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SOME COMMENTS ON EARLY CLAUDIAN CONSULSHIPS

Christer Bruun

A few years ago P.A. Gallivan revised the consular *fasti* for the reign of Claudius and brought them a long step towards what was then considered completion.¹ As late as 1981 Silvio Panciera, who made an important change in the *fasti* by removing Cn. Hosidius Geta and his three suffect colleagues from AD 44 to a year which was probably 47,² considered the work of Gallivan "una messa a punto sull'attuale conoscenza dei fasti consolari d'età claudia."³

Many of the new datings depend solely on interpretations of wax-tablets from the area around Pompeii. The editing of the so-called *Tabulae Pompeianae* was brought to an end in 1980.⁴ Students have often been puzzled by the texts of these wax-tablets, especially by some consular datings, but have not been able to proceed beyond expressions of doubt and scepticism.⁵ Now a paper by Giuseppe Camodeca has

* I wish to thank Prof. Heikki Solin for many useful suggestions. For the content of this paper I am of course the sole responsible.

¹ P.A. Gallivan, CQ 28 (1978) 407–426, especially 424f. See also P.A. Gallivan, LF 102 (1979) 1–3.

² S. Panciera, Epigrafia e ordine senatorio I (Tituli 4), Roma 1982, 609–612. See also AE 1980,57A. The same result was put forward more or less contemporaneously by A.R. Birley, The "Fasti" of Roman Britain, Oxford 1981, 225 (aided by J. Mottershed).

³ Panciera 611 n. 132.

⁴ In that year appeared RAAN 53 (1978), see pages 249ff. (= AE 1982, 184–209), with additional material in AAP 29 (1980) 175ff. Earlier tablets published in RAAN 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 51.

⁵ See for instance W. Eck, ZPE 42 (1981) 227 and 252, G. Barbieri, RAL 30 (1975) 157.

removed many doubts by demonstrating that the readings by the editors of the *Tabulae Pompeianae* often are completely wrong.⁶

Camodeca only deals with a minor part of the wax-tablet material in his recent work but his new readings are very important for the consular *fasti* of the early Claudian years. With Camodeca's corrections we have to take account of the following couples:

T. Axius – T. Mussidius Pollianus in office on 27. and 29.⁷

Q. Futius Lusius Saturninus – M. Seius Varanus on 17.7 (Not Lute-tius, not Veranus)⁸

P. Fabius Firmanus – L. Tampius Flavianus on 5.12 (Not Firmianus, not the 5th of August)

He also gives some other consular datings, which we will have reason to return to below.

While we await with great interest information on the *fasti* for the reigns of Gaius and Claudius which Camodeca will be preparing, with revisions based on the whole of the *Tabulae Pompeianae*-material, some comments and suggestions might be put forward. Hopefully they will not further confuse the picture of the consular *fasti* under Claudius, a picture that is rather fragmentary due to the fact that many new findings must be fitted into Degrassi's basically sound structure, while some of the findings now show Gallivan's *fasti* to have been too rashly conjectured.¹⁰ As it happens, the removal of *Geta et consortes*

⁶ G. Camodeca, *Puteoli* 6 (1982) 3–53, published in 1985. Some revisions of the readings had already been undertaken before Camodeca, see U. Manthe, *Gnomon* 53 (1981) 150–161 and J.G. Wolf, *ZPE* 45 (1982) 245–253.

⁷ Camodeca 26 n. 11. The tablets are TP 79 and TP 116 = RAAN 53 (1978) 252 (= AE 1982,192) and AAP 29 (1980) 193.

⁸ Camodeca 4f., the tablet is TP 67 = AE 1978, 137 = RAAN 51 (1976) 165.

⁹ Camodeca 9, the tablet is TP 40 = AE 1973,162 = RAAN 46 (1971) 191.

¹⁰ See A. Degrassi, *I fasti consolari dell'impero romano dal 30 av. C. al 613 d.C.*, Roma 1952, 11ff. and Gallivan 1978, 424f. for his *fasti*. Among the corrections in Gallivan's list that are not mentioned elsewhere in this article there is for instance the year of C. Vibius Rufinus – M. Cocceius Nerva, AD 40 or 41 according to Gallivan but now unanimously considered to be AD 21 or 22. (R. Syme, *ZPE* 43 [1981] 365ff., U. Vogel-Weidemann, *ZPE* 46 [1982] 291, Camodeca 9 and W. Eck, *Die Statthalter der germanischen Provinzen vom 1.–3. Jahrhundert* [Epigraphische Studien 14], Bonn 1985, 15). Gallivan further suggests that C. Sallustius Passienus Crispus, *consul II ordinarius* in 44, must have died at the very beginning of his tenure as P. Pomponius

from AD 44 triggers off a chain-reaction, because many other pairs have been located assuming that the year 44 is full. This is the case with the three last pairs in 41 in Gallivan's list, and this is also true of the three last pairs in AD 43, of which we have evidence from a fragment of the *Fasti Potentini* (originally dated by Barbieri). C. Suetonius Paulinus' consulship has also been dated on these grounds.¹¹

The discoveries made by Camodeca provide a new and firm ground for further discussion, but the task still remains to fit the various pairs into a "consular jig-saw puzzle". It would be a great help if we could follow Gallivan's theory that a clear pattern exists for the terms of the ordinary and suffect consulates under Claudius. Gallivan holds that *suffecti* normally began their term on July 1st, but both *ordinarii* did not always leave then, tenures of 12 months sometimes being the case. More often, however, one or both of the *ordinarii* left after only two months, and the successor(s) then held office for the remainder of the first half of the year, i.e. four months. During the second half it was possible to have as many as three pairs of *suffecti*, their terms always being two months (July–August, September–October, November–December). Combinations of these periods, giving 4- or 6-month tenures were also possible, which correspondingly would give room for fewer *suffecti*. Thus, in any one year of Claudius' reign there could be as many as 10 consuls, but usually there were less.¹²

Before we accept this theory we must, however, consider some con-

Secundus occupies the place normally held by an *ordinarius* in the *Fasti Antiates minores* on 4.5 (CIL X 6638 = I.It XIII,1 26). But it is now clear that the pair of Sallustius Passienus Crispus – T. Statilius Taurus are in office on 28.2 (RAAN 51 [1976] 164 = TP 66f., see Manthe 154 and Eck, *Statthalter Germaniens* 20), so obviously Pomponius succeeded Passienus Crispus in the normal fashion on 1.3 or 1.5.

¹¹ Gallivan 1978, 417f. puts Vibius Rufinus – Cocceius Nerva or Fabius Firmanus – Tampius Flavianus in July–August in AD 41, Q. Futius – Seius Varanus in September–October and P. Ostorius Scapula – P. Suillius Rufus in November–December. Barbieri, *RAL* 30 (1975) 153–157, followed by Gallivan 1978, 420 dates a fragment of the *Fasti Potentini* with the pairs A. Gabinius Secundus – *ignotus I*, Q. Curtius Rufus – L. Oppius, L. S[–]*ignotus II* in the second half of AD 43. For Suetonius Paullinus see Gallivan, *op.cit.* 418f.

¹² Gallivan 1978, 413–415 and *idem*, *LF* 102 (1979) 1–3.

tradictory evidence. Some of it has already been dealt with, and disposed of, by Gallivan: A. Gabinius Secundus is mentioned as being in office on September 3rd (CIL X 4881 = D 8530) whereas he should have been in office only during July–August of the year in question, for there were three pairs of suffectus during the second half of the year and Gabinius belongs to the first of these. A plausible explanation for this, i.e. an error by the stone-cutter combined with the wish to honour a local consul, was, however, put forward by Gallivan.¹³ He considers the date (28.6) given by Flavius Josephus for Antonius Rufus and Pompeius Silvanus in 45 as another error.¹⁴

We further have to consider three wax-tablet-datings, checked by Camodeca,¹⁵ namely

Sex. Palpellius Hister – L. Pedanius Secundus 20.7 AD 43¹⁶

L. Vitellius – L. Vipstanus Poplicola 3.7 AD 48¹⁷

Faustus Cornelius Sulla Felix – Q. Marcius Barea Soranus 9.6 AD 52.¹⁸

¹³ Gallivan 1978, 415.

¹⁴ Jos. ant.Iud 20,14. Gallivan 1978, 408 remarks that we now know that T. Statilius Taurus Corvinus – Ti. Plautus Silvanus Aelianus were in office on 20.6 (AE 1973,148 = RAAN 46 [1976] 180f., but some caution might be called for as the wax-tablet has not yet been re-checked!), which makes it highly improbable that a pair of suffectus would appear at the end of the same month.

¹⁵ The reliability of the *editio princeps* of the wax-tablets being what it is, there seems no point in seriously considering some irregular but not re-checked datings, like C. Pompeius Gallus – Q. Veranius 3.3 AD 48 (AE 1978,127 = RAAN 51 [1976] 156, according to Gallivan's theory they should not be in office after the end of February) or C. Laecanius Bassus 30.8 AD 40 (AE 1982,204 = RAAN 53 [1978] 259).

¹⁶ Camodeca 10 on TP 43 = AE 1973,166 = RAAN 46 (1971) 194.

¹⁷ Camodeca 16ff. on TP 41,5 = AE 1973,164 = RAAN 46 (1971) 193. See also Manthe, *Gnomon* 53 (1981) 154 for the correct reading. It has recently been made clear that the year 48, which Gallivan regarded as full, must accommodate a fourth consul, Messalla Vipstanus Gallus, who takes over the *fasces* from his relative (brother?) L. Vipstanus Poplicola. On this new consul for AD 48 see J. Devreker, *ZPE* 22 (1976) 203–206, N. Petrucci, *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio I* (Tituli 4), Roma 1982, 612f. and U. Vogel-Weidemann, *Die Statthalter von Africa und Asia in den Jahren 14–68 n. Chr.* (Antiquitas 31), Bonn 1982, 428.

¹⁸ Camodeca 21ff. on TP 139 (cf. TP 70) – AAP 29 (1980) 196. The surprising thing here is that the *ordinarius* L. Salvius Otho Titianus seems to have left his office earlier (on 31.5 presumably) than has formerly been thought, he is in office on April 4th

Camodeca does not accept Gallivan's explanation that the writers of these tablets have made a mistake, as the datings do not fit in with the supposed rule of suffectio on the 1st of July, he speaks of "... il presupposto, un po' troppo presto elevato a regola fissa, di un cambio dei suffetti il 1:0 luglio anche durante il regno di Claudio."¹⁹

It seems, however, that nobody doubts that suffectio generally took place on the first of a given month (except when Emperors ended their consulships), either at any month of the year or at the beginning of July. The first of July is, moreover, the most frequent day for suffectio both during the reign of Gaius and Nero.²⁰ What motives could Claudius have for varying this fixed practice? Death can safely be ruled out as an explanation of the irregularities in the wax-tablets above. (Barea Soranus succeeded from L. Salvius Otho Titianus who lived to help his brother in 69, and it seems highly improbable that two consul designates should have died or been disposed of so that Palpellius Hister and Pedanius Secundus had to go on). The well-documented efforts of Claudius, especially at the beginning of his reign, not to offend the Senate,²¹ argue against any irregularities when appointing consuls. Surely everything that interfered with regularity in officeholdings could only be interpreted as a sign of the Emperor's supreme power and his disregard for customs and habits. Claudius, to be sure, later in his reign did take severe measures against members of the senatorial order, either on good evidence or because of the instigation of Messalina and others,²² but one can assume that he was aware of the feelings he was stirring up, and would not have been eager to further

(CIL IV 5512), May 6th (AE 1973,149) and May 13th (unedited wax-tablet, Camodeca 23). His successor Barea Soranus was previously known to be in office on 10.8 (AE 1973,155, a wax-tablet).

¹⁹ Camodeca 23 n.8. The Italian scholar also comments on other occasions on the temptation to regard certain dates as mistakes: "... attribuire errori ai documenti antichi per appianare nostre difficoltà interpretative è soluzione assai pericolosa in mancanza di sicure controprove." (Camodeca 17).

²⁰ See L. Vidman, *Fasti Ostienses*, Pragae 1982, 42f. for suffectio on July 1st AD 36–38 and Gallivan, *CQ* 24 (1974) 294ff. for the practice under Nero.

²¹ Cass.Dio 60,3,5–7.4.5

²² Cass.Dio 60,27,5; Sen. *Apocol.* 11; Suet. *Claud.* 13.29. For a summary, see T.P. Wiseman. *JRS* 72 (1982) 65.

alienate any senators by an apparently futile act such as shortening or lengthening the consular terms by some odd weeks.

We can advance the argument further by taking notice of the content of the *Tabulae Pompeianae* in question. While the document mentioning Palpellius Hister – Pedanius Secundus is an *obligatio in dando*, where only the day a loan is given is named, the two others are *vadimonia*, where the day and place when the disputed matter is to be settled is also mentioned. These *vadimonia* cover terms that last from two days to about three months.²³ The terms being so short, it is clear that the day and month were written especially carefully. But what about the consular pair for the day the documents were drafted? Even if a dispute dragged on for years and it would be important to know in which year it had started, the year could easily be identified even if the writer either through lack of information or out of negligence had not chosen the right pair from the consul-list of the year. My point is that while the day and the month were of utmost importance, a slight error regarding the consuls might probably not attract much attention especially with regard to the *vadimonia*, which were supposed to be solved in a few months time.

I therefore hold for the various reasons outlined here that errors concerning the consular pairs cannot be excluded, above all when the documents have been drawn up close to the date when a change of consuls is most expected, i.e. July 1st. This goes especially for L. Vipstanus Poplicola on July 3rd, who, moreover, was succeeded by a close relative, Messalla Vipstanus Gallus – still greater cause for confusion.²⁴ And confusion there seems to be, as the above-mentioned tablet TP 41

²³ Both dates of the *vadimonia* are preserved in AE 1969/70,94; AE 1973,138. 139. 141. 142. 144. 147. 157; AE 1978,134. Still another is presented by Camodeca 22ff. (TP 70 + TP 139).

²⁴ Camodeca 17 argues against this view at length, introducing TP 45 as further evidence. In this tablet it might be possible to see L. Vitellius and L. Vipstanus Poplicola together, but the reading is difficult and the day and month is missing. Against this we have clear readings for Messalla Vipstanus Gallus on August 17th (TP 138 = 66d) and 21st (AE 1978,138 = RAAN 51 [1976] 166 = TP 68, with the corrected reading Camodeca 13f.). If we believe in a July date for L. Vipstanus Poplicola, we must assume a suffection on August 1st (as Camodeca 18 does). We then get the unique terms of seven and five months for the consulships of the two Vipstanii.

now checked by Camodeca actually gives us the pair *L. Vitellio L. [Mess]alla Poplicola*, the second name fitting neither of the two Vipstani of AD 48, as can be proved from other sources.²⁵

If we prefer to follow Camodeca and do not allow for any errors in the tablets, we must particularly take the date of July 20th AD 43 for Palpellius Hister – Pedanius Secundus into consideration, because this date forces us to remove the three consular pairs of the *Fasti Potentini* to the only other possible year, AD 44. This move is accordingly suggested by Camodeca.²⁶

Although Camodeca considers Gallivan's theory of fixed suffect terms unproved, he uses it and makes the following changes in the consular *fasti*:²⁷

AD 41: Futius Lusius Saturninus – Seius Varanus for July–August

AD 43: Pedanius Secundus – Palpellius Hister still in July–August

AD 44: The six consuls of the *Fasti Potentini* covering the second half of the year.

These suggestions leave us with an empty space for consular pairs during September–December of 41, September–December of 43, November–December of 45 and possibly March–June of 47. The pairs we have to find a place for are Fabius Firmanus – Tampius Flavianus, T. Axius – Mussidius Pollianus, Ostorius Scapula – Suillius Rufus and further there is a single consul, Suetonius Paullinus, who should find a place at the beginning of Claudius' reign.²⁸

Of Camodeca's datings the one for AD 41 can be regarded as the most likely. As to the years 43 and 44 what is known about the consuls

²⁵ As Camodeca 16f. himself states the name of the first Vipstanius in AD 48 is *L. Vipstanius Poplicola*, as does Vogel-Weidemann, *Statthalter* 423f. (Eck, *Statthalter Germaniens* 132 is less certain and gives *L. Vipstanus (Messalla) Poplicola*). On this, see also a forthcoming work of H. Solin, *Beiträge zur Namengebung des römischen Senatorenstandes* (Comm.Hum.Litt.). The author kindly informs me that the name of the suffectus must be *Messalla Vipstanus Gallus* (not *C. Messalla*).

²⁶ Camodeca 10, supported by Eck, *Statthalter Germaniens* 18 and 114.

²⁷ Camodeca 10.

²⁸ For possible empty space in AD 45 and 47 see Gallivan 1978, 408f. It is not the purpose of this paper to treat consuls who only with some degree of probability belong to an early Claudian year. Such men are for instance *L. Popillius Balbus*, *P. Anteius Rufus* and *C. Calpetanius Rantius Sedatus* (cf. Gallivan 1978, 419. 421).

themselves does not help much. About the six Fasti Potentini consuls we have information regarding only Gabinius and Curtius Rufus, the latter probably identical with the historian. It all adds up to the fact that Gabinius must have been consul shortly before AD 45, therefore this *terminus ante quem* holds for all the consuls mentioned in the fragment. No choice between 43 and 44 based on their careers can be made if one wants to be cautious.²⁹

Of Suetonius Paullinus it is known that he was governor in Britannia in 58–61.³⁰ As a successful pretorian commander and predecessor to Hosidius Geta in Mauretania he is assumed to have held the *fasces* before the latter, usually AD 42 is preferred to 43.³¹ But we are no longer restricted to the years 42 and 43 for this consulate, because Geta did not after all carry the *fasces* until 47. Thus the years 42–45 are open to Paullinus, independently of how the Fasti Potentini-fragment is dated, because he could have been one of the *ignoti*. However, our man is called *vetustissimus consularium* by Tacitus (hist. 2,37) in AD 69, a

²⁹ About the identification of the consuls in the Fasti Potentini see Barbieri, RAL 30 (1975) 153–157. L. Oppius – Q. Curtius Rufus are also known as consuls for an unknown year 8/14.10 (PP 6 [1951] 226). For Oppius see RE S XIV (1974) 289 nr. 12a, for Rufus RE IV (1901) 1870 nr. 30; the historian *ibid.* 1871f. nr. 31, and PIR² C 1618 (cf. C 1619). Rufus took up the governorship in Germania Superior in 47, he was therefore consul prior to that. But A. Gabinius must have been consul sometime before AD 45, because he precedes the *consul ordinarius* of that year, T. Statilius Taurus Corvinus in CIL III 6983, where a C. Julius Aquila is *praefectus fabr(um) bis in aerar(ium) delatus a co(n)s(ulibus) A. Gabin[io Secundo Ta]uro Statilio Corvino*. It is, however, not possible to infer from this fact whether Gabinius was in office one or two years before Corvinus (see Barbieri, RAL 30 [1975] 155, Gallivan 1978, 420 and the study by G. Guadagno, *Opuscula Romana* VI, AIRRS 4° 29 [1968] 21–26). Of the years before 45 we can rule out 42, and also 41 because of Camodeca's dating of Q. Futius – Seius Varanus.

³⁰ Birley, "Fasti" Britain 54–57.

³¹ Cass.Dio 60,4 for the exploits in Mauretania. For the dating of his consulate see Miltner in RE IV A (1932) 591ff.; PIR¹ S 694; R. Syme, *Tacitus*, Oxford 1958, 387 n.2; A.R. Birley, *The Roman Governors of Britain* (Epigraphische Studien 4), Köln 1967, 66 and Gallivan 1978, 418. But Birley, "Fasti" Britain 55 argues that the evidence for a tenure early in the 40s is scarce, and that a suffect consulship in 47 or later cannot be excluded. (Birley was then aware of the transfer of Geta et consortes from AD 44).

passage that has been given much importance by some scholars and been held to mean that Paullinus must have been consul as soon as possible after his return from Mauretania.³² But one might question if this characterization really is to be taken literally, in the sense that he was the first *consularis* due to seniority,³³ and if he was, whether the passage only refers to the senior consul on the side of Otho in the Civil War.³⁴ In fixing the date of the consulate the interval between that office and the governorship in Britannia is of no help, as it varies too much during these years.³⁵

When discussing senior consuls we might do well to mention Tampius Flavianus, who lived well into the 70s. Tacitus often mentions him in his Histories, and he might well have held the consulate before Paullinus. Many scholars have dated his consulship as 40 or 41, but they of course considered the years 43 and 44 as full, and their judgement was in part influenced by the incorrect assumption that Flavianus held a July–August term.³⁶ Now that we know he was in office in November–December we have not only 40 and 41 to choose from, but also 43 (or 44) and 45. Nothing is known about the career of his colleague Fabius Firmanus, and even though Flavianus' own career is

³² See the preceding note and Vogel-Weidemann, Statthalter 150.

³³ The expression could be one of many that Tacitus uses to point out the advanced age of the senators he is referring to. Then it gives no definite clue to a dating of the consulship. Cf. ann. 11,21 *longa post haec senecta*. . . (Curtius Rufus); ann. 12,40 *senectute gravis*. . . (A. Didius Gallus); ann. 13,42 *extrema senectute*. . . (Suillius Rufus); hist. 1,9 *senecta ac debilitate pedum*. . . (Hordeonius Flaccus); hist. 2,37 *vetustissimus consularium* (Suetonius Paullinus); hist. 2,86 *divites senes* (Tampius Flavianus and Pompeius Silvanus).

³⁴ Thus Birley, "Fasti" Britain 56.

³⁵ As can be seen in Birley, "Fasti" Britain passim: A. Plautius *cos.* 29, governor 43–47; P. Ostorius Scapula *cos. a.i.*, gov. 47–52; A. Didius Gallus *cos.* 39, gov. 52–57; Q. Veranius *cos.ord.* 49, gov. 57–58; C. Suetonius Paullinus *cos. a.i.*, gov. 58–61; P. Petronius Turpilianus *cos.ord.* 61, gov. 61–63.

³⁶ R. Syme, ZPE 59 (1985) 269, Gallivan 1978, 418 suggest AD 40 or 41. Vogel-Weidemann, Statthalter 150ff regards 41 as too early and suggests 43 (but she was not aware of the Fasti Potentini fragment), W. Eck, Historia 24 (1975) 342f. also regards AD 41 as improbable and considers AD 47 or 49 as the best alternatives (seconded by G.W. Houston, ZPE 20 [1976] 28).

well-known, it presents chronological difficulties so that it gives no clear clue to the date of the consulship. We can find some circumstantial evidence by comparing his career to that of his coevals, admittedly not a very good method because in seemingly parallel careers there might have been many reasons – of which we can know nothing – for slowing down or speeding up the advancement. All the same the career of M. Pompeius Silvanus, *suffectus* in 45 and Tampius' colleague as *consul II* in the mid-70s, could be hinted at here, as Eck does,³⁷ and we then find that we now have exactly the years available that we are looking for, that is the mid-40s. I suggest that Fabius Firmanus – Tampius Flavianus held the *fasces* in 43 or 44, which would make Tampius a slightly senior consul to Silvanus. This fits in with the former being named in the first place in their second consulate (CIL IV 2560).³⁸

Further, we have the pair of T. Axius – T. Mussidius Pollianus to consider. For Pollianus we have a *cursus* inscription which gives his career up to his consulship (CIL VI 1466 = D 913), whereas T. Axius has been identified as the Axius who is *legatus Aug. pro pr. Galatiae* in CIL III 248.³⁹ The last pretorian office for Pollianus was obviously the

³⁷ Eck, *Historia* 24 (1975) 340–342. For Flavianus, only his career after the consulate is known. Both men are *proconsules Africae*, Flavianus 51/52? (The most recent treatment is by Vogel-Weidemann, *Statthalter* 152f., but the dating in the early 50s has been disputed before), Silvanus 53–56, both command provinces in 69, Pannonia (Flavianus) and Dalmatia (Silvanus) and side with Vespasianus, they then hold the post of *curator aquarum*, Silvanus 71–73 and Flavianus 73–74, and shortly afterwards together hold the *fasces* for the second time. (About these offices see RE S XIV [1974] 437f. (Eck) for Silvanus, RE S IX [1962] 1391f. nr. 1a (Thomasson) for Flavianus).

³⁸ It is of some interest to notice how greater regularity is introduced in the list of the *proconsules Africae* if Flavianus is consul in 43 or 44, now that we can locate Hosidius Geta in 47. Vogel-Weidemann, *Statthalter* 145–205 *passim* gives the following list of proconsuls: Tampius Flavianus *cos.* 43? – *procos.* 51/52 (according to Vogel-Weidemann, *Statthalter* 505–507 the interval between consulship and proconsulate under Claudius is between 7 and 11 years long, 8 years being by far the most common), T. Statilius Taurus *ord.* 44 – *procos.* 52/53, Pompeius Silvanus *cos.* 45 – *procos.* 53–56, Q. Sulpicius Camerinus *cos.* 46 – *procos.* 56/57, Cn Hosidius Geta *cos.* 47 – *procos.* 57/58, Q. Curtius Rufus *cos.* 43/44 – *procos.* 58/59.

³⁹ W. Eck, *ZPE* 42 (1981) 253.

proconsulate of Gallia Narbonensis, and pretorian is also Axius' Gallican command. If these persons could be fitted into the *fasti* for their provinces, it would give us a *terminus post quem* for their consulship. For Pollianus a three-year term 34–37 in Narbonensis has been suggested.⁴⁰

The situation regarding Axius is somewhat more complicated. A record of priests from the Temple of Roma and Augustus in Ankara gives us the governors for 15 consecutive years, presumably 24–39.⁴¹ Does the Axius (without *praenomen*) in CIL III 248 hold office earlier or later than these legates? And is he identical with our consul T. Axius, or with another man, L. Axius Naso, *proconsul Cypri* in AD 29?⁴² As to our knowledge the *gens Axia* was not very numerous,⁴³ one might surmise that one of these cases holds true. If the legate is identical with L. Axius, then we obtain no chronological information on the career of the consul T. Axius (although one might wonder at the

⁴⁰ H-G. Pflaum, *Les fastes de la province de Narbonnaise*, Paris 1978, 6f. and 48. W. Eck, *Gnomon* 53 (1981) 494 holds that he was proconsul under Claudius. One might notice that Pflaum uses the office of *praefectus frumenti dandi ex s.c.* as a chronological criterion for Pollianus' career because he holds that this office was abolished under Claudius, which has a certain effect when dating careers. (For this theory see BJ 163 [1963] 234ff., where Pflaum thinks that Pollianus' career is Augustan, *ibid* 234). Without going into the question of the *praefecti frumenti dandi* any further one can point to R.K. Sherk, *ANRW* II 7,2 (1980) 1032f. where many opinions contrary to Pflaum's are mentioned. As can be seen in Pflaum, *Narbonnaise* 48 there is much empty space in the *fasti* before 34 or after 37.

⁴¹ See Sherk 972ff. for this inscription and its dating. The list of governors for the years in question is undoubtedly complete. One should notice that the inscription brakes off during or after the tenure of the last governor, T. Helvius Basila. Therefore it is impossible to say if his term really finished in AD 39, which would make it the shortest in the inscription.

⁴² Sherk 976 regards this identification as very probable, but he was not aware of the consul. Eck, *ZPE* 42 (1981) 253 and M. Torelli, *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio* II (Tituli 5), Roma 1982, 195 refute this possibility. For L. Axius see *PIR*² A 1691; *RE* II (1896) 2634 nr. 8.

⁴³ See Torelli 195 and *AE* 1981,495 (two inscriptions from Corduba) where a L. Axius L.f. Pol(lia tribu) Naso who has reached the quaestorship is mentioned. He might well belong to the early Principate and even be the future proconsul of Cyprus (C. Castillo, *HAnt* 4 [1974] 191–197 and R. Knapp, *Phoenix* 35 [1981] 134–141).

strange pretorian career of L. Axius).⁴⁴ Again, by assuming that the legate is T. Axius, and considering the possibility that he is in Galatia before the governors in the list from Ankara, we find that he was consul about 20 years after his pretorship! Perhaps not impossible, but rather unusual to receive promotion so late.⁴⁵

But if T. Axius comes after the list of known legates in Galatia, he could have entered office in AD 39 at the earliest. Even if he holds only a one-year term – his four predecessors were all in office for several years – it would seem difficult for him to have acceded to the consulship on 1.7 AD 40.⁴⁶ But if this year is not possible, we will have to go to AD 49, 50 or later to find room in July–August.⁴⁷ The argu-

⁴⁴ It would be surprising if L. Axius was in Galatia before he went to Cyprus, especially as the governorships then are more than six years apart (see note 41), and governorship in an imperial province was clearly a higher office than in a senatorial. Admittedly there could be exceptions, W. Eck lists six cases for the period 69–138. (See W. Eck, ANRW II 1 [1974] 200f.). Perhaps the less rigid promotion scheme during the early Julio-Claudians can explain such an unusual advancement. If he was in Cyprus in AD 29 and received an imperial province only 10 years or more later, he would seem to advance very slowly. But, of course, we know nothing of offices he might have held in between.

⁴⁵ Eck, ZPE 42 (1981) 254 comments that it would not be unique for Axius to have been *legatus Aug. pro pr.* in AD 14/23 and then rise to consul only around AD 40. It is true that we have cases like C. Ummidius Quadratus, praetor in AD 18 and consul about AD 40, Sex. Palpellius Hister, *comes Ti. Caesaris Augusti datus ab divo Augusto* and consul AD 43, Cn. Domitius Afer, praetor 25, consul 39, not to mention P. Suillius Rufus, praetor ca. AD 23 (according to R. Syme, JRS 60 [1970] 28) and consul at the beginning of Claudius' reign.

⁴⁶ See Sherck 972ff. for the terms on the inscription from Ankara. There can be no certainty as to when during the year Axius began his tenure in Galatia, as the practice for imperial legates varied and there was no fixed day for taking over the command like there was for proconsuls. (Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*³ II.1 256). Theoretically a consulship beginning on 1.7 AD 40 can perhaps not be excluded, although he could hardly have taken it up unless *in absentia*, which seems improbable. (The voyage home from his province must be taken into consideration; proconsuls were given three months for this (Mommsen *ibid.*).

⁴⁷ The AD 41 term has already been assigned to Q. Futius – Seius Varanus, in 42 there is no room for a pair, should we or should we not believe in the date 20.7 for Pedanius Secundus – Palpellius Hister in 43, and what about AD 44, surely then the date for the consuls of the Fasti Potentini? Antonius Rufus – Pompeius Silvanus should be in office in 45 even if Josephus (*ant.Iud.* 20,14) has made a slight error, 46

ments here considered tend to point that way. But, of course, if the Galatian governor is L. Axius, or if we have an otherwise unknown T. Axius as *suffectus* with Mussidius Pollianus, nothing prevents them from holding the *fasces* in AD 40.

Finally we have the pair P. Ostorius Scapula – P. Suillius Rufus, known to be in office on November 10th (AE 1973,152 = RAAN 46 [1971] 185). Another, but fragmentary, document makes it possible that they held a longer term than just November–December.⁴⁸ A short tenure will be the starting point here. For these consuls two facts have been used for dating, namely the governorship of Scapula in Britain in 47, which is thus a *terminus ante quem*, and secondly the close relation between Claudius and the notorious delator Rufus.⁴⁹ Until now scholars have been divided between 41 and 45 for the consulship,⁵⁰ but we

and 48 are full and in 47 we have Hosidius Geta – Flavius Sabinus. Neither is there any space before AD 40, see Degrassi 9f., Vidman, *Fasti Ostienses* 42f. and P.A. Gallivan, *Antichthon* 13 (1979) 66f. Torelli 172 estimates AD 40 for the consulship, but elsewhere restricts himself to "Claudian" (Torelli 188, 195). Eck, *Gnomon* 53 (1981) 494 is in favour of a late Claudian date, but he is undecided in *ZPE* 42 (1981) 254 and more inclined to an early date in *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio I* (Tituli 4), Roma 1982, 214 n. 86. One more clue about T. Axius exists, which, however, is not decisive. In a *fistula* from Rome a *Cornelia Tauri f. T.Axi (uxor)* is named (CIL XV 7440). This man should be our man and his wife a daughter of Sisenna Statilius Taurus, *cos.* AD 16. (Eck, *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio l.c.* and Groag in *RE S I* [1903] 233 nr. 4a). This makes her a sister of the ordinary consuls in AD 44 and 45. One could argue that this very favourable marriage soon helped Axius to a consulate. On the other hand, perhaps only a previous consulship for this member of the not very prominent gens Axia made such a marriage possible? When sources are scarce one must not be too hasty in one's judgements.

⁴⁸ AE 1949,250 where the fragment $\text{I}\epsilon\nu\beta\epsilon\tau\omega\nu$ for the month remains. Degrassi 12 thinks this means that the office was held in August or September, and so does G. Barbieri, *Epigraphica* 29 (1967) 9. Syme, *JRS* 60 (1970) 28 considers September, November or December while Eck, *Historia* 24 (1975) 342 n. 120 like Birley, "Fasti" Britain 41 suggests the period could have been from the end of August to December.

⁴⁹ About Rufus' prosecutions: Tac. *ann.* 11,5; 13,42f. His career is discussed in *PIR*¹ S 700; *RE IV A* (1932) 719–22 nr 4 and recently by Syme. *JRS* 60 (1970) 27–29. For Scapula *PIR*¹ O 112; *RE XVIII* (1948) 1671 nr. 4 and recently Birley, "Fasti" Britain 41f.

⁵⁰ In favour of AD 41 argue Eck, *Historia* 24 (1975) 342 n. 120; Barbieri, *RAL* 30 (1975) 156f. and Gallivan 1978, 419. Syme. *JRS* 60 (1970) prefers AD 45 while Birley, "Fasti" Britain 41f. is inconclusive.

now see that 43 or 44 are also possible, though the dating of this pair is also dependent on the dates of the consular pair Fabius Firmanus – Tampius Flavianus. AD 41 would perhaps fit in better with the important command given to Scapula in 47, even if there is no clear pattern for the advancement to that post, as stated above. The question is if the fact that Suillius Rufus was a friend of Claudius really has any relevance when arguing for a consulship in AD 41?⁵¹ But we cannot of course exclude the year 41 for Rufus on the ground that Claudius perhaps did not influence the designation.⁵² Either our pair belongs to 41 or they hold the only remaining November–December term during 43–45; Fabius Firmanus – Tampius Flavianus and the Fasti Potentini-pair L. S [–] & *ignotus II* holding the other two.

The purpose of this paper was to offer some comments on questions regarding the early Claudian consular *fasti*. As there are no sure proofs when dating the consuls we have discussed, a cautious way of regarding the evidence would give the following picture:

T. Axius – T. Mussidius Pollianus AD 40 or 49, 50

P. Ostorius Scapula – P. Suillius Rufus AD 41 or 43 (44–45 not to be excluded)

C. Suetonius Paullinus AD 42/45

The six consuls in the Fasti Potentini AD 44 rather than AD 43

P. Fabius Firmanus – L. Tampius Flavianus AD 43 (depending on the dating of the Fasti Potentini. AD 45 cannot be excluded).

⁵¹ Gaius died on January 24th but there is perhaps a chance that he had designated the consuls for the second half of the year. On the date of designations during this period there is not much new evidence since Mommsen conjectured that designations for the latter part of the year usually took place in March (*Römisches Staatsrecht*³ I 587–589). All the same, Syme for instance clearly does not take AD 41 into consideration when assuming that Rufus is a Claudian consul (*JRS* 60 [1970] 28). If Gaius had made designations for the whole of 41, one doubts whether Claudius regarded it as necessary to make any changes, considering the already mentioned friendly policy towards the *ordo senatorius* (see note 21).

⁵² Actually Rufus was on friendly terms also with Gaius. This Emperor did recall Rufus from the exile (*Tac. ann.* 4,31).