

THE APPOINTMENT OF GLABRIO (COS. 67) TO THE EASTERN COMMAND

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EARLY IN 67 B.C., the tribune of the plebs A. Gabinius carried a law appointing M'. Acilius Glabrio governor of Bithynia-Pontus to succeed L. Licinius Lucullus.¹ This seemingly innocuous act was highly controversial at the time and remains so today. Senatorial leaders argued that the removal of Lucullus at that time was equivalent to robbing him of a successful conclusion to his command. Modern writers have been concerned with quite another matter: the motivations and political connections of both Gabinius and Glabrio. Theories are both numerous and divergent, dividing primarily on the issue of the extent of involvement of Cn. Pompeius Magnus.² This lack of consensus demonstrates the need for a more careful study of the principals in this event to determine their

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¹Dates in this article are understood to be B.C. unless otherwise specified. Modern works cited more than once are as follows: E. Badian, "The Early Career of A. Gabinius (Cos. 58 B.C.)," *Philologus* 103 (1959) 87-99, hereafter "Early Career;" E. Badian, *Publicans and Sinners: Private Enterprise in the Service of the Roman Republic* (Ithaca 1972), hereafter *Publicans and Sinners*; J. P. V. D. Balsdon, "Consular Provinces under the Late Republic," *JRS* 29 (1939) 57-73, 167-183, hereafter "Consular Provinces;" T. R. S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* (New York 1951-1960), hereafter *MRR*; Peter Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander* (Columbia, Mo. 1981), hereafter *Pompey*; M. Griffin, "The Tribune Cornelius," *JRS* 63 (1973) 196-213, hereafter "Cornelius;" E. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1974), hereafter *Last Generation*; L. Hayne, "The Politics of Glabrio," *CP* 69 (1974) 280-282, hereafter "Glabrio;" B. Rawson, *The Politics of Friendship: Pompey and Cicero* (Sydney 1978), hereafter *Politics of Friendship*; R. Seager, *Pompey: A Political Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1979), hereafter *Pompey*; B. Twyman, "The Metelli, Pompeius and Prosopography," *ANRW* 1.1 816-874, hereafter "Metelli;" A. Ward, *Marcus Crassus and the Late Roman Republic* (Columbia, Mo. 1977), hereafter *Crassus*.

²There has been a long development on both sides of this issue. Those who find no role for Pompeius in Glabrio's appointment display a wide variety of interpretations. Th. Mommsen (*Rom. Gesch.* 5.116) saw Gabinius as an agent of the *populares* party who gave Glabrio this command to thwart Pompeius' ambitions of holding both the Mithridatic and pirate commands. Others, including H. Last (*CAH* 9.346), D. Magie (*Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century after Christ* [Princeton 1950] 1.348-349, 351), and H. Hill (*The Roman Middle Class in the Republican Period* [Oxford 1952] 158), seem to gloss over the issue of Pompeius' involvement, Hill offering the suggestion that Gabinius was motivated by hostility toward Lucullus and the Senate. M. Gelzer ("Pompeius 70,"

motivations. This article will focus on these figures and the contemporary events in Rome and the empire to establish whether Pompeius was the mastermind or the fortuitous beneficiary of Glabrio's appointment to succeed Lucullus.

Lucullus had secured the command of the Third Mithridatic War together with the provinces of Asia and Cilicia in 74. During the eight years of campaigning that followed, he had not only successfully defended Roman territory but also had driven Mithridates from his kingdom of Pontus and had invaded Armenia to chasten Tigranes, the king's chief ally. Success in the field, however, was not matched with popularity among his troops. Plutarch evaluated Lucullus as a harsh taskmaster who failed to elicit strong feelings of loyalty from his men.³ Increasingly, they resented the difficulties of the Armenian campaigns; and encouraged by P. Clodius, they were on the verge of mutiny by the end of 69. Moreover, Lucullus had not managed to effect the capture or death of either king.⁴

Lucullus' behavior in his provinces had not elicited deep feelings of admiration and support in Rome, either. His measures to ease the tax burden

Kleine Schriften [Wiesbaden 1962–64] 2.176–177) argues that Pompeius could not predict Lucullus' disasters in 67. The most thorough argument against Pompeius' involvement is given by B. Twyman ("Metelli" 864–873), who attributes virtually all of the dismantling of Lucullus' command to senatorial jealousy. Twyman denies a connection between Gabinus and Pompeius early in 67, but does not offer a substitute motivation for either Gabinus or Glabrio. Most recently, Peter Greenhalgh (*Pompey* 76, 239) portrays Pompeius as becoming too preoccupied with the pirate command to pursue an Eastern command. He also suggests briefly that Gabinus may have offered the command to Glabrio to limit consular opposition to his political schemes.

Those arguing for Pompeius' involvement seem to be somewhat more consistent, generally portraying Pompeius as manipulating Gabinus and Glabrio in order to secure the Mithridatic War for himself at a later time. L. Hayne ("Glabrio" 282) is the least certain, being only tempted to see such a connection. H. Butler and M. Cary (*M. Tulli Ciceronis de Provinciis Consularibus Oratio ad Senatum* [Oxford 1924] 90), E. Sanford ("The Career of Aulus Gabinus," *TAPA* 70 [1939] 71), J. Van Ooteghem (*Lucius Licinius Lucullus* [Brussels 1959] 153–154), and W. Anderson (*Pompey, His Friends, and the Literature of the First Century B.C.* [Berkeley and Los Angeles 1963] 14) are more certain but do not argue the point to any great extent. The most complex argument has been developed by J. MacDonald Cobban in *Senate and Provinces 78–49 B.C.* (Cambridge 1935) 123–124. He portrays Pompeius as plotting the recall motivated by jealousy towards Lucullus. The choice of Glabrio, a loyal conservative, was a master stroke to conciliate the Senate. B. Rawson (*Politics of Friendship* 54–55) and R. Seager (*Pompey* 32) also follow this argument, the latter rejecting Gelzer's and Twyman's arguments against Pompeius' foresight of Lucullus' disasters. A. Ward (*Crassus* 27–28) and E. Gruen (*Last Generation* 80) also see Pompeius in such a role but consider Glabrio a Pompeian ally and not simply an unsuspecting placeholder.

³*Luc.* 33. Plutarch attributes this view to Sallust. See also Dio 36.16.1–3.

⁴For the chronology and sources of Lucullus' campaign, see *MRR* 2.100 and *passim*, esp. 106–109; and *MRR Supplement* 34–35. For the start of the campaign, see now B. C. McGing, "The Date of the Outbreak of the Third Mithridatic War," *Phoenix* 38 (1984) 12–18.

of the debt-ridden cities of Asia in 71 alienated the *publicani* and their supporters among both the senatorial and equestrian classes.⁵ By 69, Lucullus' popularity in Rome was sufficiently low for him to be relieved of the province of Asia.⁶ The removal of this particular province would indicate that the tax contractors were heavily involved in the procedure.⁷ Dio, however, regarded the action as a popular response to charges that the general was prolonging the war for his own benefit (36.2.1–2). In the following year, the praetor L. Quinctius⁸ unleashed a full-scale assault on Lucullus. Plutarch reported a vicious attack on the general's behavior and motives which stirred the popular assembly to vote successors to Lucullus and the dismissal of many of his troops.⁹ Plutarch is perhaps conflating events at this point in his narrative, for parts of the account appear to pertain to the Gabinian actions of the following year.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Lucullus did lose Cilicia to Q. Marcius Rex, who was assigned that region as his proconsular province for 67.

At least some of the responsibility for the growing political hostility to Lucullus in Rome must be laid at the general's own feet. In his dispatches to the Senate, Lucullus painted a glowing picture of success, including a highly inaccurate portrait of Mithridates as a completely subdued monarch (Plut. *Luc.* 35.5; see Dio 36.43.2). Some time between 70 and 68, probably nearer the latter date, Lucullus had also requested a senatorial commission to assist in the organization of a new province in Pontus, indicating to Rome that the major portion of the war was completed and a regular succession of governors could soon begin.¹¹ By this action Lucullus had given his

⁵See Badian, *Publicans and Sinners* 98–99.

⁶According to Dio (36.2.2), Asia became a praetorian province. Cf. Sallust *Hist.* 4.71 M.

⁷So Badian, *Publicans and Sinners* 98, 151. Cf. Twyman, "Metelli" 864–866, for the view that the reaction to Lucullus can be attributed entirely to political hostility within the Senate.

⁸For the name, see *MRR* 2.138. Plutarch refers to him as "L. Quintus," Sallust as "Quinctius."

⁹*Luc.* 33.4–5. According to Sallust (4.71 M), Lucullus attempted to bribe Quinctius to avoid this action.

¹⁰In his account the people voted successors to Lucullus and released some of his troops from military service, surely a confusion with the release of the Valerians by Gabinius the following year.

¹¹Dio (36.43.2) vaguely placed the sending of commissioners a little before the passage of the Manilian Law. Plutarch (*Luc.* 35.5–6) said that the commissioners arrived at about the same time as the dismissal notices for the Valerian troops, i.e., in 67. This would seem to indicate a late date for the appointment (so Twyman, "Metelli" 868–869). Cf. Broughton (*MRR* 2.131 n. 6), who argues for 70 as the most likely date, and Parrish ("Crassus' New Friends and Pompey's Return," *Phoenix* 27 [1973] 361), who argues for 69 after the victory at Tigranocerta, among others who argue for an early date. On the senatorial commission, see T. R. S. Broughton, "Notes on Roman Magistrates," *TAPA* 77 (1946) 40–41.

political enemies justification for charges that he was needlessly prolonging the war. The stage was now set for the final indignity: the removal of Lucullus from the command of the Mithridatic War itself.

A. Gabinus completed the humiliation of Lucullus by legislating the discharge of some of his troops and replacing him with M'. Acilius Glabrio, one of the consuls of 67.¹² Glabrio, a man of only modest accomplishments, is a rather obscure figure, with no obvious ties to Gabinus.¹³ Why Gabinus chose him to replace Lucullus is a question ignored by extant sources, but the tribune's motivation at this point is of critical importance to the interpretation of this event. Was Gabinus here acting as a cog in the Pompeian political machine, or was he acting independently with an eye to furthering his own political ambitions?

The role of Pompeius in the Glabrio appointment depends on three things: his relationship with Gabinus, his connections to Glabrio, and his ambitions. In the first of these, considerable uncertainty exists. The pirate law initiated by Gabinus later in the spring of 67 clearly indicated Pompeian influence, but an earlier linkage cannot be demonstrated. Both men had been among the Sullan supporters during the 80's, but they did not fight in the same theaters during the civil war and had no recorded connections.¹⁴ Nothing has survived concerning Gabinus' activities during the 70s while Pompeius was reaping glory in Spain. Although Badian's proposal to connect them in the Sertorian War would fill a gap in Gabinus' early career, the argument involves an unwarranted extrapolation from the later association in the pirate law.¹⁵ Even Pompeius' backing in Gabinus' election, while perhaps attractive, does not necessarily follow from the pirate law.¹⁶ That Gabinus was able to capitalize on popular discontent with Lucullus' handling of the Mithridatic War should in itself have been sufficient to secure his election to the tribunate. As will be seen in the case of Pompeius and Glabrio, a close alliance is not implied in mutual hostility

¹²For sources, see *MRR* 2.143, 144, 150.

¹³On Glabrio's career and possible political affiliations, see Hayne, "Glabrio." The paucity of information about Glabrio is well illustrated by this brief article.

¹⁴On the identification of Gabinus as a Sullan, see Badian, "Early Career" 87-99. In 86, Gabinus served as a military tribune in the first Mithridatic War (Plutarch *Sulla* 16.8, 17.5-7) and later as a legate to end the Second Mithridatic War in 81 (Appian *Mith.* 66). On the lack of connection between Gabinus and Pompeius in these years, see R. S. Williams, "The Role of Amicitia in the Career of A. Gabinus (Cos. 58)," *Phoenix* 32 (1978) 196-197.

¹⁵"Early Career" 94-96.

¹⁶M. Griffin ("Cornelius" 209) suggests that Gabinus' marriage to a Lollia implies a connection between Gabinus and Pompeius before 67; but the marriage is attested only by a cryptic comment of Suetonius (*Iul.* 50). There is no evidence to suggest that this was Gabinus' first or only marriage. If this marriage was contracted to seal the *amicitia* between Pompeius and Gabinus, a date of 67 or even later is as likely as an earlier one. Pompeius may have been active in the elections for 67, but no extant sources mention that fact or any support for Gabinus.

to Lucullus unless one wishes to postulate an "anti-Lucullan party" in Rome.¹⁷

Pompeius' connection with Glabrio is even more tenuous. Only in a few instances do extant sources indicate possible contacts at all. In 83, due to a rearrangement of political alliances, Glabrio divorced his pregnant Metellan wife in order for her to wed Pompeius (Plut. *Sulla* 33, *Pomp.* 9). Depending on the circumstances, this may have caused Glabrio to harbor a deep animosity towards Sulla rather than Pompeius, but even the most tortuous logic cannot transform this incident into the basis for an alliance.¹⁸ Evidence of later ties between the two is circumstantial at best. Mutual hostility to Verres, perhaps to Glabrio's consular colleague C. Calpurnius Piso, and even to Lucullus show only shared dislikes, not personal *amicitia*.¹⁹ It is true that Pompeius' later Eastern command was aided by Glabrio's lack of effort in Bithynia-Pontus. Some have suggested that Pompeius actually chose Glabrio to act as a place-holder either through collusion or through a correct assessment of his sheer incompetence.²⁰ This interpretation deserves closer attention.

Collusion between Pompeius and Glabrio is easily dismissed. Glabrio, a man of consular rank, would hardly have participated in such a transparent ruse unless he received substantial compensation. By co-operating in such a scheme, he would have to relinquish in advance any hope of military glory in the Mithridatic War. In addition, he would be giving up a proconsular province already assigned by the Senate.²¹ Such provinces rarely lacked opportunities for glory and profit even for honest governors. Yet nowhere is there any indication that Glabrio profited from his ill-fated command.²²

¹⁷Twyman ("Metelli" 866-869), in arguing that the Senate, not the *equites* or *populus*, was primarily responsible for the dismantling of Lucullus' command, nevertheless demonstrates that opposition to Lucullus was widespread by 67.

¹⁸Hayne ("Glabrio" 281) sees this as a basis of animosity toward Pompeius. Ward (*Crassus* 27) suggests the possibility of a friendship between Pompeius and Glabrio because the divorce "may have aroused in Glabrio more enmity toward Sulla and his optimate supporters than toward Pompey." Gruen (*Last Generation* 131) sees this "marriage tie" as evidence for an alliance. Cf. Greenhalgh, *Pompey* 239, who finds Gruen's position "incredible."

¹⁹See Hayne, "Glabrio" 281-282. Glabrio's attitude toward Pompeius in 67 is ambiguous. Glabrio supported Piso's law against bribery (Dio 36.38.1), which was prompted by Piso's hostility toward Cornelius; but he apparently did not support his colleague in other activities against Cornelius and certainly not against Gabinius or Pompeius.

²⁰See above, n. 2.

²¹The *lex Sempronia* of 123 required the Senate each year before the consular elections to assign two consular provinces for the following year (Cicero *Dom.* 24, *Prov. Cons.* 3). Actual provinces were determined by lot soon after the elections (Cicero *Dom.* 24). The choice of provinces was not subject to tribunician veto (Cicero *Prov. Cons.* 17) but could be altered by a subsequent law. This often occurred in the post-Sullan years, whether for political convenience or military necessity.

²²Glabrio returned to Rome after his proconsulship to play a minor role in the Senate. See Hayne, "Glabrio" 282, for a brief description of his later career. One might note that he does not appear among the Pompeians following his proconsulship.

Certainly Pompeius did not neglect his allies, for Gabinius was amply rewarded by Manilius in 66 for his role in passing the pirate law.²³ One can safely accept the silence of the extant sources, therefore, and conclude that no such collusion existed. Incompetence, on the other hand, is another matter.

When he was appointed to succeed Lucullus, Glabrio set out early, presumably by the spring of 67.²⁴ Dio said he was hurrying to relieve Lucullus in order to rob him of final victory; but when he realized the military situation, he refused to take command of Lucullus' troops (36.17.1). The implication here is that Glabrio, like others at Rome, had been deceived by Lucullus' letters. The consul was sent out to take command of "mopping up" operations. Far from providing him with fresh troops, Gabinius had actually legislated the dismissal of part of Lucullus' army.²⁵ Arriving at approximately the same time as the senatorial commissioners, Glabrio appeared to be shocked to discover the truth. He refused to take the command from Lucullus on the frontier and remained securely in Bithynia (Dio 36.17.1, Plut. *Luc.* 35.5–6). Glabrio failed to act because of the desperate circumstances in which he found himself. Without fresh troops he had little hope for success and every expectation of disaster.²⁶ Glabrio certainly cannot be admired as a courageous general in this situation, but he ought not to be castigated too quickly as an incompetent.

The third consideration, Pompeius' ambition, is the most complex because Pompeius was undoubtedly ambitious, disliked Lucullus,²⁷ and

²³Pompeius himself requested that Gabinius be added to his staff. Although opposed by opponents of Pompeius, Gabinius was finally appointed as a legate in 66, possibly as a provision of the Manilian Law. See Cicero *Leg. Man.* 57–58.

²⁴Cicero (*Leg. Man.* 5, 26) indicated that Glabrio was already in the province by 66. Dio (36.14.4–15.1, 17.1–2) placed his arrival approximately at the same time Q. Marcius Rex was proceeding to his province of Cilicia (i.e., early in 67). In a subsequent passage (36.38.1–39.1), Dio attributes the bribery law passed shortly before the consular elections to both Glabrio and Piso, indicating that Glabrio may have been still in Rome in late spring. C. E. Stevens, "The Terminal Date of Caesar's Command," *AJP* 59 (1938) 183, indicates that the normal travel time from Rome to Cilicia was about two months. Glabrio, however, was travelling without a complement of troops and was hurrying. Plutarch's chronology (*Luc.* 35.1–5) shows that the rebellion of the Valerian legions which accompanied Glabrio's presence occurred in the summer of 67.

²⁵Cicero *Leg. Man.* 26, Dio 36.15.3, Plutarch *Luc.* 35.1–6. The troops involved, the Valerians, had been in the East since 86.

²⁶Cicero (*Leg. Man.* 5) said that Glabrio was "not well enough equipped to administer so great a command." This seems an understatement since he had only a portion of Lucullus' army. Lucullus himself recognized the need for reinforcements after Triarius' defeat, vainly requesting aid from Q. Marcius Rex (Dio 36.15.1, 17.2).

²⁷Plutarch *Pomp.* 30.6, 31.1–7, *Luc.* 31.1–4. See also, Velleius Paterculus 2.33.2–4. Cf. Twyman, "Metelli" 862–873. He contends that no ill-feelings existed between Pompeius and Lucullus before 66. To Twyman, Lucullus' contributions to Pompeius' pirate war demonstrate that the two had good relations. He does not explain why Pompeius, immediately upon beginning the Eastern command, acted with such extreme antagonism toward Lucullus.

ultimately secured the command against Mithridates. What does not necessarily follow is that he had any desire for the war in 67. By the time of his consulship in 70, Pompeius had already held a remarkable series of commands and had celebrated two triumphs, all without having held a regular magistracy.²⁸ He refused a proconsulship the following year, most probably because a normal governorship would have been beneath his *dignitas* and no suitable major command presented itself. To have pressed then to supersede Lucullus, who was apparently on the verge of triumph, would have been unthinkable. Pompeius was vainglorious, and Velleius said that he was unable to tolerate an equal (2.33.3); but such an obvious usurpation of a rival would have heaped ridicule, not glory, upon his head.²⁹ The command may also have been beyond Pompeius' reach, given his distinct lack of political success in the years immediately following his consulship.³⁰ Even in 67, it still appeared to those in Rome that Lucullus had the situation in the East well under control; but another, more serious concern had begun to occupy the attention of the populace—piracy.³¹ Pompeius too had seen the magnitude of the problem and its potential value to himself. By the early months of the year, he was already angling to convert this crisis into the greatest command ever entrusted to himself or any other Roman general.

With little Roman effort to counteract the problem, piracy had grown in less than a century from a localized irritation to a major menace throughout the Mediterranean. Based in Cilicia, Crete, and elsewhere, pirate fleets operated with increasing audacity, even attacking Italian coastal highways. Various measures to deal with piracy were clearly inadequate, and the pirates themselves grew ever bolder.³² Cicero chronicled numerous examples of the effrontery of the pirates (*Leg. Man.* 32–33) and complained that not only were the harbors and coasts of Italy unsafe, but even

²⁸For sources on Pompeius' earlier career, see *MRR* 2.70 and *passim*.

²⁹Both Seager (*Pompey* 28) and Greenhalgh (*Pompey* 72) portray Pompeius' retirement after his consulship as prompted largely by the lack of a suitable command. For Pompeius to have assumed Lucullus' command against Mithridates would have been no more suitable early in 67 than it had been in 69.

³⁰See particularly Seager, *Pompey* 28–30, on Pompeius' political problems during these years.

³¹After the debacle of M. Antonius Creticus in 71 (see *MRR* 2.123), the Senate ignored the pirate problem until 68 when Q. Caecilius Metellus (Creticus) was given a command specifically against the Cretan pirates (see *MRR* 2.139).

³²In the second century, piracy was allowed to grow unchecked after Rome stripped Rhodes in 168 of its ability to patrol the Aegean (Polybius 31.7) and proceeded to ignore or even encourage piracy by sponsoring the slave market at Delos (Strabo 14.5.1–2). During the Mithridatic Wars the pirates were encouraged directly and indirectly by the Pontic king to expand their activities beyond the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean (Plutarch *Pomp.* 24.1–25.1, Appian *Mith.* 62, 70, 91–93, *Sic.* 6.1, Cicero *Leg. Man.* 31–34, 53–55, Velleius 2.31.2, Dio 36.20.1–23.3).

the Appian Way was unusable (*Leg. Man.* 55). More seriously, the urban *populus* was feeling the pressure as the grain supply of Rome itself was all but cut off by pirate activity.³³ Apparently with Pompeius' backing and collaboration, Gabinius proposed a law granting an unspecified ex-consul (obviously Pompeius) an enormously powerful command including a huge fleet, unlimited troops and funds, and control of the entire Mediterranean for three years. He was also empowered to name twenty-four legates with *imperium* to assist in the ambitious project.³⁴

Armed with this unprecedented authority, Pompeius proceeded to clear the Mediterranean of pirates in less than a year.³⁵ Because this left him available to rescue the deteriorating Roman position in the East, some modern authors have concluded that the pirate command itself was only part of a clever ruse. Unable to gain the Mithridatic command directly, Pompeius first secured overwhelming power and then was in a position to demand what he truly desired: to succeed and to humiliate Lucullus.³⁶ But was this part of a single, far-sighted scheme, as many believe, or one of a series of fortunate circumstances which Pompeius shrewdly manipulated to his own advantage?

If Pompeius really was planning to take the Mithridatic War from Lucullus, his method of doing so was so devious, bordering on the bizarre. Stated succinctly, at the beginning of 67 he would have had to have known or believed the following: Mithridates was far from being defeated; Glabrio was a safely incompetent (or collusive) commander; the pirate problem had been vastly overrated; and competent and co-operative tribunes could be elected for 67 and 66 to pass the needed legislation. What, in fact, could Pompeius have known at that time?

In 67, the Third Mithridatic War was all but over, as far as anyone in Rome knew. This attitude was shared by Gabinius and the *populus* who dismissed the Fimbrian troops under Lucullus and sent Glabrio east without reinforcements. Lucullus himself did not expect Mithridates' resilient comeback, and even later senatorial *optimates* could still complain that Lucullus was being robbed, not of a war, but of a triumph (Plut. *Luc.* 35.7, *Pomp.* 30.3). If Dio can be trusted, even Glabrio himself thought he had better hurry to prevent Lucullus from grabbing all the glory as it was (36.17.1). Seager, in an effort to compare the replacement of Lucullus to Marius' supersession of Metellus in Africa, ignores the fact that Marius

³³Cicero *Leg. Man.* 34, Plutarch *Pomp.* 25.1, Appian *Mith.* 93, Dio 36.23.1–2, Livy *Per.* 99.

³⁴For sources, see *MRR* 2.144–145, 150–151.

³⁵For sources, see *MRR* 2.146. Seager (*Pompey* 37–39) gives a clear, concise description of Pompeius' conduct of the pirate war.

³⁶Most recently, see Seager, *Pompey* 32; Rawson, *Politics* 54–55; and Gruen, *Last Generation* 131.

knew firsthand the situation in Africa and had himself, not a substitute, appointed successor to a near-victorious general.³⁷ Thus, there is no basis for the charge of collusion between Pompeius and Glabrio, nor is there any indication that Glabrio would not have pursued a rapid conclusion to the war had the situation in the East been as those in Rome had believed it to be.

With respect to the pirate menace, could Pompeius have been confident of total victory in a single campaigning season? Previous to 67 the Romans had sent out several generals to deal with piracy, including M. Antonius Creticus and, most recently, Q. Metellus Creticus to deal specifically with the island of Crete.³⁸ None of these commands had produced spectacular results, and the greatest had met with stunning disaster.³⁹ Although Metellus was having some success in Crete, his efforts were not having much of an impact elsewhere in the Mediterranean.⁴⁰ As extensive as Pompeius' authority was, there was no assurance that he would prevail rapidly or that he would be ready for another task by year's end.⁴¹ Pompeius certainly believed in himself, but he was a seasoned military commander who had no delusions about the difficulty of warfare on such a scale. The Mediterranean is very large, and Pompeius' victories were the result of considerable luck as well as preparation and power.

In terms of political allies, Pompeius could perhaps be sure of Gabinus in 67, but the latter was an extraordinary tribune. Much less successful was another Pompeian ally, C. Cornelius.⁴² The certainty of achieving a Manilius to provide the climactic piece of legislation in 66 would have made Pompeius truly prescient.

³⁷*Pompey* 32. Seager's point is that Pompeius could have been urging the recall of Lucullus without knowing that disaster was about to befall the general. While true, the argument ignores the fact that Pompeius became the beneficiary of the recall movement only after several appointments and years had elapsed. If Pompeius were behind all this, he was acting in an uncharacteristically altruistic fashion.

³⁸On Antonius, see *MRR* 2.101–102, 111, 117, 123. On Metellus, see *MRR* 2.131, 139, 145, 154.

³⁹Antonius' command, perhaps the model for Pompeius', included the entire Mediterranean. He ultimately met with disaster in a battle off Crete and was forced to make a treaty with the pirates. For sources, see *MRR* 2.123.

⁴⁰Despite the efforts of Pompeius' legate Octavius to supersede him, Metellus rigorously pursued his reduction of the Cretan pirates by force, succeeding in 66. See note 38 above for sources.

⁴¹Although Rawson (*Politics of Friendship* 55) finds Pompeius' "lingering in the East long after he might have been expected to have returned to Rome" evidence that he was preparing to succeed Lucullus from the start, it is not, in fact, clear that the war was completed by the spring of 66. Plutarch (*Pomp.* 30.1) considered the war at an end, commenting that Pompeius was merely visiting Eastern cities during the winter, but Dio (36.45.1–2) gives a more plausible account of Pompeius' completing arrangements and preparing to deal with Metellus in Crete when he learned of the passage of the Manilian law.

⁴²On Cornelius' tribunate, see Griffin, "Cornelius." For sources, see *MRR* 2.144.

Yet another point concerning Pompeius' role should be considered: was he somehow involved in the progressive deterioration of Lucullus' position in the East? Certainly, the military situation was Lucullus' doing, but could Pompeius possibly have been behind Clodius' machinations in the mutiny of Lucullus' troops?⁴³ According to Plutarch, Clodius contrasted the benefits that Pompeian veterans from Spain were then enjoying with the hardships of Lucullus' troops (*Luc.* 34.3–5). This, however, is hardly evidence for Pompeian intrigue. Plutarch himself cited Clodius' disenchantment with his status in his brother-in-law's command structure.⁴⁴ The chief problem with postulating a connection here between Clodius and Pompeius is the lack of a basis of mutual benefit. Clodius received nothing from Pompeius as a result of his activities; and when he left Lucullus' army, he went off to Q. Marcius Rex, yet another brother-in-law, who gave him a more prominent command (*Dio* 36.16.2–3). In addition, one must note the hostility that otherwise characterized the relations between the two men and Clodius' generally independent, if erratic, behavior.⁴⁵ Plutarch's contention that Clodius was motivated by personal reasons remains the best analysis of his role in this affair.

To see Pompeius as a Machiavellian overlord with the foresight to know how events in the East would stand in 66 is to exaggerate grossly his abilities. That Pompeius had secured and executed the pirate command brilliantly was due to his talents and ambition. That he had accomplished this within a year and was thus available to step into the now deteriorated command in the East in 66 was the result of his good fortune. But one should not be so blinded by Pompeius' phenomenal success in two wars as to attribute to him superhuman powers of foreknowledge and control of such a wide scope of events. Not even Pompeius was that good.

By disposing of the supposition that Pompeius was the mastermind of the events of 67–66, the way is clear to look more closely at Gabinius and Glabrio. Any interpretation of the replacement of Lucullus must take into

⁴³Hayne ("Glabrio" 282) suggests this. Seager (*Pompey* 30–33) implies that Pompeius was behind much of the effort to unseat Lucullus without specifically endorsing his involvement in Clodius' mutinous behavior.

⁴⁴*Luc.* 34.2. Cf. *Dio* 37.14.4. Dio maintained that Clodius was motivated by an innate love of revolution.

⁴⁵On Clodius' independence, see E. Gruen, "P. Clodius: Instrument or Independent Agent?" *Phoenix* 20 (1966) 120–130. More specifically on Clodius' actions in the East, see A. W. Lintott, "P. Clodius Pulcher—*Felix Catilina*?" *G&R* 14 (1967) 157–158. See also E. Rawson, "The Eastern Clientelae of Clodius and the Claudii," *Historia* 22 (1973) 234–235. Rawson points out that the one time Clodius supported Pompeius was on behalf of his Eastern settlement and specifically against Lucullus. Twyman ("Metelli" 870–872) suggests that Gabinius and Clodius were acting in concert in 67 against Lucullus but without Pompeius' participation. The argument rests on a supposed mutual friendship with L. Sergius Catilina. This construction has many of the same difficulties as the alleged alliance between Pompeius and Clodius.

account the ambitions of these two men, each of whom benefited from the measure. Without the shadow of the great man to obscure their motivations and actions, a simpler, clearer, and more plausible explanation of the Labrius appointment emerges.

One can best begin by investigating the political benefits of the law to Labrius himself. The general mood in Rome was ripe for the recall of Lucullus. Popular suspicions of Lucullus' true motives in "prolonging" the war had already been aroused by Labrius' predecessors.⁴⁶ Labrius played on this theme himself, particularly when he publicly displayed a picture of Lucullus' new villa being built with the proceeds from the war (Cicero *Sest.* 93). In addition, even Lucullus' dispatches portrayed the war with Mithridates as virtually complete.⁴⁷ All this would enable Labrius to conclude that Lucullus could be safely removed from command for political reasons without endangering the Roman position in the East. In this way Labrius, himself a former Sullan, would establish his credentials as a *popularis* tribune by embarrassing a prominent champion of the *optimates*.

The recall of Lucullus, moreover, was not merely a popular issue but a shrewdly chosen initial piece of legislation; for Lucullus had become politically vulnerable during his long tenure in the East. To be sure, Lucullus had considerable support, particularly in the Senate where the dominant faction of the sixties was certainly behind him. This faction was led by Q. Hortensius, Q. Catulus, Q. Metellus Pius, Mam. Aemilius Lepidus, and M. Lucullus, the brother of the general.⁴⁸ Labrius would have been aware that their support had been strong enough to prevent Lucullus' removal in the preceding years but not strong enough to prevent the chipping away of Asia and Cilicia from his provincial command. Although these figures would later vigorously oppose Labrius' law to give Pompeius the pirate command, significantly, at this time they were virtually silent.⁴⁹ By choosing this issue, Labrius maximized his support for

⁴⁶Plutarch *Luc.* 33.4–5, Cicero *Leg. Man.* 26, Dio 36.2.1–2, Eutropius 6.9.

⁴⁷Dio 36.43.2. Dio also portrays Lucullus as still insisting that the war had been completed when he met with Pompeius in 66 (36.46.1–2). It appears highly unlikely that Lucullus, so obviously unable to accept failure, would ever have sent negative reports back to Rome.

⁴⁸Asconius (60 Clark) listed these *principes civitatis qui plurimum in senatu poterant* together as testifying against C. Cornelius. For details on the composition of the coalition and its relationship to Lucullus, see B. A. Marshall, "Q. Cicero, Hortensius and the Lex Aurelia," *RhM* 118 (1975) 141–145. See also A. M. Ward, "Cicero and Pompey in 75 and 70 B.C.," *Latomus* 29 (1970) 58–71; Gruen, *Last Generation* 52, 58. Cf. Twyman, "Metelli" 862–870. Twyman contends that Pompeius and Lucullus actually belonged to the same faction and were opposed by these senatorial leaders.

⁴⁹Whatever the opposition, it was not great enough to merit notice in the surviving accounts of the period. Twyman ("Metelli" 866–868) considers the chipping away of

subsequent legislation and demonstrated that he was a capable tribune and valuable political ally. Perhaps his activities at this time prompted his alliance with Pompeius. Certainly, Pompeius' political skills were such that he needed a good tribune.⁵⁰

To explain Gabinius' choice of Glabrio to replace Lucullus, both practical considerations and political motivations must be considered. Bithynia-Pontus was still an unsettled province requiring consular *imperium*.⁵¹ Because Gabinius regarded the war with Mithridates as nearly complete (as the details of Glabrio's appointment clearly indicate), he simply passed a law altering the province already assigned to Glabrio under the *lex Sempronia*. This was a rather less controversial proposal than the creation of a special command, which could have provoked massive opposition.⁵² His choice to fill such a command was thereby limited to the two current consuls. Because C. Calpurnius Piso, a political enemy whose active hostility was demonstrated later in Gabinius' tribunate, was clearly unacceptable, Glabrio was the natural choice.⁵³ In addition, Piso's opposition would be rendered much less effective if the tribune could count on the co-operation or even the neutrality of Piso's consular colleague.⁵⁴ Critical to all this was Glabrio's willingness to accept the command, for without his participation Gabinius' proposal would be for naught.⁵⁵

Glabrio's relative obscurity makes efforts to sort out his motivations somewhat uncertain. Although he is usually listed among the *optimates*, his family background and earlier career appear to be contrary to many of the positions taken by prominent figures so labelled.⁵⁶ Not enough evidence exists, however, to connect him securely either personally to Gabinius or more generally to *popularis* positions. Nevertheless, there is some reason to

Lucullus' command to be senatorial action led by the "dominant faction in the Senate." He does not explain why this faction did not simply supersede Lucullus by making the whole command a consular province in accordance with the mandate of the *lex Sempronia*. The fact remains that Lucullus was relieved by tribunician action, not by senatorial resolution.

⁵⁰See W. E. Caldwell, "An Estimate of Pompey," in G. Mylonas (ed.), *Studies Presented to David Moore Robinson on His Seventieth Birthday* (St. Louis 1953) 2.954-961.

⁵¹Balsdon ("Consular provinces" 64) notes that areas requiring major military action were generally considered consular provinces.

⁵²The Sempronian Law was often cancelled in the first century, at least seven times from 80 to 53 when the law was superseded by the *lex Pompeia*. See Balsdon, "Consular Provinces" 65.

⁵³On the conflicts between Piso and Gabinius, see Dio 36.24, Plutarch *Pomp.* 27.1-2. See also E. Gruen, "Pompey and the Pisones," *CSCA* 1 (1968) 156-157.

⁵⁴This is suggested by Greenhalgh (*Pompey* 239). Glabrio's political affiliations did not keep him from co-operating with Piso in an anti-bribery law designed in part to thwart Cornelius' unsuccessful stricter law (Dio 36.38.1-5). Otherwise, nothing is recorded of his consular activities.

⁵⁵At least fourteen consuls refused provinces in the period between 80 and 53. See Balsdon, "Consular Provinces" 63.

⁵⁶Hayne, "Glabrio" 280-282.

believe that he shared Gabinius' hostility toward Lucullus.⁵⁷ In the trial of Verres in 70, Glabrio was considered to be unsympathetic by Verres' backers, who included Q. Hortensius and the Metelli, the principal supporters of Lucullus.⁵⁸ In addition, Dio (36.41.1–2) related an incident in which Glabrio ordered the magisterial chair of the praetor L. Lucullus to be smashed because the latter failed to show proper respect when Glabrio passed by. If the passage is to be accepted, the incident would have occurred in 78 when Lucullus was praetor and Glabrio tribune of the plebs. Although there is no other reference to Glabrio as tribune, this action would parallel another in which the tribune Saturninus smashed the praetor Glaucia's curule chair.⁵⁹ Such a pre-existing hostility would help to explain Glabrio's willingness to join in the removal of Lucullus.⁶⁰ More importantly, Glabrio would also stand to gain practical benefits by co-operating with Gabinius. Not a man of great military reputation, he would receive an opportunity to embarrass Lucullus and achieve some measure of military glory into the bargain.⁶¹ Without the necessity of protracted and difficult campaigns, he would have the prospect of concluding the longest war in recent history and perhaps the fame of securing the capture of Mithridates himself. Thus, the appointment of Glabrio can best be understood as a limited *amicitia* to further the careers of both the tribune and the consul.

All things considered, an interpretation that removes Pompeius from the role of Machiavellian mastermind in 67 is much more in keeping with both his military and political activities at that point in this career. Such an interpretation effectively takes into account the actions and ambitions of Gabinius and Glabrio and leads to a more balanced view of the complex political climate of the late first-century Republic. By stripping away the subsequent events of Mithridates' revival and Pompeius' succession to the Eastern command, more plausible explanations emerge for the issues at

⁵⁷Most inferences of his animosity toward Lucullus stem from Glabrio's activities in Bithynia, particularly his rush to relieve Lucullus in the first place (Dio 36.17.1), and then his refusal to join him once he arrived (36.14.4, 17.1). See Hayne, "Glabrio" 282.

⁵⁸Cicero *Verr.* 1.26–29. See also E. Badian, *Foreign Clientelae* (Oxford 1958) 282–284. See above, note 48, for the association of these figures with Lucullus.

⁵⁹The conventional assumption is that the occurrence took place in 67 and that the name "Lucullus" should be emended to read "Lucceius" (so *MRR* 2.143). In a carefully argued paper, M. Dondin ("Dion Cassius, xxxvi, 41, 1–2: conduites symboliques et comportements exemplaires de Lucullus, Acilius Glabrio et Papirius Carbo [78 et 67 a.C.]," *MEFRA* 92 [1980] 199–205) rejects the emendation and proposes the otherwise unattested tribunate for Glabrio. For the episode involving Saturninus and Glaucia, see *MRR* 1.565 n. 2. Hayne ("Glabrio" 282) accepts the conventional emendation but argues that the error is due to the well-known hostility existing between Glabrio and Lucullus.

⁶⁰An early hostility to the Metelli and their political allies would be understandable for one who had recently been forced to give up his wife. See Hayne, "Glabrio" 280.

⁶¹No earlier military achievement has been noted for Glabrio, whose chief claim to fame previously was presiding at the trial of Verres in 70.

hand. Gabinius appears as an able tribune establishing *popularis* credentials and demonstrating his effectiveness in the political arena. Pompeius' *amicitia* with Gabinius seems to be the result, rather than the cause, of the Glabrio appointment. Glabrio surfaces from obscurity as a figure who hoped to benefit through personal military glory, not one who merely served as a place-holder for the awesome Pompeius. Finally one is able to see Pompeius in a more realistic frame of reference. He did not emerge in 67 from retirement to take charge of the Roman political arena. Rather, the political scene remained what it had been: a tapestry of many ambitious men, all seeking political power, military glory, and personal *dignitas*. Pompeius was ultimately the greatest beneficiary of the events of 67, but still only the beneficiary.

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