

ON 1 JANUARY 39 THE EMPEROR GAIUS became consul for the second time. Thirty days later he resigned and was replaced by Q. Sanguinius Maximus, who remained in office until 30 June together with the *consul ordinarius* L. Apronius Caesianus (Dio 59.13.1–2; Suet. *Cal.* 17.1). On 1 July these two were succeeded by *suffecti* who, under normal circumstances, would have remained in office until the end of the year.¹ According to Dio 59.20.1–3, however, the unfortunate pair neglected to proclaim a *supplicatio* in observance of Gaius' birthday on 31 August, and compounded their error two days later by celebrating the anniversary of Augustus' victory at Actium over Gaius' greatgrandfather Antonius: "For this Gaius removed them from office the very day, first smashing their fasces, whereupon one of the consuls became despondent and killed himself" (Dio 59.20.3: ἐκείνους μὲν δὴ διὰ ταῦτα αὐθημερὸν τῆς ἀρχῆς ἔπασσε, τὰς ῥάβδους σφῶν προσυντριψας, ἐφ' ᾧ δὴ ὁ ἕτερος αὐτῶν ἀδημονήσας ἑαυτὸν ἐσφαξε). For the next three days, it seems, the state went *sine summa potestate*, before new *suffecti* were elected,² an election of which Dio says: τὸν δὲ δὴ Δομίτιον τὸν συνάρχοντα αὐτοῦ λόγῳ μὲν ὁ δῆμος ἔργῳ δ' αὐτὸς εἵλετο (59.20.3). His report poses a difficulty to which various solutions have been proposed, none convincingly. Who is the referent of αὐτοῦ? In other words, whose colleague was Domitius?

It is important first to establish the identity of this Domitius. It is clear that Dio expects his readers to associate him with a character previously introduced into his narrative, and there are two who would qualify. At 59.15.3–5, under 39, Dio describes an arrangement between Gaius and Cn. Domitius Corbulo, "a senator," to raise money by prosecuting allegedly fraudulent *curatores viarum* and their contractors: "For this Corbulo achieved the consulship at the time (τότε μὲν), but later (ὑστερον δέ) under Claudius he was accused and punished" (59.15.5). But the signs point much more clearly to Cn. Domitius Afer.³ In 59.19.1–7, also under 39, Dio relates how Afer was brought before the Senate for insulting Gaius'

¹Six-month terms for each of two annual pairs of consuls had been the norm since the later reign of Augustus: see A. Degraffi, *I fasti consolari dell'impero romano* (Rome 1952) 6 ff.

²Suetonius, who records the hiatus (*Cal.* 26.3), attributes the removal of the *suffecti* only to their neglect of the Emperor's birthday. He was apparently unaware of the events of 2 September which (in Dio) also contributed. His *triduum*, then, may refer to the period from 31 August to 2 September.

³On the two Domitii see R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958) 327–328, 788 (Appendix 83).

youthfulness—the general charge was presumably *maiestas laesa*⁴—but feigned such admiration for the Emperor's speech against him that he managed to escape condemnation. Dio next interposes, *kata genos*, a brief account of an equally narrow escape by Seneca (59.19.7–8, *maiestas laesa* again), then unveils the peripeteia: Gaius “forthwith appointed Domitius consul, cashiering the consuls in office” (59.20.1). The whole narrative is coherent enough to leave no serious doubt that ὁ Ἄφρος ὁ Δομίτιος, first registered at 59.19.1 and referred to subsequently as Δομίτιος or ὁ Δομίτιος as the story proceeds (59.19.2, 6, 7; 20.1, 3), is our Domitius. This conclusion is consonant with recently published documentary evidence, a wax tablet containing a pledge of indebtedness given by a certain C. Novius Eunus on 15 September Cn. Domitio Afro, A. Didio Gallo co(η)s(ulibus) (AE 1973, no. 138).

But if Domitius was Cn. Domitius Afer, who was αὐτοῦ? Not Gaius, as has sometimes been proposed:⁵ all his consulships are accounted for, nor does grammar support such an identification. Not the suicidal consul: he and Domitius Afer could hardly have been colleagues even for a day. Nor can one speak of the *populus Romanus* (ὁ δῆμος) as electing “its colleague.” That makes poor sense and grammar. There is little alternative but to call in question the soundness of the text and to suggest that our difficulty is not one of Dio's making.

In fact the smallest of conjectures, first suggested tentatively by G. B. Townend,⁶ suffices to restore excellent sense. “In name it was the People, but in fact Gaius himself who elected Domitius *and* his colleague” (τὸν δὲ δὴ Δομίτιον καὶ τὸν συνάρχοντα αὐτοῦ).⁷ This conjecture permits us to take

⁴Cf. R. A. Bauman, *Impietas in Principem* (Munich 1974) 135–136.

⁵H. S. Reimar, *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani Historiae Romanae Quae Supersunt* (Hamburg 1750–1752) 2.924; F. W. Sturz, *Dionis Cassii Cocceiani Historiarum Romanarum Quae Supersunt* (Leipzig 1824) 3.691; 6.338, n. 210; E. Cary in his Loeb translation. Both Willrich (*Klio* 3 [1903] 452) and Balldon (*The Emperor Gaius* [Oxford 1934] 72, n.1) took τὸν Δομίτιον to be Domitius Corbulo and αὐτοῦ to be the recently mentioned Domitius Afer. This would require the pronoun to have as its antecedent a name mentioned two sections earlier, and separated from it by other proper names. It also assumes that Dio was unaware of the confusion that would result from failing to distinguish between two men with the same *nomen*; yet elsewhere Dio calls Corbulo either by his *tria nomina* (59.15.3) or by his *cognomen* (59.15.5; 60.17.2).

⁶“Traces in Dio Cassius of Cluvius, Aufidius and Pliny,” *Hermes* 89 (1961) 227–248, especially 235 n. 2: without the evidence of the wax tablet, Townend took Corbulo to be Afer's colleague after 2 September, and suggested Cluvius Rufus (=Κλούριος) as the deposed consul who survived.

⁷There is no precise parallel for this phrase in the passages cited in Nawiin's *Index Graecitatis* (v. 5 of Boissevain's edition of Dio), s.v. συνάρχω. Dio 36.41.2 (καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ συνάρχοντες αὐτοῦ) comes reasonably close; cf. 43.49.1; 53.1.1; 59.13.2; and 68.2.4, which suggest how Dio might have written our passage had he wanted to say that Gaius had chosen Domitius as *his* colleague.

τὸν συνάρχοντα as A. Didius Gallus and αὐτοῦ as Domitius Afer, just as the testimony of the wax tablet, which names these two as colleagues, requires.

Why did the scribe of the *codex Marcianus* (or a predecessor) err? A plausible explanation is that, having taken ὁ ἕτερος as “the one of the two” deposed consuls, he mistakenly took the next person mentioned to be the other. This mistake necessitated his reducing two suffect consuls—Δομίτιον καὶ τὸν συνάρχοντα αὐτοῦ—to one through the dropping of καὶ (or τε). His grasp of the context was not strong enough to prevent this lapse.⁸

Dio does not say who the *suffecti* deposed by Gaius were. Discussion of their identity is best prefaced with a list of the consuls of 39:⁹

C. Caesar Augustus Germanicus II (for 30 days—Dio 59.13.2; Suet. *Cal.* 17.1) 1–30 Jan.

L. Apronius Caesianus (for 6 months—Dio *l.c.*) 1 Jan.–30 June

Q. Sanquinius Maximus II (in place of C. Caesar—Dio *l.c.*; cf. Suet. *Cal.* 17.1) 31 Jan.–30 June

Cn. Domitius Corbulo (Dio 59.15.5; cf. 59.20.1–3; Suet. *Cal.* 26.3) 1 July–2? Sept.

Ignotus (Dio 59.20.1–3; Suet. *Cal.* 26.3) 1 July–2? Sept.

Cn. Domitius Afer (Dio 59.20.3; cf. Suet. *Cal.* 26.3; in office 15 Sept.—*AE* 1973, no. 138) 4? Sept.–31 Dec.

A. Didius Gallus (in office 15 Sept.—*AE l.c.*; cf. Dio 59.20.3 as emended; Suet. *Cal.* 26.3) 4? Sept.–31 Dec.

On the assumption that a single pair of *suffecti* fills the interval between the retirement of Apronius Caesianus and Sanquinius Maximus on 30 June and the *débâcle* of 2? September, and that Domitius Afer and Didius Gallus remained in office until year’s end, one of the deposed men should be Cn. Domitius Corbulo, advanced to the consulship as a reward for seconding Gaius’ fiscal schemes (59.15.5, under 39; quoted above).¹⁰

But the identity of Corbulo’s colleague is much more elusive. Gallivan, in his new account of the *fasti* for the reign of Gaius (above, note 9), entertains eight possible candidates. But seven of these can be shown to have survived the year of the suicide. L. Annius Vinicianus lived to be put forward as a candidate for the throne in 41 (Dio 60.15.1); Josephus’

⁸On the manuscript, see Boissevain 1.lxviii ff. The error is better attributed to a scribe than to Dio, well versed, as a consular senator and a Roman historian, in the public magistrates. See also n. 10.

⁹This list adapts those of Degraffi (above, n. 1) and P. A. Gallivan, “The *Fasti* for the Reign of Gaius,” *Antichthon* 13 (1979) 66–69.

¹⁰It is odd that Dio does not mention Corbulo’s deposition at 59.15.5. On the other hand, his *τότε μὲν* here and other temporal expressions in 59.15–16 suggest that he was sure of his chronology; and he shows a fair knowledge of the consular *fasti* of 39, referring to seven positions (apparently all of them) and naming five of the consuls (counting Corbulo).

enigmatic Κλούιτος was in the theatre on the day of Gaius' assassination (*AJ* 19.91–92); C. Ummidius Durmius Quadratus was a legate of both Claudius and Nero (*PIR*¹ V[U] 600); Pompeius Pedo died under Claudius (*Sen. Apoc.* 13.5; 14.2); and L. Popillius Balbus and P. Anteius Rufus both governed provinces in the same reign (*PIR*¹ P 622; *PIR*² A 731). The elimination of Pompeius Pennus is more complicated. In the only extant reference to Pennus, Seneca (*Ben.* 2.12.1–2) describes his *acquittal* by Gaius of a capital charge and his grateful *proskynesis*. If Pennus is to be our suicide, we must assume that Seneca's anecdote refers to a charge laid against him *before* 1 July 39 (when, if our *ignotus*, he entered office). Yet Seneca says that Pennus was already *consularis* at the time of his acquittal. So he cannot be our man.¹¹ The eighth name, that of Mussidius Pollianus, is a possibility, but a remote one, since no event in his career is dated by year or reign (*ILS* 913; cf. Gallivan, *CQ* 28 [1978] 416). In short, we are left for the present without any likely candidate.¹²

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¹¹The *proskynesis* of Pennus fits with less strain in the later reign of Gaius than before 1 July 39. Such obeisance we know to have been introduced first by L. Vitellius on returning from his governorship of Syria (*Suet. Vit.* 2.5; *Dio* 59.27.4; cf. *Tac. Ann.* 6.32.4); it was apparently *de rigueur* by the beginning of 40 (59.24.4; Smallwood on *Philo Leg.* 116).

¹²This is not a very helpful conclusion in itself. However, it has the merit of showing whom not to consider under 39. It also sheds light on the positions of *suffecti* still vacant in the latter half of 40, where the claims of Vinicianus and Κλούιτος are strengthened: no place remains for them before 40; Vinicianus could hardly have been a candidate for the throne after Gaius' assassination (24 January 41) unless he had already held the consulship; and Κλούιτος is described by Josephus as *consularis* on the day of the assassination (*AJ* 19.91).

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