

inaccessible to enquiry (it was Verginius who made them public for us). Suetonius leaves Verginius aside altogether; by the time Juvenal wrote his eighth Satire he had been removed to the dim safe pantheon of legend to stand alongside Vindex and Galba, the other heroes and Liberators of the war of 68¹⁴⁴).

This paper attempts to account for puzzles and divergences in the story of Verginius Rufus by assuming strata in its development. Whether this is correct or not, assiduous readers of the Verginius literature cannot have failed to notice strata in modern writings on the subject. Between twenty and thirty years ago, Kraay, Chilver, and Syme stated clearly, but perhaps not emphatically enough, that Verginius remained loyal to Nero to the end and that historians who asserted the contrary were glossing over that fact, or were misled by their sources. Since then the version of Plutarch and Dio has gained ground, and Verginius has been presented, almost without dissent, as a defector from Nero, usually ambivalent or hostile towards Vindex and Galba, sometimes merely incompetent. The difficulties have not all been resolved by this newer approach, and a reassessment is not out of place, especially if it can exploit and account for both ancient and modern failure to agree by tracing it to Verginius himself ¹⁴⁵).

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TITUS IN THE EAST, A.D. 70–71

The conclusion of the siege of Jerusalem marked the virtual end of the Judaeian campaign¹). Titus could well have returned to Vespasian and celebrated their joint triumph with suitable pomp

144) Juv., *Sat.* viii.221 f.

145) K. Wellesley, *The Long Year A. D. 69*, London, 1975, 9 f., correctly stresses Verginius' ambiguousness, but his extremely severe judgment makes no allowance for changing circumstances.

1) For the details of the siege, see E. Schurer, *A History of the Jewish People in The Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. – A.D. 135)*: Revised and edited by G. Vermes and F. Millar (Edinburgh, 1973), pp. 501 ff. and E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule from Pompey to Diocletian* (Leiden, 1976), pp. 316 ff. The Upper City was abandoned to the Romans on September 8th 70 (Josephus, BJ 6.407).

and display: properly presented, it would serve to underline their military reputation in contrast with the ineptness of Nero and the rest. But he remained where he was: winter was close²). So the conqueror of Jerusalem, who had crossed from Achaëa to Alexandria in the middle of winter³), who in the winter of the following year had reached Corinth on his way to Rome to be adopted by Galba, according to the official propaganda⁴), now apparently delayed the politically significant triumph because winter was close. He did immediately send the legion *XII Fulminata* to Melitene⁵), but did not return the other legions⁶) (and their auxiliaries) to their appropriate provinces, where their services could well have been needed or even vital, for Vitellius had been dead less than a year; instead, he kept them with him and engaged in what Josephus seems to indicate was a leisurely and meandering tour of the east. In all this there was a purpose, but it is not immediately obvious from a reading of his text.

Now he provides no indication of messengers passing between Titus and Rome, though Titus would clearly not have delayed the triumph and the dispersal of the legions merely on his own accord, nor would he have sent the *XII Fulminata* to Melitene without precise instructions from Vespasian. The likeliest candidate for this task would be Tiberius Julius Alexander⁷). He disappears from Josephus' account after the council of war that was held to determine the fate of the Temple⁸) (early August), at a time when it was clear that success was only a matter of time. That he was trusted by Vespasian emerges from his posi-

2) This is the unconvincing reason provided by Josephus, BJ 7.20.

3) BJ 3.8 and 29 (winter, 66/67).

4) Tacitus, Hist. 2.1 (winter, 68/69).

5) BJ 7.17–19.

6) I.e. *X Fretensis*, *V Macedonica* and *XV Apollinaris*.

7) His career has been the subject of many studies. See, in particular, PIR² J. 139; E. G. Turner, Tiberius Julius Alexander: JRS 44 (1954), pp. 54–64, V. Burr, Tiberius Julius Alexander (Bonn 1955) and G. W. Houston, Roman Imperial Administrative Personnel During the Principates of Vespasian and Titus (Diss., North Carolina, 1971), pp. 292–294, and especially n. 16 on p. 292 for some earlier studies. Nothing is known of him after his two early posts (*epistrategus* of the Thebaid ca 42 and procurator of Judaea, 46–48) until 63, when he appears as military advisor to Corbulo (*inlustris eques Romanus minister bello datus*: Tacitus, Ann. 15.28.3). Presumably, he had acquired considerable military expertise during the interval, since he held the same sort of post under Titus (after an appointment to the prefecture of Egypt and the control of the two legions there), and, subsequently, commanded the praetorians in Rome.

8) BJ 6.237–243 (August 9th).

tion in the war against Judaea, for he was Titus' chief of staff⁹), appointed by Vespasian to assist his inexperienced and headstrong son¹⁰). Apparently, he retained that trust: if *P. Hibe* is to be believed, and there is no reason to reject Turner's interpretation¹¹), then Alexander subsequently became praetorian prefect, presumably as Titus' colleague, thereby continuing the partnership that had been proved so successful in Judaea. He would have made an ideal intermediary on such a confidential mission where not everything could be entrusted to writing. At all events, Vespasian's attitude was clear: Titus was not to return until the following year and the standard excuse for delay was to be invoked – unfavourable seasonal conditions.

Of course, the political situation in the capital had been somewhat fluid. Late in 69, there had been *discordia inter patres, ira apud victos, nulla in victoribus auctoritas*¹²); the mood of the senate could be accurately described as fractions and recriminatory¹³), with the successful attack on Egnatius Celer and moves to renew the prosecution of Epirus Marcellus¹⁴). As well, a small but noisy minority bitterly opposed Vespasian's dynastic intentions, that he made no effort to conceal¹⁵). They were centered on Titus, as were the barbs of the opposition. The culmination was Helvidius Priscus' attack and Vespasian's emotional reply¹⁶). When

9) Note 7 supra.

10) Even during the siege, he worried his staff with his recklessness. On at least eight occasions, he intervened in battles in a manner that indicated to Josephus his undoubted personal bravery, but, to a less biased observer, appeared to be mere foolhardiness. Two instances of unwarranted personal intervention (BJ 5.81–97 and 281) occurred before Agrippa's wall was taken (May 5th 70), two more (BJ 5.287–288 and 310–311) before the second wall fell (May 14th), another two (BJ 5.339–341 and 486–488) occurred before the construction of the wall around the city (ca early June) and two more subsequently (BJ 6.70 and 132–135). On the last occasion, he was persuaded by the entreaties of his staff (cf. BJ 5.88 for similar blunt speaking) to remain at the Antonia: he would, they said, "achieve more by sitting still (there) as director of the contest of his troops than by going down and exposing himself in the forefront" (BJ 5.133).

11) E. G. Turner (n. 7 above), p. 62.

12) Tacitus, Hist. 4.11.

13) See J. K. Evans, *The Trial of P. Egnatius Celer*: CQ 29 (1979), pp. 198–202.

14) Tacitus, Hist. 4.40 (Celer) and 43 (Marcellus).

15) Suetonius, Vesp. 25 and Dio, 66.12.1. Note also the discussions of L. Homo, *Vespasien. L'Empereur du bon Sens* (Paris, 1949), pp. 289–295 and J. Carcopino, *L'Hérédité dynastique chez les Antonins*: REA 51 (1949), pp. 265–267.

16) Dio, 66.12.1: see the useful discussion by A. R. Birley, *Agricola, the Flavian Dynasty and Tacitus: The Ancient Historian and His Materials. Essays in Honour of C. E. Stevens* (Gregg International, 1975), p. 143.

that incident occurred is not strictly relevant to the present inquiry¹⁷), but it is consistent with the general pattern of events in Rome, where, for Titus, the political climate was like the sea – dangerous and best avoided. But if Vespasian was worried about opposition to his dynastic plans, it is hard to believe that he permitted Titus to proceed with two legions on a leisurely tour of the east. Obviously, the expedition had a definite purpose. Titus' real task was to employ his diplomatic talents¹⁸) and convince the Parthians that Vespasian had no hostile intentions towards them and that they should not be concerned by rumours that he was planning to annex Commagene. Diplomatic obfuscation backed up with a show of force would enable Vespasian to proceed unhindered with the plans that had to be explained to the Parthians as either non-existent or purely defensive.

That Vespasian had already determined on the broad lines of an eastern policy by this time is almost certain, for, by the end of 70, the *XII Fulminata* was in Melitene, in Cappadocia, which had seen no legion during the Judaean campaign¹⁹). Again, L. Caesennius Paetus, the new governor of Syria, was on his way²⁰) at this time. The decision to appoint him must have been made at around the time that Jerusalem fell or even earlier, and would have been greeted with dismay and suspicion by the Parthians, as Vespasian knew full well. His qualifications for the command were his relationship with Vespasian and a desire to prove himself after the disaster of Rhandaia some seven years earlier. The appointment

17) A. R. Birley, op. cit., p. 152, suggests that it may have been before the end of 70.

18) His diplomatic talent had been recognised previously – the visit to Galba (Hist. 2.1) and early negotiations with Mucianus (BJ 4.32: October 67).

19) Tacitus, Hist. 2.81.

20) For his career, see PIR² C. 173, G. W. Houston (n. 7 above), pp. 38–41 and R. Syme, *The Enigmatic Sospes*: JRS 67 (1977), pp. 38–49. It is now known that his full name was L. Junius Caesennius Paetus (AE 1973, 141). For the relationship between him and Flavia Sabina (PIR² F. 440), see the discussion of ILS 995 (*Flaviae T.[f.] Sabinae Caesenni Paeti*) by G. Townend, *Some Flavian Connections*: JRS 51 (1961), p. 56. His failure during Nero's reign is discussed by D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century after Christ* (Princeton, 1950), pp. 558–560 and 1415–1416. A. Garzetti, *L. Cesennio Peto e la rivalutazione flaviana di personaggi neroniani*: *Mélanges Piganol* (Paris, 1966), pp. 777–790, points out that Caesennius almost certainly had an aggressive attitude towards Parthia and that this influenced his appointment; unfortunately, he does not note the relationship with Flavia Sabina. Caesennius' journey can be assigned to the last months of 70: Titus was in Beirut on November 17th, then left for Syria and heard that Caesennius was on his way to his new post (BJ 7.39, Beirut: 7.59, Caesennius).

must have caused concern, for Paetus' boastful posturing in the past²¹) heralded an aggressive stance in the future.

Relations with Parthia had been quite satisfactory. In 68/69, an embassy from Vologaeses had come to Rome to renew their *societas*. According to Suetonius, there were those who, on Nero's death, behaved as though he would shortly return and deal destruction to his enemies: *quin etiam Vologaeses Parthorum rex missis ad senatum legatis de instauranda societate hoc etiam magno opere oravit, ut Neronis memoria coleretur*²²). The context strongly suggests that they left Parthia shortly after Nero's death, and probably they reached Rome during Otho's reign²³). It could even be that they arrived later as a result of their contact with Vespasian in Alexandria late in 69. According to Tacitus, *aderant legati regis Vologaesii quadraginta milia Parthorum equitum offerentes. magnificum laetumque tantis sociorum auxiliis ambiri neque indigere: gratiae Vologaesio actae mandatumque ut legatos ad senatum mitteret et pacem esse sciret*²⁴). Obviously, Vespasian had no intention of walking into a trap: had he accepted their offer, he would have been depicted as a "Parthian vassal", and the people of Alexandria had already made clear that Berenice's role in the Flavians' cause had not gone unnoticed²⁵). He had trouble enough as it was with his "oriental" image – the acclamation by Tiberius Julius Alexander, the support of Sarapis, Berenice's financial assistance and her affair with Titus, and, in general, with being depicted as reversing the decision at Actium a century earlier with the aid of a second Cleopatra²⁶). He had no wish to appear as the "vassal" of those

21) Tacitus, Ann. 15.6.

22) Suetonius, Nero 57.2: for a discussion of the passage, see A. S. Schieber, *The Flavian Eastern Policy* (Diss., New York, 1976), p. 129 and 264; and K. R. Bradley, *Suetonius' Life of Nero. An Historical Commentary* (Coll. Latomus, 157), p. 294.

23) Nero died on June 9th 68: see P. A. Gallivan, *Suetonius and Chronology in the 'De Vita Neronis'*: *Historia* 23 (1974), p. 318. For the suggestion that the embassy arrived in Otho's reign, see Schur, *Parthia*, RE 18 (1949) col. 2019.4.

24) Tacitus, Hist. 4.51: also Dio 66.11.3.

25) The Alexandrians called Vespasian "Cybiosactes", recalling the husband of Berenice IV, murdered by her a few days after their marriage (57 B.C.): see A. B. Bosworth, *Vespasian and the Provinces: Some Problems of the Early 70's A. D.*: *Athenaeum* 51 (1973), p. 59 with n. 51.

26) For her career, see PIR² J. 651; U. Wilcken, *Berenike nr. 15*, RE 3 (1897) col. 287–289; W. C. McDermott and A. Orentzel, *Roman Portraits. The Flavian – Trajanic Period* (Columbia, 1979), pp. 32–38 and P. M. Rogers, *Titus, Berenice and Mucianus*: *Historia* 29 (1980), pp. 86–95. The parallel with Cleopatra has been frequently invoked, following Mommsen: Wilcken (RE, loc. cit.) also adds that it was her misfortune that Titus was no Antony.

whom Augustus had “overcome” and forced to return the Roman standards²⁷). So, astute as ever, he urged them to approach the senate in the normal manner, thereby causing no offence and at the same time avoiding an embarrassing committment.

But, by the autumn of 70, the position had altered: Vespasian’s policy was apparent and must have worried Vologaeses. He would have been even more worried if the creation of the Cappadocia-Galatia complex had already begun²⁸), for the first indication of it would have been the arrival of a second legion, the *XVI Flavia Firma*. The immediate transfer of the *XII Fulminata* and the appointment of L. Caesennius Paetus, however, were ominous enough.

The Parthians had another problem. Titus had captured several sons of King Izates of Adiabene and of his successor and half-brother Monobazus²⁹). Izates had been nominally a Parthian vassal and Monobazus himself commanded³⁰) the auxiliaries sent to aid the Parthians in their invasion of Armenia³¹). In addition, both Izates and Monobazus were Jewish converts and the latter’s relatives are attested as having fought well against the Romans³²). Vologaeses no doubt regarded with some embarrassment the prospect of these associates of his being paraded in chains³³) through the streets of Rome, gracing Vespasian’s and Titus’ triumph.

Vespasian’s intentions in the east were obvious, but had to be suitably interpreted by Titus. He probably never even contemplated invading Parthia, but wanted to ensure that the long border was secure: so he created the Cappadocia-Galatia complex, annexed Commagene, established an extensive roadbuilding programme in the area and maintained excellent relations with areas such

27) *Parthos trium exercitum Romanorum spolia et signa reddere mihi supplicesque amicitiam populi Romani petere coegi*: Res Gestae 29.

28) The date has been discussed by A. S. Schieber, op. cit., pp. 65 ff. and by A. B. Bosworth, Vespasian’s Reorganisation of the North-Eastern Frontier: *Antichthon* 10 (1976), pp. 63–78.

29) For a discussion of Izates and Monobazus, see N. C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia* (Chicago, 1938), p. 165 and A. S. Schieber, op. cit., p. 129.

30) Dio, 62.20.2.

31) Tacitus, Ann. 15.1; note that Monobazus was one of the witnesses to Caesennius Paetus’ surrender at Rhandaia (Ann. 15.14).

32) Josephus, AJ 20.92 (converts), BJ 2.520 (prowess against Rome).

33) BJ 6.356–357.

as Iberia³⁴). Particularly important was the road system, since the favourite method of dealing with the Parthians, a long list of royal pretenders, had proved ineffective during the latter part of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and now had to be replaced by a more delicate mixture of diplomatic pressure and the threat of force, for now opposing forces could be more speedily mobilised.

Titus was clearly acting on instructions in sending the *XII Fulminata* to Melitene and in retaining two legions for his eastern expedition. After celebrating his father's birthday (November 17th) at Berytus³⁵), he moved to Antioch and thence to Zeugma on the Euphrates, where envoys from King Vologaeses presented him with a golden crown, congratulating him on his victory over the Jews³⁶). The Parthians were entertained and returned home³⁷). They had apparently been reassured that the new eastern policy was purely defensive and sent back with their complaints noted; on the other hand, they could report on the new emperor's son, recently victorious over the Jews and accompanied by an impressive force. The entire display was arranged by Vespasian and admirably presented by his son who now achieved public recognition of his status and diplomatic talents. Perhaps the success of Titus' enterprise is indicated by subsequent events: despite the new eastern policy of the Flavians, the relationship with Parthia remained amical. When Commagene was invaded and the King's sons Epiphanes and Callinicus sought refuge with Vologaeses, he treated them with honour but surrendered them to Velius Rufus³⁸); he took no other action. Clearly he had been impressed by the judicious mixture of diplomatic pressure and armed might displayed at Zeugma.

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34) See ILS 8795 where Mithridates, King of Iberia, is described as *philocaesar* and *philoromaïos* (A. D. 75). Clearly, he is a client king; thus F. Grosso, *Aspetti della politica orientale di Domiziano: Epigraphica* 16 (1954), pp. 153 ff.

35) BJ 7.36.

36) BJ 7.105.

37) BJ 7.106.

38) ILS 9200. For a discussion of the invasion, see D. Magie (n. 20 above), pp. 572-574 and 1434.