OCTAVIAN'S ARRIVAL IN ROME, 44 B.C.

Upon hearing the news of Caesar's assassination, Octavian made his way cautiously to Rome from Apollonia in Greece. A covert landing, probably at the obscure Calabrian port of Hydruntum, was followed by assessment of events in the obscure Calabrian town of Lupiae. A move to Brundisium tested popular reaction to the heir among Caesar's veterans, and there Octavian decided that he would accept the inheritance and the name of Caesar. A trip across Italy to Campania afforded the opportunity of further publicity among Caesarian settlers and colonies, while residence in Puteoli at the villa of his stepfather L. Marcius Philippus from 18 April to early May allowed consultation with representatives of different political interests, and assessment of their dispositions. Finally, by 11 May, there was the move to Rome, to be pronounced Caesar's heir legally and attempt a policy of co-operation as deputy to Marcus Antonius, the acknowledged leader of the Caesarians.[1]

This itinerary can be found in any undergraduate textbook or scholarly work that deals with the events.[2] It imparts the cool calculation of a youth prudent and ambitious beyond his years, one whose character was memorably described by his most incisive critic:

> The personality of Octavianus will best be left to emerge from his actions. One thing at least is clear. From the beginning, his sense for realities was unerring, his ambition implacable. . . . When he learned about the will, he conceived high hopes, refusing to be deterred by letters from his mother and stepfather, both of whom counselled refusal of the perilous inheritance. But he kept his head, neither dazzled by good fortune nor spurred to rash activity—the appeal to the troops, which certain friends counselled, was wisely postponed. Nor would he enter Rome until he had got into touch with persons of influence and had surveyed the political situation.[3]

In this depiction of the first weeks of his public life the eighteen-year-old heir demonstrates the circumspection of a skilled statesman, and the prudence that was so characteristic of the Princeps Augustus seems evident in Octavian the adolescent.[4] This characterization of Octavian's precocious political intuition finds its inspiration in a passing observation by the historian Dio (45.5.1): *οὕτως ὁ πρότερον μὲν Ὀκτάουιος . . . ἐπικληθεὶς ἥψατο τῶν πραγμάτων, καὶ αὐτὰ καὶ κατέπραξε*

[1] Octavian in Apollonia: Vell. Pat. 2.59.4, Suet. *Aug.* 8.2, Plut. *Brut*. 22.2, and App. 3.9/30–1; on the journey to Brundisium via Lupiae, cf. Nicolaus of Damascus, *FGrHist* 90, F130.47–57, and App. 3.10/35–11/39. Vell. Pat. (2.59.5) and Dio (45.3.2) have Octavian go directly to Brundisium. For his presence in Puteoli, cf. Cic. *Att*. 14.10.3, 11.2, and in Rome, 14.20.5.

[2] W. Drumann, *Geschichte Roms*, rev. P. Groebe (Berlin, 1899^2) 1, 85–9; V. Gardthausen, *Augustus und Seine Zeit* (Leipzig, 1891), 1.1, 51–3; Fitzler-Seeck, *RE* 10.1, 279–81; T. Rice Holmes, *The Architect of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1928), 1.191; R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939), 114–15; W. Schmitthenner, *Octavian und das Testament Cäsars* (Munich, 1973^2), 81; and A. Alföldi, *Oktavians Aufstieg zur Macht* (Bonn, 1976), 46–9. Most recently cf. A. Gowing, *The Triumviral Narratives of Appian and Dio* (Ann Arbor, 1992), 59–64; D. Kienast *Augustus* (Darmstadt, 1999^3), 26–7; J. Bleicken, *Augustus. Eine Biographie* (Berlin, 1998), 64; and F. Ryan, 'The type of the aedileship of Critonius', *Hermes* 128 (2000), 243–4.

[3] Syme (n. 2), 113–14.

[4] Cf. Drumann (n. 2), 1, 87: 'In einem Alter von noch nicht 19 Jahren zeigte Octavian die Mässigung und schlaue Besonnenheit eines geübten Staatsmannes.' On the cautious prudence of Augustus, cf. Suet. *Aug.* 25.4: *nihil autem minus perfecto duci quam festinationem temeritatemque convenire arbitrabatur.*

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καὶ κατειργάσατο παντὸς μὲν ἀνδρὸς νεανικώτερον, παντὸς δὲ πρεσβύτου φρονιμώτερον.

But this consensus of scholarship, and Syme's elegant rhetoric, obscures a significant problem involved with Octavian's approach to Rome as a metaphor of his later career. Both Nicolaus of Damascus and Appian say that Octavian got into a conflict with an aedile in Rome over Octavian's attempt to display Caesar's throne and crown at the ludi Cereales in mid-April of 44:[5] Nicolaus says (*FGrH* 90, F 130.108) that when Octavian approached Antonius again (αὖθις) about the display of the throne and crown at the games in July, Antonius refused him and threatened the same punishment (ὅμοια ἠπείλησέ). It is clear from the sentence immediately preceding that the terms αὖθις and ὅμοια refer to the opposition by the aedile Critonius when Octavian made his first attempt at such display at the ludi Cereales in April. The evidence in Nicolaus is confirmed by Appian (3.28/105–6):

θέαι δ' ἦσαν, ἃς Κριτώνιος ἀγορανομῶν ἔμελλε τελέσειν· καὶ ὁ Καῖσαρ ἐς τὰς θέας τῷ πατρὶ τὸν τε χρύσεον θρόνον καὶ στέφανον παρεσκεύαζεν, ἅπερ αὐτῷ κατὰ πάσας θέας ἐψηφίσαντο προτίθεσθαι. τοῦ Κριτωνίου δὲ εἰπόντος οὐκ ἀνέξεσθαι τιμωμένου Καίσαρος ἐν ταῖς αὑτοῦ δαπάναις, ὁ Καῖσαρ αὐτὸν ἐς τὸν Ἀντώνιον ἦγεν ὡς ὕπατον. Ἀντωνίου δὲ εἰπόντος ἐς τὴν βουλὴν ἐπανοίσειν, χαλεπήνας ὁ Καῖσαρ 'ἀνάφερε', εἶπεν, 'ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν θρόνον, ἕως ἂν ᾖ τὸ δόγμα, προθήσω'. καὶ ὁ Ἀντώνιος χαλεπήνας ἐκώλυσεν.

If Nicolaus and Appian are correct, Octavian must have gone directly to Rome from Brundisium before he showed up in Puteoli on 18 April, as Cicero says (*Att*. 14.10.3).

Despite its significance for understanding Octavian's actions in these crucial early weeks, only Drumann writing in the 1830s addressed the problem in any detail, and he presented alternative solutions. He thought that the celebration of the ludi Cereales may have been postponed until late May due to the confusion after Caesar's assassination. But more likely in his opinion, Appian had mistakenly introduced into the occasion of the ludi Cereales a conflict that actually occurred only during the celebration of the ludi Victoriae Caesaris in July.

Drumann's preferred hypothesis that Appian retrojected the encounter to the ludi Cereales is unsatisfactory on two counts. Drumann was not aware of the evidence in Nicolaus, and he presented no satisfactory explanation as to why the two authors would retroject the conflict at the games of July to those in April.[6] Drumann's second hypothesis, that the ludi Cereales were postponed from April to late May, has no warrant in the evidence, as Taylor noted long ago.[7] As Drumann's own hesitation

[5] The senate had decreed that Caesar's throne and crown and his chariot were to be displayed at public games in the theater and circus, cf. Dio 44.6.3; also Plut. *Ant*. 16.5 and App. 3.28/105.

[6] Drumann's original discussion (n. 2), 89, pre-dated the first publication of the relevant excerpt of Nicolaus by Müller, *FHG* 3.434–56. (Groebe's note of 1899 at 1^2.427 of his revised edition of Drumann has nothing of relevance to the issue.) Drumann supposed (based on Dio 43.51.3) that the aedile Critonius had been appointed by Caesar and therefore Appian transferred the incident to the games administered by the Caesarian aedile. There is no evidence that Caesar appointed Critonius, and the logic of Drumann's argument here is unclear. The obvious objection is why Appian would manufacture a story in which an aedile appointed by Caesar prevented Caesar's heir from an exhibition meant to honour the memory of Caesar.

[7] Lily Ross Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (Middletown, CT, 1933), 86, n. 14. Rice Holmes ([n. 2], 191), citing Cic. *Att*. 15.2.3 and 3.2, maintained that the ludi Cereales were postponed to May. But Cicero could not refer to the preparations and *procuratores* of Octavian's show (*ludorum eius*, 15.2.3), when referring to games under the administration of an aedile. Furthermore, if Octavian was able to administer the postponed ludi Cereales, then it makes the

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indicates, this hypothesis is not a solution to the problem that Nicolaus and Appian present, but rather a way of avoiding the issue. The problem of Octavian's arrival in Rome is more complicated and significant than the scholarship on the issue reveals. Two other ancient sources state or imply that Octavian was in Rome in early April, as Nicolaus and Appian say, and the recognition of this has implications for our understanding of Octavian's behaviour in these crucial early days. If Octavian hastened to Rome directly and there found himself on the losing end of a public confrontation with an aedile and a consul just a month after the assassination of Caesar, then the ruthless, calculating teenager of modern scholarship gives way to a persona less dramatic and chilling, but one more human and probably more historical.

The correspondence of Cicero confirms what Nicolaus and Appian say regarding Octavian's presence in Rome in mid-April. Writing to Atticus in Rome from Astura on 11 April (*Att*. 14.5.3), Cicero inquires about Octavian's arrival: *sed velim scire quid adventus Octavi, num qui concursus ad eum, num quae νεωτερισμοῦ suspicio. non puto equidem, sed tamen, quicquid est, scire cupio.* The following day he wrote from Fundi in response to a letter he had received from Atticus that day (14.6.1): *prid. Id. Fundis accepi tuas litteras cenans. . . . odiosa enim illa fuerant, legiones venire. nam de Octavio, susque deque. exspecto quid de Mario; quem quidem ego sublatum rebar a Caesare*. The *adventus Octavi* must refer to his arrival in Rome; why else write to Atticus in Rome for such news? The sources say that Octavian moved quickly from Apollonia to Italy, so it is unlikely that Cicero's enquiry could refer to Octavian's arrival into south-eastern Italy from Greece on so late a date as 11 April. Furthermore, the reference to Marius in Cicero's letter of 12 April must indicate that Atticus in his letter said something to the effect that there was no disruption (or none was anticipated) due to Octavian's arrival, but the antics of the 'false Marius' were causing problems in the city.[8] This can be the only explanation for the sequence of thought in Cicero's letter of 12 April: *nam de Octavio, susque deque. exspecto quid de Mario; quem quidem ego sublatum rebar a Caesare*. The only reason Atticus would have linked the two was if the *adventus Octavi* was that at Rome, which could potentially contribute to the *νεωτερισμός* then being fomented by 'Marius'. The conclusion that Cicero's phrase *adventus Octavi* refers to his arrival in Rome in April is supported by Velleius Paterculus (2.59.5), Appian (3.12/40), and Plutarch (*Brut*. 22.3). They all indicate that Octavian went directly to Rome when he arrived in Italy and they know nothing of a prolonged stay in the Bay of Naples before he got to Rome. In addition, there is important but neglected evidence in the remains of Nicolaus' biography of Augustus that provides clear support for the conclusion that Octavian was in Rome in April of 44.

The importance of the evidence in Nicolaus has gone unnoticed because scholars tend to dismiss his biography of Augustus as an encomium produced in support of the Augustan programme of propaganda and so of questionable use for historical purposes. But Nicolaus provides information that is preserved nowhere else, and he almost certainly had the autobiography of Augustus at hand when he composed his

whole encounter with Critonius in Appian nonsense. Cicero's references here are to the ludi Victoriae Caesaris that occurred in July, were under Octavian's control, and saw Antonius again refusing Octavian permission to display the sella and crown of Caesar; cf. Appian 3.28/107, Dio 45.6.4–5 and Plut. *Ant*. 16.5.

[8] The reference here is to a character named Amatius or Hierophilus who claimed to be the grandson of the great Marius and so related to Caesar. After the assassination, he built an altar on the site of Caesar's funeral pyre and pursued vengeance against the assassins. His actions gained popular approval until Antonius had him executed without trial about the time Cicero wrote this letter; cf. Münzer, *RE* 14.2 s.v. 'Marius (16)'.

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work. Like most encomiasts, he tends to exaggerate in favour of his subject and employs overly dramatic narrative, but where Nicolaus provides reasonable information not contradicted by other sources, it ought to be accepted.[9]

Nicolaus indicates that Octavian made his way from Brundisium to Rome as quickly as possible. In Apollonia, Octavian received both a messenger and a letter from his mother Atia informing him that Caesar had been murdered and that he was to come to her (*ἐπανελθεῖν ὡς αὐτήν*, F 130.38). Later, at Lupiae, Octavian learned from eye-witnesses to events in Rome that he had been named the main heir in Caesar's will, and it is probable that Octavian also now learned of Antonius' attempts to usurp his position as Caesar's heir by claiming that Octavian had declined his inheritance.[10] Certainly this information would have impressed on the young heir the need to get to Rome and defend his position. At Brundisium, Octavian received another letter from his mother urging him even more strongly to come to her as soon as possible (*ἐγέγραπτο δέησις ἰσχυρὰ ὡς τάχιστα ἀφικέσθαι*, F 130.52). Appian (3.10/34) says that Atia was in Rome when she wrote these letters, and she must have been present in Rome during the funeral of Caesar since Nicolaus says she had been entrusted in Caesar's will with its administration (F 130.48). Octavian then set out for Rome from Brundisium (*ἀπό τε Βρεντεσίου ὥρμησεν ἐπὶ Ῥώμης*, F 130.57).

Concerning Octavian's arrival and early moves in Rome, Nicolaus says the following (F130.108):

πολλῶν δὲ καὶ ἄλλων αἰτίων συμβάντων πρὸς τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλους διαφοράν, ἐδόκει αὐτοῖς τὴν ἔχθραν ἐξάπτειν μᾶλλον †πρὸς ἀλλήλους, διάφορος μὲν ὢν πρὸς Καίσαρα, συμπράττων δ' Ἀντωνίῳ. Καῖσαρ δ' οὐδὲν ὀρρωδῶν ἐκ τοῦ μεγαλόφρονος θέας ἐποίει ἐνστάσης ἑορτῆς, ἣν ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ κατεστήσατο Ἀφροδίτῃ. καὶ αὖθις προελθὼν σὺν πλείοσιν ἔτι καὶ φίλοις παρεκάλει Ἀντώνιον συγχωρῆσαι τὸν δίφρον μετὰ τοῦ στεφάνου τίθεσθαι τῷ πατρί. ὁ δ' ὅμοια ἠπείλησεν, εἰ μὴ τούτων ἀποστὰς ἡσυχίαν ἄγοι. καὶ ὃς ἀπῄει καὶ οὐδὲν ἠναντιοῦτο, κωλύοντος τοῦ ὑπάτου.

Part or all of the first sentence is paraphrase and summary of Nicolaus' text by the excerptor who copied it for the tenth-century encyclopaedia commissioned by Constantine Porphyrogenitus. The excerptor has just finished copying Nicolaus' account of the assassination of Caesar (F 130.55–106), and here he summarizes in a few sentences the elided text that covered events up until the conflict between Octavian and Antonius concerning the ludi Victoriae Caesaris. *†πρὸς ἀλλήλους* is nonsensical and is clearly a doublet from the line above, since the phrase *πρὸς ἀλλήλους* occurs in the same place at the end of successive lines in the codex Scorialensis *Ω* I.11, the single manuscript that preserves this section of the encyclopaedia. What follows, *διάφορος μὲν ὢν πρὸς Καίσαρα, συμπράττων δ' Ἀντωνίῳ*, also makes it clear that what *†πρὸς ἀλλήλους* has displaced is a proper name which identified who was opposing Octavian and co-operating with Antonius. As Müller recognized long ago,[11] the only name possible, given the context of Nicolaus' narrative here and the evidence from Appian,

[9] On Nicolaus' use of Augustus' autobiography, cf. F. Blumenthal, *WS* 35 (1913), 113–30; Jacoby, *FGrH* 2C.264–5; G. Dobesch, *Graz. Beitr*. 7 (1978), 93; and most recently E. Gabba in F. Millar and E. Segal (edd.), *Caesar Augustus. Seven Aspects* (Oxford, 1984), 62; on his use of sources and narrative style, see M. Toher 'On the use of Nicolaus' historical fragments', *Class. Ant*. 8 (1989), 159–72.

[10] Nic. Dam. F 130.48–50; Cic. *Phil*. 2.71 and Dio 44.36.2 and 53.5; also Schmitthenner (n. 2), 100 and Gowing (n. 2), 60. Nicolaus says it was rumoured that Antonius orchestrated the crowning of Caesar at the Lupercalia in the hope of being adopted as his heir (130.74).

[11] Müller (n. 6), 3.449n. mistakenly calls Critonius a tribune.

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is that of Critonius. Therefore, the end of the section that was summarized by the excerptor contained an account of the first conflict over the display of Caesar's paraphernalia at the ludi Cereales.[12] It is clear then that long before Appian, Nicolaus in his *Bios Kaisaros* presented an account in which Octavian was twice prevented, in April and July, from displaying Caesar's sella and crown at public games.

Nicolaus, Velleius Paterculus, Plutarch, and Appian say that Octavian went directly to Rome from Brundisium; Cicero's correspondence indicates that Octavian arrived in Rome on or around 11 April; and Nicolaus and Appian say that Octavian got into a conflict with Critonius and Antonius over the display of Caesar's sella and crown at the ludi Cereales in April. There is, then, no warrant in the ancient evidence to suppose that Octavian delayed his entrance to Rome for almost a month and spent this time in Puteoli. As has been seen, one reason why the supposition of scholars has trumped the evidence of the ancient authors is the fact that no one has taken into account the evidence in Nicolaus on the issue. A contributing factor is Cicero's silence on the affair with Critonius.

After his letter of 11 April Cicero has no comment on Octavian until a letter of the nineteenth (*Att*. 14.10.3): *Octavius Neapolim venit XIIII Kal. ibi eum Balbus mane postridie, eodemque die mecum in Cumano; illum hereditatem aditurum.*[13] After meeting with Octavian on the following day, Cicero smugly described the youth's demeanour toward himself: *mihi totus deditus* (14.11.3). The day after that, however, Cicero was less sanguine in his judgement of Octavian (14.12.2):

> nobiscum hic perhonorifice et peramice Octavius. quem quidem sui Caesarem salutabant, Philippus non, itaque ne nos quidem; quem nego posse <esse> bonum civem. ita multi circumstant, qui quidem nostris mortem minitantur, negant haec ferri posse. quid censes cum Romam puer venerit, ubi nostri liberatores tuti esse non possunt?[14]

If Cicero was aware of the encounter with Critonius, he might be expected to refer to it in these letters. Yet, if the correspondence of Cicero were our only source for

[12] Jacoby's strange contention (*FGrH* 2C.283) that Appian's text proves that Müller's emendation to Critonius is wrong only makes sense if the unfounded hypothesis of Drumann is accepted as true.

[13] If Octavian was in Rome before 18 April, he must then have proclaimed his intent to accept the inheritance before the *praetor urbanus* (App. 3.14/49) and may have attempted to get a *lex curiata* passed to ratify his adoption, which Antonius blocked (Dio 45.5.3–4). Therefore Cicero's phrase *aditurum hereditatem* means that Octavian was in the process of taking up the inheritance but had not completed the crucial step of the adoption and assuming the name Caesar. His adoption would not be formally ratified until August of 43. In the weeks just after the reading of the will, it must still have seemed uncertain if Octavian would become Caesar's heir and namesake; cf. U. Ortmann, *Cicero, Brutus und Octavian—Republikaner und Caesarianer* (Bonn, 1988), 90–1 and Gowing (n. 2), 60, n. 4. Many, including Cicero and his stepfather, did not recognize for some time Octavian's claim to be the son of Caesar, whether for political or legal reasons, and so did not call him by the name (cf. Cic. *Att*. 14.12.2 and Dio 46.47.5; Cicero only began to address Octavian as Caesar in December of 44, after their political alliance had formed). Cicero in his letter of 19 April referred to the issue by the technical legal phrase *adire hereditatem*, but by the time of Velleius Paterculus (2.60.1) the crucial significance of Octavian's adoption as opposed to simply his inheritance was clear. Velleius used the slightly awkward but more accurate phrase *adiri nomen* to describe the situation. Others writing from even greater historical perspective emphasized as crucial Octavian's assumption of Caesar's name (Plin. *NH* 2.98), and they saw the issue of Octavian's adoption as the cause of the early conflict between Octavian and Antonius (Florus 2.15.4).

[14] The clause *cum Romam puer venerit* anticipates Octavian's return to Rome. Not the least misleading aspect of the clause is the verb *venio*, which, in the absence of other evidence, leaves the impression that Cicero had been writing in Rome.

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the actions of Octavian in this period, then we would know nothing of his arrival(s) in Rome, in April or May. And yet it was an event that was adorned in later accounts with the sighting of a halo to mark the heir's entrance into the city.[15] Cicero says nothing of Octavian's acceptance of the inheritance before the praetor Gaius Antonius (Appian 3.14/49) which occurred in April or May. Cicero mentions nothing in his letters of May about the conflict with Critonius, if indeed the ludi Cereales were postponed until May,[16] and, more significantly, he says nothing in his correspondence about the later conflict with Antonius over the display of Caesar's paraphernalia at the ludi Victoriae Caesaris in July. In short, Cicero's silence on the actions and whereabouts of Octavian in this period provides no basis at all to determine when Octavian entered Rome after the assassination of Caesar. Cicero attended to the activities of Octavian only intermittently in the months after the assassination,[17] only when he feared the young heir's activities might effect his own plans for the restoration of the *res publica*, or when Octavian flattered his ego. The period immediately after Caesar's assassination was a *caecum tempus* (*Fam*. 12.25.3), and it was only much later, long after the death of Cicero, that the momentous significance of every move by Octavian in these weeks became clear. At the time and from the perspective of senior consulars and observers like Cicero and Atticus, Octavian seemed more on a level with the false Marius, a potential nuisance,[18] or pawn.

Nothing in the sources precludes Octavian's arrival in Rome before the middle of April. The messenger who brought the news and letter of Atia to Octavian at Apollonia claimed to have wasted no time in his journey so that Octavian would know of Caesar's murder as soon as possible and so be able to deliberate on what to do: *ἔφη τε ὡς παραχρῆμα Καίσαρος ἀναιρεθέντος πεμφθείη καὶ οὐδαμῇ διατρίψειεν, ὡς θᾶττον ἔχοι μαθὼν τὰ γενόμενα βουλεύσασθαι περὶ αὐτῶν* (Nic. Dam. F 130.39). Atia's first letter mentioned nothing about Caesar's will and contained no details of the assassination, and so it must have been written and the messenger sent off immediately, possibly on the Ides itself. It is reasonable to assume that he arrived in Apollonia by 25 March.[19] Nicolaus indicates that Octavian wasted little time in leaving Apollonia as the urgency of his mother's letter and the messenger recommended, and he probably departed for Italy by 27 March at the latest and arrived in Lupiae on or around 29 March (F 130.40–7). Nicolaus says that at Lupiae Octavian heard from informants who had come from Rome the news of his adoption and of events at Rome in the three days after Caesar's murder (F 130.48–50). That these informants could give him no news of events after *c.* 21 or 22 March suggests they must have left Rome about that time in order to meet Octavian in Lupiae.[20] There Octavian awaited letters from

[15] Cf. Vell. Pat. 2.59.6, Plin. *NH* 2.98, Sen. *QNat.* 1.2.1, Suet. *Aug.* 95, Iul. Obseq. 68, and Dio 45.4.4.

[16] Cf. *Att.* 14.20.5, 21.4 and 15.2.3

[17] Cf. E. Rawson, *CAH*^{2} 9.472: 'Cicero's letters hardly mention him.'

[18] Syme (n. 2), 115: 'For the moment, however, Caesar's heir was merely a nuisance, not a factor of much influence upon the policy of Antonius.' Cf. also Schmitthenner (n. 2), 1; Alföldi (n. 2), 71; Ortmann (n. 13), 85; and Rawson (n. 17), 472.

[19] According to Cic. *Ad Brut*. 2.4.1, a messenger travelling under normal circumstances could get from Dyrrachium to Rome in ten days. That Octavian would have got the news by 25 March: O. Schmidt, 'Die Letzen Kämpfe der Römischen Republik', in A. Fleckeisen (ed.), *Jahrbücher für classische Philologie* Suppl. 13 (Leipzig, 1884), 702; E. Becht, 'Regeste über die Zeit von Caesars Ermordung bis zum Umschwung in der Politik des Antonius', dissertation (Freiburg, 1911), 12–13 and 84–85; and Alföldi (n. 2), 46.

[20] Velleius Paterculus (2.59.5) confirms Nicolaus' account of what news the messengers were

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his mother and friends in Rome (F130.51: *παυσάμενος δέ ποτε ἀνέμενεν ἕτερα γράμματα παρὰ τῆς μητρὸς καὶ τῶν ἐν Ῥώμῃ φίλων*). Appian (3.10/35) also says that Octavian waited for a while at Lupiae (*ἐνταῦθα οὖν ἐνηυλίσατο διατρίβων*), since he was unsure if it was safe for him to approach Brundisium. Once he got to Brundisium, all the sources agree that three things happened: Octavian received a warm welcome from the populace and soldiers there; he announced that he would accept the name and estate of Caesar; and he came into possession of a considerable amount of money, some of it public money seized on questionable pretext.[21] Nicolaus says that Octavian met in Brundisium with senior advisors who persuaded him against a trip through Campania to recruit a force from among Caesar's veterans, and convinced him to head directly to Rome (*διὸ τῶν φίλων τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις τε καὶ ἐμπειρίᾳ προύχουσι μάλιστα ἐπείθετο, ἀπό τε Βρεντεσίου ὥρμησεν ἐπὶ Ῥώμης*, F130.57). The sources provide no information concerning the amount of time Octavian spent in Lupiae or in Brundisium. However, a departure by 4 or 5 April would give him almost a week to assess the information and advice he received there, and still have him arriving at Rome around the eleventh, when Cicero indicates he had arrived or was expected.[22]

Such a diary, based solely on reasonable estimates within the parameters of the available evidence, does not prove that Octavian was in Rome in April. It only demonstrates that he could have been there, and assumes (as all the evidence indicates) that Octavian hastened to Rome as fast as the circumstances permitted. A diary composed by Andreas Alföldi based on the hypothesis that Octavian did not enter Rome until May demonstrates the improbable nature of the hypothesis.[23] Alföldi assumes Cicero's reference on 11 April to Octavian's *adventus* was to that in Italy, but he does not explain why Octavian waited for two weeks or more in Apollonia when all evidence indicates that he was instructed to leave, and did leave, as soon as possible. Furthermore, again despite all evidence that Octavian was instructed to go directly to Rome and that he did go directly to Rome, Alföldi's diary has him take six days to get from Brundisium to Puteoli and remain there for another two weeks before he finally enters Rome on 9 May, more than seven weeks after the assassination. Alföldi realized the peculiar nature of his diary and explained it by saying that Octavian's leisurely itinerary was dictated by the instructions of Caesar's senior advisor Cornelius Balbus, who, Alföldi supposed, was in constant contact with Octavian during this period.[24]

The arrival of Octavian in Rome in April illuminates two important developments, Brutus' departure from the city and Antonius' execution of the 'false Marius', that are

able to deliver to Octavian in Calabria: *ille festinans pervenire in urbem omnem ordinem ac rationem et necis et testamenti Brundusii comperit.* Nicolaus does refer at 130.50 to the assassins' retreat to Antium, which did not occur until the second week of April, but Nicolaus' language makes it clear that he added this item as an aside to explain the unfortunate results of Antonius' policy of reconciliation with the assassins: *τούτους . . . πίστεις λαβόντας παρὰ Ἀντωνίου δύναμιν ἤδη μεγάλην ἔχοντος καὶ διαμεθιέντος ἐν τῷ παρόντι τὴν ὑπὲρ Καίσαρος ἐπέξοδον· ὃ κἀκείνοις αἴτιον ἐγένετο τοῦ ἀσφαλῶς ἐκ τῆς Ῥώμης ὑπεξελθεῖν ἐς Ἄντιον.* Plutarch's narrative of events during and just after the funeral of Caesar in his *Brutus* (20–21.1) also connects the departure of the liberators for Antium directly to events that occurred weeks before.

[21] Nic. Dam. F 130.51–7, App. 3.11/37–12/40, and Dio 45.3.2

[22] A messenger travelling at normal speed could get from Rome to Brundisium in seven days, cf. Cic. *Att*. 11.21.1.

[23] Alföldi (n. 2), 46–7. [24] Alföldi (n. 2), 48.

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dated by Cicero's correspondence to 12–14 April but are vague as to their cause or occasion.[25]

Writing from Formiae on 15 April, Cicero says *Brutum nostrum audio visum sub Lanuvio* (*Att*. 14.7.1). It is generally agreed that Brutus must have left the city by 13 April for Cicero to get news by the fifteenth that he had been seen in Lanuvium, and on one calculation Brutus may have left the city as early as 9 April.[26] If Octavian claimed his inheritance directly after his arrival in Rome in April, then the reason for the departure of Brutus becomes obvious. Brutus was the *praetor urbanus*, and Octavian had to present himself to that magistrate to claim his inheritance. Antonius moved to get Brutus out of Rome and appointed his brother, the praetor Gaius, *praetor urbanus* in place of Brutus to avoid a messy confrontation between heir and assassin. It is clear from Appian's account of the affair with Critonius that Antonius wanted to avoid a quarrel with Octavian.[27] Furthermore, Antonius' removal of Brutus and Cassius demonstrated his loyalty to the Caesarian cause against accusations of compromising with the assassins (cf. Nic. Dam. F 130.50, 106, 110, and 115).

The disturbances in Rome caused by Amatius, the 'false Marius', were occurring by 11 April (Cic. *Att*.14.6.1) and may have been going on for some days by then. By 15 April, Cicero in Sinuessa hears of his execution (*de Mario probe, etsi doleo L. Crassi nepotem*, *Att*. 14.8.1) and consensus puts that event at 13 April or possibly earlier.[28]

The senate was pleased but astonished by Antonius' action against Amatius (App. 3.3/6), but the reaction in the streets was violent and Antonius had to employ soldiers to maintain order (3.3/7–9). Therefore it is not likely that it was the senate that forced Antonius to act against Amatius,[29] nor was it in the consul's popular political interest to do so. But elimination of Amatius removed a powerful potential ally for Octavian in the contest for the affection of the urban plebs, even if in eliminating the 'false Marius' Antonius incurred the wrath of the populace himself. Amatius had earlier attempted to ingratiate himself with Octavian while Caesar was alive (Nic. Dam. F 130.32–3) and almost certainly he would have offered his services as an organizer of the Roman streets to the newly proclaimed heir. It is interesting to note that Appian (3.16/57–58) has Octavian say in a speech that he ought to be thankful to Antonius for killing

[25] According to App. 3.12/42, Brutus and Cassius were stripped of their provinces of Macedonia and Syria just before Octavian arrived in Rome, but this is probably an error, since it is unlikely that they had been assigned provinces by Caesar; cf. W. Sternkopf, 'Die Vertheilung der römischen Provinzen vor dem mutinensischen Kriege', *Hermes* 47 (1912), 342–3 and Gowing (n. 2), 63, n. 17 on Appian's mistaken chronology.

[26] For his departure on or by 13 April, cf. Drumann–Groebe (n. 2), 420; J. D. Denniston, *M. Tulli Ciceronis. In M. Antonium Orationes Philippicae Prima et Secunda* (Oxford, 1926), 72; and Rice Holmes (n. 2), 4. E. T. Merrill argues he left the city on 9 April, 'On the date of Cic. *Fam*. xi 1', *CP* 10 (1915), 355–8. Brutus' departure may also be indicated in a letter from Fundi written on 12 April in which Cicero refers to a *Antoni colloquium cum heroibus nostris* (*Att*. 14.6.1). Shackleton Bailey does not speculate on the topic of this *colloquium*, but Tyrrell-Purser think the conversation concerned getting permission for Brutus to be out of the city beyond the limit of ten days imposed by statute on the *praetor urbanus*. If this is correct, then by 10 April or even earlier, it had been decided that Brutus should leave the city.

[27] Z. Yavetz, *Plebs and Princeps* (Oxford 1969), 74. It is also clear, despite the doubts of some, that Appian is correct at 3.14/49 in designating Gaius *praetor urbanus* in April; cf. Gowing (n. 2), 66, n. 24.

[28] Becht (n. 19), 45 says that Amatius started his disturbances on 10 April; Denniston, (n. 26), 69, proposes 9 April; Rice Holmes (n. 2), 5 says he was executed before 13 April; Münzer (n. 8), 1817 thinks he was arrested on the thirteenth.

[29] Yavetz (n. 27), 71. Valerius Maximus (9.15.1) mistakenly credits the Senate with Amatius' execution.

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Amatius and stripping Brutus and Cassius of their provinces. It is possible that at the time Antonius portrayed his actions against the assassins and Amatius as gestures of solidarity with the heir.

If Octavian was in Rome by 11 April, he could have stayed in the city only four or at most five days, since by the eighteenth he was in Puteoli (Cic. *Att*. 14.10.3). Octavian's first move would have been to proclaim his acceptance of his inheritance before the *praetor urbanus* Gaius Antonius (App. 3.14/49). The ludi Cereales occurred 12–19 April, but games in the circus occurred only on the last day of the festival,[30] and this would have been the day to display the paraphernalia of Caesar. Therefore at some point between the eleventh and the fifteenth, Octavian lost his argument to present the material of Caesar at the aedile's games. Finally, there was still another matter that must have arisen in this first visit of Octavian to Rome, and it is this issue that provides a framework for understanding what happened during April and May of 44.

Octavian's proclamation before the *praetor urbanus* was the legal procedure that constituted the inheritance of Caesar's estate (*bonorum possessio*).[31] But his adoption and assumption of the name Caesar required the legal procedure of *adrogatio* and the sanction of a *lex curiata*. Since Octavian was an orphan and *sui iuris* (not subject to the *patria potestas* of another), his adoption had to be ratified through a *rogatio populi* presented by the pontifex maximus to the curiate assembly. From a political perspective, Octavian's inheritance of three-quarters of Caesar's estate, although substantial in terms of personal wealth, was of far less significance than his adoption and identity as the son of Caesar. As presented in Caesar's will, Octavian's adoption was a separate issue from his inheritance of Caesar's estate,[32] and a good deal hung on his adoption. Both his mother and stepfather advised against Octavian assuming the name of Caesar as opposed to his inheritance of Caesar's estate. Although Octavian eventually persuaded Atia, and she was the first to address him as Caesar, his stepfather remained adamant and refused to use the name.[33] Octavian's claim on the loyalty and support of Caesar's veterans was dependent on his adoption: the soldiers professed to be his inheritance as the son of Caesar (*κληρονομία οἱ πάντες εἶεν αὐτοῦ*), and when Octavian first attempted to raise an army, the soldiers welcomed him as the son of their benefactor (*ἐδέξαντο αὐτὸν ὡς εὐεργέτου παῖδα*).[34]

Antonius' actions in these early months were predicated on the distinction between Octavian's inheritance and his adoption. There is no evidence that the consul made any attempt to obstruct Octavian's acceptance of the inheritance by his proclamation before the *praetor urbanus*, who was the consul's brother. Nor apparently did he resist when his other brother Lucius, the tribune, introduced Octavian to address a *contio* in May.[35] When Octavian first entered the city, Antonius may have assumed that he did so as a private citizen claiming his inheritance but not the name of Caesar (cf. Dio 45.5.2: *πρῶτον μὲν γάρ, ὡς καὶ ἐπὶ μόνῃ τῇ τοῦ κλήρου διαδοχῇ, καὶ ἰδιωτικῶς καὶ μετ'*

[30] Cf. *CIL* 1^2, p. 315, Ov. *Fast.* 4.393 and 679–80, and Cic. *Att*. 2.12.2 and 4; that only the last day would have had games in the circus, cf. J. G. Frazer, *The Fasti of Ovid* (London, 1929) 4.262–3 and H. H. Scullard, *Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic* (Ithaca, NY, 1981), 101.

[31] Schmitthenner (n. 2), 50–1.

[32] Schmitthenner (n. 2), 35, n. 3 and 41: 'Es spricht die "Adoption" erst gegen Schluß des Textes und augenscheinlich nicht als Hauptteil seines Inhalts oder in Verbindung mit der Erbeinsetzung stehend aus.'

[33] Cf. Nic. Dam. F 130.53–4 and Cic. *Att*. 14.12.2.

[34] Nic. Dam. F 130.117 and 136; cf. also 130.56 and App. 3.94/389–391.

[35] Antonius was out of the city between late April and late May, but it is unlikely that such permission would have been granted without the consul's assent.

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ὀλίγων, ἄνευ ὄγκου τινός, ἐς τὴν πόλιν ἐσῆλθεν). In the days just after the murder of Caesar, Antonius seems to have presented himself as Caesar's heir, claiming that Octavian had refused his adoption and inheritance.[36] When it became clear, however, that Octavian intended to lay claim to the name of Caesar as his adopted son, Antonius consistently opposed the passage of the *lex curiata* necessary to ratify the adoption (Dio 45.5.3–4 and Florus 2.15.2–3). Octavian's display of Caesar's sella and corona at the games, the public assertion of Octavian's identity as Caesar's son, would have been the political counterpart of the *lex curiata*. Therefore, Antonius had no choice but to oppose that too. When Octavian tried to display Caesar's paraphernalia at the ludi Victoriae Caesaris in July, Antonius stopped him again (Nic. Dam. F 130.108 and App. 3.28/107). In the end, Octavian would not get passage of the *lex curiata* ratifying his adoption until he had marched on Rome with an army in 43 and had had himself elected consul (App. 3.94/389–91).

If the personality of Octavian in these early months is to be deduced from his actions, then a somewhat different picture emerges. The ancient sources report that while in Brundisium Octavian seized public money immediately after his decision to accept Caesar's inheritance. This precipitous act has received less attention than it deserves.[37] Nicolaus (F130.55) says that Octavian sent for Caesar's war-chest for the Parthian campaign and for the year's tribute from Asia, but that he limited himself to the money that was his by right of his inheritance (ἀρκούμενος Καίσαρ τοῖς πατρῴοις) and returned the rest to the treasury in Rome. Appian (3.11/39) presents a less direct seizure. He speaks only of soldiers joining Octavian at Brundisium who were either conveying money to Macedonia or bringing tribute from other countries through Brundisium. It is not likely that Nicolaus' description can be completely correct since it would have taken weeks or months to send for and collect the tribute from Asia.[38] More likely, as Appian says, Octavian was able to collect a considerable amount of money from that which happened to be in Brundisium at the time. These details of the affair are less important for the issue here than what such action indicates about the character of the newly professed heir. The seizure of public money from Roman soldiers and officials is hardly in accord with Octavian's sup- posed sense for realities and aversion to rash activity.[39] It was a reckless act that only came to be seen as a courageous deed in light of the later good fortune and success of Augustus (Dio 45.4).

The urgent injunctions of his mother and the bold pretence of Antonius to Caesar's inheritance required Octavian's presence in Rome as soon as possible. When he arrived in April he immediately began the legal procedure to claim the inheritance of Caesar, but he was unprepared for the consul's obstruction of his plan to seize the public mantle of Caesar through legal and popular ratification of his adoption. The inexperienced youth had miscalculated the situation in Rome, suffered a public rebuke from the consul, and was forced to retreat to Puteoli. There he reconsidered his strategy and consulted with his stepfather, who adamantly opposed his accepting the inheritance (Nic. Dam. F 130. 54 and Suet. *Aug.* 8.2), and with the senior consular Cicero, who detected the opportunity that the circumstances offered the defenders of the *res publica*.

[36] Dio 44.36.2 and 53.5 and Schmitthenner (n. 2), 100.

[37] The exception is Schmitthenner (n. 2), 85–89.

[38] Cf. Schmitthenner (n. 2), 86. This assumes that the tribute did not happen to be in Brundisium by chance when Octavian came through.

[39] Alföldi (n. 2), 83–4, notes the temerity of the act, but absolves the prudent youth by ascribing the idea to Balbus.

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It is significant that the historiographical tradition preserved in Nicolaus, Velleius, Suetonius, Appian, and Dio knows nothing of Octavian's residence in Puteoli during the latter half of April and early May. Only Cicero's correspondence preserves this information. The reason for its absence in the historians is not difficult to discern. Any historian of these earliest days of Octavian's public career must have depended for the essential facts on the autobiography that Augustus published in the late twenties B.C.[40] The correspondence of Cicero shows that no contemporary comprehended the significance of the teenage heir at the time.[41] The hasty retreat to Campania fitted awkwardly with the autobiography's desired portrait of a courageous but inexperienced heir, and Nicolaus, if any author, preserves the tenor of that account. In Nicolaus, the advice of Philippus, Octavian's stepfather, to refuse Caesar's name and lead a quiet, withdrawn life is pointedly rejected (F 130.53). And yet it was to Philippus in Puteoli that Octavian had recourse in April when Antonius blocked his attempt to get his adoption ratified.[42] Just a month after Caesar's assassination, Octavian was at the villa of Cicero, ingratiating himself with the acknowledged leader of the *res publica*, who delighted in the stellar act of the Liberators. Here was another meeting that did not accord with the depiction found in the Princeps' autobiography. There, to judge from the evidence in Nicolaus, Cicero is the leader of a 'middle party' between Octavian and Antonius. Cicero cared no more for the *res publica* than did Antonius, and his provocations against Antonius reflected no loyalty to Caesar's heir.[43] Octavian's consultations in Campania would have contradicted the autobiographical depiction and so Octavian's retreat to Puteoli in April was conveniently lost to the historiographical tradition.

There is irony in this. It is clear that Augustus portrayed himself in those early days as an innocent youth surrounded by powerful enemies. His only resources were his own character and the conviction that he alone had a moral and legal claim on the *archai* of Caesar (Nic. Dam. F130.113–14). The accepted modern characterization of Octavian, so vividly evoked by Syme, is an amoral character whose moves from the very beginning were driven by ambition and directed by the cold, intelligent calculation of self-preservation. All the historical evidence taken together suggests something else again, an impetuous youth who trusted to boldness and rash decision, at least in his early days, and so encountered defeat and embarrassment. Indeed, an *imperfectus dux*, driven by *festinatio et temeritas*. If presented with the choice between this last characterization and that of Syme, it is obvious which the author of the autobiography would have preferred.[44]

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[40] Rawson (n. 17), 472; on the autobiography of Augustus, cf. Suet. *Aug.* 85.1.

[41] Gowing (n. 2), 59: 'Clearly, to a contemporary observer Octavian was not yet a major player.'

[42] Syme (n. 2), 128: 'To be sure, he (Philippus) had dissuaded the taking up of the inheritance: the fact comes from a source that had every reason to enhance the courageous and independent spirit of the young Caesar. . . . The young man was much in the company of his step-father: the profit in political counsel which he derived was never recorded.'

[43] Cf. F 130.111; also Plut. *Cic*. 45.6 and 52 (3).1, where he cites the autobiography of Augustus.

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