

ARCTOS

ACTA PHILOLOGICA FENNICA

VOL. XXV

HELSINKI 1991 HELSINGFORS

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M. LEPIDUS AND THE SECOND TRIUMVIRATE

E. BADIAN

Who invented the term "First Triumvirate" for the *conspiratio* of Pompey, Crassus and Caesar is by now a question not easy to answer. It would require more time and research than is worth investing in it. The expression certainly appears as early as the original edition of Drumann's *Geschichte Roms* (1834) and seems to be taken for granted there, so that it is probably much older. By the middle of the century, it was frequently used. Despite intermittent protests by careful scholars,¹ its use continues to the present day, and the distinction between the "First Triumvirate" and the "Second" (i.e. the real one) is thought appropriate and necessary even in works of serious scholarship.²

Whoever first used it no doubt intended it as one of those striking figures that draw attention, in a memorable way, to unsuspected similarities – as for instance, Cicero does in calling Pompey "Sampsiceramus". Like the Triumvirate, the *conspiratio* was a combination of three powerful men to gain control of the state: the term *Illiri rei publicae occupandae* would have suitably covered both of those alliances. But with the use of the term "First Triumvirate" now a commonplace, it is the differences that need to be stressed. After all,

¹ E.g. H. Strasburger, RE VII A 520; T.J. Cadoux, OCD² 1096.

² See, e.g., that intelligent and useful work by H. Botermann, *Die Soldaten und die römische Politik in der Zeit von Caesars Tod bis zur Begründung des zweiten Triumvirats* (1968) – a dissertation directed by Professor A. Heuss and published in the distinguished series *Zetemata*. German has the word "Dreibund" available (thus always Gelzer) to avoid this error.

"Sampsiceramus" is not generally used by scholars as a name for Pompey. The main difference, of course, is the lack of formal recognition for the *conspiratio*, which forced it to work through overwhelming *auctoritas* supplemented by *uis* – both, by then, almost traditional ways of establishing temporary control over the *res publica* for a limited purpose. The Triumvirate, on the other hand, was a triple dictatorship, modelled on Sulla's, with complete pseudo-legal control of the machinery backed by a monopoly of official force. What is more, there is no reason to think that the *conspiratio* was conceived of as a precedent for the Triumvirate of 43: structurally quite different, it is never invoked even for comparison and seems to have been irrelevant to its formation.

The use of the term "First Triumvirate" in many textbooks forces every teacher of Roman history, at almost any level, to waste time making the obvious distinctions and explaining the inappropriateness of the common label; whether students then follow what they have heard or what they have read is another matter. But it is clear that a term first presumably applied as a striking aid in understanding has now become an impediment to it – a mere hurdle of scholarly manufacture that must, as a matter of wasteful routine, be surmounted.

Confusion can extend well beyond textbooks and students, to established Classical scholars who work on Roman authors or texts without knowing much about the basic historical background to what they are discussing. There is a regrettable case in a standard work. In 1955, Enrica Malcovati of Pavia, an editor of texts by training, published a work too ambitious for her experience: *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta Liberae Reipublicae*.³ The brief historical notes on each of the orators come with references to RE, but may have been taken from some more elementary manual. The three who formed the "First Triumvirate" naturally appear as orators. But whereas M. Licinius Crassus (*cognomento Dives*)⁴ is *triumvir cum Pompeio et Caesare a. 60* (p. 342) and Pompey is *Triumvir a. 60 cum Caesare et Crasso* (p. 358), Caesar escaped the pseudo-office: *societatem potentiae cum Crasso et Pompeio iniit* (p. 383).

The discrepancy was picked up by a reviewer (JRS 46 [1956] 219) and

³ The preface is dated 1955, the copyright notice in subsequent editions 1953. I follow the date of the preface. The book is a complete recasting of a work originally published in 1930.

⁴ Thus, alas, also Gelzer in RE.

would have been easy to eliminate. Malcovati published an elaborate reply to her reviewers, rarely changing her mind. But she never commented on this point and did not think it important enough to correct. The descriptions thus remain in the fourth (and last) edition, to mislead ill-informed users of the work.

The confusion that can be created by the unfortunate term "First Triumvirate" when it is used by those not aware of its being a mere figure of speech could not be better illustrated. But it must now be added that there is a serious historical point to be considered as well. For there was indeed a Second Triumvirate, only it was not the (first) Triumvirate to which the title is conventionally misapplied by those who imagine a "First Triumvirate" in 60–59 B.C.

Early in 37, in fact some time after the term of the law creating the Triumvirate had expired, Octavian and Antonius met near Tarentum and agreed on a reinstatement of their powers.⁵ Octavian now conscientiously calls himself *Illuir iterum*: thus on the record of his Sicilian ovation in 36 (Inscr. It. XIII 1, 86–87), on a chance building inscription (ILS 77) and on his coins (Crawford, RRC nos. 538, 540). He was a stickler for legal correctness. M. Antonius, on the other hand, seems never to bother to indicate the iteration, although he carefully records and updates the number of his consulships and imperatorial salutations on his coinage.

More recently, it has become clear that M. Lepidus was also careful to note the iteration. On a municipal inscription of Thabracca, in his own province, he is called – in a strange combination, presumably due to the locals' being ill at ease with official Roman terminology – *imp. tert., pont. max., Illuir. r.p.c. bis* (sic), *cos. iter.*⁶ The inscription must have been put up in his term of office: the city would hardly engrave it in those terms after his disgrace and official deposition by Octavian. Two elements were previously unknown: his third imperatorial salutation, won (no doubt) for some minor success in Africa which

⁵ For the conflicting evidence on, and the confusion caused by, the much delayed renewal at Tarentum see (with citation of all sources then known) E. Gabba, in his *Appiani Bellorum Civilium Liber Quintus* (1970), LXVIII ff.; and cf. further n. 8 below.

⁶ The inscription of Thabracca, first published by J. Guey and frequently republished, can most conveniently be seen in ILLRP II 1276. The novelty (to us) of the third imperatorial title is noted there as elsewhere.

our sources do not bother to mention, and the counting of iteration in his triumviral tenure. We may conclude that M. Lepidus was trying to keep up with his colleagues: his inferior position, in which he seems to have peacefully acquiesced for several years, was now becoming irksome. Both M. Antonius (who advertises the fact on his coins) and Octavian had reached three imperatorial salutations at this point, as well as the second tenure of the Triumvirate.⁷ Lepidus was clearly unwilling to be left behind.

The inscription reveals a new ambition, which we are soon to see in action. What was the cause of that ambition? For one thing, Octavian's fortunes in his war against Sex. Pompeius had shown that he was vulnerable. This might be a time for a rival to assert himself. But a further suspicion must be voiced, apparently contrary to some of our evidence: it would now be reasonable to wonder whether M. Lepidus stressed his membership of the Second Triumvirate because he had not officially been made a member at all. It is clear that he had not been there, and it seems that he had not been consulted, during the prolonged and difficult negotiations that led to the reinstatement of the Triumvirate.⁸ The

⁷ For M. Antonius' third acclamation see RRC 533 (of 38) and then frequently, until he appears as *Imp. IIII* just before Actium (RRC 545/1). He seems not to have bothered to specify the second: up to the appearance of the third his coins call him simply *Imp.*, often with *Aug(ur)*. Octavian notes his third acclamation in a rather peculiar form on RRC 534 (of 38), explained by Mommsen in his edition of the *Res Gestae* (see 1883², 11). His fourth was for his Sicilian victory (Mommsen, *ibid.*).

⁸ See esp. App. 5,93,387 ff.; Plut. Ant. 35. (Dio has little to say about this in 48,54.) The chronology has been much discussed, as it bears on the vexed question of the *legis dies* of the Second Triumvirate. (See Gabba, *cit. n. 5* above.) It seems certain that the actual meeting cannot have been much before midsummer and may have been in early autumn. During (at least) the first half of the year, therefore, the Triumvirs lacked formal standing, since the *Lex Titia* was never renewed. Fortunately for Octavian, Agrippa had been appointed to be consul in 37 and retained the office throughout the year, so that Octavian could act through him. Antonius, not having to deal with Italy, probably did not have to worry about legal challenges to his authority. It seems rather unlikely that the agreement, when made, was retrospective, as from the beginning of 37, as the two dynasts had no good reason to give up the advantage in time that had been gained by the delay. The *legis dies* will have been fixed at least five years from the end of the meeting and is quite likely to have been the end of 32. (See Gabba for detailed discussion. No theories should be built on a hypothesis putting the end of the Triumvirate at the end of 33.) None of this appears in the *Fasti* (see *n. 19* below), where normal continuity seems to be implied. As Gabba points out, Augustus' statement (RG 7) that he held the power for "ten years on end" should be taken with a grain of salt, like various other statements in that document. The well attested break in continuity

literary sources do not mention Lepidus as receiving a share in the Second Triumvirate. In the pact of Brundisium, Appian (5,65,274) and Dio (48,28,4) both explicitly mention that Lepidus was to retain Africa. At Tarentum he is ignored. Appian merely reports that the two men who met there renewed their ἀρχή, which had run out, for another five-year term without asking the People. The word he uses is ἑαυτοῖς, which can only refer to the two men involved in the transaction (5,95,398). Similarly, and perhaps even more clearly, Dio (48,54,6), who specifies that they removed Sex. Pompeius from his priesthood and rescinded his designation as consul, and that they granted to themselves (using the same word as in Appian) a five-year extension of their ἡγεμονία, since the first quinquennium had run out. The mention of Pompeius contrasts with the total omission of Lepidus.

There is another point to be considered in this context. We incidentally hear that before the meeting at Tarentum Antonius had been negotiating with Lepidus about celebrating the marriage of Antonius' daughter (by his second marriage) to Lepidus' son, to whom she had been engaged since childhood.⁹ Octavian naturally found the fact that there were negotiations going on between them suspicious; he was reassured by his sister, Antonius' wife, that they were discussing nothing but the long-awaited marriage. Even if that was so (and we have no reason to think that Antonius kept Octavia fully informed of his political manoeuvres), it was enough to make Octavian feel uneasy at this dangerous time – a time when he was doing badly against Sex. Pompeius and when political alliances might therefore be volatile. In any case, he made these negotiations one of his main issues in the contacts preceding the meeting at Tarentum.

As far as we know, the marriage was never actually celebrated.¹⁰ It is nowhere referred to, certainly not among the marriage arrangements that went with the compact of Tarentum, when another daughter of Antonius', Antonia

did not need to be admitted later, and half a century after the event, *quotus quisque reliquus qui uidisset?*

⁹ App. 5,93,391. (Dio 44,53,6 wrongly records the betrothal as a marriage.)

¹⁰ See Gabba, op. cit. 160. Groebe, in his note on Drumann in Drumann – Groebe, *Geschichte Roms I* s.v. Aemilius 25 et al., presents the marriage as concluded, but adduces no evidence except for the negotiations preceding the meeting at Tarentum. The only wife of M. Aemilius Lepidus, son of the Triumvir and later conspirator, of whom we hear is Servilia (Vell. 2,88,3).

"Maior" (born to him by Octavia about two years earlier), was betrothed to (it seems) L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, son of Cn. Ahenobarbus,¹¹ Antonius' new ally, "even though he had been one of Caesar's assassins and had been entered on the proscription tablets as one who must die" (Dio). Since the child was Octavian's niece as well as being Antonius' daughter, that connection was no doubt approved by Octavian, who never hesitated to sacrifice *pietas* or principle to political advantage. The dropping of the suspect connection with Lepidus must, correspondingly, have been part of these comprehensive agreements.

Naturally, Lepidus had to claim inclusion in the agreements. That in itself is no more significant than the title of Triumvir, which the other two continued to use long after he had been eliminated. If (as seems clear from our literary sources) he had been left out, as he very nearly had even after Philippi (App. 5,3,12), he himself cannot have been expected to recognise it. On the contrary: his only possible retort was a policy of self-assertion, in an attempt to force his disloyal colleagues to reckon with him. As we have seen, the Thabraca inscription shows him determined to prove himself a full equal, keeping up with them both in Triumviral authority and in the record of military success.

Nonetheless, it seems that Octavian did not recognise him as an equal, even when he needed Lepidus' assistance against Pompeius. After summoning him from Africa for the war (Vell. 2,80,1: *arcessiuerat*), he treated him not as a colleague (συνάρχων) but as a subordinate (ὡς... ὑποστρατήγῳ... ἐχρήτο: Dio 49,8,3 f.) when they met in Sicily. This naturally not only gave Lepidus serious offence, but drove him into entering negotiations with Pompeius. As on some other occasions, early in his career, Octavian had arrogantly overplayed his hand and had to suffer the consequences. In Dio, this in fact becomes the reason why he felt compelled to offer battle to Pompeius.¹² Lepidus took no part in the battle – any more than Octavian himself, who had not done too well in naval encounters and preferred to leave the task to Agrippa. Lepidus remained outside

¹¹ Dio reports the engagement as being to Cn. himself, but since we know that it was L. whom Antonia actually married, this is likely to be simply mistaken, like his report of the "marriage" of M. Lepidus to Antonia (see n. 9 above). See PIR² A 884 for discussion.

¹² Appian's story of a knightly challenge to set battle by Pompeius, which Octavian was in honour bound to accept, can safely be ignored. For a detailed account of the campaign, with some proper regard for Lepidus, see Leonie Hayne, AClass 17 (1974) 59–65.

Messana, which was strongly held by Pompeius' legate L. Plinius.¹³ There he was joined by Agrippa after Agrippa's victory. Deserted by his commander, Plinius immediately offered surrender. Agrippa, loyally but unwisely, refused to accept without Octavian's authority. Lepidus now seized the opportunity thus offered to accept the surrender, thus gaining possession of Plinius' eight legions, which he allowed to join his own men in plundering Messana, in order to attach the army to himself.

So far, Lepidus had shown remarkable skill and initiative in first keeping his options open and then taking advantage of his opportunities. By the time Octavian arrived, Lepidus was facing him with twenty-two (though depleted) legions. After barely, and with little personal glory, escaping the danger from Sex. Pompeius, Octavian was suddenly faced with a much more serious challenge, which he had largely brought upon himself.

Octavian's manner suddenly underwent a change. He reproached Lepidus for having come to Sicily as an ally (App. 5,123,510) and now wanting to keep it for himself, and he charged him with ingratitude. This no doubt was to remind him, for the benefit of the assembled armies, of the fact that he owed his position to Octavian: after Philippi, M. Antonius had been willing to remove Lepidus from power, despite the engagement of their children, on the charge that he had been negotiating with Sex. Pompeius, but he had left Octavian free to give him part of his own portion of the Empire (as distributed between the two) if he saw fit. Octavian had generously given him Africa. Whatever the precise circumstances of that gift,¹⁴ it could be used to depict Lepidus as practically a

¹³ The name appears as Plenius in Appian; accepted by Hayne, *op. cit.* But see ILS 8891.

¹⁴ See App. 5,3,12; 12,47 (after Philippi); partly amended 53,223 (40 B.C.) and, by implication, 75,321 (below). Dio tells a more coherent and more complex story. In that account (48,21–23) Africa was part of M. Antonius' allocation while Numidia fell to Octavian; T. Sextius was able to gain control of both provinces and held them until Lepidus was sent by Octavian to take charge of them in 40, making out that the decision and the whole gift were his alone. This version must be correct, at least in outline: Appian has merely abbreviated, as often. Note that, not long before going to Athens for the winter of 39, Antonius seems not to have been aware of the fact that Lepidus had taken over Sextius' legions and wanted them to join him in the East (App. 5,75,321). (See Gabba's comment *ad loc.*, not entirely satisfactory.) Lepidus was therefore in limbo, with the title (it seems) of *IIIuir r.p.c.* but no territorial base, between Octavian's return to Italy and his despatch to Africa. This puts Octavian's decision to send him there (partly at Antonius' expense) in a highly plausible light. He chose to take advantage (apparently without informing Antonius) of

client of Octavian, holding his present position by Octavian's grace. Both the charge of connections with Pompeius and Antonius' attitude to his ally and *adfinis* remarkably foreshadow the situation at Tarentum, and help to enable us to unravel the latter. It is quite conceivable, of course, that on the earlier occasion Lepidus had indeed tried not to lose an old association with Pompeius (Dio 45,10,6; 48,17,1) and that Octavian preferred to "forgive" him and keep him in the political game, as no longer dangerous to himself and a future counterweight against Antonius, in the clash between them that Octavian could no doubt already foresee. But it is at least equally likely that the charges of treasonable negotiations were pure invention, based merely on the known earlier contacts with Pompeius, and that Octavian knew he had no reason to suspect Lepidus' loyalty in 42. That at this time Lepidus was closer to Octavian than to Antonius, despite their *adfinitas* – perhaps because Octavian was the heir of Caesar – seems to be shown by his coinage: his sole personal issue of the period, an aureus and a denarius (RRC 495), shows his own head on the obverse and Octavian's on the reverse.¹⁵

By the time the two men met outside Messana, Octavian's treatment of him had shown Lepidus that further co-operation on Octavian's terms was impossible: whether or not he held triumviral power, it would amount to accepting a position as Octavian's *legatus*. The military strength which he had suddenly acquired seemed to indicate that this was the time to regain his independence and his authority. That strength had been won, as it happened, at a time when Octavian's weakness must have been widely known, despite Agrippa's recent victory. Resistance to Octavian's harsh rule in Italy was strong,¹⁶ and his army was restive. Not long after, he had to deal with a major mutiny. Both the

the permission obtained two years earlier when it began to appear useful to keep Lepidus warm against Antonius. Antonius' later claim to half the territory and the army (Dio 50,1,3) gives independent support to this version. Octavian's "gift" had been far from disinterested.

¹⁵ This is Lepidus' only personal issue. (The gold is a small issue.) See, on all this, Crawford's scornful comment, RRC II 740. In the official coinage of the Triumvirs, of course, Lepidus had his share (see RRC 494).

¹⁶ See Dio 49,15,1 (rebellion in Etruria); 48, 52–53 (especially the favour won by the aedile M. Oppius, which had to be posthumously suppressed, and the dire omens disquieting the people); cf. App. 5,92,384 (famine causing dissatisfaction in Rome; also refusal to pay the taxes that Octavian had imposed).

army and the civilian population were tired of civil war, and might support one who was not so closely identified with it. What Lepidus did not realise, surrounded as he personally was by a loyal elite of his forces (see App. 5,125,516), was that his own army, despite his recent indulgence, was in no better shape. He seems to have decided to wait, perhaps for trouble to erupt in Octavian's army, and certainly in full confidence that Octavian could not venture to attack him.

Octavian was well aware of this and had recourse to secret solicitation. Once he saw that this was moderately successful, he risked the one step that might defeat Lepidus without the greater risk of battle: taking only a small bodyguard with him, he boldly entered Lepidus' camp and began to harangue the soldiers. At the time, he was driven off. But the personal courage shown, retrieving his reputation in this respect, and the boldness of the step soon began to produce the desired effect: it recalled the character and the manner of his deified father. Caesar's son thus at one stroke regained the personal attraction and ascendancy which his name had given him, which Lepidus had never quite been able to acquire, and which Lepidus' cautious decision to remain inactive (*ἀργία* and *ἀπραξία*, as Dio and Appian respectively call it), although perhaps sound on a rational calculation, frittered away to the extent that he had it. The result of Octavian's gesture (and no doubt promises) was that Lepidus' army crumbled away and deserted to Octavian. Lepidus was left to surrender his *imperium* and plead for mercy. Octavian not only spared his life (although he did not allow him to live in Italy), but even allowed him to retain his pontificate, which might well have been impeached as obtained by dubious means. He wanted to advertise his regard for law and custom, as a preliminary to formally announcing the end of the civil wars.¹⁷

However, his termination of Lepidus' command was (necessarily) a unilateral act. At the time, Antonius apparently did not object, but later on, when relations between them were strained, in the propaganda war that preceded the Actium campaign, he chose to make an issue of Octavian's action at this time –

¹⁷ On this, see Dio 49,15 (remission of the taxes imposed; end of rebellion and honours for Octavian). For the dubious acquisition of the chief pontificate in 44, see Dio 44,53,6–7. See also App. 5,126,523; 130,542 ff., with a translation of the inscription celebrating the restoration of peace *terra marique*.

not so much that it had been done without consulting him (though this too was probably mentioned) as that Octavian had kept Lepidus' province and army without giving him (Antonius) the half to which he was entitled.¹⁸

This pretty well exhausts what we can gather from our quite ample literary sources about Lepidus' status after the compact of Tarentum and on its consequences. The major item of documentary evidence¹⁹ *prima facie* appears to contradict the literary tradition, but may not be decisive, any more than Lepidus' own claim to the title of Triumvir II, which cannot be regarded as objective evidence at all. There is perhaps, as so often, not enough evidence for a fully confident decision. But the literary sources can be supported by powerful considerations.

We have seen that M. Antonius, at Tarentum as after Philippi, was perfectly willing to sacrifice Lepidus' interests and connection with himself, and that, whatever the technical arrangements at Tarentum, he did nothing to protest when Octavian deposed him. What is more significant than Antonius' unscrupulous treachery is Octavian's own behaviour. For Octavian, when he saw

¹⁸ Dio 50,1,3; cf. n. 14 above.

¹⁹ The Capitoline Fasti (Inscr. It. XIII 1, 58–59) show the three dynasts, with M. Lepidus in first place, listed at the beginning of 37 B.C., preceding M. Agrippa's consulate. The title is entirely missing, but Degraffi restores it as referring to a second tenure. The years 42–38 are lost, and we cannot in fact tell whether the entry for the Triumvirs was repeated for each year during their tenure. But Degraffi is likely to be right, since the consuls of 37 are immediately followed by the consuls of 36, without repetition of the Triumvirs. This is therefore likely to have been so for their first tenure, and the listing at the beginning of 37 should indeed record the beginning of their iteration.

However, we must recall that the Fasti were inscribed in 31–30, not in 37–36. By then the political demand was for recording regularity. There is obviously no mention of the belated start to the second tenure, which was better forgotten. What is more, there is no room for any mention of Lepidus' deposition or abdication, which ought to have followed the listing of him as Triumvir. (E.g., *qui post annum abd.*) The entry at the beginning of 37 should therefore be regarded as a political document, not as an accurate historical record, and the unanimous implication of the literary sources as to the omission of Lepidus is not superseded by this entry. The Fasti were intended for posterity.

It should be added that, as early as their negotiations with Sex. Pompeius at Misenum (App. 5,71,299), Antony and Octavian had apparently been willing to suggest that they would depose Lepidus and coopt Pompeius in his place – though in the end they decided to cheat Pompeius rather than Lepidus over this matter. (The fact that Pompeius was eager to accept this should also be borne in mind in any consideration of his relations with M. Lepidus.)

no reason for recourse to treachery or violence, was punctilious in legal correctness. He showed this on some other well-known occasions²⁰ and, in Lepidus' own case, by letting him keep the chief pontificate so dubiously acquired. His treatment of Lepidus as a *legatus*, before and after his arrival in Sicily, at a time when he knew he would have to depend on Lepidus' help, seems to advertise a formal right, indeed a claim, to do so. Naturally, when his position deteriorated, he chose not to press the claim. His further decision to deprive Lepidus of his command without consulting either Antonius or the Roman People (which he could presumably have persuaded to agree) must again have been meant to demonstrate that Lepidus had been no more than an insubordinate *legatus*. The implication that, at least for Octavian, he had lost his standing as *Illuir r.p.c.* seems overwhelming, and Antonius' failure to protest supports it. Where those two agreed, no one else was competent to judge; though for historical record treachery was better concealed.

It should now be clear that the (real) Second Triumvirate should not be simply amalgamated with the (real) First into a single tenure of power. It was no more so in its nature than it was in actual chronology. It appears in fact to have been a Triumvirate in name only right from the start, and not only after Lepidus' removal. Moreover, the fact that the two major dynasts had chosen to change it in this manner for their own benefit presented Octavian with an immediate crisis, the seriousness of which has tended to be obscured by the fact that Lepidus, like his father, is no favourite of historians, ancient or modern.²¹ But the failure has certainly been accentuated by the practice of those who excogitate a so-called "first triumvirate" in 60 B.C. and continue to foist the fiction on their unsuspecting students and unprotesting colleagues engaged in non-historical studies within the ancient field. No one has ever referred to a "Third Triumvirate" – a reference that would be necessary if the distinction

²⁰ See, e.g., his dispensation of Bononia from the oath of allegiance against Antonius, and the discovery of a good "legal" reason for disallowing M. Crassus' claim to dedicate the *spolia opima*.

²¹ For a protest against this attitude, see (e.g.) R.D. Weigel, *AClass* 17 (1974) 67, and, for a plausible *Rettung* of M. Lepidus, *cos.* 78, Leonie Hayne, *Historia* 21 (1972) 661–8. The latter unfortunately appeared too late to be used or listed in Gruen's *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (1974).

between the two real Triumvirates and its historical consequences were to be noticed. Such a reference, of course, would be contrary to our actual sources and would explode the fiction regarding the *conspiratio* of 60, but it would at least show proper appreciation of the fact that the "Triumvirate" was not a single tenure of office created by the *Lex Titia*. Perhaps the considerations here advanced will add some force to the appeal which (as we have seen) has often been made by eminent scholars to drop the unnecessary and historically misleading terminology both in teaching and in writing. At least it should be clear to those who take history seriously that "mere" terminological error can have wider consequences in obscuring real historical developments.