Antony and Armenia*

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Summary: Antony is commonly credited with incorporating Armenia as a Roman province. Those who make this claim, however, must face not only a lack of direct evidence for such an annexation but the absence of a plausible explanation when the historical context is fully revealed. Antony's desire to return triumphantly one day to Rome explains his handling of Armenia, whose reduction he justified by removing its ostensibly treacherous king. The evidence collectively suggests that Antony afterwards envisioned Armenia as a future client state, which would be consistent with his treatment of other regions of the Near East earlier in his career.

I. Introduction

the importance of the kingdom of armenia to the romans was amply demonstrated in 65 b.c.e. when Pompey assigned Tigranes II the role of client king. In one sense Tigranes was lucky to retain his throne after he had joined up with his father-in-law, Mithridates VI of Pontus, Rome's inveterate enemy through three wars bearing his name (App. Mith. 104–5; Dio 36.51–53; Plut. Pomp. 33). But his retention made sense in light of Pompey's settlement of the East following the third war, an arrangement in which Armenia was to play an important role. To put it briefly, as a Roman vassal state, Armenia was intended to provide a source of stability and potentially a check on the ambitions in this region of the great superpower in the East, the empire ruled by the Parthian Arsacids. This role carried on into later periods, even into the era of the Sasanians, who replaced the Arsacids in 224 c.e. Such treatment of Tigranes stands in contrast to the way Mark Antony handled Armenia when his turn came. As part of his own settlement, he removed Tigranes' son Artavasdes II. Many scholars see this as the first step to an annexation of Armenia as a Roman province.1 Such a move would be parallel to what Trajan did after he removed the Armenian king Parthamasiris in 114 c.e. And yet, while the historicity of the latter is well documented and not in doubt,2 the same cannot be said for Antony's settlement. Its ready acceptance in modern scholarship is ultimately unwarranted, given the haphazard nature of our evidence, and such acceptance often reflects a lack of precision in discussions of the role Armenia played in the politics that embroiled Antony, Octavian, and Cleopatra and of what annexation actually entails. The latter is especially difficult. One may encounter imprecision about, e.g., the terms "province" and "client state," as in Eleanor Huzar's biography of Antony, but this state of affairs perhaps arises in part from the period under study, which sees, some argue, a transition from a more ideological Roman empire to a more territorial one.3 Matters are further complicated by the uncertainties over Antony's plans for

Parthia—whether his intention was to annex it as a Roman province, render it a client state, or merely raid and loot it.

To argue that Antony did not annex Armenia is hardly novel; others have specifically made this claim, but their explanations are not always satisfactory or complete.4 Given the difficulties outlined above, I believe a fuller account ing of the historical context can shed the necessary light on Antony's actions in and concerning Armenia and the purpose of his treatment of it. In arguing against annexation, Sherwin-White denied Antony the acumen to effect a proper settlement of the East—that is, a strategic sense beyond conquest and occupation and a vision of expanding the Roman imperium beyond the Euphrates. The Donations of Alexandria especially compromise Antony's reputation, suggesting a conception of the frontier based on delusion.5 This characterization may be accurate, but it is premature. It bears remembering that motivations change or become enhanced as circumstances change, and in the 36–31 period, the focus of this study, the situation for Antony was most certainly fluid. Whether Antony fostered such grandiose dreams, the realities of a major setback in the East, during the invasion of Media Atropatene in 36, and of his deteriorating position in the West, partly engineered by Octavian and partly by Antony's own reckless association with Cleopatra, compelled less ambitious objectives. In that vein I have doubts the Donations were as outrageous as our main sources, Plutarch and Cassius Dio, suggest.

Psychological profiles are always dangerous to attempt for figures of antiquity, but a pattern emerges in the case of Antony: he seems a man quick to jealousy, with the need to outshine not only Octavian (understandable given the stakes) but even his own subordinates. Glory and honor having the high value they did among the Roman elite, Antony attempted an eastern settlement that would elevate his standing in Rome. Those who see his occupation of Armenia in 34 as a raiding expedition are certainly right,6 and we have no reason to reject the claim in the sources that the removal of Artavasdes also satisfied a personal grudge of Antony's, though he couched it as the removal of a strategic threat to the Romans. But the big picture—that is, Antony's overall plan to achieve his goals—changed as circumstances changed. Perhaps in the future, in a world free of Octavian, Antony might have rendered Armenia a Roman province, perhaps en route to reducing Parthia to the same status, yet his pattern in earlier years in Asia Minor and elsewhere suggests that he would have turned Armenia into a client state. In any case, whatever his future plans, the realities of 36–31 leave no room for an annexation.

II. Preparations for the Parthian War

The attention given to Armenia by Roman imperatores on campaign was often a prelude to an incursion into Parthian territory, whether by way of the north, through Adiabene (near Media), so we might say of Caracalla, or through Mesopotamia, with the Parthian winter capital Ctesiphon as the goal, as with Crassus, Trajan, Lucius Verus, and Septimius Severus. All made

sure (or at least tried to) that Armenia was secure in the Roman rear, either as a client state or, in the case of Trajan, a province.7 In Mark Antony's case the submission of Armenia comes in the aftermath of a Parthian war. It was essentially an exercise in revenge for the betrayal of Artavasdes, who withdrew his forces, some 6,000 cataphracts plus additional cavalry,8 during the Parthian campaign, hampering Antony's efforts to see through his siege of Phraaspa in Media in 36 b.c.e. The hostility toward Artavasdes that comes out of our sources, especially Plutarch and Cassius Dio, may originate with the historian Q. Dellius, a military commander serving Antony and eyewitness to the events (Strabo 11.13.3 C523). In any case, after several attempts of feigned diplomacy, Antony finally invaded Armenia in 34, captured the king, and occupied the country (Dio 49.40.3; Plut. Ant. 56.1).

Christopher Pelling has noted, "With hindsight, we always associate Antony with the East."9 Though he qualifies this statement in his discussion of the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Philippi (42 b.c.e.), certainly the Treaty of Brundisium in 40, which remedied for now the rift that had developed between Antony and Octavian, made it clear that the East was to be Antony's primary sphere of activity and interest. Indeed he had already begun to sort out a number of cities in Greece and Asia Minor in 42/1, on which more is said below. Along with that came the immediate necessity of dealing with a Parthian incursion into Syria and Asia Minor in 40. The flipside of that state of affairs was the prospect of winning glory in the East, in emulation of Alexander the Great, by way of victory over the Parthians. This was an ambition shared by many of the Roman elite, and Antony's later invasion of Parthian territory amply demonstrates how much he shared this elusive dream.10 For him the stakes were especially high. Even though Octavian was at pains to stabilize the West by subduing Sextus Pompeius and Antony enjoyed a good military reputation in the post-Philippi era (though nothing approaching what a Parthian victory could provide), the latter faced two major problems: Octavian exerted considerable influence in Italy, and Antony's reputation in Rome was compromised by his relationship with Cleopatra. Moreover, Antony not only was apprehensive of the achievements and position of Octavian but stood in rivalry with his own general P. Ventidius Bassus, who was making good the aforementioned Roman losses in 39 and 38. Ventidius's efforts culminated in the defeat and death of Pacorus, the son of the Parthian king Orodes, in Syria. Plutarch and Dio both suggest that Antony was jealous of Ventidius's success.11

For Antony the best way to outshine his rivals was a Parthian victory. In fact, a motif of central importance to later Augustan propaganda first sur faced in Antony's public relations efforts: the recovery of the standards lost by Crassus at Carrhae. The sources suggest that Antony saw in the Parthian exile Monaeses, who had fled the court of Phraates IV in 37, an opportunity to make a demand that Phraates would surely reject, giving Antony a justification for his already-planned war (Dio 49.23.3–24.5; Plut. Ant. 37.1–2). Given the mileage Octavian would later get out of it, no doubt Antony saw even the mere demand of the lost standards as shoring up his

favorability in Rome. Even after the death of Sextus in 35, Octavian's military reputation was not yet fully secured.12

In this period (39–37) Antony returned to the East and began a major political reorganization of the eastern frontier, which entailed the establishment of new vassal kings across eastern Asia Minor, especially in those areas recently freed of the Parthians. At the outset it is worth noting that none of Antony's settlement at this stage involved reducing to provinces any of the client states that ringed Roman territory.13 As vassals they were perfectly capable of doing their part to help the Roman legions keep the frontier secure. The arrangements were extensive and often reflected Antony's judgment of the reliability of the clients, as well as their willingness to furnish the necessary tribute (Appian B Civ. 5.75). For example, in Cappadocia he replaced Ariarathes with Archelaus Sisines, either driving out the former (Dio 49.32.3) or executing him (Val. Max. 9.15 ext. 2). By 37, the eve of Antony's Parthian war, the three most significant arrangements for the security of Asia Minor (as judged by most scholars14) were the appointments of Polemo in Pontus, Amyntas in Galatia, and Archelaus in Cappadocia.15 Also seeing her domin ions greatly expanded in this period was Cleopatra, who received significant stretches of the Levantine coast as well as Cyrene, Crete, parts of Cilicia, and other territory.16

III. Armenia on the Eve of the Parthian War

Armenia was included in this process of consolidation. Here, too, for purposes of security, Antony's plan was to render the Armenian king a client of Rome, or at least a client of Antony. Artavasdes, however, had proven an erratic ally in the past. In 53, in addition to offering Crassus military assistance, Artavasdes had given sound advice on invading Parthian territory from the northwest—that is, via the Armenian plateau—and moving through Media Atropatene, whose mountainous terrain would inhibit the effectiveness of the Parthian cavalry. Crassus, however, had already committed to an invasion through Mesopotamia and was not willing to abandon the forces already positioned there (Plut. Crass. 19.1–2). Given the advantage the terrain offered the Parthian cavalry near Carrhae, his army was soundly defeated. As Crassus's ally, Artavasdes found himself attacked by the Parthians, and the aftermath of Carrhae made it clear that he needed to make peace with the Parthian king Orodes. Accordingly, he married his sister to Pacorus, the prince doomed to defeat by Ventidius in 38, and changed his allegiance from the Romans to the Arsacids.17 Crassus's accusation of treachery in one biography by Plutarch (Crass. 22.3) foreshadows a similar assessment by Antony in another (Ant. 50.2–4). As noted above, this hostile tradition very likely goes back to the Antonian general Q. Dellius. Nonetheless, Roman suspicion of Artavasdes was voiced once again by Cicero during his proconsular governorship of Cilicia in 51 (Fam. 15.3.1). This tradition, especially as found in the pages of Dio and Plutarch, is important for assessing properly Antony's intentions toward Armenia and will be examined further below.

To bring Armenia back into the fold, Antony sent P. Canidius Crassus into Armenia. This operation took place in the early spring of 36, during the consulships of L. Gellius Publicola and M. Cocceius Nerva (Dio 49.24.1), while Antony remained at his headquarters in Antioch and made other preparations for the war, some of which involved his dealings with Monaeses. The expedition of Canidius itself bears some examination. Our sources document this campaign very poorly. We have a notice in Plutarch that Canidius conquered Armenia and forced Artavasdes into an alliance, though we have no details about how this came about, nor indeed can we be sure that Artavasdes actually put up any resistance (Ant. 34.6).18 We also hear that Canidius campaigned further north in the Caucasus region; Dio specifies that Canidius subdued Pharnabazus of the Iberi and Zober of the Albani, rendering them both Roman allies.19 The chronology is so uncertain that we cannot even be sure against which region, Armenia or Transcaucasia, he moved first. However, since the scholarly consensus on the purpose of the expedition is almost certainly correct—that Antony intended Armenia to provide invaluable forces for his invasion of Media, as well as a bulwark to keep his rear flank safe20—Canidius's purpose would have been to make sure Armenia itself remained secure from any northern incursions.21 This interpretation is further suggested by a parallel motivation of Pompey's when he engaged the Iberi and Albani in 66 and 65 after reducing Tigranes of Armenia to vassal status.22

As sound as Antony's reasons for securing the Caucasus may have been, this excursion was also the reason for the costly delay that would ultimately result in Antony's retreating from Media Atropatene to Armenia in the autumn of 36,23 which meant withdrawing through the rugged Armenian plateau in winter. This is where he lost an additional 8,000 troops on top of the 20,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry he determined to have lost when surveying the army after his escape from Media.24 He might have done better to winter in Armenia, giving his troops much needed rest after their journey there from Syria (excepting those forces of Canidius already in Armenia), and attack Media in the early spring of 35 (Ant. 38.1). Instead, Plutarch charges, Antony wanted to wrap up the entire Median expedition before the winter of 36/5 and get back to Cleopatra (Ant. 37.4; cf. Livy Per. 130). This should be seen as reflecting the negative tradition that resulted from Antony's relationship with Cleopatra, probably stemming from Octavian's anti-Antonian propaganda. Besides Canidius's expedition, another cause for the delay was the necessity to wait for the passes of the Taurus Mountains to clear, allowing the army to move from Syria to Armenia in spring, with arrival at Artaxata by July at the earliest.25

The most important implication of Canidius's campaign bears on Antony's reason for invading Parthian territory by this northerly route rather than through Mesopotamia, as Crassus had done. Suetonius tells us that Caesar had also intended to invade through Armenia (or rather "Armenia Minor"), but with caution ("[Caesar planned] then to make war on the Parthians by way of Armenia Minor but not to engage them until they had been sized up in battle," mox Parthis inferre bellum per

Armeniam minorem nec nisi ante expertos adgredi proelio, Iul. 44.3). It is a commonplace that Antony's choice was informed by Caesar's plan,26 but this interpretation is not without its problems. We need not dwell on these, which have been thoroughly discussed elsewhere,27 but an argument made by Pelling should be stressed: if we accept the purpose of Canidius's Caucasian adventure as presented above, the excursion would hardly make sense unless Antony had always intended to invade through Armenia.28

As for Artavasdes' motivations, his alignments had more to do with his own needs than with those of the general who forced the alliance on him. There was in Media Atropatene a king also named Artavasdes, who had been a rival of the Armenian ruler for years. Antony was thus a means to an end; the Armenian Artavasdes wanted to use the Roman forces to remove his inveterate enemy to the south, probably the reason for his similar advice to Crassus.29 From Antony's own point of view, meanwhile, Artavasdes' offer of assistance would have been welcome given the latter's familiarity with Media and the enemy. Antony had need of Artavasdes as a source of important information about topography, distances, tactics and resources of the enemy, and so on. This use of an eastern king is consistent with Bengston's suggestion that Antony's embrace of Monaeses also arose from his poor information on the Parthians. Monaeses' invaluable knowledge would help make up for Antony's lack of experience in dealing with eastern peoples.30

IV. The Median and Armenian Campaigns

Things turned out very differently. While we need not discuss the Median war in detail here, it bears asking how Antony could have failed so completely when he had such a potentially valuable source of information in Artavasdes. Kromayer, citing Mommsen and Gardthausen, believed that Antony's poor understanding of the terrain and the enemy denied him his victory. Craven felt that Artavasdes did in fact provide the intelligence Antony needed, though she mischaracterized the circumstances.31 In the end, there really is no need to choose between or reconcile these options: Antony's own blunders ultimately nullified any benefit Artavasdes might have brought .

Antony started with an army of about 77,000 or 84,000 (if we use SherwinWhite's numbers), including three hundred wagons bearing heavy siege engines, which required traveling through the valley of the Araxes river into Media. His objective was the fortified town of Phraaspa, somewhere in the plains south of Lake Urmia. In his haste to reach it, presumably to take it before Phraates arrived with his army, Antony left behind the siege engines and baggage train, placing them under the command of Oppius Statianus, with the Armenian forces on hand to guard them, and pushed forward with the major part of his army. Unfortunately, he found the town impossible to capture without his siege equipment; worse still Phraates arrived at Phraaspa and hampered Antony's siege. The king sent a detachment to capture the wagons; in the ensuing battle Statianus was killed, Polemo (Antony's client king of Pontus) was captured, and Artavasdes, seeing the situation as hopeless, withdrew

with his forces. The siege itself and especially Antony's efforts to keep his men fed, in a land offering few provisions, with recurring Parthian harassment, took their toll, and eventually he began the long march back to Armenia, this time by a shorter and more mountainous route. Nonetheless, the Parthians continued their harassing attacks over the course of the twenty-seven day retreat, until he reached the Araxes once again in November. Antony's defeat resulted not only from these problems, but from his failure to seek favorable terrain when dealing with Parthian assaults, his failure to test out the enemy as Caesar had planned, the costly delay of the expedition, and ultimately Antony's fundamental misreading of the situation: a united empire rather than the collection of individual tribes Caesar had faced in Gaul, as Sherwin-White has pointed out.32

Worse still, given Artavasdes' seeming betrayal, Antony could not be sure Armenia would provide a safe haven for his retreating army. As a result, he made friendly overtures to the Armenian king, delaying his planned revenge, and eventually went on his way, after stopping to regroup and assess his losses. Those losses continued as a further 8,000 men perished during the passage of the Armenian plateau in winter en route to Syria. Despite these disasters, it was not beyond Antony to proclaim the Median war a victory in his dispatches to Rome.33

Antony's main motivation for occupying Armenia in 34 was to repair some of the damage to his reputation following the Median fiasco. As we saw before, the sources emphasize the "treachery" of Artavasdes and reflect a pro-Antonian tradition probably going back to Dellius.34 This negativity is so overwhelming that it has made its way into much of the modern discussion of Artavasdes as well,35 but such judgments tend to assess the situation from Antony's point of view. Others, including Buchheim, Prantl, and Halfmann, have urged a more objective approach. Prantl, for instance, has made the case for a more pragmatic Artavasdes, a king who was not necessarily anti-Roman as the tradition suggested but rather was negotiating the rough waters of Roman-Parthian politics, which forced him into a back-and-forth policy of favoring each side. In reference to his abandonment of Antony in Media in 36, again the Armenian king was not acting out of disloyalty to Rome but seeking to prevent Parthian retaliation when it was clear Antony would not succeed.36 We saw above essentially the same calculation in the aftermath of Carrhae. This broader perspective can be obscured if we let Antony get away with distraction from the real cause of his failure in the record of his Parthian war.

So clearly, after Antony resolved to return to Armenia, he was thinking about revenge.37 Was he also thinking about turning Armenia into a province? If we take Cassius Dio at his word, Antony was planning a new Parthian war (49.32.3, 33.3). He would have the same security needs as before, but his han dling of Armenia would have to change. By 35, a new window of opportunity opened for him. Artavasdes the Mede sent as his envoy Polemo of Pontus, who had been taken prisoner the previous year, with the message that Artavasdes wished to form an alliance with Antony and was offering his cavalry to help with a new attack on the Parthians. The Mede had switched sides because of a falling out with Phraates over the spoils from the Roman

incursion. Dio adds that he was eager to settle scores with Artavasdes of Armenia. Delighted by this turn, Antony would later award Polemo rule over Lesser Armenia (Plut.Ant. 52; Dio 49.33.1–2, 44.3).

This, at any rate, establishes the circumstances in which Antony pursued what was ostensibly the first phase of a new Parthian war, the move against Artavasdes of Armenia. He began by inviting Artavasdes to Egypt in the spirit of friendship. The Armenian was not fooled, so Antony made preparations for an expedition (Dio 49.33.3). This was to be a massive undertaking. By the completion of this venture, sometime in 34 or 33, all sixteen of his legions would be in position in Armenia (Plut. Ant. 56.1), a sign of his level of commitment, though, as in the previous war, it is likely these legions were not at full strength. In any case, Antony set out from Egypt, intending to join up with the Median Artavasdes on the Araxes, according to Plutarch (Ant. 52.2).

Suddenly Antony halted and turned back to Egypt after receiving word that his wife, Octavia, Octavian's sister, had come east with 2,000 soldiers along with money and provisions. This was in fact a small part of what was owed him by Octavian per an agreement made in Tarentum in 37.38 According to Dio, Octavia had asked her brother for these troops and was told by Antony to go home (49.33.3–4). Plutarch, by contrast, says that Antony ordered her to remain in Athens; more importantly, citing "most authorities" (οὶ πλείους), he relates that she was sent by Octavian to test the waters—that is, to see if Antony, against whom Octavian had now been directing his considerable propaganda, given the former's public relationship with Cleopatra, could be provoked to war by this point (Ant. 53.1). While Plutarch suggests that Antony returned to Alexandria to console Cleopatra, who worried about Octavia's presence in the East (Ant. 53.6), brinkmanship with Octavian was the more likely reason. Antony accepted the gifts but never saw her. By returning to Egypt, he was choosing Cleopatra over Octavia and would wait on events in the West before committing to an eastern war. Even Armenia would have to wait until the next year.39 This state of affairs suggests to me that his plan in 34 was not to take on Parthia, which would require a much more involved affair than an Armenian war. We have to wonder, in that case, why he would bother with the creation of an Armenian province if the objective was to undo the damage done to his honor and prestige by the Median debacle. The conquest of Armenia was simpler and easier than annexation, a resolution of the frontier that could for now yield sufficient political benefits in Rome, if not equal to those of a Parthian victory.

Drawing mainly from Cassius Dio, we learn that, whatever his intentions toward Armenia, Antony resumed his venture with a second attempt to lure Artavasdes to Egypt. Early in 34, he sent Dellius with a proposal to marry his son Alexander (through Cleopatra) to Artavasdes' daughter. When this failed, in the spring Antony himself came to Nicopolis, to the west of Armenia, inviting the king to join him in planning a new Parthian war.40 Artavasdes remained as suspicious as ever and did not come. Afterwards, Antony tried a variety of methods to lure Artavasdes away

from Artaxata, a combination of carrot, pleasant inducements and entreaties through the king's "companions" (hetairoi: perhaps members of the Armenian nobility known as naxarars), and stick, a forced march to Artaxata and aggressive use of his soldiers (though Dio is vague about what this entailed). Eventually, he convinced Artavasdes to come to his camp, where the king was promptly arrested and taken without shackles to various forts in which the royal treasuries were kept. But Antony was denied their contents by the keepers of those treasuries (Dio 49.39.2–6), at least initially. In his somewhat truncated account, the fifth-century writer Orosius suggests that Antony had indeed succeeded in ransacking at least some of these treasuries (Adversum Paganos 6.19.3), while Pliny the Elder records a desecration of the temple of Anaïtis (Anahita) in the district of Acilisene, where some of Antony's soldiers smashed the golden statue of the goddess and divided the pieces among themselves (HN 33.82–83). Such activities, far easier to document than any strategic considerations, are what lead a number of scholars to see the occupation of Armenia as little more than a raiding expedition.41

Not surprisingly, there was resistance to the Roman occupation by some Armenians, who rallied around Artavasdes' son Artaxias and chose him as king. Antony then shackled Artavasdes in silver (or gold) chains, as befitted his station, and engaged Artaxias. Dio does not give us the details, but with sixteen legions on hand Antony was able to best Artaxias, who fled to the Parthians to fight another day. Antony then left his legions under Canidius to maintain the occupation while he himself delivered his prisoners (Artavasdes, his wife, and his family) to Alexandria, where Antony celebrated what looked like a Roman triumph, riding in a chariot and presenting his captives to Cleopatra (Dio 49.39.6–40.4). Plutarch notes that this "triumph," given the locale, gave particular offense in Rome (Ant. 50.4).42 Likewise, Antony issued a silver denarius in 32 declaring on the obverse ARMENIA DEVICTA.43 Artavasdes seems to have been held for some time. Finally, probably in 30, Cleopatra sent his head to the Median Artavasdes in an effort to cement his support after the Antonian defeat at Actium in September 31 (Dio 51.5.5). Armenia itself remained under Antony's direct control until 32, when the war of words with Octavian had gone as far as it could and Antony ordered Canidius to withdraw his forces and bring them west (Plut. Ant. 56.1). Antony also recalled the troops he had loaned to Artavasdes the Mede (see n50), leaving him exposed to new aggressions by the Parthians and their guest Artaxias (Dio 49.44.4).

V. Assessing the Armenian Venture

This is the only information we have about Antony's activities in Armenia. Does any of this amount to an annexation? Answering this question requires a better understanding of what we mean by annexation, what the process actually entails. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that the Romans had a regular procedure for incorporating provinces into the empire. But Lintott has identified a number of important features that are known from some cases. Arranging for the settlement of conquered territories, whether leading to a province or some other incorporated region, often fell into a commission, usually sent by the Senate, one of whose duties

would be to register communities for tax assessment. Often the settlement was regulated by a lex, e.g., the noted lex agraria of 111 b.c.e. that provided for the incorporation of Africa. Such leges often acknowledged the territory as belonging to the Roman people. Most significantly, a sign of annexation would be the appointment of a magistrate by the Senate or people to administer the province.44 None of these features is attested in Antony's treatment of Armenia. No magistrates or promagistrates are listed by Broughton for this period.45

This stands in contrast to Antony's activities in his earlier settlements of the Near East. We have information about the measures he took to reorganize the provinces and other territories in Greece and Asia Minor following the Battle of Philippi in 42. Essentially, following the disruption of the war against Brutus and Cassius, Antony saw to it that roads, fortifications, temples, water supplies, and other infrastructure were repaired or shored up. He reorganized local military forces to enhance the security of these regions. He also assumed certain judicial functions and made dynastic arrangements.46 Again, no details of this sort are in the accounts of Armenia in the 34–32 period.

We must also consider the possibility that Antony had left behind the Romans who were massacred when Artaxias returned to Armenia in 30 (Dio 51.16.2). Who were these Romans? Some have argued they were merchants.47 This seems a reasonable guess since Antony likely removed all the soldiers for his western war. But it is more likely that these merchants, some of whom we might even call "Roman" in the first century, had been in Armenia long before Antony's arrival. For Armenia, along with Sophene and Lesser Armenia, had developed a coined economy during the Hellenistic period, as it became more integrated into the cultural milieu of the Seleucids and its attendant trading activities.48 Therefore, we have no reason to believe those massacred by Artaxias were remnants of a provincialization effort by Antony.49

Are we then to give any credit to Antony for assigning Armenia a role in a settlement of the East? Other Republican imperatores had shown, as future emperors would, that stability on the Roman frontier was a top priority. This could be achieved by placing peripheral territories under direct control of a Roman official or by employing a client king. Pompey had done both. For instance, he left Tigranes in place in Armenia, a king strong enough to provide a bulwark against any future Parthian aggression. Syria, on the other hand, was made into a province because, according to Pompeius Trogus, Seleucid authority had broken down and the region was racked by internal squabbles of dynasts and raids by Arab tribes. With no strong central authority at hand, the Romans were forced to accept the responsibility of imposing stability themselves (Just. 40.2.2–5). The resistance to Antony's occupation no doubt made Armenia look wild and lawless as well (for all we know, Octavian's propaganda included notices of how Antony had lost control there). Sixteen legions, even at partial strength, were more than enough to impose the Roman will on a subject people, but unlike Pompey, Antony faced an increasingly dire situation in the West in 34, and he would have need of those

legions in that theater sooner or later. The only alternative was a client king, but the closest Antony seems to have come—other than giving, in 33, Lesser Armenia to Polemo (Dio 49.33.2, 44.3) and some small part of Armenia itself, possibly Symbace, to Artavasdes the Mede (Dio 49.44.2; Strabo 11.13.2 C523)—was to declare his son Alexander Helios king of Armenia. This formed part of the infamous Donations of Alexandria.

VI. The Donations of Alexandria

Taken at face value, the accounts of the Donations would seem to problematize any arguments in favor of Antony's annexation of Armenia, that is, if we see them as Antony's schema for an eastern settlement. The alternative is to reject the account, citing Augustan propaganda, or qualify it as an embellishment of what really happened, either for Dio's and Plutarch's purposes or, again, as a consequence of Augustan propaganda. The ceremony in which the Donations were allegedly declared closely followed the pseudo-triumph Antony celebrated for his Armenian war in late 34, if not part of the same proceedings. We are told that Antony and Cleopatra, in the guise of Osiris and Isis, respectively, sat on golden thrones in the great Gymnasium of Alexandria. Cleopatra's son by Julius Caesar, Caesarion, aged 13, and her children with Antony, the twins Alexander Helios and Cleopatra Selene, aged 6, and Ptolemy Philadelphus, aged 2, were on thrones on a lower tier. The "donations," as we call them, were as follows: to Caesarion, along with his mother, rule over Egypt, Cyprus, and Coele Syria; to Alexander, rule over Armenia, Media, and Parthia; to Cleopatra, rule over Cyrenaica and Libya; and to Ptolemy, rule over the rest of Syria and Asia Minor, or at least Cilicia. Moreover, at this ceremony Alexander was arrayed in Armenian/Median attire. Finally, and not least significantly, included in these proceedings was a declaration of Cleopatra as "Queen of Kings" (Plut. Ant. 54.3–5; Dio 49.41.1–3).

Rejecting the historicity of the Donations, at least as presented in the sources, and attributing the account to Augustan propaganda would almost do a service to Antony's memory. Otherwise, we are left with a mad plan by a would-be Roman conqueror with delusions of grandeur, a plan assuredly with no chance of ratification in Rome. For one thing, the arrangement seemed to ignore the fact that Syria and Cyrenaica were Roman provinces while the claim to Parthia was based on a future (and distant) hope. If Dio is right about Ptolemy's allotment (everything to the Hellespont), that would reverse Antony's creation of the client states of Cappadocia, Galatia, and Pontus and ignore the provincial status of Asia and Bithynia. Media, ruled by Antony's would-be ally Artavasdes, at least was a kingdom that Alexander could plausibly inherit.50

In any case, in 32, with his supporters Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus and C. Sosius now in office as consuls, Antony sent a message to them to see that his acta regarding his eastern settlement be ratified by the Senate. Included in these acta, Dio suggests, were the Donations in their full radical form. Concerned by how they would be perceived, the consuls decided instead to suppress them (49.41.4). Once again,

taking Dio at face value leaves us with a quandary. The mere effort to have his acta ratified, despite the putative legality of his acts as triumvir, made before the triumvirate's expiration at the end of 33 (infra), suggests that Antony had not given up on prevailing over Octavian and returning triumphantly to Rome. Otherwise, why would he have engaged in the revved-up propaganda war with Octavian throughout 33 and 32? Antony levied many accusations to try to undermine Octavian's authority, including charges of perfidy toward himself and Lepidus and, famously in Suetonius's account, sexual excess.51 So Antony was clearly invested in winning hearts and minds in Rome, and Octavian resisted his efforts. Having taken heat for his association with Cleopatra already, why would Antony give even better ammunition to Octavian's propaganda machine?

Those who accept the historicity of the Donations as given in the sources usually explain them as reflecting Antony's true intentions. They were genuinely his vision for the East, perhaps a stratagem to make good his previous reverses and bring his Parthian efforts to a more favorable conclusion.52 Southern attempts to salvage Antony's standing in Rome by suggesting that in issuing the Donations, even in their full radical form, "Antony had not yet stepped too far outside the boundaries of Roman practice," that is, the practice of Roman imperatores to install and remove client kings.53 In favor of historicity we must also reckon with the coin mentioned above (see n43): a silver denarius issued in 32 with ARMENIA DEVICTA on the obverse and the image of Cleopatra and the inscription CLEOPATRAE REGINAE REGUM FILIORUM REGUM ("Cleopatra Queen of Kings and her Sons who are Kings") on the reverse. At minimum this coin provides evidence that Antony showed support for Cleopatra. But does it support Dio's report that he declared her as such in Rome by means of his acta?

The question about Cleopatra's title Regina Regum requires a bit of unpacking. If this title was used during the ceremony, under normal circumstances its inclusion in any formal acta to be ratified in Rome would not be so radical, and to that extent Southern's evaluation is cogent. The Romans routinely enhanced the status of clients who were expected to represent Roman interests, as we saw Pompey do for Tigranes in Armenia. Regina Regum would not have caused offense in Rome if Cleopatra was simply regarded as an instrument of Rome's will, essentially an extension of its imperium. But we must remember that circumstances in 32 were hardly nominal. Such a declaration would be fodder for Octavian, which explains the nervousness of the consuls. Dio makes clear that Octavian and other enemies of Antony were careful in couching their accusations; while Antony was certainly open to criticism, it was Cleopatra who was ostensibly the focus of their ire. As an eastern queen who had bewitched the Romans' beloved Antony, she served as a lightning rod for public opinion (50.4.3–6.1). Antony could not have failed to appreciate this and thus would not propose a settlement that was, as Reinhold has noted, "unparalleled in the management of Roman client-king relationships."54

What then do we make of the aforementioned coin and the many other

coins no doubt circulating with the same inscriptions? It bears noting that the target audience for these coins, whatever their actual circulation, was the various peoples of the eastern half of the Roman world. Aside from the fact that titles like "Queen of Kings" were far more traditional in the East, this title and Cleopatra's portrait also reminded those who saw these coins of her supreme status, and anything that helped Cleopatra helped Antony, as far as his position in the East was concerned. We must remember how important it was for Antony to consolidate his power base, which after Brundisium lay in the East, and Cleopatra was key to that goal. He was heavily dependent on her resources for his next Parthian war and the inevitable military confrontation with Octavian.55 Therefore, we should divorce the coin from the Donations, and so we are, in my view, back to the original problem that arises from Dio's testimony of Antony's acta in Rome.

Another interpretation of the Donations is that the intended audience was local. The ceremony was a grand pageant in the Hellenistic mode, the announcement of an empire reminiscent of the Ptolemaic realm at its greatest extent. Such an affair would perhaps enhance Cleopatra's reputation in the East, though its benefit to Antony is less clear.56 At best we might say that anything enhancing her position would enhance Antony's, as I suggested above. But the aforementioned coinage and Antony's expansion of Cleopatra's territory better demonstrate ways to achieve that aim than a ceremony that would be no less than a public relations disaster in Rome. Therefore, Antony's request for ratification of his acta makes this interpretation problematic as well.

Others prefer to see the accounts as exaggerations. Perhaps some kernel of truth lies behind the extravagant claims Antony was making. We may be dealing with, for instance, a topos in Plutarch. The extravagance of the Donations and the ceremony declaring them reflect the decadence of Cleopatra and her eastern court; this contrast with the more sober Roman culture perhaps works in parallel with Plutarch's contrast of the hated Cleopatra and the beloved Octavia, now spurned by Antony. Additionally, Pelling expresses doubt that Sosius and Domitius expected to succeed in suppressing the affair if the ceremony was as public and as lavish as Dio and Plutarch make it out.57

The final, and for me most convincing, interpretation also posits a less radical settlement but attributes the version we now have to Augustan propaganda.58 Especially important is Syme's observation that Velleius Paterculus and Livy, who "had no reason to spare Antonius," give no sense of the extravagant or radical nature of the ceremony and the Donations.59 Though Velleius is brief and we are dealing with a summary of Livy Book 131, such an omission is odd if the Donations were truly as outrageous as Dio and Plutarch suggest. Rather than stripping away Roman territory and awarding kingdoms yet to be won, perhaps Antony did promote a more reasonable settlement that Octavian's propaganda subsequently mutated into the Donations.

VII. Antony's View of the Situation

So our choices in assessing the Donations are that Antony was utterly delusional in his vision for the East or that he developed a reasonable settlement. I am assuming the latter choice, despite the uncomfortable degree of conjecture required, but neither scenario allows for the annexation of Armenia as a province. Antony's pattern in Asia Minor shows that he favored the creation of client kingdoms to organize the frontier, and that was likely Armenia's fate, though that and any future Parthian war would have to wait until the great obstacle in the West was removed. Clearly Antony's link to Cleopatra had compromised his standing in Rome, but I doubt he would have sabotaged his chances of final victory with the Donations. Even with Octavian's advantages, Antony still had considerable support, which emboldened him to challenge Octavian personally by declaring Caesarion Caesar's heir during the Donations ceremony (Dio 49.41.2, 50.3.5). In the midst of the propaganda war, not only did the consuls of 32, Domitius and Sosius, join him in the East, but so did "not a few" senators (Dio 50.2.6; Zonar. 10.28).60 Moreover, as we noted above, there was enough concern regarding Antony's support in Rome for his enemies to direct their ire openly toward Cleopatra rather than Antony and risk declaring his supporters, many as they were, enemies of the state (Dio 50.4.3–5). Finally, Antony no doubt had confidence in the legality of his eastern settlement, whether or not ratified by the Senate in 32. In 39, Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus had already had all their acts as triumvirs ratified by the Senate, either past (Dio 48.34.1) or both past and future (Appian B Civ. 5.75). If Appian's version is correct, then Antony likely saw his acta as already legal, despite the technicality of the lex Titia, on which his triumviral powers rested, expiring at the end of 33.61

The Donations can be explained in the context of Augustan propaganda, but it is all too easy to lose oneself in that mode when explaining all of Antony's achievements in the East, whether, for example, his shortcomings in the Median campaign or his annexation of Armenia. And yet Pat Southern contends that to deny Antony the latter achievement is to be taken in by that propaganda. She explains,

> The reason why Antony's campaign was depicted as useless and rather comic was doubtless because, far from being ill-advised, it promised to bring him success. He had prepared the ground for the last few years by installing independent but trustworthy rulers in the territories of the east, and two years after his disastrous defeat in Parthia he was ready to try again. With Armenia converted into a Roman province, his advance into Parthian territory would be greatly facilitated, and if he had to retreat again, then at least he would not have to march through a potentially hostile country once he had arrived at the border of Armenia.62

Southern seems to be referring strictly to the propaganda of the 30s, and if left at that, the argument makes sense. But we must remember that Octavian's propaganda did not stop with his victory over Antony and Cleopatra in 31. It is well known how

much he crafted a particular image for himself and shaped the account of his successes in the long term, not least in the Res Gestae later in his reign. Why then would his subsequent propaganda need to compensate for Antony's potential success when, in the end, that success eluded him? His first Parthian war was disastrous; the second was never attempted.

I cannot imagine that Antony had no plans for a second Parthian war. What is less certain is whether for conquest or for spoils. We simply cannot know how far he wanted to take matters, but we can easily discern the purpose of the expedition. Whatever the scope needed to achieve it, Antony's goal in Parthia was to surpass Octavian's prestige and have his own name glorified in Rome. The mists of propaganda do not obscure the jealousy with which Antony observed the successes of Octavian and even of his own subordinates, such as Ventidius. The Donations may have given voice to this vain hope, but they do not point to an abandonment of his position in Rome. But, as rightly observed in modern accounts, he ultimately stopped himself while keeping an eye on events in the West. The second Parthian war would have to wait. By 32, when he ordered Canidius to withdraw the legions from Armenia, Antony had given up on any political settlement with Octavian. Civil war was the only option now, and an Antonian victory would have put him in a much stronger position to direct affairs in Rome through his subordinates, of whom there were still many, while his eastern forces were deployed east again. But if a Parthian war was impractical in the late 30s, an Armenian war was more manageable and still yielded the opportunity for declarations like ARMENIA DEVICTA on Antony's coins. He could claim to have been wronged by Artavasdes, and perhaps he truly felt so, but raiding the Armenian treasuries offered the greater lure. There were no commissioners, no surveys, no measures taken to incorporate Armenia as a province. Armenia's occupation could be seen as an extension of the Roman imperium but only inasmuch as it demonstrated Antony's dominance in the East, as did his treatment of Greece and the client kings he installed in Asia Minor, not to mention Herod in Judaea. He did not need to bother with the process of annexation for any of that. Rather than the creation of a province, the Armenian war was about a Roman general desperately grasping for elusive glory while Octavian's star continued to rise in the West.

Appendix: The Accession Date of Artaxias II

Many accounts and notices of the reign of Artaxias II, son of Artavasdes II, give regnal dates of 34–20.63 If we accept as genuine four silver drachms issued by Artaxias himself and found in a Parthian coin horde,64 and if the Greek letters on the reverse of these coins, IΔ (14), are regnal years, then Artaxias himself also believed his reign properly began upon his elevation by a number of the naxarars, members of the nobility of Armenia, in 34.65 But, as we saw above, there was a significant interruption in his reign, and while he and some of his supporters may have wanted to obscure this, 34–20 cannot stand as the proper

regnal period. Matters are not helped by statements that abet this propaganda: Following the capture of Artavasdes, "[t]here was no interregnum, and he [Artaxias] appeared almost immediately as King of Armenia."66 This is true enough, but if left at that, the claim is deceptive. After a conflict of uncertain duration, but no more than several months in 34, Artaxias was driven out of Armenia. From there he fled to Parthia and subsequently went to war with his father's old rival Artavasdes of Media (Dio 49.39.6–40.1, 44.4).

Back in Armenia, no doubt many naxarars still regarded him as the legitimate king, but he did not rule as long as Armenia was occupied. Antony withdrew from Armenia in 32, but Artaxias did not immediately return. Instead, with Parthian help he attacked and defeated the Median Artavasdes (Dio 49.44.4). This came sometime after Antony withdrew the forces he had loaned Artavasdes, either in 32 or 31. Evidently, then, Media also presented an obstacle to Artaxias's return.

When did he finally return? Certainly after 2 September 31, for we hear that Cleopatra sent the head of the Armenian Artavasdes to his Median rival, obviously still in power, only after the Battle of Actium (Dio 51.5.5). Moreover, the latter's downfall was delayed by internal Parthian politics, which led to the temporary removal of Phraates IV from the throne by a rival named Tiridates in 31 (Just. 42.5.4–6; Dio 51.18.3). In the following year Phraates regained the throne, driving Tiridates out.67 We should expect that Artaxias's renewed attack on Artavasdes, clearly in conjunction with the Parthians, had to wait until after Phraates' restoration. Not only was Artaxias under Phraates' protection, but the latter had fostered an animus toward the Median Artavasdes ever since their falling out in 35. On these grounds Artavasdes could not have been removed before 30. Therefore, 30 is when we should date the return of Artaxias. His proper regnal dates are 34, 30–20.

Notes

*The suggestions made by the editor and anonymous readers of TAPA significantly enhanced the quality of this paper, for which I am grateful. My thanks also to Duane Roller, James R. Russell, and Giusto Traina for their help with certain sections of the paper. In the end, if any errors persist, look to me as solely responsible.

1 For example, Southern 1998: 126; Roberts 1988: 273; Reinhold 1981–82: 101 and 1988: 75, 77; Huzar 1978: 182; Brunt 1971: 506; Syme 1939: 265; Tarn 1934: 78.

2 For epigraphical evidence of Trajan's annexation, see ILS 1041, 1338; AE (1968) No. 510; cf. Dio 68.20.3. Discussion by Millar 1993: 101; Bennett 1997: 194; Chaumont 1976: 138–39; Pflaum 1960–61, vol. 1, No. 95.

3 This pattern has been suggested by many scholars who have observed, on the one hand, a reluctance by the Roman Republic to annex territory and rely more on client

kings to enforce Roman policy on the frontiers, especially in the East, and, on the other, a greater reliance on direct rule by Rome under the emperors. In this scenario Roman imperium is presumably ideological during the Republic and territorial under the emperors. See further Edwell 2013: 44–45; Richardson 2008: 183–86. Of course, as Edwell additionally notes, while the emperors starting with Augustus may have conceived the empire more in territorial terms, the ideology of imperium—that is, an extension of Roman power beyond provinces administered by Roman magistrates—remained fundamental to the imperial mindset. Likewise, Whittaker 1994: 54–59.

4 For example, Bengston 1974: 44; Timpe 1962: 121; Schieber 1979: 108, 113; Chaumont 1986: 137; Sherwin-White 1984: 321. Lucille Craven argued for the creation of buffer states by Antony, whose settlement of the East was not so administratively sophisticated as to require any new provinces. This forms part of her argument that Antony's Median invasion was not intended as a war of conquest but merely a razzia (1920: 73). Her characterization of the frontier is similar to that of Syme 1939: 263, who says that Antony's method of territorial expansion was "not by annexation of fresh territories as Roman provinces, but by an extension of the sphere of vassal kingdoms." And yet Syme later states, "Antonius marched into Armenia, captured and deposed the treacherous Artavasdes. He turned the land into a Roman province, leaving there a large army under the tried general Canidius" (1939: 265). There is a similar ambiguity at Huzar 1978: 182: "Antony then easily completed the conquest of Armenia and made it a Roman-occupied client state, with a Romanized son of Artavasdes as nominal ruler but with the real control determined by the Roman legions stationed there under Canidius Crassus. This was the only province that Antony added to the Roman Empire" (my emphasis). Such imprecise use of terminology is especially unfortunate given how unclear the sources are and, as noted above, given the transitional nature of the Romans' concept of empire in this period.

5 Sherwin-White 1984: 321.

6 Chaumont 1986: 137; Schieber 1979: 118; Bengston 1974: 45 and 1977: 215–16.

7 Caracalla presents a special case. Scholars often read Dio 78.12.1 to mean that he reduced Armenia to a Roman province. While he did remove the Armenian king, Dio clearly shows that the Armenians resisted. Moreover, Dio 78.21.1 indicates that Caracalla failed in his efforts, through his general Theocritus, to suppress this turmoil. At best we might argue that Caracalla intended to create a province, but the evidence does not support the contention that he actually did. If anything, it is remarkable that Caracalla invaded Adiabene at all given the instability that continued to prevail in Armenia, but we should see this as a more modest engagement with the Parthians than he originally planned. These matters are discussed in detail in Patterson 2013. If the findings of this paper hold, and we eliminate Antony as well, that leaves Trajan alone in effecting the policy of annexing the Armenian plateau, though there was a complicated evolution of Romanization of

the western fourth of Armenia after the partition of 387, evidently non-provincial Roman administration under Theodosius and finally official annexation under Justinian. See Blockley 1987: 233 with n44.

8 Strabo 11.14.9–12 C530; Plut. Ant. 37.3. Cf. Plut. Ant. 50.3, where the figure is 16,000 total cavalry, perhaps meaning the lighter-armed cavalry numbered 10,000.

9 Pelling 1996: 9.

10 Traina 2003: 86–88 downplays Antony's emulation of Alexander, preferring to characterize him as a champion of old Roman Republican virtues, i.e., an emulator of Julius Caesar and avenger of Crassus. But I see no reason why Antony, as any other imperator, could not cultivate both identities. Glory in the East could take many forms.

11 Plut. Ant. 34.2; Dio 49.21.1. Indeed, Dabrowa 2006: 345–46 has argued that Antony's Parthian war was initially motivated to outshine Ventidius. Antony's reputation for instilling fear in his subordinates, lest they incur his jealousy, also surfaces at Dio 49.23.1–2, where we hear that C. Sosius tried to avoid too much success as governor of Syria in 37 while Antony was away in Italy and thus made sure not to draw the latter's hatred.

12 On Octavian's reputation and the caution of applying post-Actium hindsight to his position in the 35–31 period, see Welch 2012: 291–92. Monaeses comes into the story after Phraates IV becomes king upon the abdication of his father Orodes in 38 and secures his new position by murdering his father, his brothers, and some members of the Parthian nobility. To escape this fate, Monaeses fled to Syria in 37. Antony saw this development as an opportunity to take advantage of the political turmoil engulfing the court. Instead, Phraates invited Monaeses back. The latter's acceptance initially upset Antony (we are told), but then he proposed to use Monaeses as an envoy to demand back the standards lost by Crassus, a demand whose expected rejection would provide Antony with his casus belli (Dio 49.23.3–24.5; Plut. Ant. 37.1–2).

13 In fact, according to Goldsworthy 2010: 294, Antony reduced the number of provinces to three: Asia, Bithynia, and a smaller Syria.

14 For example, Pelling 1996: 29; Halfmann 2011: 175; Reinhold 1988: 63.

15Polemo: Dio 49.25.4; Sullivan 1990: 161–63; cf. Jones 1971: 166–67. Amyntas: Dio 49.32.3, 51.2.1; Strabo 12.5.1 C567; Sullivan 1990: 171–73; cf. Jones 1971: 119. Archelaus: Dio 49.32.3, 51.2.1; Appian B Civ. 5.7; Strabo 12.2.11 C540; Val. Max. 9.15 ext. 2; Sullivan 1990: 182–85; cf. Jones 1971: 176.

16 Plut. Ant. 36.2; Dio 49.32.5; with commentary by Pelling 1996: 29nn133–34.

17 Plut. Crass. 21.5, 22.2–3, 33.1; Dio 40.16.2. Plutarch rounds off Crassus's story—or as he puts it, ends it like a Greek tragedy—with the famous, if dubious, episode of the wedding banquet of Artavasdes' sister, where the head of Crassus is said to have become a prop, notably the head of Pentheus, during a recitation of several lines from Euripides' Bacchae (Crass. 33.1–4).

18 Schieber 1979: 112 has suggested, with good reason, that Plutarch, our sole source for this conflict, got his facts wrong: "It is unlikely that if Canidius had to fight Artavasdes, he would have later left him on the throne (just as Antony later did) while proceeding to the Causasus [sic] from Armenia. Most likely King Artavasdes submitted to Canidius as he entered Armenia and allowed him to cross into Iberia and Albania in the hope of a Roman defeat which did not materialize." This characterization of Artavasdes is likely correct, given the caution with which the Armenian king tended to handle the superpowers, as suggested by Prantl 2008: 92, who also is reluctant to take Plutarch at face value (2008: 100). A suggestion by Buchheim 1960: 82 also bears noting: Artavasdes may have switched back to the Roman side because having Pacorus as his brother-in-law for so many years imperiled his standing with Phraates. Nonetheless, Antony later issued a denarius to commemorate his "victory," with the Armenian tiara depicted on the reverse. This coin is Sydenham 1205 (1952: 194) = Grueber 172 (1910: 2.520).

19 Dio 49.24.1; Plut. Ant. 34.6, Comp. Demetr. Ant. 1.2; Strabo 11.3.5 C501.

20 Pelling 1996: 31; Schieber 1979: 112; Southern 1998: 117; Roberts 1988: 249; Huzar 1978: 175.

21 So argued as well by Schieber 1979: 112–13; Huzar 1978: 175; Traina 2003: 84; contra Sherwin-White 1984: 307–8; Goldsworthy 2010: 305. Reinhold 1988: 59 argues that Canidius's successes "effectively isolated King Artavasdes of Armenia, except on his southern flank bordering Parthia." Braund 1994: 217 emphasizes the support the Iberian and Albanian kings were intended to provide in the Parthian war itself.

22Patterson 2002: 315–16.

23 Schieber 1979: 112–13; Pelling 1996: 32; Roberts 1988: 251–52.

24Plut. Ant. 50.1, 51.1. Of Antony's total losses, Velleius Paterculus says he lost about a fourth of the army (2.82.3) while Florus claims only a third survived (2.20.10). As usual the number of Antony's legionnaires and even of the legions is uncertain. Sherwin-White estimates that Antony's total numbers for the Parthian war were 77,000 or 84,000, divided into sixteen legions (at less than full strength), various contingents of cavalry, and additional auxiliary forces (1984: 311n37, 320). The sixteen legions figure comes from Florus 2.20.10 (based on Livy?) and Just. 42.5.3 (epitomizing Pompeius Trogus) and is deemed by Brunt 1971: 504 as the most likely, likewise Pelling 1996: 32; Bengston 1974: 18–19; Reinhold 1988: 57;

Roberts 1988: 252; Huzar 1978: 176; Tarn 1932: 76; Kromayer 1898: 23. Plutarch gives the same number of legions for Antony's occupation of Armenia in 34–32 (Ant. 56.1). Goldsworthy 2010: 306 is doubtful of this figure.

25 Sherwin-White 1984: 316.

26 At least in terms of the route. But Caesar was evidently planning something more methodical and cautious, and Antony's logistical planning would prove to be far inferior to what Caesar's no doubt would have been. See further Sherwin-White 1984: 307–8, 312; Bengston 1974: 4–9; Schieber 1979: 107–9; Kromayer 1896: 86–90; Reinhold 1988: 55–56; Syme 1939: 263–64; Craven 1920: 77; Roberts 1988: 251; Pelling 1996: 31; Halfmann 2011: 153–54; Southern 1998: 120.

27 The main problem, potentially, is a notice in Cassius Dio that Antony brought his army initially from Antioch to Zeugma on the Euphrates, intending to invade via Mesopotamia. He only turned northward when he saw Parthian forces mustered on the other side of the river and when Artavasdes invited him to take the route through Armenia (49.25.1). A common explanation for this sudden turn from Zeugma is that the manoeuver was a feint to throw off the Parthians. See Bengston 1974: 12–13, 20–21; Pelling 1988: 222–23; contra Sherwin-White 1984: 309–12. Craven 1920: 78–79 argues that Antony turned to the north because his army remained incomplete, lacking the Armenian cavalry whose importance to the Parthian campaign was so vital. Either explanation supports the view given above, that the northern route was always Antony's objective.

28 Pelling 1996: 32. A. S. Schieber has proposed an either-or interpretation of Antony's motives: he was inspired by Caesar's plan or by the advice of Artavasdes: "If he [Artavasdes] had to convince Antony—if we take Dio, XLIX, 25,1 literally—to attack Media Atropatene one might suppose that this was not in Caesar's blueprint. The very fact that Dio reported that the attack on Atropatene was Artavasdes' suggestion to Antony indicates that the latter subsequently blamed the Armenian king for this idea. Had this, however, been Caesar's own famous plan, the accusation would have been ludicrous" (1979: 110). This argument seems to cast doubt on Suetonius's report and raises the question of whether Caesar really had such a plan. Vague though it is, however, I see no reason not to accept the essence of Suetonius, and, further, Schieber's argument regarding Antony seems to me to falter. As we will discuss at length below, Antony's occupation of Armenia in 34 was justified by his charge of treachery against Artavasdes. Certainly, the withdrawal of his forces as Antony's campaign in Media began to sour did not help matters, but the failure arose from a number of factors mostly stemming from Antony's own strategic and tactical blunders. The Armenian war of 34 was intended to repair some of the damage to Antony's reputation, and we have already seen above how vital it was for him not to let Octavian (and indeed Ventidius) overtake him in prestige. Rather than Schieber's either-or scenario, I rather see Antony following Caesar's plan at the beginning and blaming Artavasdes for its failure at the end. The putative culpability of Artavasdes speaks more to Antony's psychology than to Caesar's sense of strategy. Moreover, it

is perfectly plausible that Caesar was himself inspired by the advice Artavasdes had given Crassus and by the consequence of Crassus's failure to take it, as Schieber himself has admitted (1979: 109–10).

29 Dio 49.25.1; Pelling 1996: 31; Craven 1920: 76–77; Traina 2003: 85; Kromayer 1896: 87. Schieber 1979: 109–10 disagrees that Artavasdes' advice to Crassus was also to direct him specifically to Media Atropatene.

30 Bengston 1974: 32.

31 Kromayer 1896: 86; Mommsen 1894: 364; Gardthausen 1891: 294. Craven asserted that Artavasdes' information had been useful long before 36, especially to Caesar as he planned his Parthian war in 44, applying his characteristic attention to logistical details. As his lieutenant, Antony would have been in on the planning and thus would have benefitted from this intelligence in 36 (1920: 77–78). Her argument is unconvincing, however, for we must remember that Artavasdes was hardly an ally of Rome after 53. Cicero expressed concern about Artavasdes' potential aggression against Cappadocia in 51 (Fam. 15.3.1), and Artavasdes had to be forced back into Roman allegiance by Canidius in 36. Or, as we noted above, following Buchheim 1960: 82, at best Artavasdes willingly came over to the Roman side after the accession of Phraates, but that is still long after Caesar's assassination.

32 Plut. Ant. 38.1–49.4; Dio 49.25.2–29.4; Vell. Pat. 2.82.1–3; Florus 2.20; Strabo 11.13.3–4 C523–24; Sherwin-White 1984: 312–20; Bengston 1974: 23–41; Pelling 1996: 33; Goldsworthy 2010: 309–20; Huzar 1978: 177–79; Halfmann 2011: 156–60; Roberts 1988: 252–59; Southern 1998: 120–21. For a useful map, see Halfmann 2011: 157.

33 Plut. Ant. 50.1–51.1; Dio 49.31.1–2; cf. Vell. Pat. 2.82.3.

34 By "pro-Antonian," I mean in this context anti-Artavasdes, as Strabo 11.13.3–4 makes clear. I do not mean to suggest that Dellius was necessarily a partisan of Antony when he wrote his account of the Parthian campaign. Just before Actium, Dellius had abandoned Antony's cause and gone over to Octavian's side (Plut. Ant. 59.3–4; Dio 50.23.2; Vell. Pat. 2.84.2). Given the myriad pro- and anti-Antony details in the subsequent traditions of the triumvir's Parthian war, Augustan propaganda no doubt lying behind some or all of the latter, it is hard to gauge Dellius's place at the beginning of these traditions. See further Kelly 2008.

35 For example, Roberts 1988: 249: "Artavasdes's sympathies lay with the Parthians"; Huzar 1978: 179: "Artavasdes had played the Roman alliance false"; Kromayer 1896: 103: "Es ist schwer hier nicht an Feigheit oder Treubruch zu glauben."

36 For his general assessment, see Prantl 2008: 92. On the Median war, see 2008: 103. Similarly, Halfmann 2011: 158; Buchheim 1960: 83; Asdourian 1911: 58;

Bengston 1977: 214. Despite this assessment in 1977, Bengston 1974: 36 declares that without sufficient evidence for Artavasdes' motives we are hard pressed to make judgments about his loyalties.

37 It is possible that Antony was also motivated by an alleged secret communication between Octavian and Artavasdes sometime before the latter's capture in 34 (Dio 49.41.5). In the present political climate, such a motivation seems viable, but we have no way of knowing if it factored in Antony's plans for revenge.

38 This meeting in Tarentum had to do with whether Antony would support Octavian against Sextus Pompeius. Eventually Antony agreed to provide 120 ships in exchange for 20,000 troops, which would come in handy for his Parthian war (Appian B Civ. 5.93–95; Plut. Ant. 35; Dio 48.54.1–6). However, while Octavian got his ships, Antony never got the troops. See further Pelling 1996: 25–26.

39 Schieber 1979: 116; Buchheim 1960: 87. Craven 1920: 83–84 goes too far in concluding from Antony's treatment of Octavia that he no longer sought popularity at home.

40 Buchheim 1960: 90–91 and Timpe 1962: 124 have more faith that Antony's marriage proposal was genuine than Dio appears to and ascribe the account to Augustan propaganda. Contra Schieber 1979: 117–18.

41 Chaumont 1986: 137; Schieber 1979: 118; Bengston 1974: 45 and 1977: 215–16

42 The capture of Artavasdes, if not all of Dio's details, is referenced in many accounts, suggesting that this was a highlight in the narrative of the eventual downfall of Antony. See Plut. Ant. 50.4, Comp Demetr. Ant. 5.2; Dio 50.1.4, 50.27.7; Tac. Ann. 2.3; Strabo 11.13.4 C524, 11.14.15 C532; Vell. Pat. 2.82.3; Joseph. BJ 1.18.5; Oros. 6.19.3; Zonar. 10.27; Livy Per. 131. Armenian traditions also seem to preserve this event, but as often they are somewhat garbled. The historian Moses Khorenats'i, probably drawing from Josephus, refers directly to Antony's capture of Artavasdes (Arm. Artavazd) (2.23). Later, Moses records several tales that collectively speak of an Artavazd who was chained in a cave inside Mt. Ararat by spirits called k'ajk' (2.61). Armenian historiography is notorious for conflating different figures with the same name; nonetheless, Garsoïan 2004: 1.61 believes Artavasdes II may lie behind this legend, and James Russell provides supporting evidence. Citing parallels with Iranian stories, especially the chaining of the demon Aždahak (Av. Aži Daha¯ka), Russell posits that the Armenian tradition replaces Egypt with Ararat as the place of Artavasdes' confinement. Artavasdes himself may have been a Zoroastrian hero, but later Christian Armenian tradition (including some of Moses' sources) possibly equated him with Aždahak. See Russell 1987: 401–8. For detailed discussion of the legends of Artavazd, see Mahé 1982.

43 See Sydenham 1210 (1952: 194) = Grueber 179 (1910: 2.525). The reverse of this coin featured the head of Cleopatra and the inscription CLEOPATRAE REGINAE

REGUM FILIORUM REGUM, to which we will return in discussing the Donations of Alexandria.

44 Lintott 1993: 28–32; cf. Harris 1979: 133–36.

45 Broughton has no name of any governor for Armenia in 34–32. Of Canidius, left in charge by Antony, Broughton 1952: 416 says only, "At the end of this year [33] or early in 32 Antony ordered him to bring his forces from Armenia to Ephesus (Plut. Ant. 56.1)."

46 Much of this is documented in Plutarch (Ant. 23–24), Appian (B Civ. 5.7), and Strabo (14.5.14 C674). For other sources, see Craven 1920: 27–36.

47 Southern 1998: 127; Reinhold 1988: 82.

48 Garsoïan 2004: 1.49–52; Manandyan 1965: 34–40.

49 We do have one odd detail in an Armenian source that may bear on Antony's treatment of Armenia. The historian Moses Khorenats'i says that Armenia became for the first time in its history "tributary to the Romans" (2.24) (I am using Robert Thomson's 1978 translation of Moses). The placement of this passage suggests that this event happened after the removal of Artavasdes by Antony (2.23), although the passage itself is garbled, with reference to an Armenian king named Aršam. Unfortunately, such confusion is typical of Moses. Nonetheless, Giusto Traina has argued that this account can be linked to Antony. We have notices of Antony exacting tribute in Appian, who specifically refers to the enforcement of reparations on the Greek cities that had supported Brutus and Cassius (B Civ. 5.5–6). Antony also required tribute to be paid by the client kings he installed or affirmed in Asia Minor in the early 30s (B Civ. 5.75). In Traina's view Moses records the same policy in Armenia (1998: 114–15; 2003: 89). On its own I cannot judge the usefulness of Moses, but where analogies with Appian are concerned, I am only partially convinced. Appian B Civ. 5.5–6, while dealing with provincial cities, is not very helpful because that passage concerns repayment of arrears of taxes while such a situation did not apply in Armenia. Appian B Civ. 5.75 might provide a better analogy, but only if Antony treated Armenia as a client state, not a province.

50 Schieber claims that the Donations "would have alienated King Artavasdes of Media, who had no intention of relinquishing his throne" (1979: 119), but there is no evidence that Alexander was to inherit the throne immediately (cf. Sullivan 1990: 273). More likely, by virtue of his marriage into the Median royal family, he would do so upon Artavasdes' death. This arrangement may have been made in the following spring, in 33, when Antony returned to Armenia and presumably met the Median Artavasdes in person on the banks of the Araxes. Dio says they renewed their alliance against both the Parthians and Octavian. Antony loaned some forces to Artavasdes, which helped him later to fend off an attack by the Parthians and the Armenian exile Artaxias. Antony also received the king's daughter Iotape, to be

married to Alexander, and the standards lost in the war of 36. Artavasdes, meanwhile, acquired control of part of Armenia (Dio 49.40.2, 44.1–4; Plut. Ant. 53.6). What part and how much of Armenia are unclear, though Strabo notes that at some point the Medians received a region called Symbace from the Armenians during a period of Roman domination (11.13.2 C523), for which Antony's occupation certainly qualifies. This identification, made by Gutschmid 1888: 101, is followed by Schieber 1979: 121–24 and Asdourian 1911: 63n3.

51 Cleopatra, her corruption of Antony, and the threat she posed to Rome were the focus of Octavian's charges. He also denigrated Antony's military achievements, charged him with trying to promote Caesarion as Caesar's son (and thus a rival to Octavian), and accused him of undermining the diplomatic clout of the Roman people through his treacherous arrest of Artavasdes, among other things. See Dio 50.1.3–2.1, cf. 49.41.6; Plut. Ant. 55; Suet. Aug. 69.2; cf. Tac. Ann. 2.3 (scelus Antonii).

52 Halfmann 2011: 175; Roberts 1988: 276.

53 Southern 1998: 129.

54 Reinhold 1981–82: 102.

55 Scholars have often commented on Antony's heavy reliance on Cleopatra's support, both emotional and military. See, for example, Levick 2010: 42–43; Pelling 1996: 30; Goldsworthy 2010: 295–96, 353–54; Huzar 1978: 167–68.

56 Goldsworthy 2010: 333–34; Strootman 2010: 145–57; cf. Pelling 1996: 41; Reinhold 1988: 76–77. Duane Roller notes that the ceremony may have emulated the Ptolemaia, a festival devoted to Dionysus inaugurated by Ptolemy II. Like the Ptolemies the Romans had an interest in Dionysus, and Antony referred to himself as the "New Dionysus," which enhanced his political position in the Hellenistic East. This may further explain his taking on the role of Osiris in the Donations ceremony, given the latter's equivalence with Dionysus in Greek eyes. See Roller 2010: 100, 116–17.

57 Pelling 1988: 249.

58 The line taken by, e.g., Schieber 1979: 118; Pelling 1988: 249; Timpe 1962: 124. Southern 1998: 132 acknowledges this possibility but is less certain.

59 Syme 1939: 270n1; Vell. Pat. 2.82.4; Livy Per. 131. Likewise Huzar 1978: 199.

60 The exact figure is unknown. Most seem to prefer 300: e.g, Huzar 1978: 206; Southern 1998: 133 ("but the figure is only a guess"); Bengston 1977: 223 ("nicht weniger als 300 Senatoren"). Reinhold 1988: 89–90 favors 400, perhaps based on the calculations by Walmann of the figures at Actium, desertions to Octavian, etc.

Walmann also points out that not all of Antony's supporters fled Rome with the consuls (1976: 306–7).

61 For a full discussion of the triumvirs' powers regarding provinces, see Bleicken 1990: 27–36. The end of the lex Titia is somewhat controversial, with some arguing for its termination at the end of 32 (based on Appian Ill. 5.28) and some the end of 33 (based on Augustus's Res Gestae at 7.1, with support from Suet. Aug. 27.1). Most scholars favor the latter. For full discussion, see Lange 2009: 53–60; Levick 2010: 51–53; Pelling 1996: 67–68; Bleicken 1990: 14–16; Southern 1998: 129–130.

62 Southern 1998: 126.

63 For example, Nercessian 2006: 204; Schottky 2003: 58; Redgate 2000: 78; Sullivan 1990: 290; Sherwin-White 1984: 323; Asdourian 1911: 65.

64 There is some controversy about the authenticity of these coins since the provenance and date of discovery are unknown (Nercessian 2006: 13–14). For arguments in favor of their authenticity, see Nercessian 2006: 163. These discoveries postdate the catalog of Bedoukian, who was hard-pressed to find coins definitely attributable to Artaxias (1978: 29).

65Nercessian 2006: 3, 161.

66 Sullivan 1990: 290. Oddly he gives both 34 and 33 as the ascension year for Artaxias. Schottky 2003: 58 makes a similar statement that ignores the interruption.

67 The years for the usurpation (31) and restoration (30) of Phraates are suggested by the historical context in Dio: Phraates and Tiridates were vying for Octavian's support while he was focused on dealing with Antony in 31. Upon his restoration Phraates sent a delegation to Octavian while the latter was in Syria in 30. See further Debevoise 1938: 135–36; Bivar 1983: 65–66; Ziegler 1964: 45–46; Wolski 1993: 146. Also, Phraates' coinage from Seleucia has a gap in 30/29, suggesting a break in his reign in agreement with Dio's chronology. See McDowell 1935: 185.

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