was raised in the town of Bad Oldesloe in Holstein, which was ruled by Prussia's monarchy. Mommsen was born into a Lutheran family, his father being a Lutheran minister, but he renounced this faith later in life. Despite this, the Lutheran faith fundamentally shaped his work ethic. Throughout his career he was immensely productive and produced some 1500 scholarly works which varied across numerous historical periods, cultures, and disciplines. Mommsen's education was comparatively modest as he was primarily home schooled during his youth,

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[1] I have used William Purdie Dickson's translation of Mommsen's text throughout, unless otherwise stated. Theodor Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vols. 4 & 5, Macmillan and Co. (New York, 1901). For the German edition, I have used T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte,* Dritte Auflage, Dritter Band, Wiedmannsche Buchhandlung (Berlin, 1862).

[2] C.D. auf Wirsén, 'Mommsen's Award Ceremony Speech', in Nobel Lectures: Literature 1901-1967, ed. Horst Frenz, Elsevier Publishing Company, (Amsterdam, 1969).

[3] For a brief but comprehensive catalogue of Mommsen's early life and career see Francis W. Kelsey, 'Theodore Mommsen', in *The Classical Journal,* Vol. 14, No. 4, The Classical Association of the Middle West and South, Inc. (Jan, 1919), 224-236. See too Rebenich (2002); A. Demandt Theodor Mommsen: 30 November 1817-1 November 1903 in W.W. Briggs and W. Calder III (eds) *Classical Scholarship: A Biographical Encyclopaedia*, Garland Publishing (New York & London, 1990): 285-309; William Warde Fowler (ed.) 'Theodor Mommsen: His Life and Work' in *Roman Essays and Interpretations,* Clarendon Press (Oxford, 1920): 250-68.

though he attended the *Gymnasium Christianeum* from 1833-7 where he studied Greek and Latin. Later, he studied jurisprudence at the University of Kiel from 1838 to 1843 and completed with a doctorate in Roman law. Because of his role in the political unrest in 1848, Mommsen was exiled from both Prussia and later Saxony, before he assumed a professorial position at the University of Zurich in Switzerland, where he was first approached about writing a narrative history of Rome. This work, the *Römische Geschichte* ('History of Rome'), thrust him into the foreground of contemporary historical thought.

4.1. The *Römische Geschichte*

Niebuhr's brief portrayal of Pompey was scathing. It was formed more by Niebuhr's own context and opinion than by the ancient evidence upon which it was based, but his reputation as a teacher and intellectual enabled it to thrive in the succeeding generations. Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* adapted, modified, and popularised Niebuhr's treatment of the late republic. His reading of the late republican political landscape resembles Niebuhr's although it is less polarised and mythologised. However, his view of Pompey was also the result of his selective reading of the ancient evidence, the ambivalence of which Mommsen similarly failed to acknowledge. As attested by the previous chapter's catalogue of ancient literary evidence, Pompey was a complex figure who was an authoritative and adept politician who was neither foolish, nor inept, despite evidence for errors and flaws.

The *Römische Geschichte* outlines the early history of Rome until the battle of Thapsus in 46 BC. It comprises three volumes, which were first published between 1854 and 1856. The work is a wide-ranging and vivid historical account, which focuses primarily on Rome's political and military development and considers its dynamic social elements. Mommsen's analysis of the late republican period led to a particular view of Pompey and Caesar. Put simply, his belief in the greatness of Caesar[4], along with his own socio-economic, political and personal background, led him to see Pompey only as Caesar's adversary. Consequently, Pompey was, for Mommsen, always the figure who was defeated at Pharsalus and who fell miserably on the sands of Egypt. This meant that Mommsen understated Pompey's achievements, and ignored the nuanced reading of his character that we have noted in the ancient source tradition. The result is an awkward figure, which is more the product of Mommsen's bias than a balanced reading of the ancient authors.

The *Römische Geschichte* was generally well received and popular when it was first published[5]. It soon became a foundational Roman history for students, and remained so for more than a

[4] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 305. "The new monarch of Rome, the first ruler over the whole domain of Romano-Hellenic civilization, Gaius Julius Caesar, was in his fifty-sixth year when the battle of Thapsus, the last link in a long chain of momentous victories, placed the decision as to the future of the world in his hands. Few men have had their elasticity so thoroughly put to the proof as Caesar – the sole creative genius produced by Rome, and the last produced by the ancient world…"

[5] Francis W. Kelsey, 'Theodore Mommsen', 225.

century after its original publication[6]. This shaped both contemporary and later impressions of the Roman past at a fundamental level[7]. However, it received some criticism for its lack of citations and footnotes which went against the historicist methodology prevalent at the time[8]. He was also criticized for his failure to mention points about which other historians took a different view[9]. Mommsen's method was to offer his own view of things in an authoritative voice and omit opposing reconstructions. His opinions are thus thoroughly integrated into the narrative of the *Römische Geschichte*[10]. This was not apparent to his audiences unless they had conducted wider research or developed a specialised understanding of the period. Conflicting traditions were not considered equal in the G*eschichte*. The impact of the work ensured that this partial perspective survived beyond its immediate context.

Contemporaries criticised Mommsen's portrayal of individual political figures. Most notably, his epigraphist colleague Wilhelm Henzen questioned his portrayal of Pompey soon after the release of the first edition. In a letter to Henzen in 1856, Mommsen addressed this criticism, admitting that it was well founded; he needed to control the mood that the 'supernumerary' (Pompey) fired in him[11]. Importantly, he made no excuses for his disdainful opinion of Pompey and accepted that his portrayal was imbalanced. Moreover, although he claimed that the problem had been addressed in later editions of the work, the portrayal of Pompey remained blatantly hostile in the third edition, which was published in 1861.

Mommsen also faced increased scrutiny in the years following the publication of the *Römische Geschichte*. Academic circles criticised his analysis of the fall of the republic as too simple. He was especially criticised for his blatantly pro-Caesar stance which bordered on 'Caesarism'[12]. Furthermore, his affinity for Caesar was widely mistaken as a pro-monarchical statement[13].

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[6] E.G. Sihler, 'The Tradition of Caesar's *Gallic Wars* from Cicero to Orosius', in *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1869-1896)* Vol. 18 (1887), 20.

[7] J.L. Hilton, 'Thedor Mommsen and the Liberal Opposition to British Imperialism at the time of the Second South African War of Independence (1899-1902)', in *Classical Receptions Journal* Vol. 6 (2014): 48-73.

[8] A.N. Sherwin-White, 'Violence in Roman Politics', 2.

[9] A. Guilland, 'Theodore Mommsen', 143.

[10] A. Guilland, 'Theodore Mommsen', 138. "Knowledge with Mommsen is as objective as his judgements are subjective. In all the latter we can feel the influence of the ideas of his time. We find everywhere the National Liberal of 1848 with his wrath and rancour, his complaints and hopes."

[11] L. Wickert, *Theodor Mommsen*: *Eine Biographie*, Vol. 3, Trans. Brian Croke (Frankfurt, 1969), 641-2. "Your rebuke of the first two books is perfectly founded; you will no longer recognise them in the new edition… You are quite right about Pompey and I will seek to control strictly the annoying mood which this supernumerary always fires in me."

[12] H. Kloft and J. Köhler, 'Caesarism', in *Brill's New Pauly*, Antiquity volumes edited by: Hubert Cancik and, Helmuth Schneider. Consulted online on 10 February 2015 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e1306730>, first published online: 2006. "In the third edition of his *Römische Geschichte*, Mommsen attempted to correct and distance himself from this widespread impression (Caesarism) by inserting a passage [3. 477f.] that insists upon the uniqueness of the classical instance; where Caesarism develops under other circumstances, it is simultaneously a farce and a usurpation (*Röm. Geschichte*, vol. 3, 478). Nevertheless, Mommsen's picture of a powerful and democratic king who founded a Mediterranean monarchy upon the ruins of decayed aristocratic rule (*Röm. Geschichte*, vol. 3, 567f.) had a great effect, not only in France, where Napoleon III himself produced a literary tribute to the brilliant general Caesar (*Histoire de Jules César*, I-II, 1865/6), but also, and to an equal extent, in Italy and in the rest of Europe."

[13] A. Guilland, 'Theodore Mommsen', 162.

These concerns were not, however, widespread and nor did they result in absolute rejections of Mommsen's hypotheses. In fact, Prussian academic practice during the nineteenth century aided Mommsen's enduring influence. German Professors (sing. *Ordinarius*) traditionally controlled the research of their subordinates, whilst also having the power to select like-minded scholars to act as their peers. This process of selection consequently marginalised academics who held differing views leading to their ostracism from German universities. The alienated were consequently forced abroad in search for work. This conservative system saw the Historicist tradition dominate in Germany far longer than was the case in the rest of continental Europe and Britain[14]. Mommsen, as a professor of Roman history at the University of Berlin from 1861-87, used this system to his advantage. He selected and subsequently moulded his pupils to foster similar historical views and practices. His cause was further aided by the University of Berlin's prestige, alongside the high regard given to the German university system throughout America, England, and continental Europe at that time[15].

Eduard Meyer's *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius* was the only work in the early twentieth century, which denounced Mommsen's reading of the late republic. However, it was poorly received when it was published in 1918 and thus barely influenced contemporary thought[16]. Within this work, Meyer postulated that Pompey was a crucial political precursor for Augustus' principate. Meyer wished to moderate Mommsen's portrayal of the 'stupid' Pompey and instead postulate that Pompey was a significant political force who shaped the eventual development of the Principate. The work would have an interesting afterlife in scholarship, but at the time Meyer found it very hard to keep a job in an academic landscape dominated by Mommsen and his school.

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[14] G.G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, 24. "Highly decisive for the relative lack of development of German historiographical theory was the manner in which the academic profession was recruited. No basic reform of the German university system had taken place since the establishment of the University of Berlin in 1810. Only in very recent years have there been attempts at such reforms, which have so far had very limited success. The academic profession remained a closed caste. The *Ordinarius* retained not only an extremely high degree of control over the teaching and research activities of his subordinates, but in concert with his colleagues was able to restrict admission to the profession. The painful process of *Habilitation*, by which a candidate to be admitted to university teaching had to be adopted by an *Ordinarius* under whose direction he composed his *Habilitationsschrift* effectively, especially after 1871, restricted the admission of historians whose outlook or background did not conform with the academic establishment."

[15] G.G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, 26.

[16] Matthias Gelzer, review of *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius*, by Eduard Meyer, *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial und wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 15 (1919), 522. "Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius by Eduard Meyer which first appeared in 1918 is a dreadful book. In layout it is ugly and disjointed; its style is cumbersome and its length excessive. Furthermore the tone of the work is unnecessarily polemical, and it was unwise of the author to devote so much time castigating Mommsen's interpretation of Caesar when he so obviously ignores other more recent research relevant to his subject." (Trans. Brian Croke); Tenney Frank, 'Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius (Book Review)', in *Classical Philology*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (1921), 205-6. "This second edition contains a score of minor corrections of the first edition, which, published in 1918, reached but a few of our libraries… However, it would be unfair to imply that Professor Meyer has to any extent pressed his facts into the service of an argument." See also: B. Croke, 'Eduard Meyer's Caesars Monarchie and its English Riposte', in *Athenaeum*, Vol. 80 (1992), 219-32.

4.2. The *Römische Geschichte*: Influences and Method

Mommsen's world outlook (*Weltanschauungen*) shaped his perception of and approach to Roman history. The *Römische Geschichte* reflected its contextual philosophical, intellectual, and ideological movements which influenced Mommsen's notions of history and society. Historical inquiry was first popularised throughout the Enlightenment period which idealised the Classical world as pure and worthy of emulation[17]. This had both a literary and an artistic impact on the Romanticist tradition as it developed in the nineteenth century[18]. Romanticist approaches differed from the Enlightenment tradition in that they avoided simply praising and idealising the Classical world. Instead, however, they stated that history recorded events which had consequences for the modern world. This resulted in a perception that history was relatable[19], that is, able to reflect contemporary issues and even able to provide a road-map for the present. Narrative histories consequently became the most popular form of historical inquiry. This process was amplified by the increasing accessibility and affordability of books. Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* demonstrates this through his allusions to contemporary literature[20], as well as to contemporary Prussian political and social concerns[21]. Consequently, Mommsen's work spoke to its times and appeared at a moment that allowed it to become incredibly popular. It was an engaging and powerfully written insight into the Roman world, a world which seemed to offer a way forward for the present rather than a simple summary of a distant, if famous, era.

Mommsen's declaration that the unity of Rome was the binding source of its strength echoed and reinforced contemporary aspirations for a unified Germany[22]. Its engagement with German

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[17] Dan Edelstein, *Enlightenment: A Genealogy,* Chicago University Press (Chicago, 2010), 109.

[18] Tim Blanning, *The Romantic Revolution,* Hatchett (United Kingdom, 2012); James Engell, *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism,* Harvard University Press (Cambridge, MA, 1981).

[19] Nicola Kaminski, Romanticism, In *Brill's New Pauly*, Antiquity volumes edited by: Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider. Consulted online on 21 February 2015 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e15207950>, First published online: 2006. "Subsequently, it (F. Schlegel's *Studium*) tended rather to channel the potential of ancient tradition into an integrative and *per definitionem* infinitely expandable concept of a Romantic "universal poetry" [2. 182]. Instead of a respectful distance which left the normative model unscathed, a model of performative interaction was introduced, which could develop both in the mode of "radical deformation" and of "creative instrumentalisation" [26. 249]. In any case, this model (Romanticism) involved Antiquity, until then absolutely separated from all other traditions, relativised as they were in their historicity, in a de-hierarchising process of mixed traditions. Hand in hand with this went a breakdown of conceptual barriers that took place in a similarly process-oriented way. Thus, in the preface to his pre-Romantic *Studium* essay, F. Schlegel still formulated his goal relationally ("to determine the relationship of ancient poetry to modern, and the purpose of the study of Classical poetry in general and for our age in particular" [1. 207]), whereas Novalis, already a Romantic theoretician, transcendentally condensed the relation between ancient and modern around 1798…"

[20] Theodor Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol.4, 454. "…Marcus Porcius Cato, a man of the best intentions and of rare devotedness, and yet one of the most Quixotic and one of the more cheerless phenomena in his age so abounding in political caricatures."

[21] Zwi Yavetz, *Julius Caesar and his Public Image*, Thames & Hudson (London, 1983), 20. "(Mommsen's Rome resembled) London with the slave population of New Orleans, the police of Constantinople, the lack of industry of present-day Rome, and agitated by politics like the Paris of 1848."

[22] Mommsen postulated that Roman unity was bound up in its military might which protected it from external incursion. These tenets were imperative for a highly militarised state like Prussia, which was wary of its neighbours' military intentions. It was an aptitude common to most of the German-speaking peoples of the

Nationalism separated the *Römische Geschichte* from the historical practices of the Enlightenment tradition. Mommsen's concept of Rome's socio-political structure was shaped by Hegelian ideals of nationhood (see section 2.3.1.). Hegel saw society as a pyramidal structure beginning with the individual, who was then subsumed into a small community, such as a town, which was itself better off as part of a larger socio-political group united by social custom, language and political system[23]. Thus, individuals make up communities which themselves comprise nations. Mommsen considered Rome as an ancient example, indeed the ideal version, of the type of nation state that Prussia would do well to emulate. Thus, Rome and Prussia were temporally and geographically separated but, for Mommsen, they were bound by shared ideologies. Moreover, Rome was, above all, a lesson in what Prussia had the potential to achieve if it could replicate the genius of Rome - and of Caesar, the man who had underpinned the transformation of Roman history.

Mommsen's role as a political activist and writer during the 1848 revolutionary movements allowed him to use the liberal-minded *Schleswig-Holsteinischen Zeitung* as a platform for expressing his Prussian nationalist ideals within the Schleswig-Holstein region and specifically to advocate for a forceful settlement of the regional dispute with Denmark (**See Section 3.1.**). His rhetoric was effective yet so controversial that he was exiled from Prussia. Mommsen's early career as a journalist was formative in more than one way. Along with enabling him to refine his political stance, it also taught him to write gripping prose for a wide audience. Both these aspects underpinned the later popularity of the *Römische Geschichte*.

Mommsen's history, however, was also shaped by the intellectual aspects and methods of the Prussian Historicist tradition. His methodological approach throughout the *Geschichte* was based on Historicist ideals despite being concerned with more general historical themes[24]. His approach was also shaped by an ardent faith in Militarism. As previously stated in the commentaries on Ranke (**section 3.2.**) and the chapter on Niebuhr, the Historicist school emphasised that historical practice must begin with a particular understanding of a context[25]. Thereafter, wider truths of a historical period would reveal themselves to a historian and their audience. Historicist studies were also characterised by their detailed analyses and criticisms

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nineteenth century, who were anxious of their place within a rapidly changing industrialised world which teemed with superpowers on the verge of conflict.

[23] Koppel S. Pinson, *Modern Germany: Its History and Civilization*, The Macmillan Company, (New York, 1966), 46. "German romanticism deepened the study of language and speech. Its concern with the basic character of the organic community brought recognition that language was not just a useful vehicle for communication but that it was the repository of the deepest emotions and traditions of a people. Language is the vehicle of thought, hence the uniqueness of national languages."

[24] This subverted historicist practice, and more closely resembled Hegel's approach to history. See: G.G. Iggers, 'The Intellectual Foundations of Nineteenth-Century Scientific History', in *Oxford History of Historical Writing 1800-1945*, ed. S. Macintyre, J. Maiguashca, and A. Pók, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 2016), 47. "He (Ranke) distinguished himself from G. W. F. Hegel, who attempted to proceed from the general to the particular, by insisting that the historian proceed from the particular." See also: Leopold von Ranke, A Dialogue on Politics (1836), in *The Theory and Practice of History*, Trans. G.G. Iggers and Konrad Moltke, Published by Bobbs-Merrill (Indianapolis, 1973), 63-4. "From the particular, perhaps, you can ascend with careful boldness to the general. But there is no way leading from the general theory to the particular."

[25] G.G. Iggers, *The Intellectual Foundations of Scientific History*, 47.

of relevant contemporary evidence. While Mommsen used this framework to understand the nuances of the Roman world, he does not follow this methodology throughout the *Römische Geschichte*. For example, the work is entirely void of citations to either modern sources or the ancient evidence. Moreover, its authoritative tone and method assumed that its audience would accept Mommsen's representation of the world unconditionally. Its conclusions were thus taken as fact rather than established by direct reference to the source material. The lack of critical review is astounding for a modern audience whose historical practice is dictated by methodical and careful citation and acknowledgement of theoretical frameworks and methodologies. However, it was considered an acceptable practice in the nineteenth century where the intellectual climate deemed historians among societies' most respected, influential, and authoritative thinkers. Mommsen was thus considered a trustworthy expert on Rome, whose ancient and foreign history and customs were made comprehensible through his diligent research and accessible prose[26].

4.3. The *Römische Geschichte*: Notable Historical Themes:

Law

Mommsen's training and education as a law student also shaped his approach to the socio-political events explored in the *Römische Geschichte.* His earlier academic research in Roman jurisprudence at the University of Kiel between 1838 and 1843 focused on the early Republic's agrarian laws. While this study does not relate directly with the late republic period covered in the *Geschichte*, it demonstrates his early interest in law as the very basis for Roman civilisation[27]. Mommsen conceived of the law as the embodiment of the State: an entity ideologically distinct from the political figures who enacted its enforcement and development[28]. The State, however, was a product of its laws. Furthermore, laws attest to Roman individual, social, and cultural perceptions. This was because the Roman legal system required the broad consensus of the populace to change the law. Mommsen saw this inclusivity a great strength in the Early-Middle Republic. Laws and the legal system thus offered Mommsen insight into each law's contemporary socio-political movements and the methods that the senatorial elite used to adapt and subvert their dynamic political landscapes. Mommsen also recognised the flexibility of Roman law and its receptiveness to important changes and amendments. Legal, and by proxy, social change, helped Rome reach its ideal form, which, for Mommsen, was the moment that the Republic collapsed and was replaced by imperial rule. The *Römische Geschichte* frames these changes as an inevitable process towards Imperial Rome. This resonates throughout Mommsen's documentation and interpretation of the late republic whereby he favours evidence and individuals that aided this outcome and treats the era's more conservative and traditional elements with hostility. In sum, Roman law in the late

[26] E. G. Sihler, 'The Tradition of Caesar's Gallic Wars from Cicero to Orosius' in *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1869-1896),* Vol. 18 (1887), 20 best typifies Mommsen's authoritative legacy: "It is hardly necessary to say in advance that none of the accounts, in point of fidelity and precision, can be compared to Merivale, or Mommsen, or Ranke."

[27] Francis W. Kelsey, 'Theodore Mommsen', in *The Classical Journal,* Vol. 14, No. 4, The Classical Association of the Middle West and South, Inc. (Jan, 1919), 237.

[28] Francis W. Kelsey, *'*Theodore Mommsen*'*, 238.

republic provided a legally-verified record of socio-political factors which led invariably towards Rome's imperial destiny.

Military Glory

Mommsen's contemporary political views and his analysis of Rome in the *Römische Geschichte* were interrelated and influenced by his status as a member of the *Bildungsbürgertum* (educated middle-class) and his tendency towards Prussian liberalism[29]. Various other perspectives are apparent throughout his history. His approval of Rome's militant aggression, particularly his glorification of Caesar's destructive conquests in Gaul is particularly relevant[30]. This pro-militaristic attitude shocked foreign scholars in particular, especially among the French, who were more sympathetic to the vanquished and praised the more passive resolutions to conflict[31]. In Prussia, however, Mommsen's outlook became increasingly common. Prussian scholars considered world history as an epic contest for political dominance and power. Nations and social orders were thus seen as embroiled in a struggle for survival, wherein the weakest was destroyed or subjugated without impunity[32]. In presenting Caesar and Pompey as polarised constructions, Mommsen reflected his contemporary anxieties instead of the Roman context. Pompey was accordingly presented as a conservative politician seeking continuity in a world that required change; he was a fool who

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[29] Prussian liberalism was starkly different from its British and French counterparts. Mommsen, like many of his Prussian intellectual contemporaries, regarded the emancipation of the landed peasantry from the *Junker* elites essential. This was because the subjugated peasantry was offered little social mobility and was used as tools to strengthen the position of the elite. Furthermore, Mommsen sought freedom of the press and increased political influence for fellow academic middle class citizens. Unlike British liberals, Mommsen and his contemporaries were against the notion of universal suffrage, which they believed would empower a class of unworthy and uneducated individuals. In his opinion, the Prussian state ought to be led by its greatest minds, not on the authority and guidance of the Hohenzollern dynasty or at the behest of the uneducated. Any inferior form of governance would disrupt Prussia's *sonderweg* (special path), wherein every state/nation was an individual entity comprising unique characteristics and ideals (from culture, language and social customs), moving from the renaissance into and through the industrialist age. Mommsen and his contemporaries were thus precariously placed, appreciating the significance of authoritative government, yet undermining its power with demands for a greater share in political influence for a select group.

[30] For Caesar's effect in Gaul see Plut. *Caes*. 15. "For although he fought in Gaul for somewhat less than ten years, he took over 800 cities and towns by storm, subdued 300 tribes, and in successive pitched battles against a total of 3,000,000 men he killed 1,000,000 and took the same number of prisoners."

[31] A. Guilland, *Modern Germany and Her Historians*, Jarrold & Sons (London, 1915), 147. "This work is nothing but the glorification of force, even when it has been used against what is right. To Mommsen the vanquished is always wrong. He sides with Julius Caesar, that deceitful and cunning man, against what he calls the honest mediocrities of the senate. But even that is not enough, he must needs season his remarks with sarcasm. Nothing pleased him better than to ridicule the virtue of these honest but dense people."

A. Guilland, *Modern Germany and Her Historians*, 149. "That lack of generosity towards the small is one of the characteristics of Mommsen in his History of Rome. He is full of haughtiness when dealing with the peoples who were overcome by the Romans. All this typically German superior feeling is revealed in certain descriptions of his."

[32] A. Guilland, *Modern Germany and Her Historians*, 144-5. "Mommsen's philosophy of history is that of the struggle for life: internal struggles for the formation of political unity, external struggles to affirm the nation's greatness: the whole history of Rome consists to him of a series of immense struggles... Then follow internal struggles : political struggles between patricians, plebeians, and those who had no citizen-rights, the first trying to lessen individual power for the advantage of the central power, the plebeians trying to win equality of power with the patricians, and those without citizen-rights and strangers struggling to obtain equal rights with the citizens."

sought unwarranted power and respect. Caesar, on the other hand, embodied Rome's greatness and virtuosity[33]. His intellect, diplomacy, political acumen, and ability to command were of the highest order and were all traits that modern Prussian intellectuals demanded from their leaders. Furthermore, Caesar proved that force could be justified if it was effective and for the greater good. By focusing on the immense hegemonic benefits Caesar's Gallic wars brought to Rome rather than considering the destruction and mass casualties that the invasion brought with it, Mommsen was really saying that Prussia needed to act similarly if it was to assert its dominance in a nineteenth century world.

Politics and Factions

Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* promotes a forceful reading of Rome's political parties, which have been either adopted or challenged by modern scholarship[34]. These also reflect his context. For example, he perceived the senate as a collection of the Roman elite formed into two distinct and ideologically opposed political parties (or factions). These two parties were the conservative *Ultras* (or *Optimates* in Anglophone scholarship) and *Demokraten* (lit. democrats, the Latin *populares*). For Mommsen, each senator was stringently confined to either group[35]. Most importantly, Mommsen postulated that senators who displayed shifting political allegiances were condemned by both groups. As a liberal Prussian, Mommsen naturally sympathised with the *popularis* cause, particularly when it was spearheaded by Caesar in the late republic. The *Ultras*, however, were depicted as doddering conservatives who were incapable of accepting or adapting to a changing political landscape. Mommsen's assessment of Roman politics through the lens of modern Prussian parliamentary discourse is methodologically flawed as the Prussian concept of a parliament is linguistically and philosophically inapplicable to the Roman world[36]. Accordingly, Pompey's complex political decisions throughout the ancient literary record fit into Mommsen's rigid interpretation of Rome's social elite poorly. Although Pompey was frequently a progressive political figure, he was ultimately defined in Mommsen's record by his allegiance to the 'Optimate*'* cause during the Civil War. Mommsen uses Pompey's political fluidity to exemplify the consequences of political indecision. This is particularly evident in the lead up to the civil war where Pompey betrays his *popularis* allegiances by deceptively cutting political ties with Caesar.

Mommsen's reading of political factions contributes to his negative characterisation of Pompey because he defied categorisation. Mommsen deemed Pompey an anomaly only driven by ambition and the need for adoration. This is why Pompey lost the civil war. His lack of political acumen meant that he obtained a position with which he was neither comfortable nor deserving.

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[33] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 305. "Few men had had their elasticity so thoroughly put to the proof as Caesar - the sole creative genius produced by Rome, and the last produced by the ancient world, which accordingly moved on in the path that he marked out for it until its sun went down."

[34] Lily Ross-Taylor, *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar*, University of California Press (Berkeley, 1949).

[35] A.N. Sherwin-White, 'Violence in Roman Politics', in *The Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. 46 (1956), 1-2 argues that Mommsen attempted explain the conflict between Optimates and Populares by assimilating them to nineteenth century parliamentary terms, "parties, programmes, even democrats and conservatives were brought in". This implies that seeing Rome in terms of a parliament by Prussian standards.

[36] A.N. Sherwin-White, 'Violence in Roman Politics', 1.

4.4. Mommsen's Pompey

This sub-chapter investigates Mommsen's Pompey as a historical figure and how this relates to the ancient evidence. It is divided into four sections, which were selected according to Mommsen's delineation of Pompey's career. These are: Pompey's early career (The Sullan civil war and Sertorian war), the peak of Pompey's career (The war against the pirates and Mithridates), the latter stages of his career (The period of the so-called first triumvirate and civil war with Caesar), and his death. Furthermore, it traces the thematic elements of Mommsen's characterisation of Pompey in the political, military, and social spheres.

Mommsen employs various methods of selecting the ancient evidence to propagate his own views. He uses three key techniques in particular to construct Pompey. Firstly, Mommsen displays a selectivity whereby he omits ancient evidence that contradicts his portrayal of Pompey's life. For example, he never references Cicero's positive comments about Pompey in the *Pro lege Manilia*. Although Cicero's evidence is no less problematic than others, it still offers an important insight into the positive aspects of Pompey's reception among his contemporaries. This selectivity is present throughout the work, which actively garners a negative portrayal of Pompey. Secondly, Mommsen distorts the ancient evidence. His handling of the evidence varies from the subtle to the extreme: from removing it from its context entirely to more covertly adjusting its contents to suit his narrative.

These instances are not accidental misinterpretations but are part of a calculated method for diminishing Pompey's legacy. This, most seriously, leads to Mommsen fabricating aspects of Pompey's character, investing him with faults which even the hostile elements of the source tradition do not emphasise. This is the most pernicious aspect of Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*. It is partially attributable to Niebuhr's reading of Pompey, where the tropes of 'foolish', 'cruel', and 'weak' Pompey originated. Mommsen refined these and, through this technique, invented a 'stupid' Pompey, which took root in scholarship and is still perceptible in recent treatments.

Mommsen believed that Pompey epitomised the vices of the Late Roman Republican elite. Pompey was born into great wealth and blessed with immense luck[37]. According to Mommsen, it was these circumstances alone, which allowed him to be a leading political figure in the Late Republic[38]. Pompey thus symbolised the decay and the subsequent need for a transformative figure who could renew the vigour of the system. Hence, Pompey's well-attested military achievements and position at the senate's helm were contrasted against a timidity that prevented him from seizing sole authority over the state, a development that Mommsen considered not only necessary but inevitable. Mommsen's Pompey was thus pusillanimous. He

[37] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 273. "A good officer, but otherwise of mediocre gifts of intellect and of heart, fate had with superhuman consistency for thirty years allowed him to solve all brilliant and toilless tasks; had permitted him to pluck all laurels planted and fostered by others; had brought him face to face with all the conditions requisite for obtaining the supreme power - only in order to exhibit in his person an example of spurious greatness, to which history knows no parallel."

[38] Cic. *leg.Man.* 52.

craved the acceptance and worship of his peers, rather than what was best for his country. Furthermore, he was a mediocre general and a poor politician[39]. Fortune granted him Lucullus' command against Mithridates, thereby fostering his ambitions and filling his coffers with the East's immense resources. Pompey was also a hypocrite who defied social conventions. He was routinely granted titles and political power before tradition permitted, and received commands without precedence. This included the command against the pirates, which handed Pompey unprecedented control of the entire Mediterranean and its territory fifty miles inland.

Mommsen ultimately believed that Pompey's career was a paradox. Pompey had the Roman world at his beckoning, yet neither capitalised on, nor cemented his dominance[40]. Furthermore, he was insincere in his ambitions and defined by his vanity. He thus typified the Republic's problems and justified Caesar's usurpation of traditional conventions. It is unsurprising then, that Mommsen considered him the single greatest detriment to Rome's social, political, and military development[41]. Moreover, his ambivalence between conservative and radical positions made him untrustworthy and highlighted that his sole ambition was to dominate under the acceptance of his peers. Caesar, on the other hand, fought for noble reasons. He wished to both preserve his dignity and nobly advance Rome's cause until the end. Consequently, Mommsen's Roman political figures cannot be understood within a stagnant reading of their political and social standing. Rather, he imposed a deterministic reading of their respective ideological perceptions of Rome and its ultimate direction. He thereby simplified the history as a conflict of social ideologies, wherein the past was manufactured to appear as though it was moving down a special path (*Sonderweg*) toward an ultimate goal. This finale was Caesar's conquest over his amoral enemies. Mommsen's reading reduced key figures to a few core values and traits, which thereafter represented entire characters. These traits were selected to perpetuate his reading. As was illustrated in the opening chapter, Pompey was a multi-faceted figure in the ancient evidence and defies reductionist readings. Therefore Mommsen marginalised Pompey's virtues and simplified his portrayal in defiance of the ancient evidence.

Pompey's Early Career

Mommsen's introduction to Pompey is a somewhat restrained prelude to subsequent themes. It outlines Pompey's political impotence, his lack of leadership skills, his propensity for treachery, cruelty, vanity, his weakness, and stupidity. Mommsen remarks that Pompey was a

[39] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 495-6. "It is probable that Pompeius, who was at a great distance and occupied with other things, and who besides was wholly destitute of the gift of calculating his political bearings, by no means saw through, at least at that time, the extent and mutual connection of the democratic intrigues contrived against him; perhaps even in his haughty and shortsighted manner he had a certain pride in ignoring these underground proceedings".

[40] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 111. "The exceptional position of Pompeius even under the Gabinian, and much more under the Manilian, law was incompatible with a republican organization. He had been, as even then his opponents urged with good reason, appointed by the Gabinian law not as admiral, but as regent of the empire; not unjustly was he designated by a Greek familiar with eastern affairs King of Kings."

[41] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome,* Vol. 5, 109. "Men were living in an interregnum between the ruin of the aristocratic, and the rise of the military rule; and, if the Roman commonwealth has presented all the different political functions and organizations more purely and normally than any other in ancient or modern times, it has also exhibited political disorganisation - anarchy - with an unenviable clearness."

capable soldier[42], who had physical prowess in youth and soundness of his mind, but goes on to say that Pompey's mental endowments did not correspond with his unprecedented successes[43], thereby suggesting his stupidity and already looking forward to the mental breakdown he would suffer at Pharsalus[44]. He then asserts that Pompey was neither a bad nor an incapable man, but thoroughly ordinary, stating that circumstances demanded he become a general and statesman when he was more suited to being a sergeant[45]. Even his description of Pompey as an excellent, intelligent, brave, and experienced soldier does not save a portrait of one of Rome's most successful commanders from being underwhelming. Nevertheless, this is an underwhelming portrait of one of Rome's most exemplary commanders. This passage highlights how Mommsen selects the evidence to manipulate and undermine Pompey's portrayal and perpetuate his pro-Caesar reading.

Mommsen's representation of Pompey's moral character also demonstrates negative undertones. He praises Pompey's discretion regarding his wealth, stating that he was both too rich and cold to incur special risks when making money. However, he adds that Pompey's disinterest in the disgraceful moneymaking schemes of his times was not an inherent personal virtue. Rather, his lack of interest in seizing others possessions was only admirable if it was compared to the greed typical of his times. He praises Pompey's moral character and honest countenance, highlighting both his modesty in wealth and his decision to abolish the execution of captive generals after triumphs[46]. This is the only time that Mommsen praises Pompey and it is inconsistent with the rest of the discourse.

Mommsen, having dealt with the commendable aspects of Pompey's character, then moves to distances himself from them. The use of the passive voice is especially notable. For example, Pompey was "esteemed as a worthy and moral man"[47] (*Sein ehrliches Gesicht ward fast sprichwörtlich und noch nach seinem Tode galt er als sein würdiger und sittlicher Mann*).

Mommsen then turns to the recurring themes of treachery and coldness, stating that Pompey blindly followed Sulla's orders during the civil war and unblinkingly administered the

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[42] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 272. "Sound in body and mind, a capable athlete, who even when a superior officer vied with his soldiers in leaping, running, and lifting, a vigorous and skilled rider and fencer, a bold leader of volunteer bands, the youth had become imperator and triumphator at an age which excluded him from every magistracy and from the senate, and had acquired the first place next to Sulla in public opinion…"

[43] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 272. "Unhappily, his mental endowments by no means corresponded with these unprecedented successes*."*

[44] Plut. *Pomp.* 72.1.

[45] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 272.

[46] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 272-3. "His honest countenance became almost proverbial, and even after his death he was esteemed as a worthy man and moral man; he was in fact a good neighbour, who did not join in the revolting schemes by which the grandees of that age extended the bounds of their domains through forced sales or measures still worse at the expense of their humbler neighbours, and in domestic life he displayed attachment to his wife and children : it redounds moreover to his credit that he was the first to depart from the barbarous custom of putting to death the captive kings and generals of the enemy, after they had been exhibited in triumph."

[47] T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte,* Dritte Auflage, Dritter Band (Fünftes Buch), Wiedmannsche Buchhandlung (Berlin, 1862), 11.

execution orders for his allies. Pompey becomes cold, calculating, and driven by self-ambition. Moreover, he was "unimpassioned in either good or evil acts"[48]. Mommsen claims that this was more despicable than is stated in the ancient evidence, which only accused him of cruelty towards Carbo. He thus admits that he is distorting the ancient evidence. Mommsen then addresses Pompey's political acumen, emphasising all weaknesses mentioned in the ancient record, but omitting positive assessments. He stresses Pompey's tendency to blush at the slightest provocation, which he took as a sign of shyness, and his generally stiff, awkward demeanour on display at his public appearances[49]. Mommsen thereby manufactures a Pompey who was unfit for statesmanship or a political career. He then presents him as a pliant tool for those who knew how to manage him and specifically references his freedmen and clients. These comments all undermine Pompey's authority. Mommsen then summarises his overall position with a scathing assessment:

> For nothing was he (Pompey) less qualified than for a statesman. Uncertain as to his aims, unskilful in the choice of his means, alike in little and great matters shortsighted and helpless, he was wont to conceal his irresolution and indecision under a solemn silence, and, when he thought to play a subtle game, simply to deceive himself with the belief that he was deceiving others.[50]

Pompey was thus a stupid fool, incapable and unqualified for his role in contemporary politics. Mommsen reaches this judgement through a comparison with his peers, namely Caesar and Marius, concluding that Pompey was the most intolerable, tiresome, and starched of all artificial 'great men', whose political position was 'utterly perverse'[51]. For the rest of the narrative, Pompey is likened to an inordinately mediocre third century BC *Optimate*, and as a delusional dreamer who believed in an innate greatness, which wasn't apparent in reality. Accordingly, Pompey was:

> Thus constantly at fundamental variance with, and yet at the same time the obedient servant of, the oligarchy, constantly tormented by an ambition which was frightened at its own aims, his (Pompey's) much-agitated life passed joylessly away in a perpetual inward contradiction.[52]

Mommsen thus undermines his positive commentary and introduces key themes, which resonate throughout the *Römische Geschichte*. He highlights Pompey's flawed character and his methodology for amplifying these vices, which were contested in the ancient evidence.

The Sertorian Command

Mommsen's outline of the Sertorian war reveals the underlying idiosyncrasies of his conception of Roman society, its political figures, and their relation to his Prussian context. It

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[48] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 273.

[49] Quint. 11.1.36. refutes this portrayal. Mommsen substantiates this argument with one Ciceronian letter, Cic. A*tt.* 2.21.4. (SB 41) and Velleius Paterculus' account (Vell. Pat. 2.29.2-3), which he removes from its context. He thus distorts the ancient evidence.

[50] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 273.

[51] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 275.

[52] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 275.

is clear that Mommsen was not sympathetic toward traditionalist sentiments, either in the Roman world or in his own times. He saw the value in political and social change, which when combined with genius, bettered society. His determinist reading of history supported this conclusion with hindsight. After all, Mommsen perpetuated the belief that all civilizations were invariably moving toward an end, wherein societies rose, peaked, and then fell. Conversely, Mommsen's attitude towards demagoguery was largely positive[53]. Mommsen's Sertorius typifies this. He was a heroic figure who could have positively changed the Roman world in the right situation. Mommsen thus considered the destructive elements of Sertorius' war essential for the liberation of the Roman people from the oligarchy, which dominated them. Sertorius' failure was a precursor to Caesar's later success, which saw Rome's destiny realised. The theme of the extraordinary individual as an agent for social development is central throughout this sub-chapter and the *Römische Geschichte* generally.

Mommsen's account of the Sertorian war typifies his 'great men' reading of Roman history. Like his introduction for Pompey (see above) and Crassus, Mommsen outlines Sertorius' character as a representative element of Roman society immediately after Sulla's death. While Mommsen's Pompey symbolised luck, stupidity, vanity, and self-serving politics, Crassus embodied greed and the absolute pursuit of economic dominance in this period. By contrast, Mommsen's Sertorius was praiseworthy for his fight against the prevailing Sullan constitution, which had eroded the social conditions and advances granted to the wider populace. Sertorius was thus an agent for progress, who alone[54] challenged conservative ideologies after Sulla's proscriptions[55]. Mommsen substantiates this portrayal from his reading of Sertorius' achievements and character. Firstly, Sertorius was the only capable 'democratic' officer at the time who could prepare and execute a war. Secondly, he was a genius who exceeded his peers in spirit, mind, and achievements. Finally, he was the only 'democratic' statesman "who opposed the insensate and furious doings of his party"[56]. Mommsen deduced this from Sertorius' governorship of Spain[57] and astounding success against Metellus[58]. Mommsen's introductions for Sertorius and Pompey are thereby polarised between the ideal and the unjust. This distinction continues throughout his rendition of the Sertorian war. Conversely, the ancient record states that this war saw Pompey thrive as a military commander.

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[53] Clodius was the only major exception to this rule. Mommsen used him to illuminate the negative aspects of demagoguery.

[54] Mommsen disregards Lepidus, a former Sullan, who changed sides and fought for the democratic cause when it suited him. See: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 280. "Thus the leadership of the democracy, in the absence of a man with a true vocation for it, was to be had by any one who might please to give himself forth as the champion of oppressed popular freedom; and in this way it came to Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, a Sullan, who from motives more than ambiguous deserted to the camp of the democracy."

[55] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 280. "But Caesar could only be the object of hopes for the future; and the men who from their age and their public position would have been called now to seize the reins of the party and the state were all dead or in exile."

[56] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 282.

[57] Mommsen praises Sertorius' governorship of Spain throughout the section. See: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 284-7.

[58] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 284.

Mommsen undermines Pompey's acquisition of the Sertorian command by questioning the quality of the senate. He concedes that Pompey was as efficient and capable as any other senator despite his unconventional youth and political inexperience. Yet, this diminishes Pompey's achievement because he was only an adequate choice among a pedestrian selection of senators. Mommsen acknowledges that Pompey's demands were bold[59] considering the extraordinary concessions the senate had already granted Pompey during the Lepidian revolt[60]. Pompey thus undermined Sulla's constitution and set a political precedent almost immediately after Sulla's death. In addition, he had elevated his political status, not having held civil office previously, and demanded an important provincial governorship and military command despite the opposition of the *Optimates*[61]. Mommsen's pragmatic sensibilities respected this aspect of Pompey's career, despite his active marginalisation of Pompey's accession to the command.

Mommsen diametrically opposes Sertorius and Pompey during the Spanish civil war. Within this construct, Sertorius' position was defined by his military capabilities and organisation, which were undone by a lack of provisions. While Pompey enjoyed limitless resources and extorted further assistance, he was cautious throughout the war. For example, Mommsen highlights Sertorius' decisive offensives against Celtiberian towns in which he quelled Metellus' forces. Pompey, in the meantime, was slow to support and wilfully ignored the pleas from towns that needed his assistance[62]. Mommsen emphasises that Pompey's actions were underpinned by a deliberate rationale, explaining that Pompey was conditioning his raw troops to the hardship of warfare, while also discouraging the Spanish forces who dreaded his arrival. However, Mommsen stresses that this was a foolish and vain self-overestimation on Pompey's behalf, because the Spanish forces resisted his intimidation as can be seen from Pompey's failed attempt to cross the Ebro[63]. Mommsen characterises this war as a struggle and accentuates Pompey and Metellus' setbacks at the rivers Sucro[64] and Turia where defeat was narrowly avoided. He attributes this to Sertorius' genius guerrilla warfare tactics, which protracted the war for over five years and cost Rome immense manpower and resources[65].

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[59] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 292.

[60] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 291.

[61] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 292.

[62] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 293.

[63] These events centred on the town of Lauro which itself supported the Roman cause. The ebb and flow of this battle sequence in the *Römische Geschichte* is significant because Mommsen credits Pompey's soldierly abilities at a critical juncture. He emphasises that even Pompey's great abilities were unable to salvage the battle, thereby foreshadowing Pompey's ultimate victory over Sertorius. However, it is also mixed with criticism as Pompey's innate cut-throat ambitiousness saw the battle take place before Metellus could arrive with reinforcements. Mommsen thus explains that Pompey unwisely sought the glory of victory for himself. See: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 295. "Pompeius offered battle beforehand to the main army of the enemy, with a view to wipe out the stain of Lauro and to gain the expected laurels, if possible, alone."

[64] Pompey suffered a serious wound at this battle, and Mommsen duly comments on this. See: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 295-6.

[65] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 298. "In the main, however, it was neither their (the senate) fault nor the fault of the generals that a genius so superior as that of Sertorius was able to carry on this guerrilla war year after year, despite of all numerical superiority, in a country so thoroughly favourable to insurrectionary and piratical warfare."

Accordingly, Mommsen refers to Pompey's letter of ultimatum to the senate[66], wherein he threatened to abandon the war and leave Italy unprotected if his call for assistance went unnoticed. Yet, Mommsen does not frame Pompey's setbacks negatively and instead stresses Sertorius' abilities[67].

This episode marks a contrast between Mommsen's hyper-critical reading of Pompey's actions during the civil war, where Mommsen knew that Pompey was destined for defeat. This leads him to assert that the only way the war could have been concluded was by internal division, because neither Pompey nor Metellus could defeat him. Mommsen postulates that Sertorius' demise came about not because of them but from the gradual loss of his best officers during the conflict, alongside his inability to change the unpredictable and unreliable nature of the Spanish forces. Furthermore, Spain became progressively tired of the war and its costs[68], along with the failure to achieve immediate results. Mommsen thus highlights that Sertorius' only failure was the protraction of the war and disenfranchisement of the Spanish provinces, which were circumstances he could not control. Importantly, Perpenna's assumption of command soon afterward led to Pompey's victory. Mommsen thus emphasises Sertorius' importance and ability as a commander[69], while diminishing Pompey's success as a victory over an inferior.

Pompey's Gabinian and Manilian Commands

Even Mommsen struggles to fault Pompey's commands against the Pirates and Mithridates. He accepts that these commands were legally exceptional[70] and granted Pompey almost uninhibited and entirely unprecedented control of the Roman military and navy. Moreover, he stresses that Pompey was decisive in these wars.

However, Mommsen's treatment of the pirate command is brief. He outlines the Gabinian laws legal parameters as well as the social and political conditions which demanded it. This includes a brief commentary on Pompey's popularity at this time, because there was an immediate drop in the price of grain when the Gabinian law was passed, which reflected the hopes attached to

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[66] Sall. *Hist.* 2.82.1.

[67] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 298. "Generals and soldiers carried on the war with reluctance. The generals had encountered an opponent far superior in talent (Sertorius), a tediously pertinacious resistance, a warfare of very serious perils and of successes difficult to be attained and far from brilliant; it was asserted that Pompeius was scheming to get himself recalled from Spain and entrusted with a more desirable command elsewhere."

[68] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 299-300.

[69] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 302-3. "So ended one of the greatest men, if not the very greatest man, that Rome had hitherto produced – a man who under more fortunate circumstances would perhaps have become the regenerator of his country – by the treason of the wretched band of emigrants whom he was condemned to lead against his native land. History loves not the Coriolani; nor has she made any exception even in the case of this the most magnanimous, most gifted, most deserving to be regretted of them all."

[70] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 105. "These measures of a man, who had just given so striking proofs of his vacillation and weakness, surprise us by their decisive energy (i.e. his conduct against piracy). Nevertheless the fact that Pompeius acted on this occasion more resolutely than during his consulate is very capable of explanation. The point at issue was not that he should come forward at once as monarch, but only that he should prepare the way for the monarchy by a military exceptional measure, which, revolutionary as it was in its nature, could still be accomplished under the forms of the existing constitution..."

the "expedition and its glorious leader"[71]. Mommsen adds that Pompey didn't merely fulfil, but surpassed these expectations by clearing the seas of piracy within three months[72]. However, he omits any mention of Pompey's clemency to the vanquished pirates, thus ignoring a well-attested and widely praised Pompeian decision. This selective use of the ancient evidence assists his portrayal to remain in negative territory even at the moment when he acknowledges Pompey's greatest success.

Mommsen's outline of Pompey's Mithridatic war is long and, at least on the surface, neutral. Surprisingly, Mommsen supports Pompey's decision to aid the Cretans[73], which undermined Metellus' proconsular power in Crete[74]. However, this approval springs more from Mommsen's views about Roman politics than approbation for Pompey's decision. Metellus was affiliated with the *Optimates*, while Pompey was at that time aligned with the *Populares*, or 'democrats'[75]. Hence, Pompey's positive portrayal reflects Mommsen's disdainful opinion of the *Optimates* rather than any tenderness toward Pompey. Mommsen goes on to highlight Pompey's abilities as a general at Nicopolis, where he bested Mithridates in Pontus, stressing that he achieved what Lucullus did not[76]. Yet, once again, Mommsen has an opportunity to disparage an Optimate, in this case, Lucullus[77]. Finally, Mommsen does praise Pompey's generalship[78] and administrative abilities[79], but peppers his comment with an overlay of critical remarks[80].

Above all, this chapter of the *Römische Geschichte* reinforces the Mommsenian trope of Pompey's luck. The theme has the effect of marginalising Pompey's successes, so that his later definition of him as a failure can make better sense. It is luck which brings Pompey's success

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[71] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4. 395.

[72] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 399.

[73] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 403. "This proceeding was, no doubt, not like that of a colleague; but formal right was wholly on the side of Pompeius, and Metellus was most evidently in the wrong when, utterly ignoring the convention of the cities with Pompeius, he continued to treat them as hostile."

[74] The Cretans were begging for Pompey's merciful intervention to avoid Metellus wrath, an issue in which Pompey could legally intervene. Mommsen stresses that Pompey denounced Metellus actions against the Cretan people, further stating that the entire episode proved Rome's disorganisation at that time.

[75] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 404.

[76] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 409.

[77] Mommsen largely omits the political scuffle with Pompey in the East. See: Plut. *Pomp.* 31; *Luc.* 34; Dio Cass. 36.46; App. *Bell. Civ.* 14.90-1. For example: Plut. *Pomp.* 31.4. "…but in the conferences which followed they could come to no fair or reasonable agreement, nay, they actually abused each other, Pompey charging Lucullus with love of money, and Lucullus charging Pompey with love of power…" See also T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 407.

[78] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 415. "Pompeius was too experienced and too discreet an officer to stake his fame and his army in obstinate adherence to so injudicious an expedition..."

[79] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 428. "To create order amidst the chaos did not require either brilliance of conception or a mighty display of force, but it required a clear insight into the interests of Rome and of her subjects, and vigour and consistency in establishing and maintaining the institutions recognized as necessary."

[80] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 446. "Lucullus reaped their (the East's) fruits himself; when his imprudent conduct wrested from him all the results of his victories; Pompeius left it to his successors to bear the consequences of his false policy towards the Parthians. He might have made war on the Parthians, if he had the courage to do so, or have maintained peace with them and recognized, as he had promised, the Euphrates as boundary; he was too timid for the former course, too vain for the latter…"

over Mithridates[81], and it is luck which brings Tigranes to surrender unconditionally[82]. Mommsen emphasises the importance of Phraates' invading force, weakening Tigranes' position, implying that fortune had aided Pompey, who was actually occupied with Mithridates at the time. Mommsen also underlines how the flimsy dynamic of Tigranes' household aided Pompey. This weakened the Armenian position and Mithridates' faith in his ally Tigranes, who suspected Roman involvement[83].

Mommsen's conclusion to this chapter reflects his attitude to Pompey and forecasts his failures. Mommsen states:

> It was no miraculous work, either as respects the difficulties attained; nor was it made so by all the high-sounding words, which the Roman world of quality lavished in favour of Lucullus and the artless multitude in praise of Pompeius. Pompeius in particular consented to be praised, and praised himself, in such a fashion that people might almost have reckoned him still more weak-minded than he really was.[84]

He thereby reinforces the theme of luck, while also stressing Pompey's vanity, weakness, and stupidity or weak-mindedness. This paragraph typifies how Mommsen distorts the ancient evidence and sullies Pompey's portrayal. Mommsen thus emphasises Pompey's flaws after recounting the most successful period of his life, rather than outlining his efficient administration and command. In this way, Mommsen upholds his consistently anti-Pompeian portrait.

Pompey's Gradual Demise: *Der Gesammtherrscher* and Civil War Period

This section of the *Römische Geschichte* is shaped by the impending civil war between Caesar and Pompey, which Mommsen artfully anticipates during their 'triumviral' (*der Gesammtherrscher*) period[85] from 59-50. Mommsen foreshadows Pompey's failures from the chapter's beginning[86] and demonstrates his adoration for Caesar[87]. Pompey's representation is

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[81] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 409. "During the rest at noon the Roman army set out without the enemy observing the movement, made a circuit, and occupied the heights, which lay in front and commanded a defile to be passed by the enemy, on the southern bank of the river Lycus... the following morning the Pontic troops broke up in their usual manner, and, supposing that the enemy was as hitherto behind them, after accomplishing the day's march they pitched their camp in the very valley whose encircling heights the Romans had occupied."

[82] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 410.

[83] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 405-6.

[84] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 443.

[85] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 115. "Caesar was now the hero of the day and the master of the most powerful roman army; Pompeius was an ex-general who had once been famous. It is true that no collision had yet occurred between father-in-law and son-in-law, and the relation was externally undisturbed; but every political alliance is inwardly broken up, when the relative proportions of the power of the parties are materially altered."

[86] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 108. "But when Pompeius was appointed by the coalition to be ruler of the capital, he undertook a task far exceeding his powers. Pompeius understood nothing further of ruling than may be summed up in the word of command."

[87] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 508. "If we still after so many centuries bow in reverence before what Caesar willed and did, it is not because he desired and gained a crown (to do which is, abstractly, as little of a great thing as the crown itself) but because his mighty ideal - of a free commonwealth under one ruler - never forsook him, and preserved him even when monarch from sinking into vulgar royalty."

increasingly unfavourable as the coalition's demise approaches and reaches its zenith throughout the civil war period. Importantly, this section of the *Römische Geschichte* exhibits Mommsen's selectivity whereby he picks and chooses ancient evidence to perpetuate an unfavourable portrait of Pompey. Often, the evidence that Mommsen uses is not from the specific circumstance he is examining.

Mommsen uses Pompey's political dispute with Clodius[88] in 58 to demonstrate his political ineptitude. He reiterates several fundamental Pompeian flaws which explain the longevity of the dispute[89]. Pompey's coldness is foremost. He was unperturbed by Cicero's exile and allowed it to be passed without any resistance, despite all former ties of friendship and goodwill. Mommsen stresses that this freed Clodius from Cicero, who was his greatest political adversary and restraint. Consequently, Clodius wreaked political havoc throughout Rome. Mommsen is critical of Pompey's inaction and inability to counteract Clodius[90], because his sluggishness compromised the credibility of the 'triumvirate'[91]. The passage's vocabulary aptly exhibits his frustration toward Pompey's inaction, wherein Pompey's predicament is

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Caesar's portrayal determined all of Mommsen's representation of late Republic Roman political figures. See: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 510. "Without deviating far from the truth, Caesar could tell the multitude that the senate had scornfully rejected most rational and most necessary proposals submitted to it in the most respectful form, simply because they came from the democratic consul... the aristocracy, with the obstinate weak creature Bibulus and the unbending dogmatical fool Cato at their head, in reality intended to push the matter to open violence." This is drastically different to Plutarch's account. See: Plut. *Caes.* 1-4. "Caesar, however, encompassed and protected by the friendship of Crassus and Pompey, entered the canvass for the consulship; and as soon as he had been triumphantly elected, along with Calpurnius Bibulus, and had entered upon his office, he proposed laws which were becoming, not for a consul, but for a most radical tribune of the people; for to gratify the multitude he introduced sundry allotments and distributions of land. In the senate the opposition of men of the better sort gave him the pretext which he had long desired, and crying with loud adjurations that he was driven forth into the popular assembly against his wishes, and was compelled to court its favour by the insolence and obstinacy of the senate, he hastened before it, and stationing Crassus on one side of him and Pompey on the other, he asked them if they approved his laws. They declared that they did approve them, whereupon he urged them to give him their aid against those who threatened to oppose him with swords."

[88] Mommsen illustrates Clodius' actions as destructive demagoguery which profited none other than himself. T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 111. "The principal performer in this theatre of political rascality was that Publius Clodius, of whose services, as already mentioned, the regents availed themselves against Cato and Cicero." see also: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 113. "Even a man of Caesar's genius had to learn by experience that democratic agitation was completely worn out, and that even the way to the throne no longer lay through demagogism."

[89] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol 5, 114. "Little as Pompeius liked and understood taking the initiative, he was yet on this occasion compelled by the change of his position towards both Clodius and Caesar to depart from his previous inaction. The irksome and disgraceful situation to which Clodius had reduced him, could not but at length arouse even his sluggish nature to hatred and anger."

[90] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 112. "At all these things Pompeius looked on without stirring. If he did not perceive how seriously he thus compromised himself, his opponent perceived it. Clodius had the hardihood to engage in a dispute with the regent of Rome on a question of little moment, as to the sending back of a captive Armenian prince; and the variance soon became a formal feud, in which the utter helplessness of Pompeius was displayed."

[91] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 119. "The helplessness of Pompeius in presence of these daring demonstrations, as well as the undignified and almost ridiculous position into which he had fallen with reference to Clodius, deprived him and the coalition of their credit; and the section of the senate which adhered to the regents, demoralised by the singular inaptitude of Pompeius and helplessly let to itself, could not prevent the republican-aristocratic party from regaining completely the ascendancy in the corporation."

variously 'irksome' (*verdrießlich*[92]), 'disgraceful' (*schimpfliche*[93]), 'undignified' (*unwürdige*[94]), and 'ridiculous' (*lächerlich*[95]).[96] Mommsen further highlights Pompey's political ineptitudes with reference to the requests for a grain commission in 57.[97] This passage reiterates familiar tropes introduced earlier in the work, including Pompey's transparent cunningness, feigned modesty, and foolishness. It also contrasts with Caesar's political prowess, which was so marvellous that "even Publius Clodius was induced to keep himself and his pack quiet"[98]. These portrayals anticipate Mommsen's representation of the 'triumvirate' from 56-50. He emphasises that Caesar was politically dominant at the conference at Luca in 56 and thereafter, adding that Pompey's career was "politically annihilated"[99] (*politischen vernichtet*[100]).

The months preceding the civil war emphasise Pompey's worst traits. Mommsen highlights his dallying indecisiveness and reinforces this with Pompey's veiled subversion of his allegiance with Caesar[101]. These typify his cowardliness. Mommsen deems Pompey the cause of the political fracture with Caesar, which was further aided by both Julia and Crassus' deaths. In his reading, Pompey is a bitter opponent who idly undermined Caesar and agitated for war, but was too afraid to instigate open conflict[102]. The political split eventually occurred because Pompey rejected Curio's decree, wherein both Caesar and Pompey had to resign their proconsular titles and return to Rome as citizens, after which the senate was to elect their successors. Mommsen emphasises Pompey's unwillingness to adhere to this proposal, as well as Curio's plight as he was forced to flee Rome for safety. He blames the allegiance's collapse on Pompey's unwillingness to accept Caesar's terms[103]. More importantly, Pompey is

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[92] T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, Dritte Band, 310.

[93] Ibid.

[94] T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, Dritte Band, 314.

[95] Ibid.

[96] These comments appear over a few pages in T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 114-9.

[97] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 122. "…Pompeius himself attributed or professed to attribute primarily the failure of his plan; the antipathy of the republican opposition in the senate to any decree which really or nominally enlarged the authority of the regents; lastly and mainly, the incapacity of Pompeius himself, who even after having been compelled to act could not prevail on himself to acknowledge his own action, but chose always to bring forward his real design as it were in incognito by means of his friends, while he himself in his well-known modesty declared his willingness to be content with even less."

[98] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 126.

[99] Ibid. 126. "That this whole settlement of the pending questions proceeded, not from a compromise among independent and rival regents meeting on equal terms, but solely from the good will of Caesar, is evident from the circumstances. Pompeius appeared at Luca in the painful position of a powerless refugee, who comes to ask aid from his opponent. Whether Caesar chose to dismiss him and to declare the coalition dissolved, or to receive him and to let the league continue just as it stood – Pompeius was in either view politically annihilated."

[100] T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, Dritte Band, 320.

[101] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 177. "Where Pompeius, therefore, might have simply kept by the law, he had preferred first to make a spontaneous concession, then to recall it, and lastly to cloak this recall in a manner most disloyal."

[102] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 178. "The pitiful dissimilation and procrastinating artifice of Pompeius are after a remarkable manner mixed up, in these arrangements, with the wily formalism and the constitutional erudition of the republican party."

[103] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 185.

lambasted for failing to prepare for the conflict immediately thereafter[104]. Mommsen focuses on Pompey's ego through his demand for control and outlines how he ultimately failed his subjects. It is a further allusion to the tropes of selfishness, ambition, and ineptitude.

Mommsen's selectivity has questionable outcomes for his narrative which the ancient evidence contradicts. Appian, for example, suggests that both parties and the general political anarchy were liable for the ensuing hostilities. He states that Pompey provoked Caesar by recalling his legion at an inopportune time under a pretext which ensuing events proved disingenuous[105], while Caesar sought hostilities but only if Pompey was deemed the perpetrator. This reading also appears in Plutarch's Lives of *Pompey*[106] and *Caesar*[107]*,* wherein this anarchy prevented a mutual agreement despite Pompey's willingness to comply. Mommsen avoids these traditions, despite their contextual relevance, because he wished to place Pompey as the primary catalyst for the civil war. These sources are later used to denounce the *Optimates*, though this does not aid Pompey's representation. This is one method that Mommsen uses to mould his history and produce favourable outcomes. He also focuses on evidence that favours his reading. He favours Caesar's *Civil War*, select Ciceronian letters, and Cassius Dio's *Roman History,* which are, at various times, hostile to Pompey. This results in an imbalanced reading of the civil war period. For example, Mommsen fails to mention the importance of the consuls in 49, Gaius Claudius Marcellus Maior and Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus, as well as the interference of Scipio and Cato, who prevented any effort to salvage their allegiance. Moreover, Pompey's willingness to come to terms with Caesar[108] is not referenced. Instead, Mommsen takes the most hostile reading whereby Pompey was the primary cause of the hostilities[109]. This suited Mommsen's civil war narrative, wherein Pompey was the greatest threat to Caesar's *dignitas.* Pompey is also presented as an indecisive dullard[110] and disloyal fool[111].

Mommsen's representation of the coalition between Pompey and the *Optimates* is inconsistent. Contrary to his introduction to the civil war, he states that the *Optimates* instigated the war on

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[104] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 185. "Their leaders had to listen in their conferences to the bitterest reproaches from Pompeius; he pointed out emphatically and with entire justice the dangers of the seeming peace; and, though it depended on himself alone to cut the knot by rapid action, his allies knew very well that they could never expect this from him, and that it was for them, as they had promised, to bring matters to a crisis."

[105] App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.4.29.

[106] Plut. *Pomp.* 59.

[107] Plut. *Caes.* 30-1.

[108] App. *Bell. Civ.* 28.1.

[109] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 168-9. See also: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 184-5. "Pompeius was thus recalled by the senate no less than Caesar, and while Caesar was ready to comply with the command, Pompeius positively refused obedience."

[110] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 173. "That Pompeius was not quite in earnest with his fidelity to the constitution, could indeed escape nobody; but, undecided as he was in everything, he had by no means arrived like Caesar at a clear and firm conviction that it must be the first business of the new monarch to sweep off thoroughly and conclusively the oligarchic lumber." See also: Ibid, 181.

[111] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 177.

Pompey's behalf[112] and prevented Pompey and Caesar's peace overtures. Mommsen attacks the entire senate, especially the *Optimates*[113], and temporarily sets aside Pompey. He splits the senate into two factions, which is made up of either senators with lukewarm political sentiments[114] or those with ultra-conservative views[115]. Each is denounced at great length. Mommsen criticises Pompey's political position in relation to these factions. He established this argument early in the chapter when he condemned Pompey's alliance with the conservatives, which compromised his military and political position[116]. Consequently, Pompey's political dilemma was entirely of his own making. In short, Mommsen is critical of Pompey's decision to align himself with the *Optimates* over Caesar, whom he treated with great injustice.

Mommsen's conclusions underline his greatest hate: conservatism[117]. He shows frustration and contempt toward Pompey's dallying throughout, but is most critical of the *Optimates* who upheld traditional and outdated social structures[118]. Pompey, who was not from an ancient *gens* and was predominantly a progressive politician throughout his career, was thus separated from this attack. Yet Pompey's ultimate allegiance with this sanctimonious faction resulted in a damaging portrayal, which Mommsen reinforced with Pompey's weak resolve and inability to assume total command. These were flaws that a great statesman could not possess. In sum, Mommsen actively contrasts the senate and Caesar's forces, placing Pompey, an already

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[112] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 171. "It was characteristic of Pompeius, even when he had formed a resolve, not to be able to find his way to its execution. While he knew perhaps how to conduct war but certainly not how to declare it, the Catonian party, although assuredly unable to conduct it, was very able and above all ready to supply grounds for the war against the monarchy on the point of being founded." See also: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 185.

[113] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 191.

[114] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 238-9. "Far worse traits were the indifference of the luke-warm and the narrow-minded stubbornness of the ultras. The former could not be brought to act or even to keep silence. If they were asked to exert themselves in some definite way for the good, with the inconsistency characteristic of weak people they regarded any such suggestion as a malicious attempt to compromise them still further, and either did not do what they were ordered at all or did it with half a heart… their daily work consisted in criticising, ridiculing, and bemoaning every occurrence great and small, and in unnerving and discouraging the multitude by their own sluggishness and hopelessness."

[115] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 239. "…the ultras on the other hand exhibited in full display its exaggerated action. With them there was no attempt to conceal that the preliminary to any negotiation for peace was the bringing over of Caesar's head; every one of the attempts towards peace, which Caesar repeatedly made even now, was tossed aside without being examined, or employed only to cover insidious attempts on the lives of the commissioners of their opponent."

[116] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 172. "Of the countless evils involved with this coalition (Pompey and the *Optimates*), there was developed in the meantime only one – but that already a very grave one – that Pompeius surrendered the power of commencing hostilities against Caesar when and how he pleased, and in this decisive point made himself dependant on all the accidents and caprices of an aristocratic corporation."

[117] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 238. "This Roman Coblenz (the senate organised in Macedonia during the civil war) displayed a pitiful spectacle in the high pretensions and paltry performances of the genteel world of Rome, their unseasonable reminiscences and still more unseasonable recriminations, their political perversities and financial embarrassments. It was a matter of comparatively slight momenta that, while the old structure was falling to pieces, they were with the most painstaking gravity watching over every old ornamental scroll and every speck of rust in the constitution…"

[118] T. Mommsen, *the History of Rome*, Vol.5, 169. "The impending war was not a struggle possibly between republic and monarchy – for that had been virtually decided years before – but a struggle between Pompeius and Caesar for the possession of the crown of Rome."

detestable figure, within the ranks of an even more detestable faction. This strengthens his juxtaposition of Caesar and Pompey and results in a civil war narrative defined by opposites. Thus, while Caesar shows clemency[119], Pompey's coalition is cruel[120] and punishing[121]. In addition, Mommsen juxtaposes Caesar's decisiveness and energy[122] with Pompey's cowardliness and awkwardness[123]. Finally, Mommsen's Caesar controlled his forces and was an active agent for social and political change[124], while Pompey was subjugated by the wills of his 'inferiors'[125].

Continuing this trend, Mommsen defends Pompey's actions and preparations in Macedonia and reports that his 'inferiors' considered their misfortunes his fault[126]. He stresses that this is unjust and emphasises Pompey's difficult situation. Instead, he blames two *Optimates*, Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus and Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, for the Republican force's misfortunes[127]. Nevertheless, Mommsen emphasises Pompey's inferiority to Caesar, stating:

> …from the moment when Pompeius took the head of the army, he had led it with skill and courage, and had saved at least very considerable forces from the shipwreck; that he was not a match for Caesar's altogether superior genius, which was now recognized by all, could not be fairly made matter of reproach to him.[128]

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[119] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 226. "Caesar granted to officers and soldiers their life and liberty, and the possession of the property which they still retained as well as the restoration of what had been already taken from them, the full value of which he undertook personally to make good to his soldiers; and not only so, but while he had compulsorily enrolled in his army the recruits captured in Italy, he honoured these old legionaries of Pompeius by the promise that no one should be compelled against his will to enter Caesar's army." See also: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 213-4.

[120] Mommsen refrains from labelling Pompey cruel, but deems his allies reckless in their desire for the death of their enemies.

[121] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 239-40. "But they (the coalition) did not confine themselves to words. Marcus Bibulus, Titus Labienus, and others of this coterie carried out their theory in practice, and caused such officers or soldiers of Caesar's army as fell into their hands to be executed *en masse*…"

[122] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 212. "In a campaign of two months, without a single serious engagement, Caesar had so broken up an army of ten legions, that less than the half of it had with great difficulty escaped in a confused flight across the sea… Not without reason did the beaten party bewail the terrible rapidity, sagacity, and energy of the monster."

[123] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 240. "The better men in the Pompeian camp were in despair over this frantic behaviour. Pompeius, himself a brave soldier, spared the prisoners as far as he might and could; but he was too pusillanimous and in too awkward a position to prevent or even to punish all atrocities of this sort, as it became him as commander-in-chief to do."

[124] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 197. "Above all things Caesar as a true commander understood how to awaken in every single component element, large or small, of the mighty machine the consciousness of its befitting application. The ordinary man is destined for service, and he has no objection to be an instrument, if he feels a master guides him."

[125] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 207-8. "The unity of leadership, which resulted of itself and by necessity from the position of Caesar, was inconsistent with the nature of a coalition; and although Pompeius, too much of a soldier to deceive himself as to its being indispensable, attempted to force it on the coalition and got himself nominated by the senate as sole and absolute generalissimo by land and sea, yet the senate itself could not be set aside nor hindered from a preponderating influence on the political, and an occasional and therefore doubly injurious interference with the military, superintendence… the opponents of Caesar (were) a reluctant and refractory co-operation, which formed the saddest contrast to the harmonious and compact action on the other side."

[126] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 241.

[127] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 241.

[128] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 241.

Mommsen's uncritical representation of Titus Labienus' defection from Caesar is another important aspect, which highlights his distortion of the ancient evidence. Mommsen does not portray Labienus negatively, which is a by-product of his former affiliation with Caesar. He acknowledges that Labienus was Caesar's second-in-command and thus important to his war effort[129]. He states that Labienus fought against Caesar with "unparalleled bitterness"[130], but that we know little about either the circumstances of Labienus' defection or his general character. Despite this, Mommsen criticises Labienus for his lack of political acumen[131]. He blames Labienus for the political break with Caesar and speculates that he aspired to higher political office but was blocked by Caesar. Mommsen thus makes the circumstances suit Caesar by labelling Labienus' decision as selfish and unreasonable. The reality, however, was far more damning for Caesar's cause. He had lost his second-in-command and closest political ally, who had fought by his side throughout the Gallic war.

The battles of Brundisium and Pharsalus highlight several other key issues in the *Römische Geschichte*. Mommsen outlines Pompey's failure to sufficiently prepare for the conflict in the East in great detail, and states that he made "what was already bad worse" (*was an sich schon verdorben war, nach Kraften weiter verdarb*) with his "characteristic perversity" (*eigenen Verkehrtheit*)[132]. Mommsen's account of the siege of Brundisium favours Caesar's forces, who valiantly won most skirmishes between the combatants[133]. He distorts the series of events recorded by the ancient evidence, which highlighted the indecisive and fierce nature of the skirmish[134]. Mommsen states that Pompey fortuitously overcame Caesar's forces when 'Celtic deserters' (*keltische Ueberläufer*[135]) revealed a weakness in his defences. This fortuitous act of treachery aided Pompey, whose troops overcame Caesar's position. His troops subsequently fled. Here, Mommsen emphasises that Pompey was incapable of grasping a total victory. He stresses Caesar's superior intellect by highlighting Pompey's fear of a Caesarian stratagem, which caused him to hold his troops back[136]. This perspective originates in Caesar's *Civil War*[137] and is thus partial.

Mommsen introduces the battle of Pharsalus by emphasising Caesar's obvious disadvantage before the battle. He states that Caesar had far fewer infantry (approximately half that of Pompey) and cavalry (approximately one seventh of Pompey's forces) and that his army was

[129] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 194.
[130] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 194.
[131] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 194. "To all appearance Labienus was one of those persons who combine with military efficiency utter incapacity as a statesman, and who in consequence, if they unhappily choose or are compelled to take part in politics, are exposed to the strange paroxysms of giddiness…"
[132] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 242. See also: . T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, fünftes buch, 412.
[133] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 252.
[134] Caes. *Bell. Civ*. 3.70; Plut. *Pomp*. 65.5; *Caes*. 39.4-11; App. *Bell. Civ.* 29.62; Flor. 2.13; Dio Cass. 41.61.1.
[135] T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, Fünftes Buch, 419.
[136] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 253.
[137] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.70.1.

reeling from the recent defeat at Brundisium[138]. Meanwhile, Pompey's army and its attendants were confident that the war would soon conclude in their favour. Mommsen, however, highlights Pompey's hesitance to confront Caesar. This reiterates Pompey's cowardliness and fear of Caesar, which is cited throughout the text. Mommsen questions Pompey's control of his forces, whose indignant protests toward his hesitation successfully forced him to engage Caesar on the field of Pharsalus. He thus suggests that Pompey's command was superficial. The battle sequence itself is outlined in little detail. Mommsen unreservedly praises Caesar's stroke of tactical genius, wherein his best legionaries overcame Pompey's cavalry by using their *pila* as spears rather than projectiles. He juxtaposes this with Pompey's distrust of his infantry. This perspective is only offered in hostile ancient evidence[139]. Mommsen's summary of the battle's outcomes exceeds the information within the ancient evidence. He rationalises Pompey's defeat because of his 'inferior soul' (*dürftige Seele*) contrasted to Caesar's 'grander nature'[140] (*großartiger Natur*). Mommsen exhibits partiality with his inclusion of certain pieces of evidence, stating that Pompey's capitulation to Caesar was fundamental to his character. He likens this to Pompey's threats to abandon the Sertorian war[141], which was previously unmentioned in his account.

Pompey's Flight and Death

Mommsen treats Pompey's flight from Pharsalus with contempt. He highlights Pompey's vague and indecisive nature as the cause of his defeat and adds that Pompey's vanity and distrustfulness prevented him from seeking Caesar's clemency[142]. Thereafter, he deduces that Pompey wished to continue the war against Caesar, who quickly pursued Pompey to nullify this threat. Pompey's dithering cost him the chance to flee to Parthia, where he might have found sufficient assistance. This left Egypt as Pompey's only remaining hope. Mommsen propagates a scenario where Pompey's indecision was to blame for his inevitable and fatal arrival in Egypt. The *Römische Geschichte* diminishes the dramatic and providential aspects of Pompey's demise, widely attested in the ancient record[143]. In contrast, Mommsen highlights Caesar's decisiveness and drive to eradicate Pompey as a threat[144]. He acknowledges that

[138] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 260.

[139] Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.86.2-4.

[140] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 262. "But while Caesar in the vicissitudes of his destiny had learned that fortune loves to withdraw herself at certain moments even from her favourites in order to be once more won back through their perseverance, Pompeius knew fortune hitherto only as the constant goddess, and despaired of himself and of her when she withdrew from him; and, while in Caesar's grander nature despair only developed yet mightier energies, the inferior soul of Pompeius under similar pressure sank into the infinite abyss of despondency."

[141] This perspective is largely supported by hostile evidence, particularly Pompey's letter to the senate which is found in Sallust's *Histories* and is comprised of many Sallustian literary features. See: Sall. *Hist.* 2.82. For the argument that it is Sallustian see Laistner, *Roman Historians*, 52.

[142] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 267.

[143] Caes. *Civ. War.* 3.104; Val. Max. 5.1.10; Vell. Pat. 2.53.2.

[144] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 271.

Caesar respected Pompey: the cornerstone of the republic's forces, whose defeat was essential for the cessation of the civil war[145].

Mommsen briefly summarises Pompey's life and career after recounting the events, which led to his assassination in Egypt. His final portrayal draws together Pompey's representation throughout the history. It reiterates the introductory passage for Pompey's representation in the *gesammtherrscher* period onwards. Mommsen's obituary for Pompey emphasises his isolation by contrasting a past greatness with ultimate failure:

> On the same day, on which thirteen years before he had entered the capital in triumph over Mithridates the man, who for a generation had been called the Great and for years had ruled Rome, died on the desert sands of the inhospitable Casian shore by the hand of one of his old soldiers.[146]

Mommsen stresses that Pompey was murdered by his former soldier. He denigrates Pompey's achievements, stating that he was a good - though not great – officer and was a man of mediocre intellect who lived his life beyond his mental capacity. Mommsen asserts that luck guided Pompey to the pinnacle of Roman society and allowed him to reap the rewards of others' successes[147]. His argument promotes Pompey as an undeserved successor to Sulla, as each had "ruled Rome"[148]. Mommsen labels Pompey's achievements 'brilliant', because they were 'toilless', however, this is pejorative as it alludes to Pompey's theft of others' commands. Mommsen bemoans Pompey's greatest weaknesses: his cowardice and inability to seize supreme power. The latter comment highlights Mommsen at his most presumptive. There is little evidence that Pompey ever sought solitary rule in Rome. Cicero, in a letter to Atticus in 49, mentions that Pompey sought a dictatorship[149], but this is a mercurial comment, which was later redressed. The other evidence supporting Mommsen's claim comes from later sources, who wrote during the imperial period and formulated a portrayal of Pompey in hindsight. Lucius Annaeus Florus[150], for example, comments that the civil war started because Pompey could not accept an equal, nor Caesar a superior. This sentiment is common among first and second century evidence[151], which rationalised Pompey's aggression as an act of maintaining

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[145] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 271. "While the remnant of the defeated party thus allowed themselves to be helplessly driven about by fate, and even those who had determined to continue the struggle knew not how or where to do so, Caesar, quickly as ever resolving and quickly acting, laid everything aside to pursue Pompeius – the only one of his opponents whom he respected as an officer, and the one whose personal capture would probably have paralysed a half, and that perhaps the more dangerous half, of his opponents."

[146] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 272.

[147] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 273. "A good officer, but otherwise of mediocre gifts of intellect and of heart, fate had with superhuman consistency for thirty years allowed him to solve all brilliant and toilless tasks; had permitted him to pluck all laurels planted and fostered by others; had brought him face to face with all the conditions requisite for obtaining the supreme power - only in order to exhibit in his person an example of spurious greatness, to which history knows no parallel. Of all pitiful parts there is none more pitiful than that of passing for more than one really is; and it is the fate of monarchy that this misfortune inevitably clings to it, for barely once in a thousand years does there arise among the people a man who is a king not merely in name, but in reality."

[148] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 272.

[149] Cic. *Att.* 9.7. (SB, 174).

[150] Flor. *Epit.* 2. 13.14.

[151] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.125-6.

solitary dominance. Mommsen concludes with a damning commentary on Pompey's legacy. He states that Pompey's existence was pitiful because he always passed for more than he really was. Moreover, he comments that Pompey's greatness was so spurious that it "knows no parallel"[152]. Finally, he laments that the "disproportion between semblance and reality has never perhaps been so abruptly marked as in Pompeius, the fact may well excite grave reflection that it was precisely he who in a certain sense opened the series of Roman monarchs"[153].

Mommsen's summary of Pompey's life denounced him for all his failings and offered little praise. This subsequently became a standard method for representing Pompey's death throughout nineteenth and early twentieth century works. However, the ancient evidence, even when selectively used, does not substantiate these severe views. Most sources, including: Seneca, Appian, Plutarch, and Velleius Paterculus, condemn Pompey's assassination and depict the Egyptians as treacherous. Mommsen fails to preserve the outrage of the ancient sources and instead imposes his own selective reading of Pompey.

This survey demonstrates that Mommsen constructed Pompey both as a political and personal figure by manipulating the evidence, which resonated in subsequent scholarship. It has also highlighted Mommsen's three techniques: 'Selection', 'Distortion', and 'Fabrication', which, independently and as a whole, determined Pompey's portrayal depending on which context best suited his overall depiction. These techniques allowed Mommsen to perpetuate a consistent construction of Pompey, which diminished his significance in Mommsen's narrative. Moreover, Mommsen's reading of Pompey was determined and shaped by his specific historical context, scholarly approaches, and methodologies.

This legacy endured through his renowned influence and popularity. Therefore, the aforementioned techniques, coupled with Mommsen's legacy, and Caesar's fame in both ancient and modern popular culture and historical scholarship, have all contributed to a widespread anti-Pompeian tradition. This is testified by the pro-Caesar sentiments of writers

[152] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 273.
[153] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 273

like Nietzsche[154] and Burckhardt[155], as well as Marx's harsh anti-Pompeian reading of Appian[156], which variously engaged with and perpetuated Mommsen's tradition and ideal[157].

[154] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Dawn of Day*, 594, Trans. John McFarland Kennedy, The Macmillan Company (New York, 1911), 381. "And should the desire for performing great deeds really be at bottom nothing but a flight from our own selves?—as Pascal would ask us. And indeed this assertion might be proved by considering the most noble representations of this desire for action: in this respect let us remember, bringing the knowledge of an alienist to our aid, that four of the greatest men of all ages who were possessed of this lust for action were epileptics—Alexander the Great, Cæsar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; and Byron likewise was subject to the same complaint." See also: F. Nietzsche, 'Skirmishes of an Untimely Man', 31, *Twilight of the Idols*, Trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, 32. "Another problem of diet. — The means by which Julius Caesar defended himself against sickliness and headaches: tremendous marches, the most frugal way of life, uninterrupted sojourn in the open air, continuous exertion — these are, in general, the universal rules of preservation and protection against the extreme vulnerability of that subtle machine, working under the highest pressure, which we call genius." F. Nietzsche, 'Gay Science' (*Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*), 98, Cambridge University Press, Trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge, 2001), 93-4.

[155] Jacob Burckhardt, 'Rome and Its Mission in World History', 14-5, *Judgments on History and Historians*, Trans. Harry Zohn, Liberty Fund (Indianapolis, 1929), 27. "At length the First Triumvirate is formed. It includes Caesar, the greatest of mortals. First he saves the Empire by conquering Gaul and securing it against the Germani, then he takes possession of it through his victories at Pharsalus, Thapsus, and Munda, and gives the tormented provinces a foretaste of government instead of mere desultory plundering by optimates."

[156] Andrew G. Bonnell, 'A 'very valuable book': Karl Marx and Appian', in *Appian's Roman History: Empire and Civil War*, ed. Kathryn Welch, Classical Press of Wales (Swansea, 2015), 19. "Marx's characterisation of personalities from the history of the Roman Republic (for example, his negative assessment of Pompeius) throws up the question of whether he may have been influenced by the recent appearance of Theodor Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*, volumes 1-3 (1854-1856). From London, Marx wrote to Engels in Manchester in April, 1857, asking him if he had heard anything about a new '*Römische Geschichte',* that had just appeared, and that was said to contain much new material (MEW 29.131.). By March 1858, Engels was quoting Mommsen in a letter to Marx…"

[157] W. Wolfgang, 'Pompeius'. "F. Nietzsche and J. Burckhardt, who declares Caesar the greatest of mortals (*Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen*), consider Pompey not worth mentioning. Karl Marx (with regard to his reading of Appianus) expresses himself emphatically: "Pompey [appears to be] a complete swine; acquiring spurious fame only by misappropriating, as Sulla's young man, etc, Lucullus successes …, then Sertorius' (Spain), etc.." (Letter of 27 February 1861)."

Chapter Five: First Wave of Scholarship After Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*

Niebuhr and Mommsen's views on the late republic offer interesting and valuable insights into Prussian conceptualisations of society, culture, and politics. However, their fundamental importance to this study lies in understanding how they shaped the works of subsequent historians. As previously mentioned, they achieved this through their popularity, high esteem, and widespread accessibility. This was particularly true for Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*, which became a standard textbook of Roman history throughout Germany and abroad, thereby influencing perceptions of Roman history from a foundational level. This process is traceable through succeeding generations of scholarly output within both the German and Anglophone academic contexts. Demonstrating this requires an analysis of several key historical works, encompassing various modes of historical writing, contexts, and literary schools. Thus, military histories such as J.A. Froude's *Caesar: A Sketch*, are as significant as broad historical narratives of Roman history, as exemplified by W.W. Fowler's *History of Rome* and H.H. Scullard's *From the Gracchi to Nero*. Naturally, works which shared Mommsen's thematic interests, contexts and broad literary convictions display the greatest tendency to reproduce the Pompey of the *Römische Geschichte*. This sample of works will suffice to show Mommsen's importance to and influence over the common narrative. Histories written after the 'cultural turn' in the 1970s, wherein social aspects replaced politico-military features as a primary concern for historical study, however, fundamentally oppose Mommsen's methodology, but maintain important features of his characterisation.

The impact of Mommsen's portrait of Pompey was aided by different factors. Firstly, the innate conservatism of historical discourse, which increasingly relied on prior scholarship after the advent of historicism, scorned radical historical thought, and limited change. This is not to accuse historians of a deliberate attempt to distort or to maintain a questionable reading. It simply means that historians inherit and refine the conceptions of their predecessors. Secondly, scholars in the generation following Mommsen accepted his views or they risked being ostracised by their peers. This is why Eduard Meyer's *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompejus*, which was the first scholarly work to challenge his propositions, appeared over a decade after his death and his academic career suffered because of his different point of view.[1] Thirdly, although scholars filled increasingly specialised niches, they accepted entrenched

[1] Matthias Gelzer, review of *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius,* by Eduard Meyer, *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial und wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 15, (1919), 522. "Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius by Eduard Meyer which first appeared in 1918 is a dreadful book. In layout it is ugly and disjointed; its style is cumbersome and its length excessive. Furthermore the tone of the work is unnecessarily polemical, and it was unwise of the author to devote so much time castigating Mommsen's interpretation of Caesar when he so obviously ignores other more recent research relevant to his subject." (Trans. Brian Croke); Tenney Frank, review of *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius*, by Eduard Meyer, *Classical Philology*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (1921), 205-6. "This second edition contains a score of minor corrections of the first edition, which, published in 1918, reached but a few of our libraries… However, it would be unfair to imply that Professor Meyer has to any extent pressed his facts into the service of an argument." See also: B. Croke, 'Eduard Meyer's Caesars Monarchie and its English Riposte', *Athenaeum*, Vol. 80, (1992), 219-32.

historical perspectives from the preceding generation. In sum, these phenomena highlight not only the conservatism of the historical tradition, but also the profound influence early modern scholars had in shaping the discipline.

The remainder of this thesis is separated into three chapters, which reflect the influence of Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* in different ways. The first concerns historians who wrote between 1860 and 1910 and thus engaged directly with Mommsen's work. These took on Mommsen's structural approach, namely the narrative histories popular at the time. The second focuses on subsequent scholarship (1910 and after), which no longer directly referenced Mommsen's work, but maintained his overall representation of Pompey. The third examines biographies of Pompey which in one way or another react to Mommsen's portrait even though Mommsen is not an obvious presence.

The works cross several historical genres. These include: narrative history, military history and political biography. These genres offer a convenient set of tools to observe the history of a characterisation. There are a plethora of other subdivisions and genres of historical writing which would be fruitful, not least the standard portrayal of Pompey in popular historical fiction. However, the chosen sample serves to illustrate the point within the scope of a limited project such as this.

5.1. Wilhelm Ihne

Wilhelm Ihne was a Bavarian scholar, who was born in Fürth in 1821. He undertook his studies at the University of Bonn, completing his doctorate in 1843. He spent much of his early career as a teacher in Germany, from 1847-9, and in Liverpool, England, from 1849-63. While Ihne's teaching career delayed scholarly output, his passion for teaching earned him a tutoring position at the University of Heidelberg from 1863, where he was later appointed to a professorial position in 1873. Ihne offers an opportunity to see how a contemporary of Mommsen who shared his world view intensified his antipathy to Pompey as Mommsen's influence grew.

Like Mommsen, Ihne was caught up in the revolutionary frenzy that gripped Bavarian society in 1848[2]. He was deeply concerned by contemporary social and political issues in both England and Germany, particularly before Bismarck's unification of Germany in 1871. This chaotic period caused Ihne's immigration to England for 14 years (from 1849) before his eventual return to Germany in 1863. Ihne's work reflects these issues through his portrayal of Roman social, political, and military frameworks, as well as his characterisation of Rome's notable individuals. In particular he shared Mommsen's view that Caesar was an ideal statesman and an example to be followed in modern Germany.

Historical Method

[2] K.S. Pinson, 'The Revolution of 1848', in *Modern Germany*, 80-109.

Ihne's eight volume *Römische Geschichte* (1868-90) covered Rome's earliest history down until Augustus' victory at Actium in 31. The first five volumes were published in both German and English between 1868-79, while the last three volumes, covering the period from Tiberius Gracchus until the battle of Actium, were only published in German from 1879-90. Pompey is treated in the fifth volume and so Ihne's interpretation could be read by both German and English students.

Ihne's methodology combined both Historicist and German Romanticist practices. It is Historicist in that it referenced a wide range of contemporary scholarly works and critically analysed the ancient source material seeking to outline the history of the period 'as it really was' (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*). However, its Romanticist tendencies can be seen in the comparisons between Roman historical events and contemporary Germany[3]. The inclination towards the Romanticism brought him closer to both Niebuhr and Mommsen in so far as it encouraged bold assertions that transcended the ancient evidence.
Ihne also showed a disposition towards the 'Great Men' view of late republican Rome, and that, of course, drew him to Caesar[4]. It rejected the more Positivist approach popular in England. This mixture of intellectual approaches demonstrates his greater adherence to the German academic system rather than the English system, even though he taught in England for many years. As mentioned previously, the German system was dominated by a small group of esteemed intellectuals who dictated scholarly trends and formed ideological schools of like-minded peers[5]. Ihne also engaged with social and political concerns current in the Germany of his day. His English contemporaries and critics stressed that the work's themes were equally relevant to an English audience[6].

Ihne taught at a school in Liverpool for fourteen years. This lengthy tenure ensured his skill in condensing history into manageable, accessible, and relatable material. Accordingly, his work was well received in both England and Germany, thus allowing his historical reconstruction to take root in both countries at a foundational level.

Ihne's treatment of the ancient record is, thus, at first glance, generally laudable. He references a large variety of sources and displays an acumen for critically reading some of this evidence. Furthermore, he shows awareness of discrepancies between sources and usually favours the most plausible evidence. However, he is not evenly critical of the ancient evidence and as a default prioritises 'contemporary' evidence over later sources. This is most apparent during the battle of Pharsalus. Here, he accepts Caesar's account and ignores, or at least does not explain, how it was tendentious. He thereby diminishes the significance of Plutarch's more positive

[3] 'Ihne's History of Rome', *Examiner*, eds. Leigh Hunt, Albany William Fonblanque, and John Forster, no. 3287, (London, 1871), 99. "Herr Ihne's work, though unconsciously, is a most instructive comment on the facts of today. It shows us how first, as far as we can understand, arose those ideas of military supremacy and national aggrandisement which are wasting away two great nations and squandering the resources of civilisation in our own time."

[4] 'History of Rome', *The Athenaeum*, no. 2862, J. Frances, (1882), 298. "He (Ihne) takes a liking for certain characters and certain notions, and his judgements are influenced by this special interest."

[5] G.G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, 24.

[6] 'Ihne's History of Rome', *Examiner*, no. 3287, (1871), 99.

account solely because Caesar was a first-hand witness. This historical method is questionable and is most apparent when Ihne focuses on Caesar. It thus highlights his pro-Caesar reading. Moreover, it reflects how his negative portrait of Pompey fundamentally resembles Mommsen's determinist reading.

Ihne's Pompey

Ihne's *Römische Geschichte* prioritises Pompey's vices and leaves little room for his virtues. It thereby resembles Niebuhr and Mommsen's approaches to the Late Republic, constructs which he proves himself to be familiar with[7]. Moreover, Ihne does not evenly criticise each facet of Pompey's character, but instead selects the vices which he considered most problematic. He references three recurring Pompeian vices within the two works, his 'coldness', his 'vanity', and his reputation for ruthless political ambition.

Pompey's cold and reserved manner features throughout Ihne's *Römische Geschichte* and manifests from his cruel nature. Ihne emphasises this facet with Pompey's actions against the ex-consul Carbo[8]. In the fifth volume of the *Römische Geschichte*, published in 1882, he writes:

> Carbo and a number of his friends were surprised on the island of Cossyra, halfway between Carthage and Sicily; he was taken prisoner and brought to Lilybaeum before Pompeius. On this occasion Pompeius showed that he was at bottom mean, selfish, and the slave of his ambition. In order to gain the approbation of Sulla he subjected Carbo to the indignity of being examined like a vulgar offender... This harsh treatment was all the more surprising, as Pompeius was by nature not inclined to cruelty, and on the present occasion in particular acted on the whole with mildness, allowing even many proscribed men to escape, if he could manage to do so quietly. But Carbo was a person of too much importance. In his treatment Pompeius thought he must show his devotion to Sulla.[9]

Pompey's power-mongering is evident in the ancient record. However, his emphasis suggests that his reading was selective. Moreover, the Carbo incident is well documented as an act of cruelty in the ancient evidence, but the wider scope of the ancient record contests this Pompeian vice[10]. Ihne's reading takes the worst portrayal of Pompey. This aspect of Ihne's portrayal is significant because it picks up on Mommsen's reading of the events, rather than Niebuhr's.

The other notable Pompeian flaws are vanity and power mongering. Ihne remarks that Pompey's vanity and inability to accept an equal forced the civil war and led in turn to his

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[7] Ihne proves his familiarity with Mommsen's scholarship during the work's preface. See: Wilhelm Ihne, *Römische Geschichte*, iv "The present edition has been advised throughout. In two points considerable changes have been made. 1. The author has been persuaded, by the arguments of Mommsen, to relinquish the attempt to reconcile the account given by Livy of the battle of the Trebia with that given by Polybius."

[8] W. Ihne, *Römische Geschichte*, 520. See also: Plut. *Pomp.* 10; W. Ihne, *Op. Cit.* 594. "In youth he (Pompey) was cold, calculating, and hard-hearted, covetous of military fame and not slow to appropriate what belonged to others."

[9] W. Ihne, *Römische Geschichte*, Vol. 5, Longmans & Green (London, 1882), 368-9.

[10] For example, it ignores Cicero's glowing praise for Pompey, Plutarch's emphasis on Pompey's modesty and charity[10], and Valerius Maximus praise for Pompey's upstanding character. See: Cic. *leg. Man; Sest.* 15-6; *Fam.* 19.1; Plut. *Pomp.* 1.1-3. See also: Diod. Sic. 38.9. Val. Max. 8.15.8.

ultimate demise. He suggests that if Pompey had a more modest conception of himself and 'realistic' ambitions, he could have avoided this fate and better aided the republic's cause[11]. Pompey's innate selfishness and delusions of grandeur also led to his downfall. This view rests on Ihne's belief in Caesar's superiority. The reading closely echoes Mommsen, who stressed that Pompey's life was 'joyless'[12] because of his futile delusions[13]. Ihne likewise reflects Mommsen when he states that Pompey was "unsuited for command and wished only for a position above the senate, which required no responsibility"[14]. These judgements emphasise Pompey's indolence, delusion, ineptitude, and vanity[15].

Ihne emphasises Caesar's political centrality. In book nine (which was not translated in to English), the civil war period and Caesar's dictatorship, are bundled together and collectively titled *Caesars Dictatur* ('Caesar's Dictatorship'). Moreover, the titles of chapters mention only the geographic locations of Caesar's important military victories rather than any other political or military episode. For example, chapter five is simply titled *Pharsalus* and chapter six, *Der Krieg in Aegypten* ('The war in Egypt'). Any reference to Pompey's death therein is omitted. Ihne marginalises Pompey's significance at a fundamental titular level throughout these sections by basing each chapter on Caesar's whereabouts. The hostility continues in the narrative itself. Ihne emphasises Pompey's cowardliness at Pharsalus when he deserted his

[11] W. Ihne, *Römische Geschichte*, Vol. 5, 370. "Pompeius would have been a man of more than ordinary modesty and self-control, if after such extraordinary marks of public approval he had been satisfied with the republican equality of ordinary mortals, and if his ambition had not led him on to aspire to an exceptional position and rule instead of serving the state."

[12] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 275.

[13] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 272.

[14] W. Ihne, *Ibid.* 77-8. "*Was die politische Seite seines Charakters betrisst, so war es blosser Zufall, dass er als Vertreter der republikanischen Verfassung auftrat. Niemand konnte weniger als Pompeius von dem Geiste republikanischer Gleichberechtigung der Bürger durchbrungen sein, und das Recht und die Bflicht des abwechselnden Regierens und Gehorchens anertennen, woraus die Republik sich gründet. Er konnte nich ertragen zu gehorchen, und verstand das Gebieten ebenso wenig. Seiner innersten Gemüthsart nach war er nur geeignet einen erblichen Thron einzunehmen, wo er als allgemein anerfannter Fürst nicht berufen gewefen wäre, seine Stellung täglich zu vertheidigen und die Regierungsforgen und Rühen Anderen hätte übertragen können. Sein Ehrgeiz ging nicht dahin, wie der Caesars, in eigner Person den Staat zu lenden, die Regierung anszuuben, seinen Willen geltend zu machen, sondern ohne personliche Anfrengung die Ehren und Anszeichmungen des herrschers zu geniessen*." Translation: "As to the political aspect of his character, it was mere coincidence that he appeared as a representative of the Republican constitution. No one could be less permeated by the spirit of republican equality of citizens, the law and (an) obligation and obeisance to the government, from which the republic is based, than Pompey. He could not bear to obey, and likewise understood little about (how to) command. According to his innermost soul, he wanted only to appropriate a heritable throne, where as a universally acknowledged prince, he would not have been called upon to defend his position on a daily basis and could transfer the consequences of government to others. His ambition was not the same as Caesar's, to make a government in his own person, but his will was to enjoy the honors and nominations of a ruler without personal exertion." See also: T. Mommsen, History of Rome, 272.

[15] T. Mommsen, History of Rome, Vol. 4, 275

troops[16] and when he does come to Pompey's death in Egypt he treats it with little sensitivity[17]. Crucially, he questions Pompey's legacy, suggesting that both contemporary and later writers romanticised his successes[18].

Ihne's work adapts and perpetuates Mommsen's Pompey's vanity, power mongering, and delusion. These characteristics are by-products of a methodology which combined Historicist and Romanticist theories and approaches to the ancient evidence. Ihne's work is crucial for Anglophone approaches because it succinctly promulgated German traditions and readings of Rome to an English audience. It achieved this by presenting German philosophical and historical inquiry written in a remarkably English manner. Indeed, one review remarked:

> As a mere linguistic exercise the work is remarkable. No living Englishman could have produced a book much more thoroughly English in phrase and thought. It comes to us as a genuine product of German industry in historical and philosophical research; yet in style and form it appears as a good English classic. This fortunate circumstance will commend it to many readers who would find it difficult to master the work in its original form.[19]

This begs the question why the last three volumes were not translated and published into English.

5.2. William Warde Fowler

William Warde Fowler was born at Langford Budville in Somerset in 1847 and entered New College, Oxford, in 1866. He subsequently won a scholarship at Lincoln College, where he studied from 1866-70. Fowler tutored at Oxford for the remainder of his career and published various works. He is best known for his work on Roman religion in the late republic, but also wrote monologues reflecting broader opinions about the period that focused on the political and military spheres. Moreover, Fowler worked extensively on German scholarship, a passion that he shared with the then-rector of Lincoln College, Mark Pattison. This profoundly

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[16] W. Ihne, *Römische Geschichte*, Siebenter Band, Verlag Von Wilhelm Engelmann (Leipzig, 1890), 66. "*Sobald Pompeius die flucht seiner Reiterei und die gefahrdete Lage seines linken Flugels sah, gab er Alles verloren. Es flingt sast unglaublich, aber es ist vollgultig bezeugt, dass er alsbald die noch tapfer kampfenden truppen verliess, wie es scheint, ohne vertalhungsbefehle und ohne einen Stellvertreter zu ernennen, und in sein Lager eilte.*" Translation: "As soon as he saw the situation of his cavalry on the left wing he fled, making everyone despair. It was incredible, but fully testified that he immediately left the still brave fighting troops, as it seems, without first giving commands and without appointing a deputy, and rushed into his camp."

[17] W. Ihne, *Ibid*. 75-6. "*Die Göttin und die Freunde, der ängstliche Blide dem Boote gefolgt waren, sahen die Unthat sich vor ihren Augen Vollsiehnund wie die Mörder den Kopf von kumpfe trennten und die Leich auf den Strand warfen*." Translation: "The goddess and friends, who had fearfully and blindly followed the boats, saw the deed before their eyes, and how the murderers separated the head from the body, and threw the corpse on the beach."

[18] W. Ihne, *Ibid.* 76-7. "*Der Charakter des Pompeius ist von seinem Zeitgenoffen und den unmittelbar folgenden Schriftstellern viel zu günstig beurtheilt worden, zum Theil weil seine Kriegszuge und Erfolge ihn als einen römischen Helden erscheinen liessen, an dessen Grosse man sich aus Nationalstolz erhante, zum Theil weil er als der leste hervorragende Kämpfer für die dahinschwindende Republik galt, der man noch lange nachtrauerte unter der monarchie*." Translation: "The character of Pompey has been judged too favourably by his contemporaries and by the immediate writers (after his life), partly because his campaigns and successes made him appear as a Roman hero, whose greatness was derived from the nationality, partly because he was the first among outstanding of fighters in the vanishing republic, which was still long mourned under the monarchy."

[19] 'Ihne's History of Rome', *Examiner*, no. 3287, (1871), 99.

influenced his approach to Roman history. Fowler's works consequently subvert the positivist approach then popular among his Oxbridge peers and instead bear closer resemblance to the Prussian Historicist school of thought.

Julius Caesar and the Foundation of the Roman Imperial System

Fowler's most accessible and popular work was *Julius Caesar and the Foundation of the Roman Imperial System*, which was first published in 1892. It received wide critical acclaim and was Fowler's only ancient political biography, which also included broader narrative themes on Roman late republican history. Its publication coincided with a popular scholarly movement in England, wherein increased emphasis was placed on the role of the individual in Roman history. Fowler adapted this approach to emphasise Caesar's political and military centrality to the narrative of the late republic. Yet his methodology resulted in a history that frequently exceeds the platitudes of its scholarly counterparts. For example, Fowler presents Caesar as a semi-heroic figure who reconfigured Roman politics and ushered the golden age of Roman history. This glowing favouritism is obvious on to all. For instance, the title *Julius Caesar and the Foundation of the Roman Imperial System* (hereafter *Julius Caesar*) stresses Caesar's achievements, naming him as the forefather of an entire political and social framework. Moreover, the British Empire was then at its height, so labelling Caesar the 'Founder of the Roman Imperial System' is especially high praise. The pro-Caesar sentiments are furthered by the work's publication by G. P. Putnam's Sons Publishers in the series *Heroes of the Nations*[20]. This series of monographs was widely accessible, published for broad audiences, and promoted the 'great men' approach to history. Consequently, they entrenched the centrality of men like Caesar, who defined their own epochs along with Western history. Yet such readings are by their nature misleading. Fowler's adherence to this framework demonstrates this, as it marginalised Rome's political traditions and deterministically advocated Caesar's superiority. Moreover, the publisher's framework encouraged Fowler to prioritise the ancient evidence that favoured Caesar. This resulted in a skewed reading of the late republic, which was inherently unfavourable to Pompey. This is because Fowler rendered Pompey as Caesar's main political opponent for Rome's inevitable transition into the Imperial system. The history's wide accessibility and popularity extended its influence to the largest possible readership group and thereby amplified the problems of method and evidence[21]. The numerous illustrations orientated non-specialist readers to a particular view of the Roman world. In addition, Fowler sparsely references ancient evidence or modern accounts and instead prioritises continuity and accessibility. This replicated Mommsen and Ihne's historical method, which likewise gave prominence to narrative continuity over factuality and depth of research. The few references in Fowler's work cite the ancient evidence rather than modern scholarship.

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[20] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar and the Foundation of the Roman Imperial System*, G.P. Putnam's and Sons Publishers (London, 1892), i. "Heroes of the Nations: A series of biographical studies presenting the lives and work of certain representative historical characters, about whom have gathered the traditions of the nations to which they belong, and who have, in the majority of instances, been accepted as types of the several national ideals."

[21] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, preface, v "In this volume I have tried to meet the wishes of the publishers, by explaining to those who are comparatively unfamiliar with classical antiquity the place which Caesar occupies in the history of the world."

They rarely offer contradictory perspectives for further investigation. In form, Fowler's history resembles Mommsen. This is not coincidental as Fowler cites him on four occasions even expressing his gratitude to Mommsen in the preface:

> I need hardly mention, in a book not primarily intended for scholars, the many modern works, from that of Drumann downwards, which have been of use to me. But in any biography of Caesar it is impossible not to allude with gratitude and reverence to the great genius and learning of Professor Mommsen; for even if they venture to dissent from some of his conclusions, all students of classical antiquity will allow that his life-long labours have wrought as great a change in the study of Roman history, as the work of his great hero brought about in the Roman state itself.[22]

Fowler offers insight to Mommsen's universal significance in the nineteenth century. He even wrote a biography about Mommsen[23]. Furthermore, he replicates Mommsen's vision of Rome and its history. His characterisation of Pompey reflects this influence.

Fowler's Pompey

Fowler's view of Caesar as Rome's definitive genius is clear from his opening paragraph:

> …Julius Caesar, personifying the principle of intelligent government by a single man, had made it possible for the Roman dominion, then on the point of breaking up, to grow into a great political union, and so eventually to provide a material foundation for modern civilisation.[24]

Fowler's grandiose tone powerfully emphasises Caesar's eternal greatness. He thus introduces Caesar's greatness, which is likewise magnified by Caesar's popularity in art and literature[25]. For Fowler Caesar is the personification of 'the principle of intelligent government by a single man'. It ignores the consequences of Caesar's actions, and instead emphasises his politico-military achievements. Moreover, this passage is determinist in its assumption that Caesar, who transcended the restraints of his peers, was 'destined' to change Rome's fortunes. Such a perspective reduces Pompey's significance and achievements by assuming that his victory would automatically have been a disaster for Rome. This view provides a basis for Fowler's critical approach to Pompey, which only becomes increasingly hostile as the narrative takes its course. Yet, there are traces of hostility even earlier. For instance, Fowler upholds the Mommsenian trope of Pompey's treachery and political impotence during his brief account of the Sertorian war[26]. He also stresses Pompey's untrustworthiness, vanity, and inexperience in

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[22] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, preface, vii.

[23] W.W. Fowler W.W. (ed.) 'Theodor Mommsen: His Life and Work', in *Roman Essays and Interpretations*, Clarendon Press (Oxford, 1920), 250-68.

[24] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 2.

[25] William Shakespeare, for instance, popularised and romanticised Caesar in his famous play *Julius Caesar*.

[26] W.W. Fowler, J*ulius Caesar*, 44. "…even Pompeius, the youngest and most brilliant (compared to Crassus and Lucullus), had been no match for his able enemy in Spain, though he was now wearing him out by superior resources and by treachery… All three (Pompeius, Crassus, and Lucullus) were men of ability, but so far had shown no conspicuous political skill…"

politics especially in relation to Pompey's consulship in 70[27] and his assumption of the Gabinian command. Here, Fowler is particularly critical of the senate's "incapable rule", which then justifies Caesar's later eradication of the republic[28].

The impending reality of the civil war marks a striking change in Fowler's representation of Pompey. Fowler here emphasises Pompey's faults at every opportunity and contrasts his personality with Caesar throughout this section. The two are diametrically opposed on several occasions and this results in a hostile portrayal of Pompey, who must assume the antagonist's role. For instance, Fowler describes Pompey's support for Caesar's absent nomination for the consulship as 'half-hearted'[29]. This representation depends on assuming that Pompey is treacherous and deceitful, along with being willing to abandon a political ally. Fowler distinguishes his reading from Mommsen's, when he also blames the consuls of 49, Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus and Marcus Claudius Marcellus, for initiating the war, asserting that neither Caesar, nor Pompey, wished to fight but were demanded by political expedience[30].

Fowler's negative representation of Pompey reaches its zenith during the civil war. He criticises Pompey's tactics in the early engagements, again stressing that Caesar was Pompey's intellectual superior[31]. He further ridicules Pompey's decision to station an army filled with untrustworthy troops at Luceria, a town placed directly along Caesar's path and emphasises Pompey's miscalculation of the length of time it takes to muster troops in midwinter. He bases this claim on the fate of Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, whose frequent requests for aid went unheeded and who was eventually defeated by Caesar at Corfinium. The battles of Dyrrachium and Pharsalus continue in this vein. Fowler does not credit Pompey's success at Dyrrachium and instead focuses on his failure to achieve total victory[32]. He emphasises Pompey's willingness to bow to his colleagues as the reason for his defeat, because he abandoned his attrition tactics on their account and then engaged Caesar at Pharsalus against his will[33]. These representations reflect Mommsen's concept of the 'stupid' Pompey. They highlight Pompey's foolish decisions throughout the civil war, while also stressing Caesar's genius.

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[27] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 49. "But he (Pompey) was not a man to be trusted; and to repose trust in someone was just what the wearied Roman world was beginning ardently to desire… He might be vain and inexperienced in politics; but of all the men then living of assured reputation and power, he was the only one whose character was really respected, and whom all parties could by any possibility agree in trusting."

[28] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 62. "…for it was only the political weakness of the man himself that prevented his seizing the opportunity and putting an end to the Senate's incapable rule, as Caesar did later on."

[29] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 253.

[30] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 254.

[31] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 264. "He (Pompey) dreaded Caesar's personal address and persuasiveness as much as Caesar himself trusted in it; he had perhaps begun to realise his opponent's greatness as he had never realized it before, and felt that he must now fight or lose his old position as the first citizen of the state ."

[32] W.W. Fowler, *Julius* Caesar, 293-6.

[33] W.W. Fowler, *Julius* Caesar, 298. "The same foolish clamours, the same petty competition and quarrelling, which his rival (Caesar) had escaped for ten years in Gaul, distracted him (Pompey) now, and at last induced him to fight, against his own better judgement."

In summarising Pompey's life and character at the moment of his death in Egypt, Fowler cements several tropes, which originated in Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*. Fowler admits that posterity knows little about Pompey because scarce first-hand evidence survives him[34]. He thereafter outlines Pompey's character according to the negative descriptions in Cicero's letters as well as Caesar's *Commentaries*, stating:

> Probably Pompeius was cold and reserved, except with a very few intimates, and disliked the impulsive, pushing cleverness of his would-be friend. But if we may accept the general tradition of antiquity, he was a just and honourable man in private life, clean-handed in a corrupt age, and unwilling by nature to be cruel or treacherous.[35]

Fowler knows that the ancient tradition is nuanced and contested, but he prefers to accept a negative view. Even in admitting that there *was* another view, however, he shows up the assumptions of his earlier comments. For instance, he has already emphasised Pompey's treachery during the Sertorian war[36]. In those moments, there is no mention of the alternative views in our sources.

In examining his political and military career, as opposed to his character, Fowler declares that he was of mediocre intellect and oratorical abilities[37], and that he was trained only in the arts of warfare. Fowler admits that Pompey achieved great things but steadfastly refuses to admit his greatness. Fowler's Pompey was lacking in rapidity, resource, and the ability to inspire the men around him with confidence[38]. By contrast, Fowler's Caesar "had a magical power in times of tumult and revolution"[39]. In sum, Fowler's Pompey had no knowledge of men, and could not comprehend politics. This made him unsuitable to answer the great questions of government. Fowler summarises this eloquently:

> A man without knowledge of men, and without understanding in politics, cannot govern events when great questions have to be decided; and though we may feel tenderly towards one whose downfall was so sudden and so sad, we must allow that all his history shows him incapable of doing the work that the world was then ever more and more earnestly demanding.[40]

Fowler's harsh pragmatism undermines his sympathy toward Pompey. He highlights Pompey's weaknesses as the cause of his demise, while also stating that this was an inevitability. Fowler believed that a feeble-minded Pompey was always fated to succumb to the mighty will of Caesar, the 'perfect statesman' and what Rome required[41].

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[34] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 306. "But the fact is that of Pompeius real character as a man we know hardly anything. Cicero, whose letters at least might have revealed him to us, seems to have never known the man intimately, as he knew Caesar, and the result we get from him is an uncertain and negative one."

[35] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 306.

[36] W.W. Fowler, *Julius* Caesar, 44.

[37] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 306.

[38] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 306.

[39] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar*, 307.

[40] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar,* 307.

[41] W.W. Fowler, *Julius Caesar,* 307. "Yet in Pompeius there was not the material out of which great rulers are made. The recognition of the real nature of the Roman Empire, and the invention of a method of government which might solve its many problems, were not within the scope of a mind that moved with an impetus so feeble." 307.

Fowler was hyper-critical of Pompey's decisions throughout the civil war. His predisposition towards Caesar made him a willing recipient of Mommsen's influence. His treatment of Pompey was shaped accordingly. Interestingly, only certain features took root. Fowler's historical objective, namely writing a flattering biography on Caesar's impact on western history, required Pompey's achievements and mental capacity to be diminished. This promoted the notion of Caesar's greatness. Fowler did not need to highlight the 'cruel' trope, as it had little impact on his characterisation of Caesar.

5.3. James Anthony Froude

James Anthony Froude (1818-1894) was an English historian whose lengthy career covered the mid-late nineteenth century. He was strongly influenced by the Anglo-Catholic Oxford movement, which saw a revival of traditional ecclesiastical practices among Oxford's academics. From an early age he intended to become a clergyman and even though he abandoned this ambition in 1849, when his work *The Nemesis of Faith* was deemed scandalous. Nonetheless, this movement conditioned his historical perspective. He decided to write histories, primarily concentrating on the British Empire and its colonies.

Froude's writing career was always tinged with controversy. His works were characterised by their dramatic, cantankerous, and polemical approach, rather than a strictly scientific treatment of history[42]. They were accordingly ridiculed as exercises in fiction and subjectivity. Yet his controversial writing style only increased his popularity and public profile[43]. He consequently became one of England's most influential historians during the late nineteenth century.

Julius Caesar: A Sketch

Froude is best known for his *History of England* (1856-70) and biography on *Thomas Carlyle* (1882-4), both of which became famous in their day[44]. However, he also wrote a frank political sketch on the career of Julius Caesar, a figure with whom he was fascinated from an early age. This work was humbly titled *Caesar: A Sketch*, and was first published in 1879. The biography's methodology resembles his other works, that is, it was unabashedly driven by his personal prejudices. The work offered a colourful depiction of one of history's most famous figures. This approach resonated with its broad audience, which celebrated his honest and accessible interpretation of Caesar over the frequently dry approach of his peers[45].

In the preface, Froude outlines the difficulties he faced during its composition. These included a keen awareness to the relative scarcity of available contemporary evidence, which was a stark contrast to the volume usually available for his modern histories, the dubious nature of the

[42] Herbert Paul, *The Life of Froude*, Charles Scribner's and Sons (New York, 1906), 72.

[43] According to Paul, Froude was the most famous living historian in England after the death of Thomas Macaulay. See: Paul, *The Life of Froude*, 110.

[44] Ciaran Brady, *James Anthony Froude: An Intellectual Biography of a Victorian Prophet*, Oxford University Press, (Oxford, 2013).

[45] 'Mr. Froude's Caesar', in *Spectator*, (London, 3 May, 1879), 18; Paul Revere Frothingham, 'The Historian as Preacher', in *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol.2, No.4. (1909), 481-99.

ancient evidence and their lack of reliability. Froude attempted to overcome this by prioritising the available contemporary evidence. However, his analysis inadequately covers the various historical issues that these works engendered. For example, Froude does not acknowledge that Cicero's letters were dictated by context. Furthermore, he does not address the fundamental issue with Caesar's evidence, namely that it was inherently tendentious. Froude offers little reflection on the ancient source material, which is amplified by the work's minimal use of footnotes.

Froude's Pompey

Froude's introduction to Pompey outlines his superficial positive attributes, commenting that he was a high spirited and good-willed youth who was loved by those around him. He adds that Pompey was a resilient politician who successfully overcame his maligned father's political shadow[46]. Pompey's commands against the pirates and Mithridates are also praised[47], though are presented as examples of his moderation in victory[48], rather than his capacity as a general. Froude strengthens this portrayal by stating that Pompey faced "no real resistance"[49] during these campaigns, an opinion which originates from Cato's sneering remark that Pompey was "victorious over women"[50]. Finally, he marginalises Pompey's victory, asserting that Pompey threw down these 'buccaneers' because he refused to be bribed by them. Froude thus believed that Lucullus was an equally capable commander as Pompey, but had allowed himself to succumb to the East's fortunes. Froude hereafter perpetuates Pompey's portrayal as a dullard, albeit a moderate one, who stumbled onto victory. He thereby ignores ancient evidence that testified Pompey's military skill[51]. He also describes Pompey as having 'no political insight' and suffering from an 'innocent vanity'[52], which resulted in him being the easy 'dupe of men with greater intellect'. Here, Froude adapts Mommsen's paradigms of Pompey, while anticipating Pompey's demise later in the narrative. He selectively constructs a plausible reality in which Caesar's victory was inevitable, despite ignoring the contested portrayal in the ancient evidence, and veils his selectivity by limiting the number of footnotes throughout the passage. Moreover, his translation of Cicero's comment on Pompey's speech to the senate after his return from the east has been corrected by contemporary critics[53]. Accordingly, even Froude's positive comments about Pompey are buried under the weight of criticism. For example, when Froude comments that Pompey 'practiced strictly the common rules of morality' and 'detested

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[46] J. A. Froude, *Caesar: A Sketch*, Longmans Green and Co. (London, 1879), 82-3.

[47] J. A. Froude, *Caesar*, 180. "Pompey meanwhile was at last coming back. All lesser luminaries shone faint before the sun of Pompey, the subduer of the pirates, the conqueror of Asia, the glory of the Roman name."

[48] J. A. Froude, *Caesar*, 181. "His successes had been brilliant; but they were due rather to his honesty than to his military genius."

[49] J. A. Froude, *Caesar*, 181.

[50] J. A. Froude, *Caesar*, 182.

[51] Cic. *leg.Man;* Val. Max. 8.15.8; Vell. Pat. 2.29.5; Front. *Strat.* 1.4.8; Plut. *Pomp.* 28.2. 31.2-3; App. *Mith.* 12.14.96; Dio Cass. 37.20.2.

[52] J.A. Froude, *Caesar*, 182.

[53] 'Mr. Froude's Caesar', 18. "*non iucunda miseris, inanis improbis, beatis non grata, bonis non gravis; itaque frigebat* (Froude translates this as: Pompey gave no pleasure to the wretched; to the bad; he seemed without backbone; he was not agreeable with the well-to-do; the wise and good found him wanting in substance. Froude, 162)."

injustice', he actually wants to imply that Pompey was ill-equipped for politics and thus destined to fail. This is a preamble for his assessment of Pompey as 'stupid':

> In the age of Clodius and Catiline he (Pompey) was the easy dupe of men of stronger intellect than his own, who played upon his inconspicuous integrity.[54]

Froude uses this platform to criticise Pompey's decision to disband his army and relinquish control of Rome when he returned from the East. This argument reveals two factors that shaped his reading. Firstly, Froude believed that Roman history must inevitably succumb to sole rulership. Secondly, he accepted Mommsen's reading, that Caesar was destiny's cure to Rome's ills. These factors culminated in a hyper-critical analysis of Pompey's decision to disband his forces, which in itself demonstrates a determination not to be another Sulla rather than a failure to understand the inevitable march of history.

Froude's *Julius Caesar* adopts an impartial tone throughout the 'triumviral' and civil war periods. However, his reading realigns with Mommsen's when he comes to describe Pompey's death. Froude briefly alludes to the positive secondary source tradition for Pompey, stating that "history had dealt tenderly with him on account of his misfortunes"[55]. In doing so, he ignores his earlier commentary, wherein he selectively sourced evidence that attacked Pompey's character. He stresses Pompey's noble qualities, commenting that Pompey was honest above all and that this was rare in his times[56]. However, that said, Froude goes on to say that Pompey was not an exceptional soldier and that his rise to distinction resulted from his 'honesty', read simplicity. This ignores the talent which, according to friendly sources, had been on display from his extreme youth. Froude goes on to outline Pompey's weak character and political incompetence revealing his implicit view that Pompey's honesty was pernicious. Eventually he states that Pompey "had acquired his position through negative virtues"[57]. He further asserts that Pompey's vanity, despite being unmentioned previously, was a factor in his demise[58]. This insertion further highlights the intrusion of Mommsen's Pompeian constructs[59]. Froude afterward demonstrates his Caesar-centric reading, stating that Pompey only maintained his honour and authority through his allegiance with Caesar.[60] Froude's summary of Pompey's importance to the narrative summarises his contempt:

> His (Pompey's) end was piteous, but scarcely tragic, for the cause to which he was sacrificed was too slightly removed from being ignominious... He was a weak, good man, whom accident had thrust into a place to which he was unequal; and ignorant of himself,

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[54] J.A. Froude, *Caesar*, 182.

[55] J.A. Froude, *Caesar*, 453.

[56] J.A. Froude, Caesar. "So ended Pompey the Great. History has dealt tenderly with him on account of his misfortunes, and has not refused him admiration for qualities as rare in his age as they were truly excellent." 453.

[57] J.A. Froude, *Caesar*, 454.

[58] J.A. Froude, *Caesar*, 454.

[59] While Pompey's vanity exists in the ancient record, an equal number of sources attests his modesty. The emphasis on his vanity began with Niebuhr and was popularised by Mommsen. See sections **2.4.3. Niebuhr's Pompey** and **3.3.4. Pompey's Gabinian and Manilian Commands**.

[60] J.A. Froude, *Caesar*, 454.

> and unwilling to part with his imaginary greatness, he was flung down with careless cruelty by the forces which were dividing the world.[61]

All the negative readings of Pompey's character meld together to condemn him. Pompey was pitiful, weak, feeble, foolish, and delusional. Even Froude's suggestion that fate had disposed of Pompey with careless cruelty implies that it was an inevitable fate for such a flawed character. This view is only justifiable through hindsight.

Froude's biography of Caesar is unique because it was written by a historian who did not specialise in the Classics[62]. This only increases its importance for this thesis, because Froude's work drew from contemporary narrative histories. Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* was almost certainly the most influential of all the narratives he used, given his dominance of the field. Froude's portrayal of Pompey reproduces elements characteristic of Mommsen's Pompeian paradigm, particularly Pompey's 'weakness of mind' and 'foolishness'[63]. In conclusion, Froude's work allows us to see how Mommsen's conceptualisations shaped Anglophone scholarship in the late nineteenth century.

5.4. William Everton Heitland

William Heitland was an esteemed Cambridge scholar who worked extensively on Roman history throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His most famous work was the *History of Rome*, published with much acclaim in 1909. It typifies Heitland's intellectual background and the resulting Positivist approach to history, wherein historians strived to achieve 'impartiality' and preserve the past 'as it actually happened'. This philosophy determined Heitland's approach to history and is outlined in his essay *The Teaching of Ancient History*,[64] which was published in 1901.

Heitland's *History of Rome* is less affected by contemporary political and social themes than his historicist forebears. This is explained by Heitland's positivist historical methodology, which preserved history for its own sake rather than using it as a platform to comment on contemporary politics. Positivism's rise resulted from the diminishing significance of Historicism, Romanticism, and Militarism in late nineteenth century British scholarship. Hereafter, only Historicism shaped the practical elements of historical inquiry helped by increased use of footnoting and peer review. Meanwhile, Romanticism and Militarism dwindled into insignificance against the background of the diminution of British imperialism.

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[61] J.A. Froude, *Caesar*, 454.

[62] 'Mr. Froude's Caesar', 18. "But Mr. Froude's historical tact is hardly so sure, and his scholarship is by no manner of means so strong, as Mommsen's. It argues, therefore, great courage in a writer who has so few claims to be called a specialist to choose a topic which a real specialist has already made his own."

[63] Richard Claverhouse Jebb, *Essays and Addresses*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge, 1907), 315. "Mr Froude paints him (Pompey) in less opposing colours: as a mock-hero who did not even know that he was a sham."

[64] W.E. Heitland, 'The Teaching of Ancient History', in *Essays on the Teaching of History*, Cambridge University Press, C.J. Clay and Sons (London, 1901).

Historical Positivism

Positivist histories have certain trademark characteristics which distinguished them from their historicist counterparts in Germany. They are characterised most greatly by the passivity of their author's opinions within the text. This process intended to minimise the subjectivity within any given work and thereby offer the truest available representation of the past[65]. Heitland, for example, never uses first person and rarely inserts his opinion throughout the work. Instead, he offers a condensed record of the past which earnestly attempts to untangle the prejudices of the ancient record. This approach bespeaks good scholarly practice, but does not in and of itself mean that the resulting analysis is 'objective'. The preconditions and prejudices remain even when they are not openly on display. If inconvenient evidence is deemed 'untrustworthy', it will not be given its due of attention. Accordingly, the scholar's opinion still affects the outcome, even if it is less obvious. In Heitland's case, this process has predominantly affected his view of Pompey

Heitland's Positivist intellectual climate had inherent determinist leanings, which already predisposed it to Mommsen's authoritative narrative. As stated previously, Positivist historiography sought to recreate the past as it happened in fact, the historian's recreation of what happened[66]. It saw the past as something separated between two realities: what happened, and what was recorded. Accordingly, history was the act of removing the evidence's prejudices to reveal actual events. Hence, Positivist historiography was automatically attracted to determinist readings and was underpinned by empiricist practices and cause-and-effect relations. For example, Heitland's rationalisation of the Roman republic traced a series of cause-and-effect relations (events) to fixed endpoint (the end of the republic). Moreover, Caesar and Cicero, as the most reliable authorities for the period, could be mined for reliable information through careful historical investigation. This methodology sat quite comfortably with Mommsen's teleological reading whereby the Principate was the destined and inevitable end-point of Roman Republican history. The only difference between these approaches is the myth of objectivity. Heitland claimed to be writing objective history, while Mommsen was unashamedly subjective.

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[65] This is the crux of the quarrel between Positivist and Historicist histories, as Historicism rejects that history is scientifically quantifiable. See: Edwin R. Wallace, 'Historiography: Medicine and Science', in *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology: With an Epilogue on Psychiatry and the Mind-Body Relation*, eds. E.R. Wallace and J. Gach, Springer (New York, 2008). 28. "If under the rubric of 'science' one admits only disciplines that use predominantly experimental and mathematical models, then history need not apply (though statistical models have been usefully applied in many fields of history…). By the very nature of what they study historians cannot engage in prospective, controlled experimentation; nor, often, can they provide more than an approximate kind of qualification… Their method is essentially idiographic, interpretative, and reconstructive… The historian cannot attain (indeed he would not want to) the same degree of observational detachment as the natural science. Finally, historical perspectives are to some degree time and culture bound. … If, as I believe, much of what history studies is nonquantifiable anyway, then to quantify is to lose, not to gain, precision."

[66] See: W.E. Heitland, 'The Teaching of Ancient History', in *Essays on the Teaching of History*, Cambridge University Press, C.J. Clay and Sons (London, 1901), 31. "Historical study is applied Logic. Reasoning is applied (1) to the appraising of evidence, that is, to the extraction of fact, (2) to the appraising of facts, that is, to the extraction of their meaning." See also: W.E. Heitland, *The Roman Fate: An Essay in Interpretation*, Cambridge University Press (London, 1922).

Heitland's Pompey

Heitland's *History of Rome* is measured in its treatment of Pompey throughout the majority of the work. These sections hardly reference Pompey's vices or define his political and ideological stance. There are, however, subtle allusions to Mommsen's Pompeian construct[67], which reflect his descriptions albeit in a gentler tone. For example, Heitland labels Pompey 'self-satisfied' when he failed to heed Cicero and Cato's warnings about Caesar's growing power[68]. This alludes both to Pompey's vanity[69], which is contested in the ancient evidence, and Mommsen's more problematic construct of Pompey's delusional self-overestimation[70]. Heitland emphasises Pompey's demise as pitiful, feeble[71], and inevitable[72], further reflecting Mommsen's reading. However, Heitland's attempts at impartiality become even more Mommsenian in his summary of Pompey's overall contribution. Here, he damns Pompey's character, blaming his vice-filled nature as the cause of his inevitable demise. At this point, Heitland describes Pompey as slovenly, delusional, vain, jealous, a mere tool in the hands of Caesar[73]. He adds that Pompey's career reached an early pinnacle[74], before his deficiencies became apparent to his peers and destructive to his career. Heitland also outlines Pompey's treachery in taking over Lucullus' command in 67, highlighting Pompey's belittling behaviour and mean-spirited jealousy, thus completely undermining the restraint he had earlier shown when relating this event in its

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[67] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 310. "We have traced his career, and from time to time noted the weaknesses that marred it and that now brought it to a pitiful and feeble close."

[68] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 225. "Both Cato and Cicero are said to have warned Pompey that he was raising Caesar to a height from which he would not be able to dislodge him, but the self-satisfied man took no heed."

[69] See also: W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 15. "It would seem that the Senate had a fair chance of keeping Pompey loyal to the existing system by themselves cheerfully making the concessions required by his vanity."

[70] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 273.

[71] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 310.

[72] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 308. "We may call it (The battle of Pharsalus) the military expression of the coming political change. The one absolute chief, undistracted by irrelevant considerations and irresponsible meddling, could take risks, retrieve errors, and subordinate everything to the attainment of his end, without deference to the wishes of others. The head of an aristocratic clique could only feign a position of equal freedom by the firm suppression of his own supporters, a course for which Pompey was wholly unfitted."

[73] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 311. "But when he had earned the name of Great and entered in civil life, he could not keep his greatness in repair. Vanity and jealousy impaired his judgement, wavering and procrastination grew upon him like a disease. He could neither do what was necessary for keeping his primacy, nor endure a rival. So he drifted to ruin, the victim of slovenly delusions. He became a tool in the hands of Caesar, who rose at his expense. His later life was that of a solemn dreamer, fancying that he still held a position which in truth was long since undermined. The civil war pitilessly exposed his weakness. As leader of the Roman aristocrats he was ridiculous, for he was neither their master nor their hero. As champion of the republic he was equally ridiculous, for sincere republicans like Cato had no trust in his patriotism and self-denial. Mere military skill was not enough for civil war, and Pompey had no other qualification for the post of leader. He had never been a man of genius, and he was now stale. He could neither overcome his difficulties nor profit by his advantages, and the last scene of the tragic failure was of a piece with the rest."

[74] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 310-1. "He was at his best in the campaigns of his earlier life, while strung up to the point of efficiency by immediate necessities of war. He had to look facts in the face and act with energy." See also: W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 59. "None of his (Pompey's) later achievements, great though they were, will stand comparison with the prompt and thorough suppression of piracy as an exhibition of statesmanlike tact and strategic skill."

context[75]. The tone and view are best explained by Heitland's familiarity with Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* and other works which Heitland references 37 times in his third volume alone. Heitland's reference to volume four of Mommsen's history is the most important. It supports his assertion that "Some one master, corrupt or not corrupt, was to rule the vast empire as an empire with an eye to its well-being as a whole, were it only for his own interest"[76], while afterwards insinuating that the clear and practical intellect of Caesar made him the perfect candidate. This directly paraphrases Mommsen's sentiment[77]. In sum, Heitland references Mommsen far more than any other author. Only certain critical pieces of ancient evidence receive more attention.

Heitland further demonstrates how Mommsen's successors selectively adopted aspects of his reading of Pompey. For instance, Heitland was not critical of Pompey's decision to disband his army on returning to Rome from the East[78]. Moreover, he openly praised Pompey's military abilities[79] and claimed that Pompey fairly earned the cognomen 'the Great'[80]. Yet, he embraced Mommsen's demonization when he comes to summarise Pompey. The literary trope is designed to diminish Pompey's character and successes. The Mommsenian Pompey's 'stupidity', 'delusion', 'treachery', and 'vanity' are left to have the final word.

[75] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 59. "Pompey lost no time in putting his new powers to use, upsetting arrangements made by Lucullus for the punishment or reward of persons whose deserts he knew and Pompey did not. We need not doubt that he meanly lowered his predecessor in the eyes of all, and mortified him in every way. Jealousy of rivals, and an eagerness to reap where others had sown, were marked features of his character. The two proconsuls met in Galatia, but their conference ended in unprofitable bickering."

[76] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 343.

[77] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 492 (in Macmillan and Co. edition). "For long the development of the Roman commonwealth had been tending towards such a catastrophe; it was evident to every unbiased observer, and had been remarked a thousand times, that, if the rule of the aristocracy should be brought to an end, monarchy was inevitable."

[78] Though he does emphasise Pompey's pomposity. See: W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 68.

[79] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 308. "In the battle of Pharsalus efficiency triumphed over numbers, yet it was not what is called a soldiers battle. Nor was it in respect of the commanders a victory of the professional over the amateur, for no man of the time was better able to handle an army than Pompey."

[80] W.E. Heitland, *History of Rome*, Vol. 3, 59. "Even his (Pompey's) friends regretted his jealousy of Metellus; but, setting this aside, we must grant that he had now fairly earned the name of Great."

Chapter Six: Second Wave of Scholarship

Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* has been shown as an active influence on the works of late nineteenth and early twentieth century scholars. Ihne, Fowler, Froude, and Heitland all worked as contemporaries of Mommsen or in the succeeding generation. Their connection to Mommsen, especially the *Römische Geschichte*, is clear from their references to him or open admission of his contribution to their reconstructions. However, Mommsen's influence became less obvious throughout the twentieth century. The First and Second World Wars altered both historical discourse and its view of the individual in society. The fields of ancient history and classical studies consequently moved away from the 'great men' reading of history. This shift became especially apparent during the 1930s with the rise of totalitarianism in Europe and the resulting questions about figures such as Caesar and Augustus[1]. The 'great men' conception, however, survived in biographical treatments even if the form and tone were moderated.

There were other wholesale changes to historical method. Early-Mid-twentieth century scholarship increasingly rejected the belief that history is about teaching for the present. Rather, history was to be studied for its own sake[2]. Through such movements, the role of the discipline was transformed. Naturally, these shifts reflected wider social, philosophical and scientific developments.

These changes saw Mommsen's militaristic and historicist outlook lose favour with later generations of scholars. Nevertheless, Mommsen's anti-Pompeian paradigms remained prevalent, albeit in less belligerent guises. This particular tradition survived because it was long established within 19th and early 20th century scholarship. Furthermore, its Caesar-centric aspects were indirectly aided by the universal centrality of Caesar's commentaries in the Latin and Ancient History syllabus at both school and university levels. Pompey's depiction generally continued to suffer in later 20th century scholarship because Mommsen's Caesar-centric readings of the late republic had reinforced the popularisation of the Caesar myth, allowing it to endure in narrative histories, political biographies of Caesar, and other genres including popular fiction and military history. Yet works were generally less polarised in their views of Caesar and Pompey. The late twentieth century even saw an increase in Pompeian biographies, which sought to salvage, but not glorify, Pompey. Consequently, Pompey's portrayal became more nuanced throughout the twentieth century and increasingly rejected the blatant hostility of late nineteenth century scholarship. Nevertheless, Mommsen's influence is still traceable throughout modern scholarship and continues to define the most prevalent characterisation of Pompey.

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[1] See: R. Syme *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 1939); Mario Attilio Levi, *La lotta per la successione di Giulio Cesare e l'avvento di Ottaviano Augusto*, Vita e pensiero, (Milan, 1939); H. Strasburger, *'Caesar im Urteil der Zeitgenossen*' in: *Historische Zeitschrift*. Band 175 (1953), 225–26, 2.

[2] Collingwood was the most famous advocate for this approach to history. See: R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 1946).

6.1. Matthias Gelzer

Matthias Gelzer (1886-1974) was a Swiss-German historian, whose works had a major impact on later studies of Roman Republican and Imperial politics and society. Gelzer studied history and classical philology at the Universities of Basel and Leipzig. He completed his doctorate at the University of Leipzig in 1909 as a student of Ulrich Wilcken,[3] who was a disciple of Theodor Mommsen. Gelzer later received his *Habilitation* from the University of Freiburg in 1912 with a thesis on the nobility of the Roman Republic. This later became a significant book for 20th century studies of the late republic. Following the success of this study, he later produced influential biographies of Caesar[4] (1921), Pompey[5] (1949), and Cicero[6] (1969).

Gelzer's *Caesar: Politician and Statesman* (*Caesar: Politiker und Staatsman*)

Matthias Gelzer's *Caesar: Politician and Statesman* (*Caesar: Politiker und Staatsman*) was first published to much critical acclaim in German in 1921. An English translation, published in 1968, meant that it became equally influential among Anglophone scholars. The work is renowned for its clinical approach to Caesar's life and career, which is read against the complex machinations of Roman politics. Gelzer also rejected the mythologising of Caesar's military and political capabilities, common in nineteenth century scholarship. He also realised that previous approaches diminished the achievements and abilities of Caesar's peers. Instead, he included the widest available body of ancient evidence. This ensured that Caesar's career was set within the context of his perception in the ancient world. Unfortunately, Gelzer's ambitions were only partially realised. Pompey throughout *Caesar* retains aspects of Mommsen's negative Pompeian tropes.

Pompey in *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*

Gelzer's representation of Pompey's early career is favourable. Here, when Caesar was an aspiring political figure, Pompey is an exemplary administrator[7]. Neither does Gelzer criticise Pompey's political and military achievements. In fact, he has little to say about them. Instead, he focuses on Caesar's pragmatism and foresight in supporting Pompey at the peak of his powers[8]. The attacks come later as he begins his treatment of the 'first triumvirate':

> The strength of the three confederates was quite uneven: Pompey was much stronger than Crassus, and Caesar still a beginner compared with either of them, but as consul the tactical initiative rested with him and, since he was also vastly superior intellectually and in political skill, the actual leadership fell to him.[9]

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[3] Wilcken also succeeded Eduard Meyer as the associate professor of ancient history at the University of Breslau in 1889 on Mommsen's recommendation.

[4] M. Gelzer, *Cäsar: der Politiker und Staatsmann*, Deutsche verlags-anstalt (Stuttgart und Berlin, 1921); M. Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Trans. P. Needham, Basil Blackwell & Mott, Ltd. (Oxford, 1968).

[5] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius: Lebensbild eines Römers*, F. Bruckmann, (München, 1949).

[6] M. Gelzer, *Cicero: Ein Biographischer Versuch,* Franz Steiner (Wiesbaden, 1969).

[7] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 34.

[8] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 34. "Those who did not wish to be crushed by the foreseeable new order had to humour their future master (Pompey). Caesar was faced with this bitter necessity. But, since it had to be, he was not content to be a mere time-server; rather, he became an enthusiastic supporter of the bill (Gabinian)..."

[9] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 68.

Gelzer bases this claim on an understanding of Pompey's 'good fortune', which allowed him to ignore Rome's testing *cursus honorum* and other political hurdles[10]. Like Mommsen, he stresses that Pompey only got to where he did by luck and not talent, which is contested in the ancient evidence[11]. Moreover, he contrasts Pompey and Caesar's political career, noting that Caesar's conventional advancement more adequately prepared him for difficult circumstances, instead of noting that Caesar was lucky too in having three uncles closely attached to Sulla even while he could 'sell' his connections to Marius - and even survive Sulla's proscriptions[12].

Gelzer's portrayal of Pompey in *Caesar* becomes increasingly negative as he moves through the 'first triumvirate' period. Pompey is increasingly reduced to the role of antagonist. Within his first criticism, he states:

> But the most profound reason for his (Pompey's) hesitation lay in his caution: he no longer dared to undertake any enterprise, the success of which could not be calculated beforehand with the maximum of certainty.[13]

Gelzer thus alludes to the modern trope of Pompey's 'incompetence'[14], wherein his hesitancy was so acute that it paralysed him. This construction also amplifies Caesar's boldness, thereby emphasising his super-human qualities and genius[15] in the face of Pompey's mediocrity. Gelzer also focuses on Pompey's unwillingness to dominate the senate, but rather than reading this as a positive attribute, it is interpreted as a sign of ineptitude and weakness[16]. Pompey's absorption into the oligarchy eroded his relationship with Caesar[17], something which Gelzer saw as Pompey's ultimate failure. Gelzer ridicules Pompey's ambition, stating:

> Furthermore, he had not even mastered the mechanics of politics as managed in the senate and popular assembly, with the result that the hopes he entertained in 61 of being from then on the first man in the state had been wretchedly frustrated.[18]

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[10] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 69. "Now his career of defiance of the *leges annales* caught up with Pompey. Spoiled by his good fortune from his youth upwards, he despised the normal activities of the senator in the Curia and Forum, and so never learned how to further his own interests there..."

[11] Diod. Sic. 38.9-10; Strab. 12.3.28; Val. Max, 4.5.5; Vell. Pat. 2.29.5; Plut. *Pomp*. 1.3. App. *Bell Civ.* 1.9.80; Flor. *Epit.* 41.6.15; Dio Cass. 37.20.2.

[12] Plut. *Caes.* 1.

[13] M. Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Basil Blackwell & Mott, Ltd, (Oxford, 1968), 150-1.

[14] The ancient evidence supports Pompey's propensity for caution, but stresses that this ensured Pompey his numerous victories. In fact, the evidence generally asserts that Pompey's decision to follow his colleagues' advice for Pharsalus cost him the war and that he would have been better served to protract the war. See: Caes. *Bell. Civ.* 3.86.2-4; Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.43; App. *Mith.* 2.10.66-7; Dio Cass. 42.1.3. Velleius Paterculus' account contradicts these accounts and states that Pompey ignored the advice of his peers. See: Vell. Pat. 2.52.2.

[15] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 240. "As soon as he (Caesar) was close enough to their formation he recognized with the acuteness of genius that Pompey intended to aim a fatal blow at his right flank..."

See also: M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 332-3.

[16] Gelzer suggests that Pompey was entirely incapable of conceiving any other form of government in Rome, alluding to this as a product of Pompey's dull intellect. See: M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 151.

[17] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 151. "In fact Pompey was now abandoning his claim to stand above normal political activity, and stepping back into the ranks of the Optimate oligarchy."

[18] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 151-2.

This provides further evidence for Gelzer's interaction with Mommsen's Pompeian paradigm. As Gelzer's assumption, that Pompey was incapable of sole leadership, presupposes that this was his ultimate aim. There is little proof of this in the ancient evidence[19], which instead states that Pompey wanted to be first among equals[20]. This was equally true of Caesar[21]. However, it lies at the heart of Mommsen's reading[22].

Gelzer builds on this negative representation throughout the ensuing chapters, introducing the theme of Pompey's 'jealousy' to highlight Caesar's growing significance throughout the 50s. He centralises the importance of Caesar and Pompey's *dignitas* in this argument, stating that Pompey's jealous protection of his superiority caused the civil war. There is a precedent for this in the ancient evidence[23]. However, Gelzer has distorted this evidence by ignoring its equal criticism of Pompey and Caesar. Instead, Gelzer claims that Caesar's claim for supremacy is justified[24]. This is reminiscent of Mommsen's reading, wherein he asserted that Pompey's resistance to Caesar was futile because the latter was clearly superior. In addition, Gelzer insinuates that Pompey was delusional and that he should have recognized Caesar's superiority. This prejudice highlights Gelzer's determinist reading.

Gelzer solidifies the nature of these relations by focusing on Pompey's 'treacherous' deeds throughout the work. These highlight Pompey's insatiable desire to be the first man in the republic and the reprehensible lengths he goes to fulfil these ambitions. Gelzer first criticises Pompey during the political aftermath of Clodius' murder. Pompey's treachery[25] left Clodius' supporters seriously undermanned and persecuted by the Optimates. Gelzer also implies that Pompey's attempt to intervene on behalf of a defendant during one trial[26] was insincere. He supports this by highlighting that Clodius' 'squad' were both Caesar and Pompey's clients, and that Caesar was the only one willing to help. Gelzer thus highlights Pompey's indifference to political allies and contrasts this with Caesar's charitability.

Gelzer is most critical of Pompey during the civil war. He is unsympathetic to the *Optimates*, among which Pompey is included, and the frantic situation during Caesar's military incursion into Italy. Gelzer emphasises Pompey's political ineptitude and malleability, which renders him ineffective despite his desire to maintain dominance. Furthermore, he suggests that Pompey consolidated his unjust dominance by disgracefully 'stealing' two legions from

[19] Appian suggests Pompey was working toward a dictatorship. See: App. *Mith.* 2.3.23.
[20] Vell. Pat. 2.29.4, 2.33.3; Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 7.9-12; Dio Cass. 37.57.1. Tacitus implies that Pompey is one in a long line of would-be despots who failed to achieve lasting supremacy. See: Tac. *Ann*. 1.1.
[21] T. Stevenson, '*Dignitas*: Pompey, Caesar and Relative Rank, 52-49 BC', in *Julius Caesar and the Transformation of the Roman Republic*, Routledge (London, 2015), 109-23.
[22] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 492.
[23] Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.14
[24] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 92. "But his (Caesar) claim was more deeply rooted in his certainty that he was the intellectual superior of his political opponents."
[25] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 154.
[26] Plut. *Pomp.* 55.8-11; Val. Max. 2.6.5; Dio Cass. 40.55; Cic. *Fam.* 7.2.2. (SB 52).

Caesar[27] while the latter was in Gaul. This is both a selective and determinist reading of the evidence. It ignores that one legion was Pompey's to begin with and puts the worst possible slant on the evidence. Gelzer postulates that Pompey's recall of his own and one of Caesar's legions was accordingly unjust, because this conflict never eventuated. It is somewhat premature to assume that Pompey was bolstering his forces for the impending civil war, when he and Caesar had not yet reached a political impasse. Here, Gelzer follows Mommsen's pro-Caesar reading[28].

Gelzer doesn't perpetuate the trope of 'stupidity', but he stresses Pompey's 'treachery', 'jealousy', and 'power-mongering', in a way that reinforces Mommsen's selective interpretations of the ancient evidence. This is only partially the result of Caesar's commentaries on the civil war and Caesar's centrality to the biography. Gelzer demonstrably works beyond the parameters of the ancient evidence to promote an unfavourable depiction of Pompey.

Gelzer's *Pompeius: Lebensbild eines Römers*

Matthias Gelzer's *Pompeius: Lebensbild eines Römers* was first published in 1944. It was less popular than the biography of Caesar, partly because it was never translated into English. Despite its lesser influence, it was still seminal to Pompeian scholarship within Germany. Gelzer formally rejected both Mommsen and Meyer's approaches which he saw as either underappreciating or over-appreciating Pompey[29]. However, in fact, he does lean closer to Mommsen in that his Pompey exists in Caesar's shadow[30]. Consequently, Gelzer assumes some of Mommsen's perspectives of Pompey in the work. Herrmann-Otto, who wrote the work's *Forschungsbericht* (overview of subsequent scholarship), comments that only in the late twentieth century has German scholarship overthrown Mommsen's characterisation of Pompey's "ridiculous hollow head" (*lächerlichen Hohlkopf*).[31]

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[27] M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 197.

[28] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 183. "…and the public had once more the opportunity of comparing the manifest endeavours of Caesar to avoid a rapture with the perfidious preparation for war by his opponents."

[29] Lily Ross-Taylor, Review of, *Pompeius,* by Matthias Gelzer. *The Classical Weekly* 46. no.2, (1952), 23. "In his preface Gelzer declares that he is not trying to rescue Pompey's reputation, which was underestimated by Mommsen and overestimated by Eduard Meyer."

[30] Elisabeth Hermann-Otto, 'Forschungsbericht: 1984-2004', in *Pompeius: Lebensbild eines Römers* by Matthias Gelzer, Franz Steiner Verlag, Neudruck der Ausgabe von 1984, (Stuttgart, 2005), 9. "*Selbst die leidenschaftslos-distanzierte Wertung Matthias Gelzers... kann nicht darüber hinwegtäuschen, dass auch diese mittlere Linie im Schatten Caesars konzipiert ist, der, Gelzer zufolge, "das Gebot des Schicksals" - trotz aller persönlichen Schwächen - vollstreckt habe*." Translation: "Even the most dispassionate and distanced evaluation of Matthias Gelzer… cannot conceal the fact that this middle line (portrayal of Pompey) is also conceived in the shadow of Caesar, who, according to Gelzer, had "executed the commandment of destiny" – despite all personal weaknesses."

See also: Review of, *Pompeius,* by Matthias Gelzer. *The Classical Weekly* 46. no.2, (1952), 24. "Still it is Caesar whom Gelzer admires, and the best biographies are congenial to the writer."

[31] Elisabeth Hermann-Otto, 'Forschungsbericht: 1984-2004', 9.

Pompey in *Pompeius: Lebensbild eines Römers*

Gelzer's *Pompeius: Lebensbild eines Römers*, hereafter *Pompeius*, attempted to reproduce perceptions of Pompey faithful to the ancient sources and free from the perspectives of modern concepts. In practice, he thus seldom cites modern sources and instead focuses on the ancient evidence. This results in a more favourable portrait of Pompey, but one that still had its problems. Balsdon criticised his approach as a 'scissors and paste' method which awkwardly joined the ancient evidence into a clunky narrative[32]. This becomes apparent during sections on Pompey's early career. For example, Gelzer praises Pompey's military prowess during the Sullan civil war[33], and refrains from criticising Pompey's decision to execute Carbo[34]. Instead, he falls back on Plutarch's account[35], which, despite its allusions to cruelty, stresses that Pompey's orders were given by Sulla. Likewise, Gelzer's portrayal of the war against the pirates is positive[36] and follows the accounts of Cicero, Plutarch, Appian, and Dio. However, Gelzer was critical of Pompey's first consulship in 70, which he claimed was largely ineffective[37]. Moreover, he criticises Pompey's Mithridatic war, commenting that Pompey didn't meet any adversary that was his equal throughout[38]. This results in an underwhelming portrait, only salvaged by Gelzer's praise for Pompey's organisational abilities[39].

Gelzer's tone changes with the impending civil war. He maintains a positive view of Pompey throughout his narrative of the civil war, but the details are determined by context. In situations where Pompey challenges the Optimates, Gelzer portrays Pompey positively. For example, he comments that criticism of Pompey for his actions in Thessalonika was not fair. Pompey's subsequent decision not to listen to his peers is framed positively, as that they were carelessly

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[32] J.P.V.D. Balsdon, Review of *Pompeius*, by Matthias Gelzer, *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, Bd. 1, H. 2., Franz Steiner Verlag (Wiesbaden, 1950): 297.

[33] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius,* 43. "*Den Pompeius behandelte er wiederum mit besonderer Auszeichnung, woraus wir schließen können, dass er seinen militärischen Leistungen hohen Wert beimaß.*" Translation: "What we can conclude is that Pompey was treated specially (literally: ‚with a special marking') and that he placed a high value on his military performances."

[34] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 44. "*Pompeius gab den befehl, seine Begleiter sogleich niederzumachen, beim Führer stellte er die Schuld in einem Verhör in aller Form fest und sandte dann seinen Kopf an Sulla. Es ist klar, dass er in diesem Fall dem, ausdrücklichen Willen des Diktators nicht zuwiderhandeln konnte*." Translation: "Pompey gave the orders to immediately desist from his (Carbo's) companions at once. With the leader (Carbo), he found guilt after placing him under every form of interrogation and then sent the head to Sulla. It is clear that in his (Carbo's) downfall he (Pompey) was not able to contravene the commands and will of the dictator (Sulla)."

[35] Plut. *Pomp.*10.

[36] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 80.

[37] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 80.

[38] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 106. "*...Pompeius habe doch Glück gehabt, daß sein Feldherrnrhum sich vorzüglich auf den Sieg über ein so unkriegerisches Volk grunde*." Translation: "…Pompeius was fortunate, however, that his conquest (lit. field-domination) was chiefly based on the victory over such an unwarlike nation."

[39] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 107. "*Desto größer war die organisatorische Leistung: Zum ersten Mal in der Römischen Geschichte wurde hier die Aufgabe ergriffen, nach einem großgedachten Plan die gesamte Verwaltung neu eroberter Länder zu regeln*." Translation: "Even larger was the organisational capacity: for the first time in Roman history this task would be accomplished here (in the East) according to his (Pompey's) large master plan which regulated the administration of the whole new conquered are (lands)."

throwing caution to the wind[40]. However, Gelzer is more hostile the moment that Pompey's decisions compromise Caesar. In the chapter on Pompey's third consulship (*Das dritte Konsulat*), Gelzer closes with an allusion to the impending political break between Pompey and Caesar, suggesting that Pompey's treachery would cause him to drop Caesar and align himself with the Optimates. Yet, Gelzer also frames Pompey as a cunning and deceptive politician commenting that Pompey "did not misunderstand that the Optimates welcomed him as a helper against Caesar"[41]. He thus implies that Pompey was guided solely by his own motives. This passage also alludes to the Mommsenian constructs of 'stupid' and 'treacherous' Pompey, as well as his general amorality while playing both sides of the political divide[42]. Gelzer stresses that this justified Caesar's political break with Pompey, because he had made every effort to reach an agreement with him[43].

Gelzer's concluding remarks bring together features of his mixed judgement of Pompey. Here Gelzer admits that Pompey's demise was tragic[44], but does so to emphasise Caesar's symbolic role as Pompey's destined destroyer[45]. According to Gelzer, Pompey lost his brilliance over the course of the war with Caesar[46]. He implies that Caesar's brilliance made the outcome of the war inevitable, even if Pompey hadn't been politically and militarily compromised by

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[40] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 197. "*Im Lager fühlte er sich wieder ganz in seinem Element, nachdem er in Thessallonike manche unliebenswürdige Kritik hatte anhören müssen, vor allem eben, daß er nicht rechtzeitig gerüstet und die sehr berechtigten Mahnungen der optimatischen principes in den Wind geschlagen habe.*" Translation: "In camp he felt more himself and completely in his element. Once he was in Thessaly he had to listen to some inimical critics and the highly qualified reminders of the *optimates*, who above all stated that he was not duly prepared. These (comments) were ignored (literally 'beaten into the wind')."

[41] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius,* 165-6. "*Pompeius verkannte gewiss nicht, dass er the Optimates jetzt als Helfer gegen Caesar willkommen war*."

[42] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius* , 166. "*Aber ihnen den bisherigen Verbündeten so ans Messer zu liefern, wie sie hofften, lag nicht in seinem Interesse, wenn wir einmal vom Moralischen absehen wollen. Er traute sich wohl zu, ihm in ein Abhängigkeitsverhältnis zu bringen.*" Translation: "But to give them (the *optimates*) as much to the previous allies as they hoped was not in his interest, if we were to ignore morality. He (Caesar) probably dared to put him in a relationship of dependency."

[43] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius,* 166. "*Umgekehrt ging auch Caesars Streben dahin, Pompeius festzuhalten*." Translation: "Conversely, Caesar's efforts (to maintain the political allegiance with Pompey) also then went on, but Pompeius held firmly (against them)."

[44] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius,* 221. "*Die Geschichte des Pompeius endet so mit einem Bilde unsäglichen Jammers; denn der Betrachter wird nicht einmal durch die Empfindung erhoben, eine wahrhafte Tragödie mitzuerleben.*" Translation: "The history of Pompey ends with this, a picture of unspeakable misery; because the observer is not raised by the sensation, a true tragedy."

[45] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius,* 221. "*In höchst merkwürdiger Weise ist Caesar sein Schicksal geworden, unter dessen genialem Gegenstoß er bei Pharsalos zusammenbrach und der ihn danach durch die dämonische Gewalt seiner Verfolgung in den Tod jagte*." Translation: "In a remarkable way, Caesar became his destiny. In the meantime, he had collapsed at Pharsalus, and then drove him to death by the demonic force of his persecution." see also: M. Gelzer, *Pompeius,* 221. "*Aber in der Katastrophe waltete ein Verhängnis, das über diese persönlichen Beziehungen hinausreichte und auch Caesars Laufbahn bestimmte*." Translation: "But in the catastrophe prevailed a doom (fate), which above these personal relationships also extended Caesar's certain career (path)."

[46] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 221. "*So gewiss er im Waffengang mit Caesar dessen Genialität unterlag, indem dieser stets wagte, was er für unmöglich hielt, und her, nur auf Sicherheit bedacht, nicht Zugriff, wo sich dieser eine Bloße gab, so kann man doch fragen, ob schließlich seiner methodischen Kriegsführung nicht doch der Erfolg beschieden gewesen wäre, wenn er bis zuletzt daran festgehalten hatte*." Translation: "As surely as he had lost his genius in the course of the war with Caesar, during which he always dared to do what he thought was impossible, and was careful not to resort to security, but one could ask whether the war would not have been successful if he had drawn it out to the last."

circumstances. He further reinforces this view by disparaging Pompey's abilities as a statesman, abilities which he had previously praised. Pompey becomes a tool in the hands of better statesmen, who accepted him only to defeat Caesar[47]. He thus reveals his Caesar-centric perspective at the last. This undermines the positive aspects of Pompey's portrayal in the work. Within this framework, Pompey was always destined to succumb to Caesar's genius, and with this Mommsen's narrative line is allowed to emerge once again.

Summary

Gelzer's hostility toward Pompey is more subtle in both biographies than in the works of his predecessors. At times he freely credits certain Pompeian achievements including his statesmanship and military capabilities. However, in both cases these positive passages are undermined in the climactic episodes. There is also a disparity in the level of hostility in the two works. Pompey is understandably less credited throughout *Caesar*. The conclusions of the *Pompeius*, however, were also determined by Gelzer's pro-Caesar *tendenz.* In short, Caesar dominated Gelzer's perceptions of Pompey in both biographies. Mommsen is at least partly to blame in both cases. Within Gelzer's *Caesar*, we saw that the Pompeian themes of 'treachery', 'power-mongering', and 'political ineptitude' were prominent. *Pompeius* likewise focused on Pompey's 'treachery' and 'political ineptitude', but also alluded to the 'stupid' Pompey[48], an entirely Mommsenian construct. Gelzer thus displayed a pre-disposition to Roman politics which stemmed from modern readings of Pompey, despite claiming that his work wished to moderate, or at least offer an alternative to, both Mommsen and Meyer's legacies[49].

6.2. Ronald Syme

Ronald Syme's name is synonymous with revisionist history. His seminal *The Roman Revolution*, completed in 1939, focused on the transformation of the Roman state between the years 60 BC and AD 14[50]. Syme looked to the late republic for answers regarding the gradual emergence of Augustus, seeing in the late republic the conditions which allowed Augustus to seize power and to entrench it. Unlike his predecessors, he did not view the emergence of the Principate as either a good thing or as a result of any inevitable 'march of history'. In this regard, Syme's approach to this period was original. On the other hand, he was favourably disposed towards Caesar and gave much more attention than others to the contribution of

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[47] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 222. "*Pompeius war ja gar nicht gefährliche Mann, den sie fürchteten. Frei und überlegen handelnde Staatsmänner hätten ihm sehr wohl einen seinen Ehrgeiz befriedigenden Platz ein räumen können, indem sie ihn freiwillig als den Reichsfeldherrn anerkannten, als den sie ihn zuletzt wenigstens gegen Caesar ertrugen*." Translation: "Pompey was not at all a dangerous (risk-taking) man whom they feared. Free and superior statesmen could well have given him a place satisfying his very obvious ambition, recognising him voluntarily as the field-marshal of the empire, who at last was bored against Caesar."

[48] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, 165-6.

[49] M. Gelzer, *Pompeius,* Vorwort, 21. "*Das Buch will keine Rettung sein. Ich verkenne die schwachen Seiten des Pompeius, die Mommsens Witz herausforderten, nicht, möchte ihm aber in der römischen Geschichte doch einen höheren Rang zuerkennen, wenn er auch nie die Stellung erlangt hat, die Eduard Meyer ihm zuschreiben wollte.*" Translation: "The book does not want to rescue him. I do not ignore the weak sides of Pompey, who pushed Mommsen's wit out, but I would rather give him a higher rank in Roman history, even if he never attained the position which Edward Meyer would have attributed to him."

[50] Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 1939).

Antony in the years after Caesar's death[51]. To set up his case for the period down to AD 14, Syme slides over various significant political and military details. His aim was to "trace the transformation of the Roman state … by emphasising the personalities and acts of Augustus' adherents"[52]. To this end, much significance is given to a range of powerful individuals[53] and their role in the Republic's demise, thus revealing his debt to Münzer and Gelzer's prosopographical approach. Syme also prioritised a study of the oligarchy as a whole, as well as warfare, provincial affairs and constitutional history. Consequently, his presentation of Pompey reflects his view that the figures of the late Republic, and Pompey in particular, were more to blame for the onset of the Principate and its authoritarianism than Caesar and his supporters.

In his preface, Syme declares his preference for Caesar's side during the late republic and civil war period, as the republic system no longer worked. He bases this view on the accounts of three authors, C. Asinius Pollio, Sallust, and Tacitus. The claim is problematic. Firstly, Syme accepts the 'invectives' as Sallustian[54], where most other scholars do not, and takes the most pessimistic readings of Sallust on offer. Secondly, he cites Sallust's *Histories*, which are heavily fragmentary. Even more worrying is his claim to have used 'Asinius Pollio' when we have at most eight fragments of Asinius Pollio's history. This suggests that Syme mined Plutarch's, and especially Appian's, accounts, and thereafter framed these as 'Pollio's' opinions. Syme's hypothesis thus relies on the loose notion that he knew what Pollio wrote. Syme states that all three sources were 'republican' in sentiment, but in fact the authors he relies on to support this view were in fact very much in favour of the Principate (especially Appian).

Syme uses this theory to develop the theme of Augustus' faults but sets them against a teleological reading of the late Republic. Caesar and Antony are exempted from criticism. His view of the republic is thereby subservient to this approach. All this makes him predisposed to a negative view of Pompey. He projects onto him various negative characteristics that he later sees in Augustus and purposefully neglects to assess them against their very different backgrounds.

This argument for Augustus' use of Pompey's tactics has some merit when considered in isolation. After all, Pompey was invested with extraordinary political roles and stood as the first citizen of Rome[55]. Eduard Meyer had already introduced this idea in *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius*[56] (1918). Syme's approach, however, inverted Meyer's

[51] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Preface, I.

[52] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Preface, I.

[53] Syme cites the influence of several historians who specialised in prosopography to achieve this end, including Münzer, Groag, Stein, and Gelzer. R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Preface, II.

[54] R. Syme, *Sallust,* University of California Press (Los Angeles, 1964).

[55] Cic. *leg.Man*. 52. "What then says Hortensius? That if one man is to be put in supreme command, the right man is Pompeius; but that supreme command ought not to be given to one man."

[56] Eduard Meyer, *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius*, J.G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, (Berlin, 1918).

positive reading of this emulation and used it as a means of denigrating both Pompey and Augustus, thereby challenging traditional views of the Augustan principate[57]. This was a refreshing take on a period of Roman history, especially to a world experiencing totalitarianism, and was highly influential. Yet, Syme's argument took on countless hypothetical interpretations not explicitly stated in the ancient evidence. These include but are not limited to: Pompey's self-propagated image[58], Augustus' use of and control over Livy, Virgil, and Horace[59], which is surmised via circumstantial evidence, as well as the generalised assumption of Pompeian influence over Augustus' principate[60]. Even if these are granted the benefit of the doubt, and, there is a case that they deserve to be, Syme's work is based on an inescapable paradox. *The Roman Revolution* challenged one questionable modern view of Rome's past (the nature of Augustus' principate) using an equally dubious and dominant modern portrayal (Pompey as a cruel, sinister, and violent figure). This had great bearing on the continuation of anti-Pompeian history in modern scholarship.

Syme's Pompey

Syme's proclaimed focus is the oligarchic nature of Roman politics and the families which traditionally dominated the senate. Even so, he dedicates two chapters to the most influential figures of their generation, Pompey and Caesar: *The Domination of Pompeius* and *Caesar's Dictatorship*. These chapters are situated at the beginning of the work and outline the major events of the period as well as outlining Syme's view of both characters. They lay the groundwork for subsequent criticism, which is primarily targeted at Pompey.

The Domination of Pompeius outlines Pompey's origins, career, and character. The themes can broadly be separated into three groups: 'treachery', 'indifference', and 'weakness'. Pompey's treachery is the most evident theme throughout the chapter. Syme represents Pompey as a menacing political figure during his early years. He preserves the theme of treachery, like many of his predecessors, citing Pompey's ruthlessness in politics. Syme focuses on Pompey's merciless killing of Servilia's husband, Marcus Iunius Brutus[61]. Much is made of Helvetius' description of Pompey as the teenage butcher, *adulescentulus carnifex*[62]. Syme summarises Pompey in memorable prose:

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[57] R. Syme, The *Roman Revolution*, Preface, II. "It is surely time for some reaction from the traditional and conventional view of the period. Much that has recently been written about Augustus is simply panegyric, whether ingenuous or edifying."

[58] This manipulation, for Syme, rendered the "authentic" Pompey "politically forgotten" and was replaced with a eulogised, indeed almost mythologised, figure that was fabricated to reinforce Augustus' legitimacy and authority. R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 316-7.

[59] Syme, when discussing Augustus' emulation of Pompey, argues that Augustan literature was propaganda which gave Pompey undue credit to serve Augustus' political purpose See: R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 323.

[60] What Syme describes as a "violent and illicit" career marked by "treacheries and murders" is re-imagined as the "champion of the Free State against military despotism" to reflect Augustus' desired image as defender of the Republic rather than tyrant. See: R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 322-3.

[61] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 27.

[62] Val. Max. 6.2.8.

> The career of Pompeius opened in fraud and violence. It was prosecuted, in war and in peace, through illegality and treachery…After supporting Lepidus to the consulate and encouraging his subversive designs, he turned upon his ally and saved the government.[63]

Syme also accuses Pompey of treachery towards Caesar. He states that, as their relations deteriorated in the late 50s, Pompey attempted to annul Caesar's right to stand for the consulship *in absentia* via trickery[64]. Syme combines this with descriptions of Pompey's general aloofness during the latter part of his career. In reporting Pompey attempts at impartiality, Syme inverts the evidence to magnify Pompey's treachery. He then moves onto Pompey's alleged detachment in 51 BC, describing Pompey's recall of a legion from Gaul in hostile terms[65]. This resulted in Caesar surrendering two legions because Pompey recalled the legion he had previously lent to Caesar[66]. Syme's description implies that Pompey only chose a side if they were in a clearly favourable position. Pompey was thus always "playing a double game"[67] and his aloofness was a tactic[68]. Doing this allowed Pompey to turn against the losing side without remorse. Syme marked it as a fundamental Pompeian trait: a man who cared only about maintaining political dominance.

The theme of 'indifference'[69] is referenced throughout the chapter and builds on from Pompey's treachery. There are two notable examples for Pompey's indifference and each is imbued with the implication of cruelty. All three also have contentious elements. Firstly, Syme insinuates that Pompey may have restricted the availability of corn in Rome during the late 50s BC, thus placing political pressure on his adversaries via the starvation of Rome's poorest citizens[70]. Yet he fails to reference the ancient evidence supporting this claim. Despite the ambiguity of the sources, Syme is happy to introduce such hostile material because it suits his view. Likewise, Syme's portrayal of Pompey's decision to kill Carbo, a former friend and political ally, is evocative[71]. He stresses the savagery of Pompey's character and adds in his footnotes that neither friend nor enemy was safe from Pompey's brutality. We have seen that Carbo's death could be read in more than one way and that even Mommsen allows that it was a case of following Sulla's orders. Syme, however, uses the event to draw as bleak a picture of Pompey as even more unjust than cruel.

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[63] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution,* 28-9.

[64] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 40.

[65] This mirrors the both Mommsen and Gelzer's interpretations of the events. See: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 5, 183; M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 197.

[66] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 40. See too, 46. "Helped by the power, the prestige, and the illicit armies of Pompeius Magnus (stationed already on Italian soil or now being recruited for the government and on the plea of legitimacy), a faction in the Senate worked the constitution against Caesar."

[67] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 43.

[68] See also: R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 42.

[69] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 67. "Pompeius could surely have saved him (Gabinius from the *publicani*), had he cared. But Gabinius had served his turn now."

[70] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 37.

[71] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 27. For the Carbo passage and its relation to M. Junius Brutus death see footnote 1 on page 27.

These events, as they appear in Syme's *Roman Revolution*, are underpinned by Pompey's indifference. As previously mentioned, several modern historians conceptualised Pompey as a man of cold character. Syme respects this portrayal throughout these three examples. Syme's depiction of Pompey's indifference primarily implies 'cruelty' as a leading vice, but, it also has wider implications. Syme uses Pompey's indifference to actively reinforce representations of numerous Pompeian vices. Pompey is variously shown as merciless, cold, insatiable in ambition, and disloyal. As such, his indifference sits at the core of Syme's conceptualisation of Pompey which determines his understanding of both the late republic and early imperial periods.

Syme finally reinforces the trope of Pompey's weakness, which he demonstrates first by listing all the examples of Pompey's caution or his desire for unswerving admiration and affection. Syme deems these traits a hindrance to Pompey's political and military position. Thus, 'weakness' doesn't necessarily extend to all of Pompey's 'vices', some of which allowed him to achieve great political success. Syme centres the representation of this weakness upon Pompey's return to Rome after conquering the East[72]. He suggests that Pompey made very few astute political decisions at the time, stating that "Pompey trod warily and pleased nobody", and that his first speech before the senate was "flat and verbose, saying nothing"[73].

Syme's criticisms of Pompey are subtler than those of his predecessors and generally need extrapolation. The fast-flowing approach of the *Roman Revolution*, moving from one catastrophe to the next, does not allow an audience to appreciate the scale of Syme's prejudices[74]. It masked Syme's vocabulary usage which is inherently hostile to Pompey. For example, Syme's introduction to Pompey is rife with calculated vocabulary. Firstly, Syme states that Pompey was 'lurking'[75] - not residing - in Picenum after his father's death. He continues by commenting that Pompey triumphed over the 'remnants'[76] of a Marian army and consequently added 'Magnus' to his name. Subsequently, Syme relates Pompey's rise and dominance of the Roman political landscape after the enactment of the *lex Gabinia*. He comments that "no province of the Empire was immune from his (Pompey's) control"[77], implying that Pompey's control was a sickness spreading across the Roman world, thus needing a cure. Syme clearly wished to subvert Pompey's image by creating a negative representation at the most fundamental level. He portrays Pompey using evocative language that both alludes to and magnifies the worst elements of Pompey's character.

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[72] This reflects Mommsen and Gelzer's readings. See: T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 492; M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 151-2.

[73] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 33. See also: Cic. *Att.* 1.14.1. (SB 14)

[74] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Preface, II. "The design has imposed a pessimistic and truculent tone, to the almost complete exclusion of the gentler emotions and the domestic virtues."

[75] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 28. "After his father's death, protected by influential politicians, he lay low, lurking no doubt in Picenum."

[76] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 28. "He held a command in Africa against Marian remnants and triumphed, though not a senator..."

[77] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 29. "No province of the Empire was immune from his (Pompey's) control. Four years before, Pompeius had not even been a senator. The decay of the Republic, the impulsion towards the rule of one imperator, were patent and impressive."

The reasons for this negative portrayal only become clear later in the work. The following chapter, *Caesar the Dictator*, sees Caesar become the focal point and while Pompey still plays the villain, the move in focus makes him more peripheral to the narrative. The increasing importance of the theme of 'legacy' superficially resurrects Pompey's portrayal in this chapter. Syme argues that Pompey received the more favourable outcome overall which he attributes to the makeup and outcomes of the civil war. In death, Pompey became eulogised as the righteous defender of the Republic[78]. Consequently, the Pompeians were able to make his "the better cause" by which they "usurped the respectable garb of legality[79]." Syme suggests that Caesar's legacy was thus unfairly muddied because contemporaries reviled Caesar acting as dictator, when Pompey was actually more destructive to the "ills of the Roman state[80]. He states that contemporaries considered "his (Caesar's) rule was far worse than the violent and illegal domination of Pompeius" whereby its existence made "the present unbearable, the future hopeless."[81] While superficially rejecting pro-Caesarian sentiments, this passage actually builds a stronger and less-idealised portrayal of Caesar and his legacy. Thus, Caesar 'the dictator' was slain for what he was, not what he might become: a god[82]. Caesar's assassination forever altered his legacy and he became a god and myth in death thus "passing into the realm of history into literature and legend, declamation and propaganda"[83]. Here, Syme believes that the righteousness of the Pompeians shifted onto Caesar. Posterity condemned the acts of the 'Liberators' as worse than a crime: a folly[84].

Syme's interpretation is problematic because contemporaries were divided on whether Pompey's cause was righteous. The 'oligarchy' certainly saw things this way, but they were a minority which Syme admits[85]. Most the senate wished to avoid civil war. This was their priority. Thus, their decision to follow Pompey to Macedonia was not necessarily indicative of their commitment to his cause. Furthermore, the suggestion that the 'Liberators' used this 'garb of legality' to justify assassinating Caesar is based on a hostile reading of the evidence. An equally convincing reading might suggest that Caesar's assassination was a reaction to

[78] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 51.

[79] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 51.

[80] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 316. "But Pompeius was sinister and ambitious. That *princeps* did not cure, but only aggravated, the ills of the Roman state… Not only that. The whole career of Pompeius was violent and illicit, from the day when the youth of twenty-three raised a private army, through special commands abroad and political compacts at home, devised to subvert or suspend the constitution, down to his third consulate and the power he held by force and lost in war. His murders and his treacheries were not forgotten". See also: R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 50-1. "Pompeius had been little better (than Caesar), if at all, than his younger and more active rival, a spurious and disquieting champion of legitimate authority when men recalled the earlier career and inordinate ambition of the Sullan partisan who had first defied and then destroyed the senate's rule."

[81] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 56.

[82] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 56. See also: F.E. Adcock, The Cambridge Ancient History, IX, 724.

[83] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 53.

[84] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 57.

[85] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 47. "As the artful motion of a Caesarian tribune had revealed, an overwhelming majority in the senate, nearly four hundred against twenty-two, wished both dynasts to lay down their extraordinary commands. A rash and factious minority prevailed."

desperate circumstances. As Syme suggested, Caesar's dictatorship made for a bleak future, nevertheless, this does not equate to Pompey's cause becoming righteous in comparison.

Summary

Syme's *Roman Revolution* raised legitimate questions about the interpretation of the late republic and principate. He swept away mythic interpretations of Caesar and challenged Augustus' positive representation and thereby opened fresh avenues for historical inquiry. His frank writing style frequently offers important reconstructions, either previously unconsidered or ignored[86].

However, Syme adhered to equally traditional (and questionable) readings of the late republic. He firmly rejects Mommsen's overall reconstruction of the Republic as "too simple to be historical"[87], but follows several of Mommsen's Pompeian paradigms. Even Syme's original historical methodology is paradoxical. Although he opens new avenues of historical inquiry, his methodology was deliberately selective. Syme chose to focus on particular social/political groups in history, which yielded his desired results. Yet, he thereafter imposes the results of this inquiry onto the entire period. Syme was equally selective with his reading of the ancient evidence. By recreating Asinius Pollio, and reading Sallust and Tacitus in an idiosyncratic way, he could make Caesar into a late republican hero[88], and Pompey its enemy. This corresponds to several of Syme's historical forebears, despite his radically different motive. The presence of these methodological issues reduces the value of *The Roman Revolution's* countless insightful points, which are disharmonious to Syme's intentions. Yet, this has not prevented the work from being influential and it continues today to provide the basis for re-evaluations of both the late republic and early principate.

6.3. H.H. Scullard

H. H. Scullard's *From the Gracchi to Nero*[89] is a detailed narrative history of Rome's late republic and early principate periods. It deals with events from the middle of the second century BC to the middle of the first century AD. Scullard's work was written and published in 1959

[86] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 59. "The Liberators knew what they were about. Honourable men grasped the assassin's dagger to slay a Roman aristocrat, a friend and a benefactor, for better reasons than that. They stood, not merely for the traditions and the institutions of the Free State, but very precisely for the dignity and the interests of their own order. Liberty and the Laws are high-sounding words. They will often be rendered, on a cool estimate, as privilege and vested interests."

[87] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 47. "The conquest of Gaul, the war against Pompeius and the establishment of the Dictatorship of Caesar are events that move in a harmony so swift and sure as to appear pre-ordained; and history has sometimes been written as though Caesar set the tune from the beginning, in the knowledge that monarchy was the panacea for the world's ills, and with the design to achieve it by armed force. Such a view is too simple to be historical."

[88] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 54. "This extreme simplification of long and diverse ages of history seems to suggest that Caesar alone of contemporary Roman statesmen possessed either a wide vision of the future or a singular and elementary blindness to the present. But this is only a Caesar of myth or rational construction, a lay-figure set up to point a contrast with Pompeius or Augustus... as though Pompeius, the conqueror of the East and of every continent, did not exploit for his own vanity the resemblance to Alexander in warlike fame and even in bodily form. Caesar was a truer Roman than either of them."

[89] H.H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen & Co. Ltd (London, 1959).

and immediately became a popular point of reference for students: its target audience. It received new life in 1980 when the fifth edition published by Routledge press ensured the longevity of its foundational influence on another generation of scholars.

The work is principally prosopographical. Like Syme, Scullard considered the 'oligarchy' crucial to understanding the Roman past and instilled this throughout his work. His literary approach is clear and unembellished which suits its intended audience (students). Its directness makes it valuable for analysis for this thesis because it demonstrates the propagation of Mommsen's anti-Pompeian historiography.

Scullard's Pompey

On the surface, Scullard's history deals with Pompey in an even-handed manner. His work lacks the blatant disdain toward Pompey which is a feature of earlier studies. Pompey is not criticised for executing Carbo, and his decision to execute Brutus after his surrender[90] is treated with impartiality. This is because Scullard's disapproval of Pompey was not founded on his political errors. Instead, Scullard practiced a reductionist approach wherein the fundamental characteristics of each man, great or otherwise, were condensed and then preserved into a basic character profile. Thus, *From the Gracchi to Nero* highlights how Scullard adapted common preconceptions of Rome's key personas.

While Scullard admits Pompey's achievements were great, he measures his character in the shadow of Caesar. This is a conventional approach for attacking Pompey's character among scholars and Scullard's work reflects their methodology, as his portrayal of Pompey is increasingly negative from the moment that he labelled Pompey's achievements 'great'.

Later in the work, Scullard draws a much more negative picture of Pompey. He suggests that Pompey was not a gifted politician calling him 'inexperienced'. He adds that Pompey did not take advantage and dominate the Roman political scene, but still wanted recognition of his greatness[91]. This resembles Mommsen's paradigms of Pompey's 'ineptitude', 'vanity', and 'weakness', which was thereafter adapted by Gelzer and Syme[92]. The ancient evidence does not support these views[93]. These views are problematic because Pompey's reliance on political allies to achieve and then maintain political dominance does not equate to political impotence. Rather, it exemplifies Pompey's astute political instincts, insofar as he identifies and utilises

[90] H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, 85-6. "…(Pompey) went north against Brutus, whom he besieged in Mutina; after Brutus has surrendered, Pompey had him put to death, perhaps being uncertain whether to treat him as a citizen or enemy."

[91] H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, 111-2. "His (Pompey's) motive was not fear, but probably the lack of desire to take control; he was at heart a constitutionalist, and though a great administrator, he lacked experience of political life at Rome. He wanted recognition of his greatness more than the hazards of a dictator's life."

[92] T. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. 4, 492; M. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 151-2; R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 33.

[93] See: Cic. *Sest.* 15; Diod. Sic. 38.10; Val. Max. 8.15.8; Vell. Pat. 2.33.3; Plut. *Pomp*. 1.3; *Sert.* 27.3; App. *Bell. Civ*. 1.13.115; 2.11.87.

his contemporaries' abilities to achieve his goals. This holds true irrespective of subsequent events whereby Pompey was defeated by Caesar.

Scullard develops this portrayal throughout the work. Pompey receives praise for his achievements but these are always conditioned by direct comparison to Caesar. The most significant example of this occurs after Scullard's account of Pompey's death, the timing of which is purposeful. Scullard comments that Pompey's "gifts as a soldier and administrator raised him high above his contemporaries" and that this "made him a worthy opponent of Caesar"[94]. Ultimately, he concludes that Pompey lacked the final spark of genius that set Caesar apart[95]. It is clear that Scullard's decision to compare Pompey and Caesar's careers had two roles; namely, to subordinate Pompey, and to elevate Caesar's greatness.

Pompey's subordination to Caesar is absolute and Scullard's opinion unmistakable throughout this passage. However, there is more to be said for what this passage reveals about Scullard's methodology. Scullard's choice of vocabulary reveals his determinist reading of the late republic. In particular, his comment that Pompey "was a worthy opponent of Caesar"[96] illustrates how he prefigured the ancient record through hindsight. It implies that Pompey's pre-destined role was to challenge Caesar and ultimately lose. In Scullard's eyes, Pompey's greatness allowed him to reach an elevated position, and, this consequently allowed Caesar's genius to prove the telling difference between the two. This sense of fate and necessity is what drives Scullard's negative portrayal of Pompey, as he was always 'destined' to succumb to a greater man.

It is unfair to treat Scullard alone harshly for this methodological approach when it was the common view of most scholars throughout mid-twentieth century scholarship. In his defence, Scullard did not intend to portray Pompey as a weak or incapable individual, unlike most of his scholarly forebears. He frequently praises Pompey. However, the defining aspect of Scullard's work is its adherence to the then widely-accepted determinist reading of Roman history whereby Caesar's genius was fundamental for change within Roman society. This theoretical framework shaped the development and survival of negative Pompeian portrayals, even within scholarly contexts that claim impartiality.

From the Gracchi to Nero embodies the passive manifestation of Mommsen's questionable historical Pompeian construct. While Scullard's commentary on the late republic is brief, its influence is immeasurable. His decision to reiterate accepted norms exemplifies how widespread this idea of Pompey was at the time. Its continued use embodies the continuity and longevity of this stance and demonstrates how it has influenced subsequent generations of Roman scholars.

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[94] H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, 139.

[95] H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, 139. "His (Pompey's) gifts as soldier and administrator raised him high above his contemporaries and made him a worthy opponent of Caesar; he lacked only that final spark of genius that set Caesar apart."

[96] H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, 139.

Chapter Seven: Later Twentieth Century Approaches to Pompey

Along with the advent of post-modern thought, and the subsequent crisis of knowledge and 'facts', scholarly practices shifted throughout the middle and late twentieth century and demanded increased specialisation from academics. In late republican Roman studies, narrative histories consequently decreased in popularity, because a multitude of works in this genre already existed and they were also deemed to lack critical acumen. This popular form of discourse was replaced by 'political biographies' of prominent late republican figures. While Caesar and Cicero were most popular, because of their extensive literary legacies, Pompey also received extensive attention from modern historians.

Pompey's treatment within late-twentieth century political biographies is diverse, which undoubtedly originates from his enigmatic persona in the ancient evidence[1]. In some works Pompey is villainous and his sole purpose is to succumb to Caesar's genius. In other works, he is the republic's last tragic defender. However, neither of these extremes represents the Pompey of the ancient evidence. Instead, they are either the adoption of Mommsenian constructs of Pompey, or, redemptive reactions against these tropes. None of the late twentieth scholarship cites Mommsen's *Romische Geschichte*, which was published one-hundred and thirty years prior. Nonetheless, it is possible to see how Mommsen's prejudices, having taken hold in the works of his successors, remained an integral part of the narrative in the intervening period. To this end, every representation speaks volumes about the complexity of Pompey's legacy, both ancient and modern. Each account is thus valuable, because it reveals aspects of Mommsen's Pompey have survived and how they were perpetuated.

The ensuing analysis takes three English-language biographies of Pompey, which were published between 1979 and 1981. These are: John Leach's *Pompey the Great* (1978), Robin Seager's *Pompey: A Political Biography* (1979), and Peter Greenhalgh's two-volume work *Pompey: The Roman Alexander* (1980) and *Pompey: The Republican Prince* (1981). Each represents the various ways Pompey was interpreted throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s. They also have distinct methods, focuses, and perspectives, which sharpens the contrast between each work and makes them useful for comparison.

7.1. John Leach

John Leach was trained at the University of Oxford and cites D.L Stockton as a primary influence on his approach to history. Rather than pursuing a career in academia, Leach became a schoolteacher in Oxford. Leach prioritised the ancient evidence above modern scholarship,

[1] Anthony Marshall laments this in his reviews of Leach and Seager's biographies of Pompey. See: Anthony J. Marshall, review of *Pompey the Great*, by J. Leach; *Pompey: A Political Biography*, by Robin Seager; *Mark Antony: A Biography*, by Eleanor Goltz Huzar', *Phoenix*, Vol. 35, No. 3, Classical Association of Canada (1981), 281-5.

an approach he ascribed to his role as a teacher of ancient history[2]. Nonetheless, Leach's *Pompey the Great* shows signs of significant modern scholarly influence because the judgements are inconsistent with the ancient tradition. This resulted in a mixed portrayal of Pompey, particularly after his break with Caesar.

Leach's Pompey

Leach earnestly attempts to present both the positive and negative elements of Pompey's character throughout the work. There are numerous examples of this, though one from an early section of Leach's work is noteworthy:

> And yet here was a young soldier who had not even entered the Senate; his family was not long established in Roman politics... like his father he scorned traditional methods of advancement... He had taken advantage of a time of upheaval and civil war, when irregularities were justified on the grounds of expedience, and he had the foresight to make himself indispensable to the victor of that war and the most powerful man in the Roman world.[3]

This passage embodies the multi-faceted nature of Leach's Pompey. There is, without question, a sense of awe toward Pompey's achievements in the face of adversity. Pompey's ruthless ambitiousness and political aptitude are commended. Leach's choice of vocabulary enriches the text and pushes particular readings. Sections of the passage impartially develop Pompey's portrayal; Pompey 'justified' his choices and his 'foresight' forged an indispensable role for himself. However, Leach does not hold back from injecting a manipulative and callous Pompey into his text: Pompey 'takes advantage' of the upheaval, for example, and there are shades of the 'cruel' trope. Furthermore, Pompey 'scorned' traditional methods of advancement, and his 'power-mongering' tendencies operate in an environment of political anarchy. Leach obviously wishes to project an image of Pompey that remains faithful to the ancient evidence, but his emphasis on Pompey's alleged 'cruel' and 'power-mongering' tendencies goes beyond it, especially with respect to Carbo. This suggests that Leach approached this subject with a preconception of Pompey which dictates his portrayal despite his good intentions.

Leach outlines the events around Carbo's execution, before actually recording Pompey's role in the proceedings. His contextualisation of the events is unfavourable to Pompey, as it underlines his culpability in the execution and perpetuates the misreading of the *teenage butcher* trope. Yet Leach's portrayal of Pompey is thereafter balanced, which highlights how his predisposition to anti-Pompeian narratives shapes his reading of key sections of the ancient evidence. Leach emphasises the deep impression Pompey made on his contemporaries when as a twenty-four-year-old commander, who was not yet old enough to enter the senate, he executed a man who had thrice been consul[4]. There are several issues with Leach's use of the

[2] John Leach, *Pompey the Great*, Croom Helm (London, 1978), 9. "If there are few overt references to modern studies of the period, this is because I share the belief of many teachers of Ancient History that it is by an informed study of the original sources that the student can obtain the clearest understanding of the life and people of the Classical world."

[3] John Leach, *Pompey*, 33.

[4] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 29.

ancient and modern evidence in this passage. Firstly, Leach recognised that this negative reading survives in modern works with anti-Pompeian sentiments, but does not cite or analyse the modern sources themselves. Secondly, he refers to Valerius Maximus' description of Pompey as the teenage butcher[5], but does not mention the rest of the passage which offers a much more positive image of Pompey than the epithet alone suggests[6]. Leach somewhat balances the scales by referencing the 'favourable counter-propaganda', stating that "Pompey's firm control over his soldiers, his leniency towards Sicilians who had shown support for the Marian cause, his refusal to order a search for the less important Marians trapped on the island, and his restraint and freedom from corruption in his dealings with the Sicilian cities"[7]. Unfortunately, he omits any references to the sources and their relative value. Finally, Leach refers to the incident later in the book at the moment of Pompey's execution of M. Brutus[8] as an example of how Pompey's enemies used the execution of Carbo as a means to blacken his character. Here he alleges that the representation of Pompey as cruel and perfidious was the result of hostile reporting[9]. Furthermore, Leach firmly rejects the 'cruel' trope in his account of the Sertorian war when he emphasises Pompey's praiseworthy decision to burn a number of incriminating letters[10] unread and also execute Perperna[11] immediately. In his opinion, this saved Rome from further proscriptions and political purges.

In summary, Leach's account of Pompey's early career is positive, if uneven. This differs from nineteenth and early twentieth century approaches. This stems from Leach's approach to the evidence, wherein he prioritises the ancient sources over modern accounts. Unfortunately, its execution in the work is flawed. Without reference to or analysis of the ancient sources, Leach's treatment lacks incision. His treatment of the Valerius Maximus passage demonstrates the problem best. The result is a puzzling portrayal of Pompey which reflects the inconsistencies of the evidence but doesn't explain them. It thus becomes apparent that, despite Leach's best efforts, modern prejudices have seeped into his work. His reading of key parts of the evidence highlights how the dominant anti-Pompeian narrative affects not just readings of the late republic, but also readings of the evidence itself.

Leach goes on to praise Pompey's conduct in the wars against the pirates and Mithridates. He states that 'Pompey's strategy in the war against the pirates was deceptively simple in concept and brilliantly executed'[12]. In the introduction to the work's next chapter, titled *Conqueror of*

[5] Val. Max. 6.2.8.
[6] Val. Max. 6.2.4. See Discussion at section **1.4.**
[7] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 29.
[8] Plut. *Pomp.* 16.
[9] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 42-3.
[10] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 52. "After the battle news was brought to Pompey that Perperna had been captured hiding in a thicket, and that in an attempt to save his own skin he was offering to produce some incriminating letters from several consulars at Rome, which he had found among Sertorius papers. With this information a number of secret Marian sympathisers could be uncovered."
[11] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 52. "It is to Pompey's eternal credit that he refused even to see Perperna, but ordered his immediate execution and burnt the letters unread."
[12] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 70.

the East: The New Empire 66-62, Leach attacks modern accounts stating that they have perhaps lost sight of the full significance of the campaign.[13] He highlights the political and military magnitude of Pompey's successes after which Rome's most dangerous enemy since Hannibal was defeated and vast territories were absorbed into her empire. Leach also emphasises the similarities between Pompey and Alexander's achievements, reflecting the reconstruction favoured by Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*[14].

In describing the lead-up to the civil war, Leach asserts that Caesar was the aggressor during the political tussle with Pompey in the late fifties. He also defends Pompey's law in 52, which mandated an interval of five years between magistracies and provincial commands and stated that candidates for office must submit their nomination before the assembly in person. This consequently stripped Caesar of his exemption from the requirement to return to Rome if he wanted to stand for the consulship after the termination of his Gallic command. Leach defends this action, stating that Pompey's hasty amendment, which reinforced Caesar's status, proved that it was an accidental oversight[15]. He adds that Pompey was enacting a senatorial decree from the previous year, arguing that it "can hardly be counted as a deliberate attack by Pompey on Caesar."[16] Likewise, Leach later portrays the political circumstances in Rome during 50 BC even-handedly. He concludes with a defence for Pompey's stubbornness against Curio's demands, stating that "Pompey's own position had been under attack and he was fighting to maintain his supremacy."[17]

Leach's view of Pompey changes after the outbreak of the civil war. The biography signals this shift with Pompey's decision to recall two legions from Caesar in 50. Leach states that Pompey was planning for the coming conflict[18] and was taking advantage of the situation by reducing Caesar's strength[19]. He thus does not defend or justify Pompey's decision, despite its legality. Hereafter Leach's reading is increasingly negative, because he uncritically reproduces the negative testimony of select ancient evidence and reflects some Mommsenian paradigms of Pompey. For instance, Leach states that Pompey's character profoundly changed during the civil war, whereby a growing 'bitterness' and 'savagery' could be detected[20]. He dramatically refers to the wider implications of this, stating that: "the country towns of Italy, who were a year before offering prayers to his wellbeing, were now terrified of his anger and harshness"[21].

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[13] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 78. "The full significance of the campaign on which Pompey now embarked has perhaps been lost sight of in many modern accounts, with their main emphasis on political and military history."

[14] Plut. *Pomp.* 2.

J. Leach, *Pompey*, 78. "Furthermore, as Alexander's conquest had been, so was Pompey's to be a journey of exploration, to extend the boundaries of knowledge in several fields, and to combine the interests of power politics with those of scientific research."

[15] Suet. *Caes.* 26.1; 28.3.

[16] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 160. See also: James Sabben-Clare, *Caesar and Roman* Politics *60-50* BC, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 1971), 320.

[17] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 167.

[18] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 166.

[19] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 164.

[20] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 184.

[21] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 184.

Finally, he references Pompey's allusions to the resurrection of Sullan terror[22]. This shift reflects Leach's belief that Curio was the important political figure of 50 BC[23]. Moreover, he states that both the *Optimates* and Pompey had underestimated Curio's political independence and abilities[24]. While Leach subsequently defends Pompey's stance against Curio[25], he aligns his reading of this period with Cicero, who was sceptical of Pompey's intentions and feared his diminishing moral character. Leach then questions Pompey's general competence during the war. He first queries Pompey's economic management because he fell into heavy debt[26]. However, Leach's criticism is perplexing as it is unsupported by the ancient evidence. Moreover, it contradicts Leach's earlier praise for Pompey's abilities as a statesman. Leach hereafter states that Pompey contributed to the greater part of his own misfortune throughout the civil war[27]. He veils his criticism of Pompey's military capacity in the civil war by including contemporary concerns with Pompey's control over his colleagues, who doubted their commander's competence[28]. This, along with Pompey's decision to reject Caesar's peace overtures, highlights his vanity, delusional self-overestimation, and inability to accept a superior. Leach seals the portrayal of Pompey's decay with his failure to achieve victory at Dyrrachium[29]. Leach's inconsistent portrayal of Pompey in this period reflects the ambiguity of the ancient record, but also his innate preconceptions of this period which were determined by his foundational understanding of late republican history.

In his conclusion, Leach represents Pompey as a man defined by good and bad traits. His work is not apologist and thus does not overstate Pompey's good qualities. Leach concedes that Pompey had imperfections, which impacted his abilities as a statesman, politician and general, but stresses that the period between Sulla and Caesar's dictatorships was understood as "the era of Pompey the Great."[30] Leach also emphasises the positive aspects of Pompey character over the negative traits. Thus, Pompey's vanity[31], coldness[32], and fear of losing supremacy[33], are given a subsidiary role in comparison to his compassion, honesty, and modesty[34]. Most importantly, Leach highlights the complex nature of Pompey's character which is "hard to

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[22] Cic. *Att.* 8.11-16 (SB 161-6) and 9.7-10 (SB 174-7)

[23] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 163.

[24] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 163.

[25] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 166.

[26] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 188.

[27] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 188.

[28] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 196.

[29] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 198.

[30] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 213.

See also: Cic. *Att*. 11.6 (SB 217); Sall. *Hist*. 2.16-17; Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 1.98-157 and 9.186-214.

[31] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 211. "...he came early to the conclusion that he was a man out of the ordinary, a Roman Alexander, who could earn by his services to his country a position of honour and prestige that was also quite out of the ordinary. This is well exemplified by his love of titles and outward display; his frequent references in his own speeches to his own achievements, and his reputation for personal pride and vanity."

[32] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 212.

[33] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 212.

[34] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 213. "Pompey was a leader who combined humanity with integrity and efficiency, capable of deep and lasting friendships, ready to forgive offences, less ruthless than many of his peers, and at least aware of the dangers and responsibilities of power."

understand, sometimes infuriating, often admirable."[35] Yet, Leach's conclusion outlines an inescapable issue with his work, namely that his rejection of modern authorities is superficial. This was best exemplified during the civil war, where Leach perpetuated anti-Pompeian tropes which originated from the prejudices of his forebears and lead back to Mommsen. These included, Pompey's 'political ineptitude', 'vanity', 'delusion', and 'cruelty'. These readings stem from Leach's conception of the late republic and remain despite his effort to remain faithful to the ancient sources and avoid too much modern commentary. While his characterisation is more measured than others, mostly due to his refusal to allow Caesar to dominate the story, the result is confusing and inconsistent because the Pompey of the civil war period does not reflect the Pompey of the sixties and fifties.

7.2. Robin Seager

Robin Seager studied Classics at the University of Oxford and later pursued a career in academia, spending his entire career at the University of Liverpool. Seager has written and published numerous works on the late republic and early imperial periods, as well as contributing to several other publications. Seager's *Pompey: A Political Biography* was first published in 1979 and received mixed reviews[36]. Despite this, it became the most influential biography of Pompey in English. Unlike Leach, Seager cites modern scholarly sources throughout his biography. This makes it simpler to trace his ideological and methodological influences, which typically originate from German schools of thought. In the preface, Seager cites Matthias Gelzer as a major influence[37]. This is evident, as he references both Gelzer's biographies on multiple occasions. Unsurprisingly, his work thus reflects Gelzer's pro-Caesarian reading of the late republic, and this in turn deeply affects his interpretation of Pompey.

Seager's biography of Pompey was not a historical reaction against Leach's *Pompey the Great*. They were published less than a year apart, which means each work was in the process of writing, editing, and publication around the same time. However, Seager directly rejected Leach's biography[38] in a footnote which was added after the work's first publication. This can be found in later reprints of Seager's biography of Pompey.

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[35] J. Leach, *Pompey*, 213.

[36] Marshall and Starr offer positive reviews, while Stockton and Bachrach are critical of Seager's approach. Anthony J. Marshall, Review of *Pompey the Great,* by John Leach; *Pompey: A Political Biography* by Robin Seager; and *Mark Antony: A Biography* by Eleanor Goltz Huzar", in *Phoenix* 35, no.3. (1981): 281-5; Chester G. Starr, Review of, *Pompey: A Political Biography*, by Robin Seager. *The American Historical* Review 85, no. 4 (1980): 864-5; D.L. Stockton, Review of *Pompey: A Political Biography*, by Robin Seager. *The Classical Review* 30, no. 2 (1980): 248-50; Bernard S. Bachrach, Review of *Pompey: A Political Biography*, by Robin Seager. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 454, Sage Publications (1981): 223-4.

[37] Robin Seager, *Pompey: A Political Biography*, Basil Blackwell (Oxford, 1979), IX. "Scholars and students have had at their disposal only foreign works: in German the admirable study by the greatest of all historians of republican Rome, Matthias Gelzer…"

[38] Robin Seager, IX. (Footnote 1) "Since this book, and these words, were written, there has appeared J. Leach, *Pompey the Great* (London, 1978), which does little to improve the situation."

Seager's Pompey

Seager manipulates the historical record against Pompey from the work's beginning. His first chapter in *Pompey: a Political Biography* outlines Strabo's (Pompey's father) political career and achievements, which deliberately introduces Pompey as the son of one of Rome's most maligned political figures[39]. Seager thus implies that the adage, 'like father like son', reflects Pompey's similarities to his father. However, Seager eventually concedes that Pompey learnt from Strabo's failings and that this ultimately prepared him for political life in late republic Rome.

Unlike Leach, Seager criticises all aspects of Pompey's involvement in the Sullan civil war. He stresses Pompey's dependence on political support during his early years in politics and highlights Carbo's role in his rise to political prominence. This foreshadows Pompey's later betrayal of Carbo and intensifies his treachery[40]. Moreover, Seager uses dramatic language to heighten Pompey's reprehensible decisions. Carbo is presented as prey[41] captured by a ruthless predator that lacks basic human compassion[42]. Seager reiterates Pompey's cruel, cold, and treacherous aspects, commenting that "Pompeius was never to show any hesitation in betraying old friends when the occasion demanded."[43] He thus adapts a familiar anti-Pompeian framework, which prefigures Pompey's later treachery against Cicero and Caesar. Seager is sceptical of Pompey's actions throughout his early career and manipulates the text to tarnish his persona. For example, he frames Carbo's 'proscribed' status only after labelling Carbo 'a victim' of Pompey's decisions. He asserts that any defence for Pompey's cruelty based on Sulla's domination is flimsy, because it only applies to his execution of Carbo and not the countless other men Pompey was ordered to execute[44]. Seager reiterates this when Pompey executes Domitius, where he again dismisses proscription as a valid defence and asserts that the wrongful act had subsequent 'political repercussions'. Seager's reading ignores aspects of Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*, namely its negative portrayal of Carbo and its assertion that 'Pompey suffered as many as possible to escape detection'[45]. Instead, he follows the modern tradition which chose to accept the interpretations of Oppius[46] and Helvius Mancia[47]. Lastly, Seager concludes the chapter with a general comment on Pompey's early political standing and character, revealing Seager's prejudices against Pompey. He states that Pompey was a Sullan

[39] Robin Seager, *Pompey*, 5. "Two motives are cited for this popular hatred of Strabo: his avarice and his persistent refusal to come to the aid of the state in its hour of need."

[40] Robin Seager, *Pompey*, 7.

[41] Robin Seager, *Pompey*, 9. "He (Pompey) was invested with praetorian *imperium* by a decree of the senate and sent in pursuit of Carbo, who had fled, when the resistance to Sulla collapsed, first to Africa, then to Sicily. The chase was soon over."

[42] Robin Seager, *Pompey*, 9. "Carbo was captured, and despite his pleas for mercy he was put to death and his head sent to Sulla."

[43] Robin Seager, *Pompey*, 9.

[44] Robin Seager, *Pompey*, 9-10. "He (Carbo) is described as consul at the time of his death, which at least serves to date that event before the end of 82, but, unlike others among Pompeius early victims, he is also labelled, by sources concerned to justify Pompeius behaviour, as one of the proscribed."

[45] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.5.

[46] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.4-5.

[47] Val. Max. 6.2.8.

during his early career, albeit an "ambitious, arrogant and unmanageable Sullan"[48]. This casts Pompey as a dangerous supporter of Sulla, which is itself charged with negative connotations.

Seager's account for the middle section of Pompey's career recognises his achievements[49], but subtly manipulates how they are presented. For example, Seager frames Pompey's achievements against the pirates as 'exaggerated'[50], stating that contemporaries were hyperbolic when they claimed "that no pirate was ever seen in the Mediterranean again."[51] Moreover, he emphasises Pompey's subsequent clash with Metellus in Crete as a costly episode which diminished his political standing and marred his expedition against the pirates. Seager was equally cynical of the Gabinian law, which promoted Pompey to the command. He stressed that the Senate almost universally opposed the bill and that Caesar only supported it to win popular support[52]. This reading is supported by non-contemporary ancient evidence[53], but this does not explain Seager's framework which accentuated how unpopular Pompey was with the conservative senators at this time and ignores his popularity with the Roman people[54].

Seager's biography is equally unfavourable for the later portion of Pompey's career. The one exemption is Pompey's legislative actions in 52, which are fairly treated. Here Seager outwardly rejects the idea that these laws were a method to undermine Caesar's political position[55]. However, he later contradicts himself and states that Pompey's aim throughout the fifties was to prevent Caesar becoming his equal[56]. Therefore, Seager frames Caesar and Curio's actions as ingenious, because their political machinations created Pompey's uncomfortable political situation in late 50 and early 49 and forced him to defend his primacy.

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[48] Robin Seager, *Pompey*, 13. "In 80 and for a further decade Pompeius was a Sullan: an ambitious, arrogant and unmanageable one, it is true, but nevertheless, for what the label is worth, a Sullan."

[49] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 52. "The most elaborate aspect of Pompeius settlement of the East was his organisation of Pontus. Here he displayed all his administrative skill."

See also: R. Seager, *Pompey*, 55. "Nevertheless it was not only the Roman state that was to profit from Pompeius conquests. Honours were heaped upon him in unprecedented measure... But more than wealth Pompeius had acquired *clientelae* on a scale hitherto unwitnessed."

[50] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 39.

[51] Flor. *Epit.* 1.41.15. Pompey himself never claimed this, as argued in K. Welch, *Magnus Pius: Sextus Pompeius and the Transformation of the Roman Republic*, The Classical Press of Wales (Swansea, 2012).

[52] The bill was clearly popular among the common populace. See: Cicero, *leg.Man.* 44. "Do you believe that there is anywhere in the whole world any place so desert that the renown of that day has not reached it, when the whole Roman people, the forum being crowded, and all the adjacent temples from which this place can be seen being completely filled,—the whole Roman people, I say, demanded Cnaeus Pompeius alone as their general in the war in which the common interests of all nations were at stake?"

[53] Plut. *Pomp.* 25. "When these provisions of the law were read in the assembly, the people received them with excessive pleasure, but the chief and most influential men of the senate thought that such unlimited and absolute power, while it was beyond the reach of envy, was yet a thing to be feared. Therefore they all opposed the law, with the exception of Caesar…"

[54] Cic. *Q.F.* 1.2.15. (SB 2) "Our free constitution is a total loss, so much so that C. Cato, a young harum-scarum but a Roman citizen and a Cato, had a narrow escape with his life when he addressed a public meeting and called Pompey 'our unofficial Dictator.' He wanted to charge Gabinius with bribery and for several days the Praetors would not let themselves be approached or give him a hearing. It was really touch and go with him. You can see from this what the state of the whole commonwealth is like."

[55] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 148.

[56] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 152-3.

Moreover, Seager states that their actions emphasised Pompey's vanity[57], which further perpetuates Mommsenian tropes. He thereafter highlights Pompey's deceitfulness with his decision to recall two legions from Caesar[58] and foolishness for claiming military superiority over Caesar[59]. In addition, Seager questions Pompey's leadership throughout the war, and stresses both his Sullan aspirations[60] and mental instability[61]. Hereafter, he understates Pompey's victory at Dyrrachium[62] and instead focuses on his inability to bring the war to a successful end. Finally, Seager concludes that Pompey was undone by his need to be liked, as he crumbled under the mounting pressure of his colleagues, who wished to fight Caesar at Pharsalus. This culminated in Pompey's 'cracked' nerves at Pharsalus[63] as he was defeated by a superior general. Seager hereafter emphasises Caesar's noble restraint during the war, rather than focus on Pompey's plight. He thus demonstrates his blatantly pro-Caesar reading of the period.

In his concluding chapter, Seager offers a cynical view of Pompey's life and legacy. He states that Pompey always aimed at supremacy and was fortunate to have died before his 'good intentions', namely saving the republic, could be put to the test[64]. He thus insinuates that Pompey would never have relinquished his control. Seager thereafter suggests that Pompey's legacy could only have been positive if he had died from the fever which struck him in 50[65]. In short, Pompey's conflict with Caesar was always going to end badly. Unsurprisingly, Pompey's vices are henceforth the predominant focus of this chapter. Seager cites Pompey's inability to accept an equal[66], his lust for power, his conceited and hypocritical nature, and his deviousness[67]. More importantly, Seager suggests that Pompey provoked crises to maintain his power and prestige, as these were the only times that his assistance was required. This

[57] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 157. "Pompeius made an error which only his vanity can explain: he allowed himself to believe that all those men who had flocked to celebrate his return to health would come forward with equal enthusiasm if he called upon them to fight."

[58] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 157. "Pompeius, however, played a trick on Caesar, choosing this moment to ask for the return of the legion he had loaned him, so that in practice Caesar lost two legions and Pompeius none. Too underline the deceit, the men were never shipped to the East, but were retained in southern Italy to await developments."

[59] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 164. "Pompeius claim to military superiority, if it was not simply a foolish and short-sighted lie to boost public morale, is intelligible only on the assumption that he expected to have much more time at his disposal to make his preparations and assemble his forces."

[60] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 176. "At the end of February Cicero claimed that Pompeius, together with many of his followers, had long been hankering after domination on the Sullan model."

[61] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 177.

[62] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 181.

[63] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 182.

[64] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 186. Interestingly, Seager cites Syme as the origin of this idea: R. Syme, *Roman Revolution*, 51.

[65] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 186. See also: Vell. Pat. *Hist.* 2.48.2, Sen. *Dial*. 6.20.4, Juv. 10.283ff. and their contrast in the accounts of Caesar, cf. and App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.86.363.

[66] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 187.

[67] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 188. "But Pompeius character did not make matters easy. His conceit and hypocrisy inspired resentment, his deviousness bred distrust."

highlights Seager's predisposition to modern anti-Pompeian paradigms[68]. It further strengthens Seager's connection with Mommsen's 'treacherous', 'vain', 'power-mongering', and 'foolish' Pompey. However, Seager's portrait is not entirely negative. He does point out that Pompey always resigned commands when they were no longer necessary, and that his hunger for power was moderated by an "outward appearance of goodwill."[69] Yet even here there is a hint of hypocrisy.

The work's final paragraph is crucial, as it outlines the fundamental difficulty which Pompey poses the historian. Seager rightfully states that Pompey's representation was, and is, split between two extremes which border on caricature[70]. Pompey was undoubtedly more complex than either end of this spectrum admits. Yet, he is recreated as a 'cardboard cut-out hero' because this reality is easier to accept than the awkward and elusive figure, who looms large in Roman history. Seager concludes that when we accept this cut-out figure, Pompey ceases to matter as even a symbol of a bygone era[71]. He thus outlines the problems of the ancient evidence and the issues they cause modern scholarship. Inadvertently, Seager also describes how modern readings, including his own, fall into the trap of reading Pompey's character according to Mommsen's more straightforward narrative of the late Republic.

Seager's *Pompey: a Political Biography* best typifies how modern anti-Pompeian constructs survived into the twentieth century. Moreover, its dominance among modern biographies of Pompey highlights how this prejudice remains engrained in common understandings of the late republic. Seager's work is also helpful, as it traces its influence to Gelzer, whose seminal biography of Pompey accepted Mommsen's constructs of Pompey.

7.3. Peter Greenhalgh

Peter Greenhalgh studied at Cambridge University after receiving a scholarship at King's College in 1964. He published several works throughout his academic career, but is most famous for his two-part biography of Pompey. The first volume, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander* (1980), outlines Pompey's career until his return to Rome after the Mithridatic war. The second volume, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, covers the later part of Pompey's career and summarises his legacy. This work differs from its peers because it is redemptive and thus challenges anti-Pompeian paradigms, but specifically states its antipathy to Seager's anti-Pompeian stance[72]. However, its approach is equally as prejudiced as its modern counterparts, except it favours Pompey over Caesar. Greenhalgh's biography is also defined by its writing

[68] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 188. Seager supports this view with reference to both M. Gelzer (*Pompeius*, 140, 159) and C. Meier (*RPA* 143f, 289f), but doesn't include ancient evidence.

[69] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 187.

[70] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 189. "In death Pompeius became a symbolic figure, crudely ambiguous: failed pretender to sole dominion of the Roman world, or martyr in the cause of *libertas* and *auctoritas senatus*. Both images border on caricature..."

[71] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 189.

[72] Peter Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince,* Weidenfeld and Nicholson (London, 1981), 308.

style, which is both accessible and 'colourful'[73]. Greenhalgh cites Sir Frank Adcock as the progenitor for this approach to biographical writing, which is dictated by accessibility[74] and 'beautiful prose'[75]. This methodology challenges both the elitist ideals which govern specialist scholarship and the historiographic practices that define the discipline[76]. Unfortunately, it shoots itself in the foot by failing to include footnotes.

Greenhalgh's Pompey

Peter Greenhalgh's *Pompey: The Roman Alexander* offers a positive portrayal of Pompey's early career. He stresses Pompey's military prowess and supports this with a flattering outline of Pompey's role[77] in the Sullan civil war. Greenhalgh rejects the traditional modern anti-Pompeian narrative concerning the Carbo incident, but with some concessions. He admits that an ancient tradition attests Pompey's cruelty[78] and that his actions caused widespread distress both politically and socially. However, he exonerates Pompey, stating that Plutarch proved he acted on Sulla's commands[79]. Moreover, he comments that Carbo's cowardice justified his execution, according to the Roman concepts of *Virtus* and *Dignitas*[80]. Despite this, Greenhalgh acknowledges that Pompey's decision to interrogate Carbo was a costly error which overshadowed his career and legacy. The interrogation made Pompey seem culpable for the execution and suggested that Pompey relished his position of authority[81]. Greenhalgh adds that the main defence for Pompey's interrogation - that Pompey was inquiring about the disposition of the Marian forces in Africa - is flimsy[82]. To its credit, Greenhalgh's argument carefully considered Plutarch's account rather than simply accepting the cruel portrayal. Yet, it fails to

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[73] Peter Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson (London, 1980), XII. "…I learnt from his (Adcock's) lively wit and sparkling prose that history which is worth writing at all is worth trying to write well."

[74] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, XI. "In reconstructing Pompey's life I have tried not to write for the academic at the expense of the general reader or for the general reader at the expense of the academic. To compartmentalize readers of historical biography by this literary apartheid has always seemed to me rather artificial and offensive. There are of course some highly technical writings so esoteric that only specialists are likely to read them, but even these should not be illiterate or more boring than they can help, and certainly biographies have no such excuse."

[75] P. Greenhalgh, Pompey: *The Roman Alexander*, XI.

[76] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, XI. "That scholarship should be regarded as a medicine which can be good only if unpalatable is a curiously puritanical hangover in a permissive age, and there is a suggestion of literary insecurity among those who profess to be serious scholars but scorn readability as somehow irrelevant or even inimical to their profession."

[77] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson (London, 1980), 21. "He (Sulla) saw in him a young man of great ability whom he could mould in his own image..." See also: P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 15, for a detailed summary of Pompey's early military successes.

[78] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 23. "A hostile tradition has it that this was not an isolated instance of cruelty on Pompey's part."

[79] Plut. *Pomp.* 10.

[80] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 23.

[81] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 23. "...even so it cannot be denied that the young inquisitor relished his authority."

[82] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 23. "The best that can be said in defence of Pompey's conduct is that he may have felt it necessary to interrogate Carbo about the strengths and dispositions of the Marian forces in Africa..."

emphasise that Pompey sent all significant prisoners to trial throughout the war[83] and that Pompey's immediate execution of Perperna[84] in the Sertorian war shows that he could adapt to different circumstances and pressures. Crucially, Greenhalgh's argument is contradictory, as it first exonerates Pompey of the charges of cruelty and thereafter admits that modern arguments which assert Pompey's cruelty have some credence. This demonstrates how Greenhalgh manufactures a pro-Pompeian perspective, despite evidence for the criticism of Pompey in the ancient sources. Greenhalgh thus perpetuates an insupportably pro-Pompey reading, which is as problematic as Mommsen's pro-Caesar reading.

Greenhalgh's biography celebrates Pompey's military successes during the middle part of his career. He uses Dio's description of Pompey's promotion to the command against the pirates to highlight Pompey and Gabinius' masterful manipulation of the crowd to gain their support[85]. However, he does not mention Dio's anti-Pompey perspective, which underpins the entire episode. Hence, Greenhalgh has interpreted this evidence without consideration of its standpoint. Thereafter he outlines Pompey's commendable conduct and achievements in the war against piracy[86]. His undertaking, for example, "would not have been brought to so rapid and permanent an end but for the enlightened clemency of the commander-in-chief."[87] This hyper-positive reading is increasingly evident in the work's subsequent chapters, which are titled: *Generalissimo in the East*, *The New Alexander*, and *The Great Settlement*. These reinforce this favourable portrayal of Pompey throughout his command in the east and culminate in Greenhalgh's description of Pompey's crowning achievement: the eastern settlement. Greenhalgh stresses that this settlement was "extremely skilful" and "the culmination of a carefully planned and coherent exercise in empire-building" which wove all these "multi-coloured threads into one coherent web on the loom of Roman interest"[88]. Moreover, it was a work of "administrative art"[89] defined by the remarkable speed with which Pompey completed it. In summary, Greenhalgh's portrayal for the middle (or peak) of Pompey's career is charged with motive. Its flowery and extravagant dialogue aims to marginalise Pompey's alleged flaws and redeem his character.

Unsurprisingly, Greenhalgh's favourable portrayal of Pompey continues in the second volume of his biography: *Pompey: The Republican Prince*. He states that Pompey was fair to Caesar with his the legislative actions in 52 and adds that there was "no sign whatsoever that Pompey ceased to trust Caesar in 52 despite the usual anachronism of the non-contemporary sources

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[83] Plut. *Pomp*. 10.
[84] Plut. *Pomp*. 20.
[85] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 81-4.
[86] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 97. "No honest assessment of Pompey's achievement in the war against the pirates can be too favourable, for all that his success attracted some small-minded and jealous criticism from lesser men. In no more than three months the maritime commerce of the Mediterranean world had been freed from near-paralysis by a remedy that was as permanent as it was immediate."
[87] P. Greenhalgh, Pompey: *The Roman Alexander*, 97.
[88] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 150.
[89] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander*, 150.

anticipating their estrangement"[90]. Greenhalgh adds that Pompey's efforts let Caesar return as consul and gave him time to adjust to the now unfamiliar political scene at Rome. Greenhalgh thus asserts that Pompey not only held faith with his 'protégé' but also cleaned the sink of Romulus for his return[91]. Finally, Greenhalgh stresses that Pompey's recall of his own legion from Caesar was not an unfriendly act as claimed by the non-contemporary sources. He justifies Pompey's decision by stating that Pompey's troops in Italy were dispersed and would thus take time to organise and that Pompey's Spanish legions would take a long time to reach Syria. Hence, Greenhalgh claims that Pompey's decision to recall the legion from Gaul was sensible, as they were battle hardened, readily accessible, and "no longer needed in Gaul"[92]. Furthermore, Greenhalgh uses these circumstances to support his portrayal of Caesar's distrust[93].

Greenhalgh determines that Caesar's actions before the civil war initiated the conflict. He cites Curio, who was acting on Caesar's command, as the primary instigator. Thus, Greenhalgh believes that Pompey and Caesar's political split occurred because Caesar increasingly distrusted his ally, as a result of his nine-year absence from Roman political life[94]. Greenhalgh also stresses that Caesar's proconsulship in Gaul reinforced his belief that the army was a general's best method to defend political power. He thus perpetuates a paranoid and alienated Caesarian depiction, which absolves Pompey of blame. Finally, he blames Curio's overtures in February 50 for their political break. He asserts that Caesar's demands, wherein Pompey must disarm first, were entirely unjustified and imbalanced. Moreover, these terms were insulting and Pompey's ensuing rage forced the majority of the senate to react satisfactorily[95]. Greenhalgh concludes that no reconciliation was hereafter possible and that Pompey was thus absolved from initiating the civil war.

Greenhalgh maintains his positive representation of Pompey during the civil war[96], calling the civil war a mutual struggle[97] and arguing that chance ultimately decided the victor[98]. This

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[90] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 90.

[91] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 92-3.

[92] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 119.

[93] He states that Caesar's propaganda misrepresented the Senate's decree as a calculated effort to weaken Pompey's political standing. See: P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 119.

[94] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 116.

[95] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 116-7.

[96] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 252. Even in defeat Greenhalgh portrays Pompey as the righteous side. "He could either stay or flee - lose life, battle and war all at once, or preserve his life in the hope of losing only the battle. Caesar says that Pompey and all his officers and men had sworn not to leave the field except in victory, but it seemed more useful if less glorious now to ride back to the camp and try to organize its defence. There were seven fresh cohorts guarding it... there might yet be a chance of salvaging the nucleus of a future army from the mess."

[97] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 204. "But if Pompey's fleet was suffering, Caesar's army was suffering more, and though Caesar glosses over his own difficulties in his memoirs, his revelations that he had taken a legion over a hundred miles south of the Apsus to try to find supplies tells its own story, especially when combined with his increasingly desperate messages to Antony to sail from Brundisium at any cost."

[98] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 224. "Caesar attributes his disaster (Dyrrachium) more to bad luck than to bad management on his own part or to good management on Pompey's. But while it may well be true that many more reputations for generalship have been made or destroyed by luck than the writers of military

reading challenges the Mommsenian paradigm, wherein Caesar's genius intellect made his victory both inevitable and easy. Greenhalgh praised Pompey's conduct during the war, as he cared about the lives of Roman citizens[99] and employed sound strategic choices. Moreover, he does not attribute the war's conclusion to either Pompey's failures or Caesar's genius[100]. Instead, he stresses the importance of chance and thereby rejected the determinist aspect of his scholarly predecessors. Ultimately, Greenhalgh blames the senators, kings, and princes who pestered Pompey and demanded a swift end to the war after Dyrrachium[101] for Pompey's defeat. He stresses that even Caesar was sympathetic to Pompey's political conundrum before Pharsalus[102]. However, this originates from a questionable reading of Caesar's *Commentaries*, a work that he had previously criticised as "downright false"[103].

Greenhalgh hereafter summarises Pompey's legacy and its issues in modern scholarship. He states that modern works on Pompey must distinguish between his heroic-tragic legacy and the actual person behind this characterisation. Greenhalgh's *Pompey: The Republican Prince* glorifies the tragic aspects of Pompey's death and cites Cicero's letter to Atticus to support this portrayal[104]. Yet, Pompey's attested imperfections sober this reading. Greenhalgh concedes this and offers Lucan's Catonian speech as a perfect obituary for Pompey[105], wherein "affection is not so blind to imperfection that the man of flesh and blood becomes a mere icon in the hagiography of lost causes."[106] Finally, Greenhalgh only vaguely references Pompey's flaws[107] throughout his conclusion. Instead, he obstinately pushes his redemptive reading.

Greenhalgh's construction of Pompey was a reaction to modern discourses that espoused Mommsenian models. He rejected all facets of Mommsen's Pompey and instead perpetuated an equally selective but positive portrayal. The premise of Greenhalgh's research was merit worthy, as modern Pompeian discourse is unfairly negative. However, his methodology was unsound because it produced an outcome as flawed as the works he was attempting to denounce Greenhalgh thus epitomises the problems with modern interpretations of Pompey, which fail to take adequate account of the deep divisions of opinion in the ancient evidence. In this way, although its conclusions are completely different, it bears a close resemblance to Mommsen's treatment of this difficult but significant individual.

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history usually admit, there is something suspicious in Caesar's special pleading at certain critical points in his narrative."

[99] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 226-7.

[100] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 252. Greenhalgh never offers Caesar outright praise in the text, though he does suggest that Pompey underestimated the discipline of Caesar's troops after the defeat at Pharsalus.

[101] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 244.

[102] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 244.

[103] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 239. "Caesar's account is typically selective if not downright false."

[104] Cic. Att. 11.6.3-4. (SB 217) "...I could not help feeling sorry for Pompey's fate, for I knew him as a man of integrity, honour and principle."

[105] Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 10.119-24.

[106] P. Greenhalgh*, Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 269.

[107] P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Republican Prince*, 268. "Pompey may not have been the ideal guardian of the ideal republic envisaged by Cicero, but if a guardian was needed for the very imperfect republic in which Cicero lived, Pompey's ambitions were more compatible with its preservation than Caesar's."

Summary

Leach, Seager, and Greenhalgh's portrayals of Pompey demonstrate different responses to Mommsen's anti-Pompeian discourse, as it survived in the modern historiographic tradition. Leach attempted to reject the tradition by analysing Pompey's political career solely through the ancient evidence. However, Leach's conclusions highlighted the foundational level that Mommsenian constructs shape Pompey's interpretation in modern discourse. Seager was conditioned by Gelzer's reading and was thus a successor of Mommsen's Pompeian paradigm. Moreover, he allowed his personal agenda to colour the ambiguous portrait preserved in the ancient evidence. Similarly, Greenhalgh's approach to the anti-Pompey discourse was supported by a selective and redemptive reading of the ancient evidence. Thus, each work allowed personal agendas and reactive readings dictate their representations of Pompey. Seager highlighted these issues in reference to the ancient evidence, but with startling relevance to modern studies, stating:

> It was easier and safer to forget the ambivalent figure, whose political career raised such awkward questions, and remember instead only a cardboard hero, the mighty conqueror who had triumphed over three continents and brought the East under Roman sway. Once that happened, then even as a symbol Pompeius had ceased to matter.[108]

[108] R. Seager, *Pompey*, 172.

Conclusion

Prior to this examination, there had not been a comprehensive study of the interpretations of Pompey from Mommsen onwards set against a survey of what the surviving record actually has to say. This is due to two primary factors. The decline of narrative histories and the increased specialisation of scholarly research allowed the claims of earlier works to go unchallenged. This ensured that prejudices, derived directly and indirectly from a Mommsenian narrative, remained dominant in contemporary treatments of Pompey. Moreover, these constructions are transmitted through accessible works that are the common first resources for young historians and those interested generally in late republican history. These audiences are likely to accept the conclusions of modern scholarly narrative histories and biographies because they are not trained to scrutinise the ancient evidence, and are even less prepared to investigate the development of modern traditions in historiography. These works have a domino effect, as they reflect the views expressed by their scholarly predecessors, unless the new generation specifically queries these traditions.

Consequently, the origins of the negative stereotypes often go unchallenged. Most modern scholars thus accept this discourse without realising that it originates more from Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* than the ancient source tradition itself.

This thesis investigated the adaptation and normalisation of Mommsen's anti-Pompeian prejudices over several generations. It also demonstrated how each scholar's emphasis on different negative aspects of Pompey reflected a specific historical narrative, context, and idea about motivation. The primary conclusions are as follows. The influence of Determinism, Nationalism, and Romanticism upon Mommsen helped construct a Pompey characterised by vices and shortcomings. Mommsen based this reading on evidence, which reinforced his position and overlooked important ancient evidence. His paradigm of Pompey thereafter endured through the popular narrative histories and biographies of nineteenth and twentieth century scholars, including Ihne, Fowler, and Heitland whose accessible works promoted Mommsen's ideas through direct citation or reference. As the comparison of their works attests, each author concentrates on a Mommsenian motif of Pompey that best reflects their reading of late republican politics. In doing so, they set a precedent for the subsequent generation of scholars. The Second Wave works by Gelzer, Syme, and Scullard reflected Mommsen's negative assessments of Pompey through their engagement with the previous scholarly generation.

Just as Mommsen influenced the First Wave, the methods and conclusions of the Second Wave influenced Leach, Seager, and Greenhalgh. Leach's biography of Pompey opted to use primarily ancient evidence with limited reference to the modern scholarship. This approach was ultimately unsuccessful because, in the end, it had to align itself with either a positive or negative stance. Leach's choice of the more popular negative trope is a basic consequence of engaging with a pre-existing discourse of anti-Pompeian scholarship. Seager, however, openly acknowledged his scholarly debt to Gelzer and, by proxy, Mommsen through an assessment of

Pompey's life based on scepticism and manipulation of the evidence. Greenhalgh reacted to the negative tradition by fabricating an overly optimistic portrayal of Pompey which borders on caricature. By concentrating on a polarised version of Pompey, he too distorts the evidence and misleads his reader by omitting key pieces of evidence. He thus employs a methodology consistent with his contemporaries and predecessors but to achieve a different end. The formulations of Pompey in Mommsen's subsequent generations of scholars are at the core on Pompeian scholarship as they reveal the transferral of a negative Pompey from one scholarly generation to the next.

This examination has also yielded specific results, which reflect the diversity of modern interactions with Mommsen's Pompeian paradigm. Syme demonstrated how a rejection of traditional narratives of Augustus could still incorporate Mommsen's Pompey. He revealed how modern authors conveniently pick up anti-Pompeian narratives to explain what was wrong with the late republic, and, for Syme, how these were continued through the actions of Augustus. An analysis of Ihne's *Römische Geschichte* illustrated how the Mommsenian archetype had an immediate impact on other writers. Likewise, a comparative examination of Gelzer's *Caesar* and *Pompeius* demonstrated that a modern anti-Pompeian reading could remain prominent but vary according to a text's subject matter. Thus, Pompey's portrait in Gelzer's biography of Caesar differs from that of his biography of Pompey. Other notable historical trends were also demonstrated. For instance, the Anglophone scholarship proved that Mommsen's depiction of the 'stupid' Pompey declined in popularity over time and was replaced by the 'incompetent politician' Pompey. Heitland emphasised Pompey's 'stupidity' and 'vanity', while later twentieth century works, namely Gelzer's *Pompeius* and Leach's *Pompey* prioritised Pompey's political incompetence which was more defensible according to the ancient evidence. Finally, the analysis of Leach revealed that Mommsen's anti-Pompeian paradigms endured in a work that disavowed pro-Caesar readings of the late republic. All of the above contributed to the variety of Pompeian portraits, which each reflected, modified, and adapted, Mommsen's foundational construct.

The benefits of historiography to examine the dissemination of modern constructs and their effects upon the reception of ancient evidence cannot be underestimated. An approach that adopts historiography, reception studies, and textual analysis has shown that Pompey was not a one-dimensional individual comprised of negative characteristics and shortcomings but a complex, multifaceted historical figure. Anti-Pompeian readings mostly result from the domination of Caesar over both the ancient and modern traditions. Interpretations of his life tend to focus on extremes: either overwhelmingly positive or damningly negative. These ultimately reduce a nuanced political figure to stereotypes and tropes which are inherently linked to his enigmatic nature, a lack of first-hand evidence, and divisive portrayal in the ancient record. Pompey's portrayal in the modern Anglophone record is more caricature than reality, comprising a patchwork of polarised ancient accounts which modern scholars must elucidate. To achieve this, they prioritise one set of evidence over the other and assessing which portrayal best suits the overall scope and motive of any work. Future scholarly attention could be directed towards incorporating more reception studies and historiography in classical studies to reconcile other disparate portrayals in modern popular histories with the ancient record and

other victims of Mommsen's reconstruction. What remains of Pompey's life is a cardboard cut-out of causal links, generalisations, and echoes of nineteenth-century theories which do not attest to the diversity of the ancient record but reflect the legacy of Theodor Mommsen.

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