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The Death of Decimus Brutus
The Strange Case of his Artillery and the Iapodes*

Plate 23

After Caesar's murder, Decimus Brutus went to govern Cisalpine Gaul, which Antony legally exchanged for Macedonia. Decimus Brutus' career is briefly discussed, as are the events, which postdated his refusal to surrender his province. The alliances at Mutina were unusual: the consuls Aulus Hirtius and Gaius Vibius Pansa, as well as Octavian, fought on the side of Decimus Brutus against Antony. The aftermath of Mutina and particularly the flight of Decimus Brutus are analysed in detail, as well as his death among the Sequani, whose dynast was Camilus. Appian's (possible) sources and his reliability are discussed, particularly his use of the *Memoirs* of Augustus. Light is shed on the problem of how the artillery machines of Decimus Brutus' army could have ended up at Metulum, the capital of the Iapodes.

Decimus Iunius Brutus Albinus (praetor in 45 BC and consul *designatus* for 42 BC) was most probably the son of Decimus Brutus, consul of 77 BC, and Sempronia; as is indicated by his name Albinus, he was adopted by a Postumius Albinus, probably a son of A. Postumius Albinus (*cos.* 99 BC).¹ As a very young man Decimus Brutus was appointed prefect of Caesar's fleet in the war against the Veneti in Gallia in 56 BC, in which he won a naval victory (*BG* 3.11.5: *D. Brutum adulescentem classi Gallicisque navibus ...*).² He served as a prefect in Gaul under Caesar in subsequent years, fought against Vercingetorix in 52 BC (*BG* 7.9.2; 87.1), and is attested in 49 BC as Caesar's legate in charge of naval operations near Massalia, during which he again distinguished

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¹ D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Two Studies in Roman Nomenclature* (American Class. Studies 3), Philadelphia 1976, 86–88, particularly 118. F. Münzer, *D. Iunius Brutus Albinus 55a*, RE Suppl. 5 (1931) 369–385; F. Hinard, *Les proscriptions de la Rome républicaine* (CÉFR 83), Rome 1985, 163 n. 68; 297; 409; 486; K. Matijević, *Marcus Antonius. Consul — Proconsul — Staatsfeind. Die Politik der Jahre 44 und 43 v. Chr.* (Osnabrücker Forschungen zu Altertum und Antike-Rezeption 11), Rahden/Westf. 2006, for two crucial years 44 and 43 BC.

² The whole episode: Caes., *BG* 3.11.5–16.4; Dio 39.40–43; T. R. S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*. Vol. II, New York 1952, 213; Vol. III, Supplement, Atlanta, Georgia 1986, 112–113.

himself.³ He was then appointed governor of Transalpine Gaul by Caesar, where he suppressed an uprising of the Bellovaci in 46 BC (Liv., *Per.* 114; App., *BC* 2.111); at the same time Cisalpine Gaul was governed by M. Iunius Brutus. Caesar held him in great esteem and affection, giving him another provincial command in Cisalpine Gaul and designating him consul for 42 BC.⁴ Although he enjoyed Caesar's special favour and was one of Caesar's dearest friends (App., *BC* 2.111.464–5), he nonetheless took part in the conspiracy against the dictator, joining the two chief conspirators C. Cassius Longinus and M. Iunius Brutus, his relative. They, too, as is well known, were entirely trusted by Caesar, who regarded Marcus Brutus almost as a son (App., *BC* 2.111.464–5; 112.466–8). According to Appian, Caesar was killed four days before his intended departure to fight against the Getae and Parthians, of whom the former were to be attacked first: 16 legions and 10,000 cavalry had been sent across the Adriatic in advance (*BC* 2.110.459–60).

Appian on Decimus Brutus

Data concerning Decimus Brutus is found in the works of many classical writers, from his contemporaries Caesar and Cicero to Velleius Paterculus, Plutarch (notably in his lives of Caesar, Cicero, Antony, and Brutus), Appian and Cassius Dio.⁵ Appian is one of the most important sources for the period during which Decimus Brutus was one of the prominent protagonists. In chapter 48 of the second book of his *Civil Wars*, he recounts how Caesar returned to Rome after the mutiny of his army at Placentia in 49 BC and was chosen dictator, but after only eleven days he designated himself and P. Servilius Isauricus as consuls (for 48 BC) and appointed governors to provinces, among others Decimus Brutus to the newly acquired Gaul.⁶ In chapters 111 (464) and 113 (474) of the second book, Decimus Brutus is merely mentioned as Caesar's close friend whom the conspirators won to their side. In chapter 143 of the same book, Appian describes the reading of Caesar's will, in which Caesar had adopted as his main heir Octavian, while he had named Decimus Brutus for adoption in the second degree (597). This caused great disturbance among the people, who regarded it as ungrateful and even sacrilegious that he should have plotted against Caesar. After Caesar's will had been publicly read, Antony delivered the funeral speech; its (biased) version is recounted by Appian in the next chapter.⁷ Cassio Dio's account is much longer, differences in it

³ See, e.g., Caes., *BC* 1.36.5 and 56.1–58.5; 2.1–7 and 22; Liv., *Per.* 110; Dio 41.19 and 21.3; Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 267.

⁴ He bore the title *imperator*; he may have been Caesar's legate, but was probably not a proconsul, as he appears in Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 347; see B. M. Kreiler, *Statthalter zwischen Republik und Prinzipat* (Europäische Hochschulschriften 3, 1026), Frankfurt am Main 2006, 25–28.

⁵ They are collected and assessed by Münzer, *D. Iunius Brutus* (see n. 1); by Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), for 44 and 43 BC.

⁶ Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 272; 267; 281.

⁷ It has been variously interpreted: Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 96–104.

betraying different sources. They have been analyzed in detail and commented.⁸ Possibly Appian summarizes one of the sources later used by Cassius Dio, perhaps a Greek one. This may be indicated, for example, by the fact that he noted the amount of money given to every Roman in the city to have been seventy-five Attic drachmas. In Dio, on the other hand, the amount distributed to the citizens was thirty drachmas according to Octavian himself, or seventy-five, according to some other writers — obviously he used several sources and also Augustus' *Memoirs* (44.35.3),⁹ which Appian in this part of his narrative did not. It is not implied by these data that Appian consulted only one source, since he elsewhere refers to several (as, for example, in *BC* 4.16.64), but for certain longer episodes he indeed might have done so. It should be emphasized that he is actually the only author to offer a positive depiction of Antonius, portraying him as an experienced and skilful politician.¹⁰

Appian mentions Decimus Brutus again at the beginning of the third book, where he describes the atmosphere in Rome soon after Caesar's murder. A pseudo-Marius, called Amatius, claimed to be a grandson of Marius and thus a relative of Caesar, and with a band of followers threatened Caesar's murderers. Some of them fled from the city, while those who had been appointed by Caesar as governors left the city to take charge of their provinces. Decimus Brutus went to Cisalpine Gaul. Marcus Brutus and Cassius, as city praetors, remained in Rome (*BC* 3.2.4–5). Antony had been appointed to Macedonia and transferred the army from this province to Brundisium. As Appian had Antony emphasize, when explaining his moves against the murderers who were supported by the Senate, Decimus Brutus governed a most conveniently placed province with a large army (*BC* 3.37.150). Indeed, the conspiracy had been much more carefully planned than usually believed, resulting in the fact that many senior conspirators were designated provincial governors (particularly in the East, among others Q. Hortensius in Macedonia, C. Trebonius in Asia, and L. Staius Murcus in Syria), supported by several senators holding important offices in Rome in 44 BC.¹¹ In response, Antony succeeded, by means of a tribunician law passed by the people (and thus avoiding the

⁸ A. M. Gowing, *The Triumviral Narratives of Appian and Cassius Dio* (Michigan Monographs in Classical Antiquity), Ann Arbor 1992, 95–122; cf. G. Dobesch, *Ritual und Politik beim Begräbnis Caesars*, in: G. Thür (ed.), *Grabrituale. Tod und Jenseits in Frühgeschichte und Altertum. Akten der 3. Tagung des Zentrums Archäologie und Altertumswissenschaften an der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 21.–22. März 2010*, Wien 2014, 115–127; 143–144.

⁹ Note the apologetic tone of Octavian's statement: A. Powell, *Augustus' Age of Apology: an Analysis of the Memoirs — and an Argument for two Further Fragments*, in: C. Smith, A. Powell (eds.), *The Lost Memoirs of Augustus and the Development of Roman Autobiography*, Swansea 2009, 175.

¹⁰ Gowing, *Triumviral Narratives* (see n. 8), 118–122; Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 95. Note also the assessment of Augustus' *Memoirs* in Powell, *Augustus' Age of Apology* (see n. 9).

¹¹ M. Drum, *Cicero's Tenth and Eleventh Philippics: The Republican Advance in the East*, in: T. Stevenson, M. Wilson (eds.), *Cicero's Philippics: History, Rhetoric and Ideology* (Prudentia 37–38), Auckland, N.Z. 2008, 82–94.

Senate), in exchanging Macedonia for Cisalpine Gaul (*BC* 3.37–8). He acted legally both in this regard and in the case of the transfer of the legions from Macedonia.¹²

Appian proceeds to describe in considerable detail the most complicated and oscillating relationship between Antony and Octavian, great rivals ever since the death of Caesar, who each tried to win over as many soldiers as possible, mainly with blackmail, bribes, and promises of large donations, each outwitting the Senate in turn. Not everything in Appian's account may be entirely reliable, but it is valuable as an 'Antonian' counter to Cicero's attempts at discrediting Antony's actions.¹³

When, at the end of 44 BC, Decimus Brutus refused to give up Cisalpine Gaul, war became inevitable (*BC* 3.45.187). The alliances were unusual, but given the circumstances quite understandable: the new consuls, Aulus Hirtius and Gaius Vibius Pansa, and Octavian were on the side of Decimus Brutus, or, at least, against Antony. In chapter 49 and subsequent chapters of his third book, Appian describes the siege of Mutina (modern Modena), where Decimus Brutus decided to defend himself against Antony's attacks. In Appian's account, L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus (*cos.* 58 BC) made an effort to bring about peace, but with no success; he was sent as an envoy to Antony with other senators, to demand of him to come to terms with Decimus Brutus and withdraw from Cisalpine Gaul, but no agreement could be reached; the second embassy, in which he should have also taken part, was cancelled.¹⁴

The first months of 43 BC were among the most turbulent months of the civil war. The consuls had been charged by the Senate to raise an army in order to fight Antony and, together with Octavian's legions, to prevent his blockade of Decimus Brutus.¹⁵ Antony could not resist this armed coalition. After his defeat in the battles of Forum Gallorum (Castelfranco) and Mutina in April, Decimus Brutus was finally relieved, although both consuls were lost in the fighting. Much insight about those difficult months can be obtained from Cicero's writings, notably also from his correspondence, not least between him and Decimus Brutus (*Ad fam.* 11.4–26).¹⁶

Decimus Brutus informed the Senate that he would pursue and annihilate Antony (3.81.333). In the meanwhile, Antony with his army, and M. Aemilius Lepidus, proconsul in Narbonensis and Hispania Citerior,¹⁷ with seven legions and auxiliary forces,

¹² Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 136; 220–224.

¹³ Analysis in Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 238–241; in the light of Cicero's writings: A. Lintott, *Cicero as Evidence. A Historian's Companion*, Oxford 2008, 386–394.

¹⁴ Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 350–351; Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 321–322; on Piso also p. 123.

¹⁵ Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 334–336; a survey mainly based on classical sources in H. Botermann, *Die Soldaten und die römische Republik in der Zeit von Caesars Tod bis zur Begründung des Zweiten Triumvirats* (Zetemata 46), München 1968, 55–84.

¹⁶ D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero: Epistulae ad Familiares*. Vol. II: 47–43 B.C., Cambridge 1977, nos. 342, 380, 381, 385, 386, 388, 399, 401, 402, 410 (Decimus Brutus to Cicero); 343, 353, 354, 356, 360, 394, 397, 411–413, 420, 422, 427, 434 (Cicero to Decimus Brutus). On Cicero's correspondents: É. Deniaux, *Clientèles et pouvoir à l'époque de Cicéron* (CÉFR 182), Rome 1993; historical data evaluated by Lintott, *Cicero as Evidence* (see n. 13).

¹⁷ Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 341–342.

concluded an alliance, having been joined by P. Ventidius Bassus with three legions of the *evocati* from Italy (3.84).¹⁸ Octavian was appointed, “awkwardly enough” (μάλα ἀπρεπῶς), a general with Decimus Brutus against Antony, since the Senate wanted to prevent his siding with Antony (3.85.352). Eventually, under pressure from Octavian’s army and after much alarm in Rome, the Senate elected him consul in August (3.85–94). After having taken some immediate measures (3.95), Octavian planned a reconciliation with Antony, offering him assistance against Decimus Brutus (3.96). His colleague in the consulate, Q. Pedius, was the author of the *lex Pedia* (Vell. 2.69.5; Suet., *Nero*, 3.1), according to which all the murderers of Caesar should be legally persecuted.¹⁹ Decimus Brutus was an immediate victim of the law.²⁰ One of the reasons may have been to legalize *post festum* Octavian’s political dealings with the latter.²¹

The flight of Decimus Brutus

The final two chapters of Appian’s third book give an extended account of the end of Decimus Brutus. He was pursued by Antony, who was joined by the governor of Hispania Ulterior, C. Asinius Pollio, and his two legions.²² L. Munatius Plancus (*cos.* 42 BC) was at that time proconsul in Transalpine Gaul and as much in touch with Cicero and Decimus Brutus as with Lepidus and Antony.²³ During the siege of Mutina, he was urged by the Senate to bring aid to Italy. He crossed the Rhone and communicated with Lepidus, but retreated when the latter joined Antony. Decimus Brutus followed Antony across the Alps into Gaul and in June arrived at Cularo (Grenoble), where the troops of Plancus were also stationed. With Plancus he should have held joint consulship in 42 BC. The last letter of Decimus Brutus to Cicero was written on his march to Cularo on June 3, 43 BC (*Ad fam.* 11.26). Strabo mentioned that Decimus Brutus had to buy his way through the territory of the Salassi. They controlled the routes to Helvetia and the Upper Rhine (among other Alpine passes, also the Great and Little St Bernard),²⁴ and charged Decimus Brutus and his men a toll of one drachma per head to be allowed passage (4.6.7 C 205). However, shortly afterwards, in August, Decimus Brutus was deserted by Plancus, who surrendered his three legions to Antony at the instigation of Asinius Pollio; Plancus himself referred to four of his legions (*Ad fam.* 10.24.3). Decimus Brutus decided to flee to Marcus Brutus in Macedonia.

¹⁸ Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 274–279.

¹⁹ Q. Pedius was also one of Caesar’s heirs, who, however, renounced his part of the inheritance in favour of his cousin Octavian.

²⁰ Decimus Brutus lost the support of L. Munatius Plancus, the proconsul in Transalpine Gaul, cf. n. 24.

²¹ F. Münzer, *Q. Pedius 1*, RE 19.1 (1937) 38–40; Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 225.

²² Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 343.

²³ Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 347–348; Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 367; 355–359; Lintott, *Cicero as Evidence* (see n. 13), 408–414.

²⁴ G. Walser, *Via per Alpes Graias. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Kleinen St. Bernhard-Passes in römischer Zeit* (Historia Einzelschr. 48), Wiesbaden 1986, 14–15.

Decimus Brutus knew that he could by no means resist Antony. Of his ten legions, four were experienced, but had been much weakened by famine, while the rest were recently conscripted and as yet untrained (*BC* 3.97.400).²⁵ He proceeded towards Ravenna and Aquileia. However, upon learning that Octavian was travelling along the same route, he decided on a longer and more difficult journey across the Rhine and through the lands of barbarian tribes. This scared the new levies, which went over to Octavian, and shortly afterwards the four older legions, as well as the auxiliaries, also deserted him; they, however, joined Antony. Only his personal bodyguard of Celtic horsemen remained loyal to him, and to those of them who wanted to return to their homes, he gave some gold and allowed them to go. He continued on his way to the Rhine with 300 horsemen, but at the river they also abandoned him because it would be difficult to cross it with so few soldiers. With ten faithful followers, he turned south again towards Aquileia, and having changed his clothes, he passed himself off as a Celt, since he knew the language. Perhaps he actually estimated that it would be possible to cross northern Italy.

The route of Decimus Brutus to the Rhine can be approximately reconstructed, since at that time the only possible way was to bypass the Jura Mountains, not to cross them. His direction was clear enough: he wanted to reach Aquileia from the north, after he had crossed the Rhine. Consequently, he had to bypass the mountains on the west and traverse the region of the Sequani, avoiding their town of Vesontio (Besançon), where he might have been recognized. He must have reached the Rhine somewhere near modern Basel, in the territory of the newly founded Colonia Raurica (Augst). He would have then proceeded through the regions on the upper Rhine, Raetia, and Noricum, in an attempt to reach Aquileia across one of the Alpine passes.²⁶ From there, the route would have led him across the Odra Pass (Razdrto below Mt. Odra, present-day Nanos in Slovenia), which had been in Roman hands already since the mid-second century BC.²⁷ In less than two days he could have reached Nauportus (Vrhnika), where a Roman *vicus* was founded most probably during Caesar's proconsulate in both Gauls and Illyricum (pl. 23).²⁸ There the Nauportus River (the Ljubljanica) was navigable almost

²⁵ Plancus, however, mentioned eight recently conscripted legions in Decimus Brutus' camp (Cic., *Ad fam.* 10.24.3).

²⁶ The route was reconstructed by D. van Berchem, *La fuite de Decimus Brutus*, in: Id., *Les routes et l'histoire. Études sur les Helvètes et leurs voisins dans l'Empire romain*, Genève 1982, 57–59, despite the prevailing opinion that this was not possible, cf. H. White, *Appian's Roman History with an English Translation* (Loeb Classical Library), III–IV, London, Cambridge, Mass. 1913 (several reprints), 135 n. 1. There is, in fact, no discrepancy in Appian's narrative: the Rhine fits in well with the Sequani, where Decimus Brutus was captured. Cf. also D. Magnino, *Appiani Bellorum civilium liber tertius*. Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione e commento a cura di D. M. (Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di lettere e filosofia dell'Università di Pavia 32), Firenze 1984, 201.

²⁷ J. Horvat, A. Bavdek, *Okra. Vrata med Sredozemljem in Srednjo Evropo / Odra. The Gateway between the Mediterranean and Central Europe* (Opera Instituti arch. Sloveniae 17), Ljubljana 2009.

²⁸ J. Horvat, *Nauportus (Vrhnika)* (Dela 1. razr. SAZU 33), Ljubljana 1990; J. Horvat, B. Mušič, *Nauportus, a Commercial Settlement between the Adriatic and the Danube*, in: M. Chiabà,

immediately at its source; it then flows into the Sava (the Savus), which is in turn a tributary of the Danube. This is the so-called route of the Argonauts; from Singidunum (Belgrade), at the confluence of the Sava and the Danube, the route led across Moesia southwards to Macedonia. If Decimus Brutus wanted to join Marcus Brutus in Dyrrhachium, for example, he should have travelled nearer the Adriatic coast; the roads, however, were very bad in the hinterland of the Adriatic, and no less so in the interior of Illyricum.

A march across Illyricum to Macedonia was not a new idea. It had first been attempted by the consul C. Cassius Longinus in 171 BC, when he left his province of Cisalpine Gaul for Macedonia, in order to gain military glory there (Liv., 43.4.1–12). He erroneously believed that the distance was shorter and the interior not so impassable. However, the Aquileian envoys informed the Senate about the consul's departure. Longinus had to abandon his march, but on the way back his army devastated the regions of the Iapodes, *Alpini populi* (probably some tribes controlled by the Taurisci), the Histri, and the Carni, whose ambassadors complained the next year in the Senate that they had been treated like enemies by the consular army.²⁹ The second known Roman general who wanted to take an army across Illyricum was A. Gabinus, who was supposed to lead fifteen cohorts and 3000 cavalry soldiers "through Illyria along the Adriatic" (App., *Illyr.* 12.35) to Caesar in Macedonia, in the winter of 49/48 BC. He, too, does not seem to have been successful.³⁰

The capture and death of Decimus Brutus

Appian's description of the flight of Decimus Brutus and his insistence on Aquileia prompted Ruggero Fauro Rossi to suggest that Decimus Brutus might have been attempting to reach the hinterland of Aquileia, perhaps in Iapodia, where the Iunii Bruti

P. Maggi, C. Magrini (eds.), *Le Valli del Natisone e dell'Isonzo tra Centroeuropa e Adriatico* (Studi e Ricerche sulla Gallia Cisalpina 20), Roma 2007, 165–174; M. Šašel Kos, *Caesar, Illyricum, and the Hinterland of Aquileia*, in: G. Urso (ed.), *L'ultimo Cesare. Scritti, Riforme, Progetti, Poteri, Congiure* (Monografie / Centro ricerche e documentazione sull'ant. class. 20), Roma 2000, 294–297; cf. also C. Zaccaria, *Romani e non Romani nell'Italia nordorientale: la mediazione epigrafica*, in: G. Cuscito (ed.), *Aspetti e problemi della romanizzazione. Venetia, Histria e arco alpino orientale* (Antichità Altoadr. 68), Trieste 2009, 88.

²⁹ F. Càssola, *Le popolazioni preromane del Friuli nelle fonti letterarie*, in: Id., *Scritti di storia antica — Istituzioni e politica II: Roma* (Antiqua 68), Napoli 1994, 292–293; V. Vedaldi Iasbez, *Aquileia dalla seconda guerra istrica all'età postsillana*, in: G. Cuscito (ed.), *Aquileia dalle origini alla costituzione del ducato longobardo. Storia — amministrazione — società* (Antichità Altoadr. 54), Trieste 2003, 134–135; G. Bandelli, *Veneti e Carni dalle origini alla romanizzazione*, in: G. Bandelli, F. Fontana (eds.), *Iulium Carnicum: centro alpino tra Italia e Norico dalla protostoria all'età imperiale. Atti del Convegno, Arta Terme — Cividale, 29–30 settembre 1995* (Studi e Ricerche sulla Gallia Cisalpina 13), Roma 2001, 20–21; M. Šašel Kos, *Appian and Illyricum* (Situla 43), Ljubljana 2005, 329–331; ead., *Cincibilus and the March of C. Cassius Longinus towards Macedonia*, *Arheološki vestnik* 65 (2014) 389–408.

³⁰ G. Marasco, *Aulo Gabinio e l'Iliria al tempo di Cesare*, *Latomus* 56 (1997) 307–326; Šašel Kos, *Appian* (see n. 29), 347–353.

possibly had their *clientelae*, and where he would have been eventually captured. His grandfather D. Iunius Brutus Callaicus successfully fought against the Iapodes in 129 BC, together with the consul of the year, C. Sempronius Tuditanus (Liv., *Per.* 59).³¹ A statement by Cassius Dio would seemingly support Rossi's hypothesis, since he ambiguously mentioned that "(Decimus Brutus) decided to leave Gaul and traverse Illyricum on foot in order to join Brutus in Macedonia where he had sent ahead some soldiers, while he himself attended to the most urgent matters" (46.53.2).³²

However, other accounts, including Livy (*Per.* 120), Velleius Paterculus (2.64.1), and Orosius (6.18.7), are clear about Brutus' capture, which happened in September. According to Livy, Decimus Brutus, whom the Senate had charged with attacking Antony, took flight when his legions abandoned him, and was killed by Capenus, a Sequanian, acting under orders from Antony.³³ Orosius, too, says that Decimus Brutus had arrived in the territory of the Sequani, where he was captured and put to death by their chieftain, on the orders of Antony.³⁴ Velleius Paterculus, who briefly mentions this event, calls the Sequanian ruler Camelus.³⁵ At least some of the remaining comrades of Decimus Brutus must have been Romans; according to Cassius Dio, when he was about to die and started lamenting his death, one of them, Helvius Blasio, killed himself in Decimus Brutus' sight to make his end easier for him (46.53.3).

Appian (3.98), in contrast to Livy and Orosius, does not specifically name the Celtic people in whose country Decimus Brutus had arrived. But he does say that Decimus Brutus was captured by robbers in the territory of a Celtic people, whose dynast was Camilus. He adds that Decimus Brutus knew this man since he had done him many favours. When Decimus Brutus governed Transalpine Gaul, he no doubt established close contacts with members of the Celtic elite of various peoples within his province as well as outside it, such as the neighbours of the Helvetii, the Sequani (settled in modern Franche-Comté). The aristocracies of these two peoples were connected

³¹ R. F. Rossi, *Romani e non Romani nell'Italia nordorientale*, in: Id., *Scritti di storia romana*, eds. P. Botteri, L. Toneatto (Univ. d. Studi di Trieste, Dipart. d. Scienze dell'Antichità 7), Trieste 1996, 284–286; cf. also J. J. Wilkes, *The Danubian and Balkan Provinces*, in: A. K. Bowman, E. Champlin, A. Lintott (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (second edition), vol. X. *The Augustan Empire, 43 B.C.–A.D. 69*, Cambridge 1996, 549. Decimus Brutus was not killed by "a chieftain in the Carnic Alps", as in J. Hazel, *Who's Who in the Roman World*, London, New York 2001, 40.

³² Τὴν τε Γαλατίαν ἐκλεπεῖν καὶ ἐς τὴν Μακεδονίαν πρὸς τὸν Βροῦτον περὶ δι' Ἰλλυριῶν ἐπειθῆναι ἔγνω, καὶ τινὰς στρατιώτας, ἐν ᾧ δὴ τὰ ἐν χερσὶ καθίστατο, προέπεμψεν; M. Šašel Kos, *A Historical Outline of the Region between Aquileia, the Adriatic, and Sirmium in Cassius Dio and Herodian*, Ljubljana 1986, 110 n. 16; 116–118.

³³ *Per.* 120: ... *et Dec. Brutus, cui senatus ut persequeretur Antonium mandaverat, relictus a legionibus suis, profugisset caesus iussu Antonii, in cuius potestatem venerat, a Capeno Sequano interfectus est.*

³⁴ 6.18.7: *Postea D. Brutus in Gallia a Sequanis captus et occisus est.* Berchem, *La fuite de Decimus Brutus* (see n. 26).

³⁵ 2.64.1: ... *relinguente cum exercitu fugiens in hospitis cuiusdam nobilis viri, nomine Cameli, domo ab his quos miserat Antonius iugulatus est ...* According to Velleius, Decimus Brutus was killed by men sent by Antony.

through marriages and business affairs, as is indicated precisely by the case of the distinguished Helvetian family of the Iulii Camilli, descendants of the Camilus mentioned in Appian.³⁶ As has plausibly been argued by Denis Van Berchem on the basis of the early Imperial period inscriptions of the family, Appian's form of the name, Camilus, should be preferred as the most authentic, and the episode would indeed have taken place in the territory of the Sequani.³⁷

However, alliances between Celtic noblemen and Roman governors, too, depended on the political situation at the time, and information travelled fast. In public, Camilus was kind to Decimus Brutus as his former benefactor, but secretly he informed Antony of his capture. Antony gave orders to kill Decimus Brutus and send him his head, which he then ordered to be buried. A death by beheading, described by Appian in chapter 26 of the third book, also befell C. Trebonius, the proconsul of Asia and the first of the conspirators to die.³⁸ The episode of the death of Decimus Brutus is reminiscent — *mutatis mutandis* — of the death of Pompey the Great, as it is reported by Appian (*BC* 2.90); Caesar had the head of his main opponent buried at a place sacred to Nemesis.

In spite of their surface inconsistencies, Appian and the ancient sources which follow Livy enable us to reconstruct Decimus Brutus' final days. For Valerius Maximus (4.7.6; 9.13.3) and the younger Seneca (*Ep. Mor.* 82.12), Decimus Brutus is simply an example of one who died without dignity, revealing the extent to which he had become a stock figure for the moralists. Cassius Dio's account shows some signs of the effects of this tradition.³⁹ Appian's account is not without its romantic or moralistic elements, but without it we would be hard-pressed to understand what happened to Decimus Brutus or what were the events that resulted in the complicated politics, alliances and manoeuvres which characterized the later months of 43 BC.

Appian's source(s) for the triumviral period will probably never be known with certainty, but indisputably he drew the data — directly or indirectly — from contemporary writers, whom he probably combined. His narrative is unexpectedly favourable to Cassius (which may echo the use of the *Memoirs* of M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus) and in part not hostile to Decimus Brutus either, which makes it clear that he drew from several sources. The lost *History* of Asinius Pollio comes to mind (which was explicitly referred to by Appian when writing about the battle at Pharsalus, *BC.* 2.82.346),⁴⁰ as

³⁶ Berchem, *La fuite de Decimus Brutus* (see n. 26); G. Kaenel, S. Martin-Kilcher, *Où et qui sont les aristocrates helvètes?*, in: V. Guichard, F. Perrin (eds.), *L'aristocratie celtique à la fin de l'âge du Fer* (Actes de la table ronde Glux-en-Glenne 1999, Coll. Bibracte 5), Glux-en-Glenne 2002, 162–163.

³⁷ Berchem, *La fuite de Decimus Brutus* (see n. 26).

³⁸ This happened in mid-January 43 BC at Smyrna, by order of the consul Dolabella, proceeding through Asia to his province of Syria; for other sources recounting his death: Broughton, *Magistrates*, Vol. II (see n. 2), 349–350.

³⁹ Cassius Dio (46.53) attributes his capture to “an enemy” (ὄπι' ἐχθροῦ τιμοῦ) and characterizes him even at the end as a cowardly complainant. The role of “brave friend” which Valerius Maximus gives to Ser. Terentius (4.7.6) is very similar to that assigned to Helvius Blasio by Cassius Dio (*ibid.*).

⁴⁰ L. Morgan, *The Autopsy of C. Asinius Pollio*, *JRS* 90 (2000) 51–69.

has been argued by Emilio Gabba in several of his works, and partly accepted and partly modified by subsequent authors, most notably by Alain M. Gowing.⁴¹ Messalla is indeed another name that could be considered as a possible source for Appian,⁴² and A. Cremutius Cordus was also an important historian,⁴³ as well as Livy.⁴⁴ When choosing his source for a particular section of his historical work, Appian seems to have decided on what was in his opinion the best available narrative: an exhaustive, authoritative, and interesting account, on which he would base his own opinions and comments wherever he would want to express them.⁴⁵ Despite some legitimate criticism, it should be conceded that Appian's account of the triumviral period, including his narrative referring to Decimus Brutus, combined with that of Cassius Dio, is the best that has come down to us.⁴⁶

Appian and the artillery machines captured by the Iapodes

Most interestingly, Appian also refers to Decimus Brutus in the second part of his *Illyrian History*, which is an account of Octavian's Illyrian war in 35–33 BC. In a passage where he describes the destruction of Metulum, the capital of the Iapodes, he mentions the military devices that the Iapodes used against the Romans. According to Appian, they “captured them in the war, which had been fought there by Decimus Brutus against Antony and Augustus” (19.54).⁴⁷ The Iapodes were settled beyond the

⁴¹ E.g. E. Gabba, *Appiano e la storia delle guerre civili*, Firenze 1956; Gowing, *Triumviral Narratives* (see n. 8), 3; 40; 49; 131; 157. See also I. Hahn, *Appian und seine Quellen*, in: G. Wirth (ed.), *Romanitas — Christianitas. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Literatur der römischen Kaiserzeit. Johannes Straub zum 70. Geburtstag am 18. Oktober 1982 gewidmet*, Berlin, New York, 1982, 251–276, particularly 260–264; M. Hose, *Erneuerung der Vergangenheit. Die Historiker im Imperium Romanum von Florus bis Cassius Dio* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 45), Stuttgart, Leipzig 1994, 259–264; Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 18.

⁴² Gowing, *Triumviral Narratives* (see n. 8), 40; see, for an important assessment of his personality and his *Memoirs*, K. Welch, *Alternative Memoirs: Tales from the 'Other Side' of the Civil War*, in: C. Smith, A. Powell (eds.), *The Lost Memoirs of Augustus and the Development of Roman Autobiography*, Swansea 2009, 200–209.

⁴³ M. R. McHugh, *Historiography and Freedom of Speech. The Case of Cremutius Cordus*, in: I. Sluiter, R. M. Rosen (eds.), *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity* (Mnemosyne Suppl. 254), Leiden, Boston 2004, 391–408; M. Meier, *Das Ende des Cremutius Cordus und die Bedingungen für Historiographie in augusteischer und tiberischer Zeit*, *Tyche* 18 (2003) 91–127.

⁴⁴ Gowing, *Triumviral Narratives* (see n. 8), 277.

⁴⁵ Appian was in general interested in ‘human drama’, in contrast to Cassius Dio, cf. Gowing, *Triumviral Narratives* (see n. 8), 76 and *passim*. See also U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Die griechische Literatur des Altertums*, in: Id., J. Wackernagel, Fr. Leo, E. Norden, F. Skutsch, *Die griechische und lateinische Literatur und Sprache*, Leipzig, Berlin, 1912, 246: “Appian versteht zu erzählen und zu gruppieren; er ist zwar ganz unmilitärisch, aber für das Persönliche hat er Interesse.”

⁴⁶ See, e.g., Gowing, *Triumviral Narratives* (see n. 8); Matijević, *Marcus Antonius* (see n. 1), 17–20.

⁴⁷ ... ὅς ἐσχίκεσαν ἐκ τοῦ πολέμου ὄν Δέκμος Βροῦτος ἐνταῦθα ἐπολέμησεν Ἀντωνίῳ τε καὶ τῷ Σεβαστῷ. Cf. K. Patsch, *Japodi*, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Sarajevo* 8 (1896) 128 n. 2, who does not question the data about the war devices, but cannot explain “the war fought there”;

Liburni (who inhabited Kvarner [Quarnero] and the northern Dalmatian coast, including the islands), in that part of Illyricum that had not yet been subjugated by the Romans.⁴⁸ It must be emphasized that the area of Ogulin (where Metulum is located) was not very far off the main route leading in the direction of Siscia (Sisak) and Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica), and further to Macedonia. It is understandable that Appian did not make mention of the episode in the *Civil Wars*, since it is above all relevant in the context of the history of Illyricum and of the conquest of the Iapodes, dangerous Roman enemies and a threat to northern Italy. What the difference demonstrates is that Appian used Augustus' *Memoirs* selectively, notably for the Illyrian war and probably for those episodes for which he could not find any more adequate source.

Appian's statement is not entirely accurate, if he takes "the war fought there" (ἐνταῦθα) to refer to the territory of the Iapodes. Decimus Brutus fought against Antony and Octavian in northern Italy, but he soon desisted from this war. In his flight he certainly never reached the territory of the Iapodes. It would not be impossible to hypothesize that the Iapodes had invaded the region of Aquileia as they had done during Caesar's proconsulate ten years earlier, in 52 BC, when they plundered Tergeste and attacked Aquileia.⁴⁹ They would have proceeded along old prehistoric roads, hypothetically through Vinica across the Kolpa River and further to the Krka Valley and Cerknjiško jezero (the Notranjska region), from where they reached Tergeste across the Odra Pass (pl. 23).⁵⁰ The Notranjska region was densely settled with tribes hostile to Rome, which is not least indicated by the first phase of the Roman fort on the hill of Nadleški hrib, plausibly associated with the activities of Octavian's army in 35 BC.⁵¹ Somewhere in northeastern Italy the Iapodes may have come across (a part of) Decimus Brutus' retreating army and captured the war engines, which they later used against Octavian's army.

However, Appian's interesting information could perhaps be explained in the light of Cassius Dio's data mentioned above (46.53.2), that a part of the army of Decimus Brutus had been sent by him in advance to Macedonia. Cassius Dio added that these soldiers had joined Octavian, but some might have proceeded on their way and might have been attacked by the Iapodes and robbed of their military equipment.⁵² This would

J. Dobiáš, *Studie k Appianově knize illyrské (Études sur le livre illyrien d'Appien)*, Pragae 1929, 193–195; 289–290, strangely, did not comment on this significant information.

⁴⁸ B. Olujić, *Povijest Japoda*, Zagreb 2007; D. Balen-Letunić, *The Iapodes*, in: D. Balen-Letunić (ed.), *Warriors at the crossroads of East and West*, Zagreb 2004, 211–257.

⁴⁹ Hirt, in Caes., *BG* 8.24.3; App., *Illyr.* 18.52; see C. Zaccaria, *Regio X Venetia et Histria. Tergeste — Ager Tergestinus et Tergesti adtributus*, in: *Supplementa Italica*, n.s. 10, Roma 1992, 151–152; Šašel Kos, *Caesar* (see n. 28), 292.

⁵⁰ Personal communication of Boštjan Laharnar.

⁵¹ B. Laharnar, *Small Finds from the Roman Fort at Nadleški hrib, the Notranjska Region (SW Slovenia)*, in: J. Horvat (ed.), *The Roman Army between the Alps and the Adriatic* (Opera Instituti Arch. Sloveniae 31 / Studia Alpium et Adriae I), Ljubljana 2016, 85–97.

⁵² Šašel Kos, *A Historical Outline* (see n. 32), 116–118; ead., *Appian* (see n. 29), 431–432; see also Olujić, *Povijest Japoda* (see n. 48), 94.

then be in accordance with Appian's statement that the fighting took place in the territory of the Metulian Iapodes (in the war fought "there"), but would be inexact in so far as Decimus Brutus was not present in person. In any case, the Iapodes did possess Roman artillery machines,⁵³ which means that during the Illyrian war of Octavian both the Romans and Iapodes used them against each other. Metulum was eventually captured and burnt down by Octavian's army. Indeed, three Roman bolt heads of the late Republican period have been identified in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, which can be linked to Viničica near Ogulin, the site of Metulum, and consequently to the siege of the Iapodian capital.⁵⁴ It has been argued that the Iapodes would not have been able to maintain the complicated mechanism of such machines, since they had not been trained in the use of them,⁵⁵ but even if this were the case it is more than possible that they could have employed Roman captives for such tasks.⁵⁶ The presence of the engines in Appian's *Illyrike* should not be taken to mean that Decimus Brutus himself transported them there or that he was anywhere near the territory of the Iapodes when he died.

Appian's use of Augustus' *Commentarii* in his *Illyrian History* is most illuminating since in this case his source is known by name. As was convincingly argued, Appian directly used Augustus' *Memoirs* as his source for the *Illyrike*, chapters 14–28 (an account of Octavian's Illyrian war in 35–33 BC),⁵⁷ and not indirectly, as had been believed earlier.⁵⁸ It does not appear that he would have considerably altered anything contained in it, and Augustus' tone could even be recognized in certain parts of Appian's narrative. The very beginning of Appian's account of Octavian's Illyrian war can be cited, in which Appian quoted Augustus and summarized the war in a few sentences. He wrote that: "Augustus, however, took everything entirely in his own hands and stated in the Senate that he had — in contrast to Antony's inactivity — succeeded in saving Italy from the barely conquerable peoples who had so often

⁵³ These must have been catapults (*scorpiones*), but in any case light artillery that was relatively easy to transport (*carroballistae* or *manuballistae*): J. F. Torres-Martínez, A. Martínez Velasco, C. Pérez Farraces, *Augustan Campaigns in the Initial Phase of the Cantabrian War and Roman Artillery Projectiles from the Monte Bernorio oppidum (Villarén, prov. Palencia)*, *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt* 42/4 (2012) 534–537; cf. J. Wintjes, *Technology with an Impact. Field Artillery in the Ancient World*, *Vulcan* 3 (2015) 26–28; 32; on artillery generally E. W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery: Historical Development*, Oxford 1969 (on Roman pp. 174–198). I would like to thank Everett L. Wheeler for his kind explanation and suggestion of further literature.

⁵⁴ I. Radman Livaja, *Roman Missiles in the Zagreb Archaeological Museum*, *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* 34 (2001) 132–135; 143–145.

⁵⁵ *Id.*, *ibid.*; they indeed were maintenance-heavy: Wintjes, *Technology with an Impact* (see n. 53), 32.

⁵⁶ Olujić, *Povijest Japoda* (see n. 48), 94.

⁵⁷ A. Migheli, *Le memorie di Augusto in Appiano Illyr. 14–28.*, *Annali delle Facoltà di Lettere Filosofia e Magistero dell'Università di Cagliari* 21 (Studi Motzo I, 1953) 199–217.

⁵⁸ E. Schwartz, *Appianus* 2, *RE* 2.1 (1896) 228–229; F. Blumenthal, *Die Autobiographie des Augustus I*, *Wiener Studien* 35 (1913) 116.

attacked it” (*Illyr.* 16.46).⁵⁹ The beginning words seem to be typical of Augustus’ style, invoking a sentence in the *Res gestae* (34): *per consensum universorum [potens rerum omn]ium*.⁶⁰ Augustus composed his autobiography in thirteen books soon after he had been invested with supreme power (Suet., *Aug.* 85.1),⁶¹ and dedicated it to Agrippa and Maecenas (Plut., *Comp. Dem. et Cic.* 3.1).⁶²

Augustus’ autobiography was no doubt an attractive source for Appian. Moreover, it is also clear how he used it: for the second part of his *Illyrian History* he practically copied out the relevant account of Augustus more or less exactly, as it seems, perhaps merely shortening it in some places, as might possibly be the case for the data concerning the military devices stolen by the Iapodes, with ambiguous results.

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⁵⁹ Ὁ δὲ Σεβαστὸς πάντα ἐχειρώσατο ἐντελῶς καὶ ἐν παραβολῇ τῆς ἀπραξίας Ἀντωνίου κατελογίσατο τῇ βουλῇ τὴν Ἰταλίαν ἡμερῶσαι δυσμάχων ἔθνῶν θαμινὰ ἐνοχλούντων.

⁶⁰ Migheli, *Le memorie di Augusto* (see n. 57), 203–205. On the question of whether Augustus wrote *potitus* or *potens*: P. Botteri, *L’integrazione mommseniana a Res Gestae Divi Augusti 34.1 ‘potitus rerum omnium’ e il testo greco*, ZPE 144 (2003) 261–267.

⁶¹ J. M. Alonso-Núñez, *Los commentarii de vita sua del emperador Augusto y su proyección*, in: P. Defosse (ed.), *Hommages à Carl Deroux. II: Prose et linguistique, Médecine* (Coll. Latomus 267), Bruxelles, 2002, 20, proposed the years 27–25 BC as the time of composition.

⁶² It seems to me less likely that Appian would combine Augustus’ *Memoirs* with those of M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus for chapter 17 on the campaign against the Salassi (suggested by Welch, *Alternative memoirs* [see n. 42], 207), since the main protagonist of this episode is actually C. Antistius Vetus (*cos.* 30 BC).