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How was the tribune of the plebs used from the Reformation of Sulla (81 B.C.) to the second consulship of Pompey and Crassus (55B.C.)?

Jake Ruairidh Linton McGrath

1704033

In Partial Completion for the BA Ancient History

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Introduction

This dissertation will explore how the tribune of the plebs was used in the Late Republic from 81-55 B.C., this time period was chosen because it shows how the tribune was used to benefit stand-out politicians to futher their own careers to reach end goals. The focus will begin at the start of 81 B.C. under the reformation of Sulla, where the tribune was curtailed as the tribune of the plebs was deemed too dangerous by him. The structure of the dissertation will be chronological, for this is the best way to progressively understand the use of the tribune of the plebs throughout. First, it will analyse the restoration of the tribune and the tribune movement in the 70s, then demonstrate a politician using the tribune to further their own career, like Pompey in the 60s. Then the 50s show an increased use of the tribune of the plebs by all factions in the Republic and the rise in commands to benefit spectrum of politicians in the half of the decade being engaged with.

This examination of tribune of the plebs will be looking at the main events within the time period and how they show the use of the tribune, and an evolution of the tribune in politics within Rome itself. The tribune was an elected position by the Plebeians only, unlike the other positions within the *curses Honorem,* (see Fig.1) . This is important to note for this technically means the tribune is not a typical magistracy, but scholarship will more commonly use the term magistracy when engaging with the tribune of the plebs.

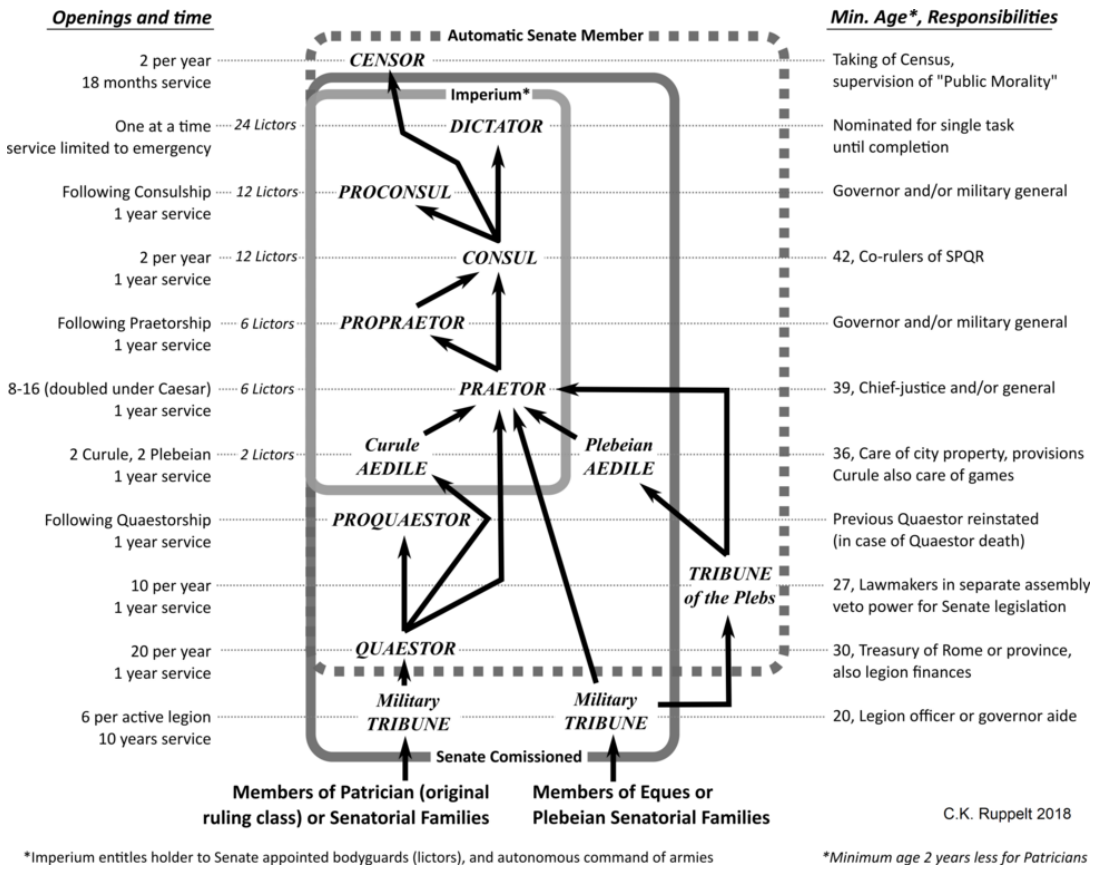

Figure 1 A flow chart showing the career paths in the *cursus Honorem*, the Roman Republic's career ladder. Found at Wikimedia.org.

This time period will be investigated using modern scholarship, showing a century's worth of engagement and interest within the topic of the Late Roman Republic. The most popular time for the Republic in modern scholarship appeared to be the 1970s where there was a surge of popularity to explore the Late Roman Republic. Over time trends have changed in some stances, but for the most part there has been the same consistent belief and debates within scholarship, one trend in debate being the use of the tribune of the plebs and their powers to aid specific politicians.

When looking to the primary sources, the sources writing contemporary to the time or within a couple hundred years of the Late Roman Republic, there is a variation, but this is due to the development and survival of sources over time. To look at a couple in focus: Cicero was a contemporary of the events specified; he talks about a plethora of events in his life relevant to

the dissertation topic, but also carries a heavy bias and multiple stances within the works of his that have survived. Sallust is also another contemporary who wrote about varied topics but remains more focussed than Cicero, writing with an agenda in all his works. However he also recorded key events that without him would not provide as much depth on the topic.

Marxist Theory

The dissertation will also be utilising Marxism from a historiographical view. While there is not a wide spectrum of engagement with Marxism and the Late Roman Republic shown to be abundant within modern scholarship, this dissertation will require the reader to see this more empirically. While there is evidence for Marxism in this assessment, and there will be cases where it is applied, there is no modern scholarship to further this proof. Throughout this dissertation there is evidence to suggest that there was class oppression, when looking at the use of the tribune of the plebs.[1] This topic looks at class conflict and societal change, but the majority of Marxism applied to the ancient world focuses on slavery, neglecting the thought of any other problems in the ancient society. The Romans were class based, and there is a historical record of these clashes. The Conflict of the Orders records the history of the class oppression and wars shown in the Roman world.[2] This is because the conflict created the tribune of the plebs, which shows that the tribune being used is a reflection of the historical use and abuse of the class and the divided stance of the Patrician and Plebeian relations. In short, applying a Marxist theory when there is so little engagement in the topic by modern scholarship is problematic, and must rely on an empirical analysis by the reader throughout.

[1] Frank 1975: 52-3
[2] McManus 2020

Chapter 1: The reform of the tribune of the plebs under Cornelius Sulla to their undoing by Pompey & Crassus From 81 to 70 B.C.

Introduction

This section will be looking at an eleven-year time period during which the tribune is ironically not used but instead reduced to its base traits.[3] The civil war between Marius and Sulla had reached an end and Sulla ruled as a dictator to restore the Republic. The tribune of the plebs under Sulla's reformation was heavily altered; he banned the plebeian position from having any real importance. Therefore, this section will discuss: the reasoning for the curtailing of the tribune's position; the maintenance of the reform; and then the tribune's movement followed by a focus on the speech written by Sallust from a tribune in 73 B.C. Finally, there will be a look at the actions of Pompey and the reasoning he had for bringing back the tribune in 70 B.C.

Why did Sulla reduce the tribune?

The tribune of the plebs was a powerful position within the Roman Republic: it could propose laws and also block laws with the power of veto.[4] Sulla had risen to power to reduce any future conflicts and any potential dictators, and made the potentially revolutionary magistrate, the tribune, become useless.[5] Hawthorn and Macdonald show a great

[3] See more in Roberts 2005: 782
[4] Steel 2014: 329
[5] Keaveney 1982: 170; Fields 2010: 56; Santangelo 2014 : 6.

understanding of the tribune and its powers, stating how the tribune was able to "rule and dominate" the Republic.[6] Hawthorn and Macdonald's assessment of Sulla's actions should start with this statement, the proposal that ten men could rule a state if they so wished.[7]

There are two factions in Rome that are worth considering within this time period (81-70 B.C.) and these where the *Optimates* and the *Populares;* both factions will be considered for they are the most notable factions written about by all scholars who study the Late Republic. The *Optimates* were the aristocrats, the dynasts and conservatively minded Roman politicians.[8] The *Populares* were typically plebeian politicians or senators with the tendency to support popular bills or pro-plebeian bills.[9]

Through this political alignment held by Sulla, it becomes clear why Sulla chose to put such a penalty on the tribune; Sulla wanted a traditional republic: the elite and ancient families ruling the people and the Senate as the body of power that ordered Rome.[10] This model of government would have been oppressive to the plebeian class. The most simplistic way to show Sulla's ideal form of government is shown through the *Marxist Pyramid of the Capitalist system*. It is worth mentioning that this model would have to be re-designed to account for the varied class systems and that the slave populace would not be the main focus group.[11]

Though reducing the tribune's powers to prevent radical politicians from occurring, Sulla knew that he could not eradicate the tribune and that the role must hold some power within the Republic.[12] Flower suggests that Sulla knew he had to manage the reform of the tribune

[6] Hawthorn and Macdonald 1965: 2
[7] Hawthorn and Macdonald 1965: 2-3
[8] Tatum 2006: 191
[9] Hawthorn and Macdonald 1965: 28
[10] Leach 1978: 55;
[11] Morley 2006: 305
[12] Marsh 1934: 131

carefully otherwise there would have been a backlash from the plebs.[13] This is logical to understand, for the tribune was fundamentally created to protect the people from the patrician classes.[14] Therefore to strip the magistracy entirely after the position had stood from approximately 400 years would have caused outrage. This reinforces the argument put forward by Millar that the Plebs where a powerful group in the Republic and not weak, and why Sulla could not abolish the position.[15] So Sulla implemented two major reforms. The first was that the tribune could hold no office but the office of tribune of the plebs.[16] The second reform was that the tribune would not be allowed to propose legislation on its own, and must put the law to the senate for approval.[17] These laws helped to reduce extreme attitudes and would dissuade most politicians from running for the position. Sulla had efficiently buried the tribune's office and thus made the senate the ultimate powerbase of the Republic.[18]

The assessment from the ancient sources is varied when looking at the reforms from Sulla's time as dictator. Primary sources within this time period on this topic are limited and vague in most cases; the more detailed examples were written after the events. Eckert & Thein state that Appian engages briefly on this reform.[19] This is because Appian is writing on Civil Wars, so the administrative reforms that follow after the victor applies their own imprint on Rome are important to acknowledge, for those reforms will change the potential future of the nation.

[13] Flower 2004: 99
[14] Millar 1990: 135
[15] Millar 1990: 135
[16] App. Civil War. 100; Leach 1978: 36
[17] App. Civil war. 100.; Plut. Mar. 34.
[18] Wiedemann 1994: 29
[19] App. Civil Wars. 100.; Eckert & Thein 2019: 60

Plutarch, in this case neglects mentioning the reforms on the tribune within his book on Sulla.[20] However, Plutarch mentions the reforms in the book of Pompey, and then neglects the information that should be attached to the book on Crassus.[21] This is important for this reflects that Plutarch has tailored this information for one specific biography, even though it is valid information for all three *Lives.*

How was the reform maintained?

To quote Plutarch "Sulla now devoted himself entirely to the work of butchery."[22] The easiest way to guarantee the success of a new institution is to fill it with ones who support and remove those that do not. Sulla expanded the senate by three-hundred members, adding *Equites* (knights) he favoured.[23] Thus the senate became full of pro-Sullan *Optimates* who would uphold his reforms, for they had not been designated to the proscriptions and had been allowed to keep their property. Steel concurs with the sentiment, agreeing that the new senators of Rome had been granted a reward from Sulla in the form of power by being added to the growing ranks of the senate.[24] This would bring in new senators with big political ambitions and a debt to Sulla to maintain his reforms, and a blueprint to maintain the new republic.[25]

Sulla, after implementing his own senatorial powerbase, had his legacy in place. But he had also made a legal ramification that would further deter any aspiring or revolutionary tribune,

[20] Plut. Sulla. 33.
[21] Plut. Crass. 12.
[22] Plut. Sulla. 31.
[23] App. Civil wars. 100.
[24] Steel 2014: 325-6
[25] Steel 2014: 326

passing law that any tribune who opposed the law would have all their property confiscated.[26] This law was an ingenious way to keep the tribune in check, without stripping them of any futher political authority. The senators were *Optimates* likened to Sulla, as they supported the dictator and shared the belief the senate should hold all the constitutional power of the Republic.[27] This therefore implies that this senate would uphold the reforms applied to the tribune to maintain the power. Marsh and Keaveney agree with the idea that the Sullan reforms had fallen through by 70 B.C. and that with hindsight, its fall was inevitable.[28]

Gruen makes the argument that the tribune being restored would help heal the Republic.[29] This is questionable to believe as the tribune of the plebs being restored is proven to alter and accelerate the fall in the Republic. The tribune of the plebs allows legal loopholes within the political system of the late Republic. So understandably there is the argument that the tribune was the protector of the plebs and until restored the urban plebs were at risk of further class oppression, the tribune had become a more standardised radical position by the time of the Gracchi in c.130 B.C.[30] Gruen presents a weak argument, for Gruen engages with the Late Republic, meaning he should understandably acknowledge that the tribune of the plebs contributed heavily into the collapse of the Republic.

Macer's speech – the tribune movement

This speech was delivered in 73 B.C. However, the speech is recorded by Sallust and is the core text when it comes to understanding the movement of the tribunes in the 70s.[31]

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[26] Marsh 1934: 131; Millar 2002: 169
[27] Gruen 1974: 26
[28] Marsh 1934: 145; Keaveney 1982: 226-7
[29] Gruen 1974: 24
[30] Hawthorn and Macdonald 1965: 2
[31] Sall. Hist. 1-4.

Therefore to understand what scholars are engaging with, this speech must be considered first. The 70s lacks a substantial amount of source material on the tribunes and their resistance on the Sullan reforms, [32] even though politically this would have been a substantial topic for the time, with or without a pro-Sullan senate. The reason this speech is valued when looking at the tribune is because Macer provides the names of tribunes who had stood up to the oppression put forward by Sulla.[33] This allows modern historians to grasp a vague idea into the political strife that the tribune underwent in the 70s.[34] The tribunes of this period acted so their office in the Republic would remain relevant within Roman politics. For Sulla's reform, if it remained untouched, would in a poetic sense kill off the tribune of the plebs as an aspiring position in politics. This first assessment of the speech is looking at the actions of the other tribunes and what it showed the tribunes before Macer acted, and the result of their protests.

Within Macer's speech, Sallust references the notable tribunes who spoke out against the pro-Sullan senate.[35] This is vital for modern scholarship, for the tribunes named by Sallust and their actions carried out, give an insight into the socio-political atmosphere within the magistracy during the eleven year period. The first mention of a tribune is the event of 75 B.C. where Gaius Cotta lifted the ban on the tribune holding futher offices, restoring the plebeian politicians' careers within the *Cursus Honorem.*[36] Sallust conveys that Macer was not pleased with this alone, but, it does allow a window into the attitude of the senators of the time; through the *Optimates* and the Sullan faction, nobody openly opposed the tribune being restored as a career, which presumably means that the senate had a fundamental issue with

[32] Millar 2005: 55
[33] Sall. Hist. 7-14.
[34] The insight from the speech provides an in-depth opinion from the impact of the reforms made.
[35] Sall. Hist. 8-12.
[36] Sall. Hist. 7-9; Leach 1978: 55; Gruen 1974: 26

the restoration of the tribune's powers. In keeping with the reforms, this is still in-line with Sulla's main intention: keeping the senate in control of the Republic.[37]

Macer then recounts the event of 76. First he looks at the tribune Lucius Scinius who Sallust records was killed, as the speech recalls how Scinius was "cut off" by his "slayers".[38] Violence was a common theme in the Roman Republic, though not always, but in this case the consuls took the law into their own hands. This is probably due to Scinius being noted as being the first to "speak about the tribunician power".[39] This would notably cause a political movement and problem for the senate.[40] Gruen states that the criticisms of Scinius against the consuls would most likely have been a factor in his death.[41] Leach offers the same argument but names the killer as consul Scribonius Curio.[42]

The final tribune, Lucius Quinticus, is recorded from 74 B.C., the year before Macer's magistracy, and is important. For Lucullus was one of Sulla's generals and being consul he was not going to be lenient as Cotta was. So when Sallust records "with what passion Lucullus last year assailed Lucius Quintius" [43] it reflects the rule of those close to Sulla during the civil war and proscriptions that will maintain his law. Leach defines the year of 74 by stating that Lucullus "firmly checked the agitation of tribune L. Quinticus for restoring the tribune powers";[44] the statement is likely based on Sallust's work.[45] The development of the tribune is complex for the 70s, for there is little use of the tribune by other politicians or them being aided to support one faction against another, but nonetheless this speech from Sallust

[37] Flower 2004: 99
[38] Sall. Hist. 8-9.
[39] Sall. Hist.8
[40] Sall. Hist. 8-9.
[41] Gruen 1974: 24
[42] Leach 1978: 55
[43] Sall. Hist. 11-12.
[44] Sall. Hist. 11-12.
[45] Leach 1978: 55

creates an insight into the tribune fighting for the survival of its own position and restoring its power to be more directly involved in politics.

Marxism can be applied to this speech for it is talking about the tribune of the plebs and class antagonism. The patrician and the plebeian classes are different but both are able to reach the rank of consul. But through the reformation, as Leach described it, Sulla "curtailed" the tribune and its power.[46] Sallust's account of Macer is a great example of how Marxism can be applied to the 70s, through applying historicism. The speech of Macer shows the internal view of the tribune in Roman politics in the Republic, showing that the tribune reform of 81B.C. created a fundamental impact on the Republic with the plebs being robbed of their rights and the representative of the plebeians being made to submit to the senate, if the tribune wanted to do anything.

Gruen argues that the tribune of the plebs was key to heal the Republic and this can be disputed.[47] From a Marxist prospect it is clear that the tribune was being oppressed, a class dispute that historically created the tribune of the plebs originally.[48] Then when we look at the rhetoric used by Sallust for Macer's speech we see that the language conveys the class oppression that the plebeians were being subjugated to. The speech emphasises the "slavery" from the very first few lines and this is the tone of the whole discourse.[49] When looking at Gruen's statement with a historical focus his point is inaccurate. The tribune was a catalyst for the collapse of the Republic, allowing extraordinary and legally abstract bills to bypass the senate. Sulla was correct in seeing the tribune as a dangerous position, and while Gruen

[46] Leach 1978: 36
[47] Gruen 1974: 28
[48] Roberts 2005: 782
[49] Sall. Mac. 1; Dowling 2000: 315. The speech insights the slavery of the plebs 12 times throughout the account of the speech, using words such as master, oppressors and cattle, to create a dramatic speech.

may be looking at this as a social aspect - to better the plebs and their political security, however, this is not stated clearly enough.

Pompey and Crassus' Consulship and the implications

The consulship of Pompey and Crassus in 70 B.C., is commonly associated through modern scholarship as the end point of the Sullan reforms.[50] Both politicians had reaped the rewards of being on Sulla's side in the civil war, and both had contributed as key politicians and generals to the Republic's stability.[51] While both men had been supporters of Sulla they both undid the reforms of what Marsh called Sulla's "Political machine and constitution",[52] with particular focus being on the tribunes' powers being restored.[53] Modern scholars such as Stockton and Ward state that the restoration was to win favour with the plebeians, however, Evans states that the restoration was not crucial to winning the vote for the popularity of Pompey was so great as it was.[54] Through the restoration, the tribune was fully restored in its magisterial, and the Republic was now opened up to a more radical style of politics.

What can be taken from this chapter is that the tribune was not being used. The tribune was made a position that could not be used in the future and act only in its base function of protecting the plebeian class. However, through the tribunes mentioned, who stood against this oppression from Sulla and the patrician classes, it shows that the tribune was an active and essential political cog that once restored by 70 B.C., would have an impact on the whole

[50] Rawson 1974: 48; Keaveney 1982: 225
[51] Pompey and Crassus had both been involved in two campaigns. Pompey went on a gruelling campaign against Sertorius in Spain and Crassus had felt with the majority of the revolt led by Spartacus. To learn more read here. Plut. Crass. 8-11; Plut. Pomp.21.
[52] Marsh 1934: 145
[53] To see more on the reforms read Plut. Pomp. 22.
[54] Stockton 1973: 212; Ward 1977: 100; Evans 2016: 88

foundation of the Republic. For the restoration by Pompey shows that the tribune was fundamentally the key reason there was a surge of interesting and extraordinary laws proposed in the 60s.

Chapter 2: The commands given to Pompey in 67 and 66 B.C. through the tribunes of the plebs

How a tribune beat the senate: the events of the *Lex Gabinia* 67 B.C.

The *Lex Gabinia* was proposed by the tribune of the plebs; this was a landmark event in the Late Republic when looking at how the tribune was used.[55] Gabinius became a political weapon, and would alter the position of the senate and the stability within the Republic in the long term.[56] Pompey's career in the Republic, without Gabinius being able to bypass the senate, would have become stagnant.[57] But as Rawson states, Pompey would use the opportunity of the restored tribune powers to help him.[58] Of the sources, Cassius Dio wrote about this event in the most detail, and emphasises that though the command was given no direct leader, it was obviously written for Pompey.[59] Most scholarship does not focus on this point and prefers to just acknowledge that the command was presented for the piracy.[60] Cicero, who was a contemporary source to the command, writes that the command proposed was of great benefit to the Republic and the plebs, for food supplies had been stopped.[61]

The law proposed by Gabinius had a very negative reaction when received by the senate. The law was to propose a large naval command, an extraordinary request to Pompey to handle the

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[55] Keaveny 1982: 225. Keaveney states that the tribunes had been "unleashed" upon the senate.
[56] The use of the tribune to reach an extraordinary command is seen as a trend within this assessment of the tribune and how it was used.
[57] Leach 1978: 70
[58] Rawson 1978: 41
[59] Dio. Hist. 36. 23.5.
[60] Sources such as focus on other narratives fitting to their works, or simply do not hold this section to be as pivotal
[61] Plut. Pomp. 25; Cic. Leg. Man. 5.; Gildenhard and Hodgson 2014: 247. The pirates had impacted the economy freezing the economy of Rome. The pirates had also intercepted the corn supply to Rome and the plebeians where facing potential starvation hence the praise from Cicero.

threat of the pirates.[62] There are two key reasons this proposal had such a severe reaction in this stage. The first was that there had been a former command, which modern scholarship compares the command given to M. Antonius in 74 B.C.. [63] This command given to the Praetor had failed, with Antonius being defeated.[64] So with justification the senate would be reasonably dubious to offer another, larger command to Pompey, even though he was a senator. Though Pompey was the greatest general of the time, as argued by Cicero, in his *Pro Manilia,* and reiterated by Seager, Plutarch states that Piso threatened to kill Pompey.[65] The second reason for the senate's reaction was the command proposed to Pompey. The proposed force was huge and due to Rome's past history of civil wars, the senate did not want Pompey to become a new Sulla and march on the Republic.[66]

The senate, as noted by both Dio and Plutarch, attempted to lynch Gabinius.[67] How Gabinius escaped is seen as a surprise to the primary sources.[68] Nonetheless due to the senate acting irrationally it allowed Gabinius to form a riot,[69] which stormed the senate house and would have killed Piso, if Gabinius did not manage to have control of the crowd.[70] This is where Gabinius is seen as a weapon, a revolutionary tribune, for the chaos within the senate house, the attempt on his life and the use of a mob meant that he could thwart the senators.[71] The power of the plebeians is shown in Sallust's works from the speech of Macer.[72] Gruen also believes that those involved in rioting knew what they were doing when they stormed the

[62] Dio. Hist. 36. 22.2; Plut. Pomp. 24 ; Caes. 2; Cic. Man.33. Piracy had become a large issue in the Mediterranean and for Rome. The accounts show of Prates kidnapping politicians, sacking sanctuaries and even getting to the Port of Ostia.
[63] De Souza 2002: 159; Steel 2013: 144.
[64] Vel. Pat. 2.31.
[65] Seager 1979: 41; Plut. Pomp. 25; Cic. Man. 1.
[66] To see the proposal of the command look here: Plut. Pomp. 25; Dio. Hist. 36.23.
[67] Plut. Pomp. 25; Dio. Hist. 36. 24.1; Seager 1979: 33
[68] Plut. Pomp. 25; Dio. Hist. 36. 24.
[69] Dio. Hist. 36. 24.2
[70] Dio. Hist. 36. 24.3; Plut. Pomp. 25.
[71] McNeese 1999: 15; Bloom 2011: 553
[72] Sall. Hist. 15-8

senate house.[73] This presumably is due to the fact that Gabinius would have mentioned the obstruction to Pompey and his command, as the plebs held Pompey dear to them.

Regarding Plutarch's brief account on the events, modern scholarship has compared Gabinius to T. Gracchus when conducting the final blow against the senate.[74] The *Optimates* of the senate had gone to the other tribunes of the plebs to recruit anyone willing to oppose Gabinius. The result was two tribunes, notably called Trebonius and Roscius.[75] These tribunes were both beaten swiftly by Gabinius who was able to use the people and his skills in politics to counter these tribunes.[76] The end result of the *Lex Gabinia* left the senate defeated and unable to challenge Pompey further, with the law being passed and the military command being larger than stated previously, out of fear of the people.[77] This shows the overall power and influence of Gabinius when being used by Pompey with the premise of securing the command, but it must be noted that the senate contributed to its own demise.

The command after Gabinius: the *Lex Manilia* - 66 B.C.

The *Lex Manilia* was another extraordinary command granted to Pompey, giving him the war against Mithridates in the East.[78] It is important to look at the overall passing of the law, for this law goes through with great ease, showing the overarching impact that came from the actions, as discussed in the previous chapter. This law shows that a tribune was a powerful force to the senate and able to assert itself.

[73] Gruen 1974: 436
[74] Leach 1978: 66; Ward 1977: 113
[75] Steel 2013: 143-6
[76] Leach 1978: 68; Ward 1977: 113; Dio. Hist. 36.24.4
[77] Plut. Pomp. 26
[78] Steel 2013: 147; Yakobsen 2006: 398; Drogula 2015: 311

The law proposed by Manilius was symbolic to the balance of the Republic and the authority of the senators against, in this case, Pompey. Cassius Dio writes that the tribune made a link to Pompey through Gabinius, proposing the command in return for protection.[79] Plutarch similarity states that the two politicians held no distinct connection prior to the command.[80] Therefore it can be assumed, as Dio presents, that the two men had met through Gabinius, who as stated previously was a smart and cunning tribune.[81] Gabinius' proposal and the motivation behind Manilius was, according to Steel, to protect the Republic's reputation, as the campaign in the East was not going well.[82] Therefore Pompey, with the track record and success of his past, would be best given the command, through a tribune, to ensure a more successful and swift campaign (see Figure 2).[83]

[79] Dio. Hist. 36. 42.4; North 2006: 261
[80] Plut. Pomp. 30; Dio. Hist. 36.42.3-4.
[81] Hist. 36.42.3-4.
[82] Steel 2013: 148
[83] Cic. Man. 9; Steel 2013: 142; Raaflaub 2006: 131. Raaflaub presents evidence that Gabinius had given Galabrio commands in the East, absorbing some of the troops that Lucullus had, had accessible to him, to hinder his campaign against Mithridates, preventing Lucullus from holding any success, and the law of Manilius, as well as the dwindling success in the campaign paid off immensely.

Figure 2 A Map of the Middle East, Asia Minor and Greece showing the Eastern territories of 89 B.C. and the geographical location of the regions Pompey would get in 66 B.C. command from the *Lex Manilia.* These territories where Cilicia, Bithinyia, Phrygia, Lycaonia, Gallatia, Cappodacia, Upper Colchis and Armenia. (Plut. Pomp. 30.). Found at Wikimedia.org.

This is where the impact of Gabinius is most prevalent, for while Plutarch records that some senators were unhappy, none dared oppose it out of fear of the public.[84] The rioting and chaos that came from the year prior had such a profound impact on the senate that none opposed the law.[85] For the law was received well by the people, politicians and some senators, notably ex consuls. Cicero, in his speech for the command, states that Pompey was the best man for the command, and emphasises the qualities of Pompey as a general and how there was no one else who could complete the task.[86] However, it is worth noting that Cicero, in another

[84] Plut. Pomp. 30.
[85] Plut. Pomp. 30.
[86] Cic. Man. 10.

account, states that Pompey was robbing Lucullus of the command. Cicero is however a complex source to deal with, for in the Late Republic Cicero was involved in many factions, and is argued by Hawthorn and Macdonald as trying to stay neutral throughout all factions in order to have associates in many places.[87]

To conclude, this chapter examined the re-introduction of the tribune after its restoration and how it would be used in politics by other politicians. In this case it was the actions of Pompey and how Pompey was able to wield Gabinius to such effect that it almost removed a tribune and secured the *Lex Gabinia*. Then from the actions of Gabinius, the senate as a whole allowed the next Eastern command, proposed by Manilius, through fear and general admiration of Pompey and the *Lex Manilia*.

[87] Hawthorn and Macdonald 1965: 28-9

Chapter 3: how the triumvirs used the tribune Vatinius to their advantage, *Lex Vatinia* 59 B.C

What does Caesar get?

Vatinius was used in the most effective manner possible to benefit Caesar, as Caesar understood that there was a method to political success, arguably a formula.[88] When looking at the career of Pompey, his main influence was within his military force and loyal veterans as well as the plebeian masses.[89] Through Caesar having Vatinius propose this provincial command it gave Caesar an opportunity as Governor in a territory to build up his own conquests and fame.[90] This is supported as a theory by Gruen who argues that Caesar needed Gaul to gain his own experience, and that Caesar chose Gaul, for he knew it would not damage the foreign policy of the Republic or hinder the senate, as he was not going far or being too excessive with resources.[91] The main issue, however, is the mentioning of Vatinius as a tribune and his law the *Lex Vatinia* not always appearing in the primary sources. There is a surprisingly limited amount of evidence to show the law, and as a consequence modern scholarship has not given the law as much detail, other than its bare essentials, therefore creating an issue in the transparency in what happened and why it was so important. But what is important to note is that there was again a variation in how Caesar got the command he did. Plutarch and Appian both state how the senate gave Caesar both sides of the Alps, Illyricum and four legions for his proconsular command (see figure 3 and 4).[92] The same goes for

[88] Erdkamp 2006: 239. The formula would be firstly a military command proposed by a tribune to a region of conflict or potential wealth, followed by popular support and then a politician strong enough and charismatic enough to be a leader who can handle the senate and its criticisms.
[89] Plut. Pomp. 1-31.
[90] Roberts 2005: 800; Taylor 1968: 135
[91] Gruen 1974: 541
[92] Plut. Caes. 14; App. Civil war. 14. It is interesting to note that the translation (John Carter) states that Clodius was the first to repay Caesar by getting Caesar the Gallic command even though the command was granted through Vatinius, hence the law being called, *Lex Vatinia.*

Suetonius, however Suetonius' account expands on the third provincial territory, stating the senate added Transalpine Gaul in fear of the people demanding it.[93] Cassius Dio refers to the province being added later, but not through fear of the Republic. What this therefore shows is that there is an issue within modern scholarship, as the works of modern scholars pick and choose their sources to build upon their narrative, thus not engaging with all the primary sources to create slightly different accounts, which obscures the overall result of what Vatinius' law gave Caesar for his Proconsulship.

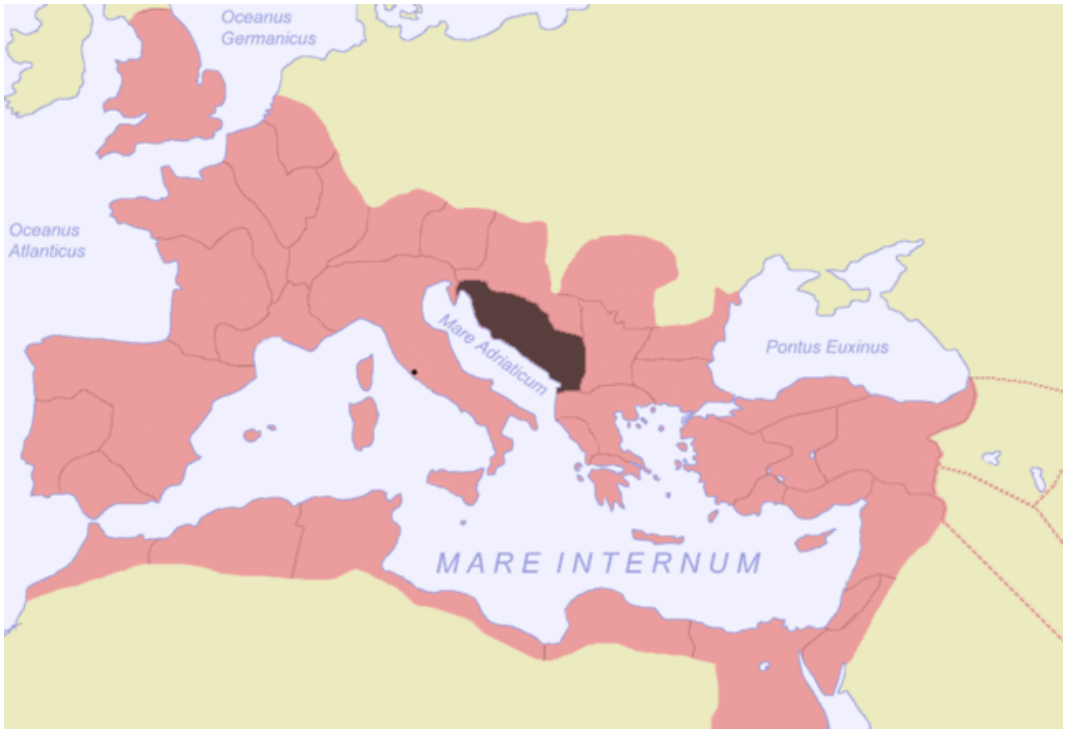

Figure 3 A map of the Mediterranean highlighting the province Illyricum in a dark red. Found at Wikimedia.org.

[93] Suet. Jul. 22.

Figure 4 A map of Caesar's movement in Gaul from 58 to 52 B.C. showing the other two provinces Caesar was given in the *Lex Vatinia*, Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul. Found at Wikimedia.org.

The use of the tribune of the plebs in 59 – Caesar

Within the account of Suetonius it describes Caesar working with two tribunes prior to 59 B.C.; no doubt this is to show that he was a supporter of the people and working close with the representative of the plebs. Plutarch accounts for Caesar being in support of the laws proposed to Pompey in 67 and 66.[94] It is crucial to understand that Vatinius was seen as a

[94] Plut. Pomp. 25. Though it must be noted that Plutarch embellishes the importance of Caesar using hindsight to promote Caesar. This could likely be due to the time of writing in the Augustan regime.

supporter of Caesar within this, but the use of Vatinius alone is not always accounted for. Yet the same stance has been taken on Vatinius over time, and that is that Vatinius was an agent of Caesar.[95] Gruen rightly states there were tribunes that overall supported specific politicians, with Vatinius being listed as a Caesarian tribune.[96] It must also be noted that once Caesar had left, his consulship was to be challenged by a tribune, Lucius Antistius, as a result of which Caesar appealed again to the assembly of tribunes for support while he was away and could not defend himself.[97] This shows that Caesar was in this time a man who was prepared to defend his position and appeal to the political powerhouse of the tribunal assembly for supporters.

The three *Optimate* tribunes

What is worth noting however is that there are three other tribunes not mentioned in the year of 59 B.C. by the primary sources. Contextually, Bibulus was to oppose Caesar and block any proposal and legislation made by Caesar to aid the *Optimates* in obstructing Caesar's laws, in this case Pompey's Eastern settlement.[98] Yet Caesar, with what are presumed to be Pompey's veterans, assaulted Bibulus (cos. 59) and the three tribunes and Cato.[99]

What is interesting is the variation in the primary sources. For Plutarch in his account states how Bibulus and Cato where "often in danger of being killed in the forum"[100] stating that there was a threat of attack, presumably from Caesar's supporters, but no direct assault.[101] Yet Cassius Dio states how Bibulus was "thrown down the stairs" with the three tribunes

[95] Ward 1934: 181
[96] Gruen 1974: 187
[97] Suet. Jul. 23.
[98] Marsh 1934: 182
[99] Tatum 2006: 200
[100] Plut. Caes. 14.
[101] Plut. Caes. 14.

accompanying him also being attacked.[102] This is important for it forgoes the law of *sacrosanctas,* a legal law giving the tribunes of the plebs protection from harm.[103] Appian too accounts for the attacks on Bibulus and the tribunes, but also mentions that the men attacking Bibulus had "daggers".[104] The variety in the reports revolving around Bibulus being forced into hiding reveal that there is varied interest in the mentioning of the tribunes and how dangerous the event was. The sources, as written, increasingly heighten their descriptions of the level of danger reported. Potentially the reason Plutarch omits the tribunes being harmed is for the reputation of Caesar being a *Populares* and being ally to all tribunes, but it is hard to speculate. However it is worth acknowledging that though these tribunes where not named, the *Optimates* had three tribunes on their side to support Bibulus as consul, whereas Caesar is only recorded to have Vatinius from the assembly of tribunes. The tribunes were now political weapons being used to counter the opposition in legislation and authority.

Overall this chapter shows the impact of the tribune in the Late Roman Republic, for the tribune of the Plebs was now a key politician in fighting radical or dubious consuls and politicians, for both popular and conservative politicians were using the power of the tribune to assert their political authority. Therefore the law of Vatinius shows that the Republic's proconsular command could be warped to benefit the specific politician and their agendas, while also showing that tribunes were being used in force to align to a political faction to counter the other, indicating a new trend in politics.

[102] Dio. Hist. 38.6
[103] Roberts 2005: 782
[104] App. Civil Wars. 10.

Chapter 4: Clodius as a tribune of the plebs and the triumvirate in 58 B.C.

Clodius working with the triumvirate

Clodius was adopted into the plebeian class.[105] The process *Transit ad plebem* was a religious ceremony that performed the transition from one class to another; it required help from a religious authority, which was carried out by the Caesar as *Pontifex Maximus* and Pompey as an augur.[106] The triumvirs used Clodius' personal resentment to Cicero as a threat to dispel Cicero from speaking against the alliance.[107] Suetonius and Cicero state that Clodius had persistently asked Caesar to be adopted.[108] The alliance with the triumvirs and Clodius is directly linked to Caesar and Pompey, primarily, as they carried out the adoption ceremony and would presumably have the most to profit from having their legislation backed by a tribune.

It can therefore be presumed that Clodius would have been indebted to the triumvirs, in particular Caesar, for the adoption into the plebeian ranks and the protection of the triumvirates' interests.[109] Clodius reciprocating the triumvirs, notably Caesar, would benefit from the law proposed by Clodius out of the four notable ones mentioned by scholarship, the *Lex de obnuntiatione.*[110] Tatum states that the reform worked to hinder any form of government by observing the skies for bad omens.[111] As Tatum points out, the issue at hand

[105] Canfora 2007: 83; Fezzi 2017: 60-1
[106] Cic. Att.8.3;
[107] Plut. Caes. 14; Tatum 1992: 188
[108] This can be fairly argued to be due to the power and authority that was given to the tribune and Clodius wanted to reach such a position of power quickly.
[109] Roberts 2005: 161; Hawthorn and Macdonald 1965: 71; Drogula 2019: 159
[110] Tatum 2006: 201
[111] Tatum 1999: 126

was that anyone, magistrate or tribune, could "paralyse the government".[112] This would have been created likely due to the Consulship of Caesar in 59 B.C., when the other consul Bibulus was opposing Caesar to pass any legislation, through the use of *obnuntatione*.[113] Cicero was critical of the *Lex de obnuntiatione* made by Clodius, arguing this was part of the ongoing problem with the tribune of the plebs and the corruption of the state.[114] However, as Tatum states, the law was unopposed and seen as a practical law benefitting the Republic, as it had been a grey area within Roman politics.[115] So it can be presumed that this law would be to benefit Caesar, by preventing further abuse and respecting the use of religion in politics.

The removal of opposition

To benefit the triumvirs, notably Caesar and Pompey, Clodius was used to remove opposition to the triumvirate.[116] The two key figures in particular were Cato and Cicero. Caesar had clashed with Cato over past events in politics and was one of the only politicians to speak out against Caesar under the passing of a bill.[117] Cato was, like Cicero, a skilled orator and both men could be a hindrance to the triumvirs' goals.[118] Modern scholarship prefers to focus on the expulsion of Cicero, understandably, as the remnants of Cicero's works are available. The command was to confiscate the island from Ptolemy and not to annex it.[119] Badian suggests the authority addressed to Cato was not direct *imperium* but is described to have been passive to an extent, meaning that Cato could only use it if he met resistance.[120] Cicero accounts for

[112] Tatum 1999: 126
[113] Plut. Caes. 14; App. Hist. 2. 11; Davies and Swain : 133-4
[114] Cic. Har. 45.
[115] Tatum 1992: 189
[116] Plut. Cat. 31.1
[117] Bloom 2012: 50; Taylor 1968: 138
[118] Canfora 2007: 67
[119] Drogula 2019: 158
[120] Badian 1965: 112

this, commenting that Cato was a man who had to confiscate a king's land for no justification, and then oppose any who dared fight back.[121] Naturally the writing of Cicero is biased, for the language "iniquitous law" refers passively to Clodius and his disapproval at Cato's command.[122] Oost states that the choice of Cyprus was not for punishment of Cato, but for revenge against the king of Cyprus.[123] Oost provides the argument that Cyprus was chosen for overall assertion in the East.[124] However Cicero recounts that the command was to fund part of Clodius' *Lex frumantia* as the free grain dole would cost the state a large portion of the treasury.[125] Therefore, as can be concluded by Oost, the choice of Cyprus was to remove Cato and also provide financial relief to the Republic.[126]

Clodius famously exiled Cicero, for as Appian wrote, Cicero had been condoning the triumvirs for trying to reach sole power in their alliance.[127] Clodius exiled Cicero for executing citizens without trial; Weidemann says that this was revenge for those who died in the Catilinarian Conspiracy.[128] This banished Cicero 500 miles from Rome without "fire and water"[129], taking Cicero to Greece; Weidemann states it to be 400 miles but provides no source for this claim.[130] It is worth acknowledging Pompey did not support Cicero and neither did the consuls, and this is important, for this showed the political monopoly Caesar held within Rome. Pompey was his son-in-law, Piso Caesar's father-in-law and Gabinius was Pompey's man, supported by Clodius as tribune.[131] This does not mean that Caesar hated

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[121] Cic. Dom. 20
[122] Cic. Dom.20
[123] Oost 1955: 98. Clodius was like Caeasr kidnapped by Pirates and the King of Cyprus did not help Clodius.
[124] Oost 1955: 99
[125] Drogula 2019: 158
[126] Oost 1955: 99
[127] App. 2. 15; Marsh 1934: 188; Wiedemann 1992: 49
[128] Weidemann 1992: 49. See more in Sallust and his account on *The War with Catiline.*
[129] Plut. Cic. 32.
[130] Weidemann 1992: 50
[131] Canfora 2007: 69; Fezzi 2017: 60; App. Hist. 2.14.

Cicero, he simply wanted to control the politician.[132] After the exile of Cicero, Clodius destroyed Cicero's property, and dedicated a temple to Liberty on the site, then sold the rest.[133] In general, this shows Clodius, as a tribune for the triumvirate against the alliance's political opponents, was ruthless and efficient at disposing of them legally.

Relationship with the triumvirate

Contrary to the former tribunes, where their loyalties are fixed to their patron, Gabinius to Pompey and Vatinius to Caesar, Clodius was more complex. For the relationship recorded between Clodius and the triumvirs is as not smooth as the other prior relationships, as Ward comments how Clodius was volatile to everyone including the triumvirs.[134] Clodius produced two popular laws, one providing a free grain dole and another restoring the old clubs, called *Collegia*.[135] These laws brought Clodius a tremendous amount of popular support and his own network.[136] As Clodius rose in popularity he would at times attack Caesar and Pompey's legislation, notably Pompey's Eastern settlement.[137] Plutarch wrote that Clodius tried to have Pompey assassinated in 58 B.C. which scared Pompey into hiding in the countryside, as Clodius' domain was within Rome only, as tribune of the plebs.[138] While the relationship with Clodius was volatile and sporadic, Clodius aided the triumvirate within the domain asked from him as tribune of the plebs, even when building his own network of support.

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[132] Plut. Cic.30. Caesar offered Cicero the position of legate on his Gallic command, but Cicero rejected this offer.
[133] Plut. Cic. 33.
[134] Ward 1977: 233-4
[135] Rawson 1978: 110. Rawson states how the laws of Clodius had been positively received as they had managed to lift some of the senate's oppression. Notably the grain dole had not been seen since Sulla who abolished the dole in his dictatorship.
[136] Davies and Swain : 132-3; Harrison 2008: 111
[137] Plut. Cic. 33; Gruen 1974: 294
[138] Plut. Pomp. 49.

In conclusion, Clodius was used by the triumvirate for more than a command. Clodius was a tactical tribune used to remove opponents from the triumvirates' main goal of power and authority while also protecting the triumvirate from powerful and influential politicians such as Cato and Cicero who could have both hindered the triumvirates' position all together. While the relationship of the body of politicians was complex and subjective to each triumvir, specifically Pompey, and Clodius was rising in popularity through his own reforms, he was still acting on behalf of Caesar's interests.

Chapter 5: The provincial commands of the triumvirate, the *Lex Trebonia* 55 B.C.

How was the tribune used by the triumvirate in 55 B.C.?

Trebonius is regarded by Gruen as an agent of Caesar.[139] This is an understandable and logical presumption, for the conference of Luca was engineered by Caesar and thus it is rational that Caesar would use a tribune of his choice to guarantee the result he wanted.[140] Trebonius proposed the legislation giving Pompey and Crassus, after their joint consulship, two provincial commands of their choice.[141] The importance of Trebonius' proposal is surmised by Appian, stating that the triumvirate held a "monopoly" on the provincial commands.[142] Plutarch, in his *Life of Crassus,* also states through the voice of Cato, that the triumvirs acted as they pleased, running the Republic.[143] However what is an issue about this command is the details of it as recorded by primary sources. Trebonius is mentioned by Plutarch and Cassius Dio, however, Trebonius is absent from Suetonius and Appian's accounts as both fail to mention the *Lex Trebonia*,[144] although this may well be a by-product due to the writing stylisations of the two latter authors.[145] If Gruen's belief that Trebonius was under the employment of Caesar then Trebonius would be a notable tribune to mention in the life of Julius Caesar.[146]

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[139] Gruen 1974: 187
[140] Read about the Conference of Luca in Roberts Oxford dictionary of the classical world for a summary.
[141] Roberts 2005: 781
[142] App. Civil war. 19.
[143] Plut. Crass. 15.
[144] Suet. Jul. 24; App. Civil war. 18.
[145] Appian writing on Civil Wars and Suetonius writing on the life of Julius Caesar. Read Appian civil Wars and Suetonius the twelve Caesars for more.
[146] Gruen 1974: 187; Suet. Jul. 24.

Historical issues on the *Lex Trebonia*, Understanding the law from the primary sources

The next issue with the Trebonian law is that there is a conflict in the command itself. Ward is the only other scholar who notably picks apart the gaps in scholarship, noting how the proposal has two main conflicts.[147] Plutarch, in his *Life of Pompey*, along with Appian mentions that Pompey through Trebonius would gain the command of the Spanish provinces and Africa.[148] Yet in the accounts of Suetonius there is again no acknowledgment of the other triumvirs within the account, even though they were key for Caesar and his plans.[149] Cassius Dio and Plutarch's *Life of Crassus*, in both accounts of the proconsular commands, had no mentioning of Africa either, leaving the actual details of the *Lex Trebonia* to be a conflict of belief in modern scholarship.[150] Ward argues that while more primary sources acknowledge the mentioning of Africa in the legislation there was already a governor out there, and was not removed.[151] This is worth noting as the overall engagement with this law is varied in modern scholarship. It is also worth mentioning that the primary sources have a slight variation on Crassus' command, with Appian and Cassius Dio both referring to Crassus holding Syria and lands near to Syria (see figure 5).[152] Yet Plutarch states that in both works of Crassus and Pompey that Crassus only held Syria and not the neighbouring lands too.[153] Finally there is also a conflicted account of the military size that would accompany Pompey and Crassus on their commands. For it is only stated in Plutarch that Pompey received 4 legions and sent 2 of them to Caesar.[154] Then in Cassius Dio there is only the line saying they

[147] Ward 1977: 274-5
[148] Plut. Pomp. 52; App. Civil wars. 18.
[149] Suet. Jul. 24.
[150] Dio. Hist. 39. 33; Plut. Crass. 15.
[151] Ward 1977: 275
[152] Appian. Civil war.18; Dio. Hist. 39. 33.
[153] Plut. Crass. 15; Plut. Pomp. 52.
[154] Plut. Pomp. 52.

could in effect have an army of any size they wished.[155] Appian states that Crassus had a force of 100,000 in his conquest, but that number is not given anywhere else.[156] Other sources mention no other details on the military sizes of the commands.[157] What is hard to

Figure 5 A map showing the capitol of Syria, Antioch, Crassus provincial command, and the size of the Parthian Empire, which Crassus would declare war against. Found at Britanica.com.

grasp is that the tribune here was providing the three largest names of Roman history these commands: Pompey and Crassus as consuls had Caesar's Gallic command extended by another 5 years: highly likely to avoid a trial for corruption.[158] The main problem with the *Lex Trebonia* is the variation in the primary sources, Ward is the only scholar who acknowledges the lack of detail, whereas most scholarship seem to have chosen sources that align, and ignore the source diversity.

[155] Dio. Hist. 39. 33.
[156] App. Civil war. 18
[157] Examples being Plutarch life of *Crassus* and Suetonius life of *Julius Caesar.*
[158] For more read Plut. Pomp. 51-52 and Dio. Hist.39. 32-5.

The opinions of modern scholarship

Modern scholarship has looked at the reasoning behind the commands allocated and why these provinces were chosen and put forward to Trebonius, and come up with a variety of reasons. Tatum believes that Crassus' main motivation was to achieve war and have the same level of success that Caesar himself was having.[159] While this was undoubtably true, it must be noted that Plutarch writes that Crassus wanted the East to reach fame to surpass Pompey and Lucullus from their campaigns from the 70s and 60s.[160] This trend, that Crassus was keen for the war, is held in the views of most scholars and has not changed significantly, but Crassus being able to utilise the tribune to give him this command was key for him to reach his military glory.[161] Seager argues that Pompey's logic for not actually going to his province was that Pompey was being tactful in case of a potentially rogue Caesar.[162] This seems logical for Pompey choosing Spain was where he had built his clientele and thus, according to the account of Plutarch, it can be believed that he sent his subordinates to command instead.[163] No modern scholar has suggested that Pompey stayed for the love of his wife, but instead that he stayed to manage the grain supply, a command given to him in 57 (B.C.).[164] Overall it can be shown that Trebonius aiding the triumvirs allowed them to both have their own political agendas maintained and carried out through the guise of Caesar's tribune.

[159] Tatum 2006: 203
[160] Plut. Crass. 16.
[161] Boak 1918: 20; Ward 1977: 286-7; Morell 2017: 181
[162] Seager 1979: 130
[163] Plut. Pomp. 53.
[164] Plut. Pomp. 53. It is understandable why this has not be brought up as a valid reason in modern scholarship as Plutarch bringing up love as a reason where no other primary sources do means it is most likely to fill the plot of the section.

The opposition's reaction - Cato

The reaction to the bill was not popular; Cato and Ninnius publicly opposed Trebonius and Cato refused to adhere to Trebonius' authority and was arrested, which caused a backlash on Trebonius' part.[165] Gruen argues that the extraordinary commands were by default not dangerous to the Republic.[166] This is true and should be acknowledged; for the command was by the typical use nothing too new. But the politician and affiliation among other factions is what was dangerous, in this case, through the reaction of the *Optimates* and other people alike complaining and trying to obstruct this bill, showing that there was a distrust in the aims of the politicians, in this case Pompey and Crassus. Gruen is correct in his statement but it must be factored in that threat level varies per individual.[167] Gruen and Evans acknowledge that the command was won through the grounds of violence and force, as Caesar, through Crassus' son, brought a contingent of troops from Gaul in support of the bill and consulship.[168] This therefore showed that Trebonius was being used by Caesar, as Gabinius was by Pompey, to further his own political agenda, as a triumvir and individual.[169]

The opposition's reaction – the tribunes

As written by Appian, "the tribunes vetoed a war against the Parthians, who had done no harm to Rome…"[170] Although this is a vague statement it shows that the command of Crassus was opposed by the tribunes. This is understandable for the command was to make war against a people, that the plebs would then have to fight, so from the point of a champion

[165] Drogula 2019: 185
[166] Gruen 1974: 542
[167] Gruen 1974: 542
[168] Gruen 1974: 440; Evans 2016: 91; Plut. Crass. 14.
[169] Read former chapter on the *Lex Gabinia*.
[170] App. Civil war. 18.

of the people, the tribunes could be argued as trying to protect the lives of plebs so they did not die for an individual's pride. Nonetheless no scholarship has willingly proposed this argument and prefers to stick to the common argument of the factions, stating how they are either *Optimates* or supporters of Cato. This therefore shows that there is a stark contrast in the views of modern scholarship.[171] According to Cassius Dio, the names of these tribunes were P. Aquillius Gallus and C. Ateius Capito.[172] These tribunes where noted for constantly challenging Pompey and Crassus in their consulship, and could well be the tribunes mentioned by Appian in his account.[173] Ateius, among others, strongly opposed Crassus going off to create a war, according to Plutarch's account. Again, this ties in with the other sources logically. What is worth noting is that Plutarch states that Aetius alone cursed Crassus, whereas Appian states it was the tribunes as a body.[174] Nonetheless what can be concluded is that the tribunes were opposed to the warmongering plans of Crassus, who had clearly chosen to follow him to satiate his need for conquest.[175]

This therefore shows that Trebonius was used to ensure commands over the three key regions of the Republic, two for the consuls and the third for Caesar via the consuls, giving the triumvirs the ability to hold a "monopoly" on the provinces. However it can also be understood that the sources have a multitude of accounts which suggests overall that there has been a lack of engagement or direct understanding of everything that happened through Trebonius.

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[171] This shows how Marxism as a theory or abstract argument being applied in a class struggle to protect the plebeian populace is again overlooked due to the fundamental issue of Marxism being about the lowest class in this case the slaves.
[172] Dio. Hist. 39. 32.
[173] Ramsay 2009: 44
[174] Plut. Crass. 16; App. Civil war. 18.
[175] Dillon & Garland 2009: 611

Conclusion

In this dissertation I have studied how the tribune of the plebs was used from the Reformation of Sulla to the second consulship of Pompey and Crassus. This office was used as a political tool to benefit a small group of individuals, in the late Republic. The tribune of the plebs was halted by Sulla and reduced to its bare function to minimalise the potential of a revolutionary politician to create an uprising through the tribune of the plebs legal powers. Yet it was through the very foundations of Sulla that the tribune was restored and, for lack of better words, abused by those ambitious to challenge the constitution and the Republic by a legal means. Macer's speech from Sallust helps show the commitment of the tribunes in the period of oppression put by Sulla, reflecting that the tribune was being penalised for the past in how those politicians had acted to regain their former authority. Yet at the end of the 11 year period the tribune was restored and Sulla undone. Gabinius and his proposal against the pirates showed that he was pro-Pompey and a tribune of the plebs and was willing to incite popular politics within the Republic again, to such an extent that through Gabinius the Senate was beaten and powerless to oppose. This showed that the tribune could be used as a weapon in opposition and this political tactic and style would be carried out for the rest of the Republic. There were tribunes on both sides, being the ultimate weapon with their veto and ability to potentially muster the crowds to riot. Manilius and his law showed that he was working in support of Pompey to avoid his opponents but to a less dramatic outcome. However, it demonstrated how the tribune was feared by the law's actions of Gabinius, for Manilius' law went unopposed and opened Pompey to a region which he could capitalise on. Vatinius was also used by Caesar to allow his command in Gaul to come into effect, but the sources show that there is a conflict within this as three tribunes were opposing Caesar's reform but were still victims of assault despite their legal protection (*sacrosantas*) within

Rome. Reflecting the changing political environment, the 50s were becoming more heightened and radical, again reference to the reforms of Sulla and the attempt to halt revolutionary politicians. Clodius was an agent for Caesar, but the use of Clodius shows a development in the use of the tribune, as Clodius engaged with the removal of opposition of political rivals, a move not done prior to the period in question. Trebonius was undoubtably used for the goal of the triumvirs; what is critical to acknowledge is that the tribune's law passed observes the proconsular commands that end the triumvirate two years later. His command allowed the triumvirate to dominate the three sides of the Empire, which gave Caesar his stability and army, Crassus his war and Pompey the West. Modern scholarship shows that there is a necessity to debate the tribune of the plebs and how it was used and looked at within history. The sources themselves present in some cases variations that do not always link up logically and therefore create tailored narratives for the scholars of the 20th and 21st century, which blurs the overall argument. The tribune is engaged with extensively by a few, notably Gruen and Ward, who have been engaged with throughout this dissertation. Marxism is hard to apply in this period, though looking at this political office there is a clear use of the tribune of the plebs for a more powerful politician to reap the benefits of authority and power, showing the abuse of a class position. Sulla, in trying to prevent radicalism in the Roman Republic and safeguard the future of it, created a movement which would radicalise the politics of Rome, and through the aid of the tribune bring the collapse of the Republic.

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