

TULLUS, A ROMAN NOBLE, RESIDENT OF CYZICUS*

With Octavian's victory over Marcus Antonius in 31 BC the Greek East fell to the new *princeps* and with it the province of Asia. Among the first after that to govern Asia as proconsul¹ was Lucius Volcarius Tullus, who had been *consul ordinarius* in 33 BC as colleague of Octavian. He was accompanied on this mission by his nephew Tullus, a close friend of the poet Sextus Propertius. Propertius addressed several of his elegies to him at the time that Tullus was away, one at the very moment when Tullus was about to leave Italy.² If the first book of the elegies has been correctly dated not later than October of 28, and probably during 29 BC, the new governor must have assumed his office somewhat earlier. The dates assigned to him by modern scholars do vary, however. A year as late as 26/5 is considered the most likely by K. M. T. Atkinson,³ whereas U. Laffi opted for either 30/29 or 29/8.⁴ T. R. S. Broughton favored the years 28/7 or 27/6.⁵ Bengt E. Thomasson considered any year between 29/8 and 26/5 as a possible date for Volcatius Tullus' governorship of Asia.⁶ In this he is followed most recently, in 2010, by Ch. Marek.⁷

* Warmest thanks go to Bengt E. Thomasson for critical and helpful comments.

¹ The hypothesis of B. M. Kreiler that Asia was from 30 to 28 BC governed by a prefect of equestrian rank (*Statthalter zwischen Republik und Prinzipat* [Frankfurt 2006] 199–212) is untenable, as M. Heil has pointed out (*Klio* 91 [2009] 501–502).

² Propertius 1. 6. 2. The poet explains why he declined to accompany his friend: love keeps him at home. Lines 19–20 show that the uncle was governor and as such in charge of jurisdiction within the province. For a recent opinion that Prop. 1. 6 was in fact written *before* the battle of Actium, in early 33 BC, see *Additional Note* at the end.

³ K. M. T. Atkinson, “The Governors of the Province Asia in the Reign of Augustus”, *Historia* 7 (1958) 312–314. See also R. Syme, “Missing Persons, III”, *Historia* 11 (1962) 152.

⁴ “Le iscrizioni relative all' introduzione nel 9 a. C. del nuovo calendario della Provincia d'Asia”, *Studi classici e orientali* 16 (1967) 5–98, on pp. 59–62, followed by C. Habicht, “Die augusteische Zeit und das erste Jahrhundert nach Christi Geburt”, in W. den Boer (ed.), *Le Culte des Souverains dans l'Empire Romain* (Geneva 1973) 81.

⁵ *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* 3 (Atlanta 1986) 223, without further comment.

⁶ *Laterculi praesidum* (Göteborg 1984) 205 no. 1, not changed in later additions. I owe this work and all the *Addenda* to the kindness of B. E. Thomasson.

⁷ *Geschichte Kleinasiens in der Antike* (Munich 2010) 823.

Propertius provides additional guidance. Elegy 3. 22 is an eloquent praise of Italy and its beauty as part of a strong appeal to young Tullus to return to the country in which he was born and raised, and where a splendid career and the expectation of marriage and offspring are waiting for him, if only he could be lured away from Cyzicus where by now he had spent “so many years” (*tam multos annos*).⁸ From this it is clear that Tullus stayed on once his uncle’s term in Asia had ended, and that he preferred to live in Cyzicus. Since elegy 3. 22 is very close to 3. 18 in number and probably also in time, both seem to be contemporary. In 3.18 the death of Augustus’ nephew and presumptive heir Claudius Marcellus, which happened in 23 BC, is mourned as a very recent event.⁹ If 3. 22 does, in fact, also date to the year 23,¹⁰ the expression “so many years” would favor Laffi’s high date for the arrival of Tullus in Asia accompanying his uncle, whose governorship might therefore be as early as 29/8 and was hardly later than 28/7.

The governors of the province of Asia in the time of Augustus have been thoroughly discussed by K. M. T. Atkinson in a paper from the year 1958.¹¹ There is great uncertainty concerning the specific dates of most of them in the first decade after the battle of Actium, partly caused by the dearth of surviving (and not politically compromised) *viri consulares*,¹² partly because existing rules, like the five year interval between consulate and proconsulate, may have been neglected for special reasons, such as family connections with the emperor, or privileges resulting from the *leges de maritandis ordinibus*, once these had gone into effect. Because of these uncertainties the dates assigned by scholars to governors of Asia in this period differ widely. The order, in which these individuals served in Asia, was probably different from the order, in which their consulships had followed each other.

In competition for a place in the *Fasti* of Asia during the twenties BC, are
 M. Herennius Picens, *consul ordinarius* 34 BC,¹³
 L. Volcarius Tullus, *consul ordinarius* 33 BC with Octavianus,

⁸ 3. 22. 1.

⁹ “Unmittelbar danach geschrieben” (R. Helm, “Sextus Propertius”, *RE* 23 [1957] 773).

¹⁰ “Book Three … can hardly be later than 22” (G. P. Goold, *Propertius. Elegies* [Cambridge MA 1990] 2).

¹¹ Atkinson (n. 3) 300–330, where, ahead of chronological tables, the methodological questions are discussed (300–312).

¹² Two of the *proconsules* in the twenties served, against the rule, for a second consecutive year: Sex. Appuleius, *consul ordinarius* in 29 BC, and Manius Potitus Valerius Messalla, *consul suffectus* that same year 29 BC.

¹³ Provided he, and not the homonymous *consul suffectus* of AD 1, was the author of the Ephesian edict *SIG* 784. The reference to damages “caused by the war” favors the senior man.

L. Vinicius, *consul suffectus* 33 BC,¹⁴
 M. Valerius Messala, *consul suffectus* 32 BC,¹⁵
 M. Tullius Cicero, *consul suffectus* 30 BC with Octavianus,¹⁶
 S. Appuleius, *consul ordinarius* 29 BC, governor twice,¹⁷
 M'. Potitus Valerius Messalla, *consul suffectus* 29 BC with Octavianus,
 governor twice.¹⁸

These seven individuals occupy nine years, since the last two of this list both served for two consecutive years. The picture is further complicated by the fact that during the years 23–21 BC Marcus Agrippa was in charge of the eastern provinces with a major *imperium*; it is not certain whether *proconsules* or *legati* served under him as governors of Asia, although Sex. Appuleius, *consul ordinarius* in 29, seems to have administered Asia as *proconsul* in these very years.¹⁹ It has also been suggested that during Agrippa's tenure of this high command (C. Iunius) Silanus served under him as *proconsul Asiae* of praetorian rank.²⁰ This was admitted as a possibility by Thomasson, who, however, stated that it was far from being certain, and that there existed other Silani at the time, such as M. Iunius Silanus, *consul ordinarius* 25 BC with Augustus.²¹ The case for this man has recently been made by Claude Eilers.²² He identifies him as governor of Asia in an inscription from Stratonicea in Caria that calls him “hereditary patron and benefactor of the city”, πάτρων κοι ε<νε>ργέτης τῆς

¹⁴ If he (and not a Marcus Vinicius) was the author of the edict from Aeolian Kyme, *I. Kyme* 17; see Syme (n. 3) 147–148.

¹⁵ He was perhaps the man honored at Pergamon (*IvP* 417 = *IGR* 4.431), as R. Han-slik thought (“Valerius” no. 255, *RE* 8 [1955] 128) and may have received the honor because he was *proconsul* at the time, but since no title is given, it is not certain that he was in fact governor.

¹⁶ Coins from Laodicea at the Lycus identify him as *proconsul Asiae*: MAPKOΣ ΤΥΛΛΙΟΣ ΚΙΚΕΡΩΝ; see *Roman Provincial Coins* 1, no. 2448; W. Leschhorn, *Lexikon der Aufschriften auf griechischen Münzen* (Vienna 2009) 853.

¹⁷ J.-L. Ferrary, “Les inscriptions du sanctuaire de Claros en l'honneur de Ro-mains”, *BCH* 124 (2000) 360: ἀνθύπατον τὸ δεύτερον and other testimonies (*PIR*² A 961).

¹⁸ His tenure as governor is well attested: *ILS* 8964 from Rome: *procos. Asiae bis*; *TAM* V 1366 (Magnesia ad Sipylum); *I. Didyma* 147; *BCH* 124 (2000) 364, no. 10 from Klaros and, most recently, *Chiron* 38 (2008) 228–230, no. 31 and fig. 12, from Cos.

¹⁹ Thomasson (n. 6) 205 no. 3.

²⁰ Iosephus, *Ant. Iud.* 16. 168. The suggestion was made by Atkinson (n. 11) 305, but rejected by R. Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy* (Oxford 1986) 191 n. 27.

²¹ Thomasson (n. 6) 206 no. 5.

²² “M. Silanus, Stratonicea, and the Governors of Asia under Augustus”, *Tyche* 14 (1999) 77–86.

[πόλεως].²³ Eilers argues further that *στρατηγός* in the document quoted by Josephus (note 20) cannot mean *vir praetorius*, but only *governor*. If so, then Silanus must have been governor while Agrippa was his superior with the higher *imperium*. As the result of Eilers' argument the sequence of governors of Asia in the late twenties BC is given as follows: 26–24 Sex. Appuleius; 24–22 Manius Potitus Valerius Messalla; 22/21 M. Iunius Silanus.²⁴

If this is correct, it leaves only the few years between Actium and 27/6 for the five other *viri consulares* who were mentioned above as likely governors of Asia in one of those years, namely Herennius Picens (*consul ord.* 34), Volcarius Tullus (*consul ord.* 33), L. Vinicius (*consul suff.* 33), M. Valerius Messalla (*consul suff.* 32), and Tullius Cicero (*cos. suff.* 30). At least one of them would have to be struck from the list, in order to accommodate the other four; most likely that would be M. Valerius Messalla, who is not clearly attested as governor in the Pergamene inscription (note 15). In any event, the evidence is decidedly in favor of a year in the early twenties for Volcarius Tullus, and of the dates proposed for him those later than 27/6 seem ruled out.²⁵ Furthermore, if seniority was a potent factor in the admission to the *sortitio* for one of the consular provinces, he should have had priority over the others, except for Herennius Picens. And the words of Propertius (3. 22. 1) that by the year 23 *multi anni* had passed since the time Volcarius Tullus took up the governorship also speak for one of the earliest years in the twenties.

If Tullus, the nephew of the governor, stayed on for years in Cyzicus and perhaps never returned to Italy, he may have witnessed the events of the year 20 BC that cost the city its freedom. Augustus took it away because Roman citizens had been flogged and killed in the city. Glen Bowersock even ventured a suggestion on the fate of young Tullus: “Conceivably Volcarius himself lost his life in this outbreak.”²⁶ Had that been the case, we might well have heard an echo from Tullus’ close friend Propertius, who was still alive in the year 16, well after these events.

²³ *AE* 1997, 1472. The paper of Eilers is noticed at *AE* 1999, 1597. The author has briefly restated his view in Eilers, *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities* (Oxford 2002) 79–80, and 250–251.

²⁴ A very fragmentary Latin inscription from Emporion in Spain (*AE* 1990, 656) has been restored to give the name of M. Iunius Silanus and his governorship of Asia: *M. Iun[io] Silano], pro[cos. Asiae], co[s. patrono]*, with the comment “Le proconsulat d’Asie est daté de 22/21 a. C.” The date is that proposed by Eilers, the restoration, however, not certain.

²⁵ Possible dates that remain are 30 (Goold [n. 10] 1: “in 30”); 30 or 29 (Laffi [n. 4]), 29/8, 28/7 or 27/6 (Thomasson [n. 6]). The year 27/6 is favored by R. Hanslik (“Volcarius”, *RE Suppl.* 9 [1962] 1838 f.) and Broughton (n. 5) 223, who, however, also admits 27/6 as a possibility.

²⁶ *Augustus and the Greek World* (Oxford 1966) 21.

Another question is what made Tullus choose Cyzicus and to settle there for many years.²⁷ Obviously we cannot know for sure, but it is worth mentioning that the town possessed many attractions. At about the time that Tullus arrived there, Strabo wrote: “The city of Cyzicus rivals the first in Asia Minor in size, beauty and a constitution well suited for both peace and war”.²⁸ Modern scholars echo this statement, for instance Théodore Reinach: “Kyzikos, das Eingangsthör Asiens, eine der schönsten Städte und bedeutendsten Festungen des Altertums”,²⁹ or W. Ruge: “Kyzikos war eine der glänzendsten und mächtigsten Städte Kleinasiens”.³⁰ The city had long been free and allied for quite some time with the Attalids of Pergamum and favored by them, since Cyzicus was the home of Apollonis, the queen of king Attalus I and the mother of kings Eumenes II and Attalus II. It had withstood the onslaught of Mithradates Eupator in 72 BC and been the scene of a major defeat of his by the Roman general Lucullus. A little later, in 58 BC, when Cicero was forced into exile, he contemplated to weather the storm in Cyzicus, since the city, being free and not under Roman jurisdiction, would be a safe haven.³¹ Citizens of Cyzicus fought for Julius Caesar in Alexandria against King Ptolemy and in 46 BC against Caesar’s Roman enemies in Africa. After the end of the Civil Wars, a Roman living there was not isolated, since an association of Roman merchants (οἱ πραγματευόμενοι ‘Ρωμαῖοι) existed and is attested about the time of Tullus’ stay. These Romans participated in decisions of, and honors awarded by, the city.³²

Furthermore, it is quite possible that Tullus had come into closer contact with the city during the year his uncle governed the province, and in connection with official business. All scholars are agreed that he came to Asia as a member of his uncle’s staff.³³ It is well known that the three

²⁷ The proposals made by F. Cairns, *Sextus Propertius, the Augustan Elegist* (Cambridge 2006) 76 f. on the base of Prop. 3. 22 seem to me arbitrary.

²⁸ Strab. 12. 8. 11, p. 575. He has more praise in 14. 2. 5, p. 653.

²⁹ Mithradates Eupator, *König von Pontos* [German edition by A. Goetz] (Leipzig 1895) 321.

³⁰ RE s. v. Kyzikos (1924) 232.

³¹ Cic. *Att.* 3. 6.

³² IGR 4, 159, restored and interpreted by E. Chiricat, “Funérailles publiques et enterrement au gymnase à l’époque hellénistique” in P. Fröhlich and Ch. Müller (edd.), *Citoyenneté et participation à la basse époque hellénistique* (Paris 2005) 214–223. He dates the text to 15 BC – AD 15.

³³ “as a member of his staff” (Bowersock [n. 26] 79); “sicher als legatus proconsul” (Hanslik [n. 25]) “one of the *comites* of his uncle” (Atkinson [n. 3] 313; “on an official mission” (Goold [n. 10] 1); “as a Roman dignitary” (S. J. Heyworth, *Cynthia* [Oxford 2007] 399).

legati assigned to a governor of consular rank were to assist him in his jurisdiction.³⁴ For this task they were given a special *imperium*. Cyzicus was the center of one of the ca. twelve assizes or jurisdictional districts of Asia, the *conventus* of the Hellespont.³⁵ Since in the words of Propertius for both Volcacius the *proconsul* and his nephew “a special function is indicated ... to restore the *iura* of the provincials”,³⁶ it is tempting to speculate that Tullus was assigned some role in the process of rendering justice in that very district during the year his uncle served as governor. What that could have been is, however, difficult to tell. Since he was very young, born around 50 or 49 BC, and so, like Propertius, hardly above twenty years of age, he almost certainly was not yet a *quaestorius* and a senator. For this reason he can hardly have been made a *legatus proconsulis* and given a substantial role in the field of jurisdiction.³⁷ It is more likely that Tullus served in an informal way, as a *comes*, in his uncle’s staff and as a member of his *consilium*. He will have accompanied him on his travels across the province, to render justice in the various *conventus*. Since Cyzicus was such a place, it may well have been this way that he came to know and to like the city.

The presence of the two Volcacii in Asia seems to have left in Cyzicus traces visible much later. In a fragmentary list of *prytaneis* of the city, dated

³⁴ Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht* II, 268; G. P. Burton, *JRS* 65 (1975) 94–97: “Legates and ‘Dioceses’” (within a larger study of assizes). St. Mitchell, “The Administration of Roman Asia from 133 BC to AD 250”, in W. Eck (Ed.), *Lokale Autonomie und römische Ordnungsmacht in den kaiserzeitlichen Provinzen vom 1. bis 3. Jahrhundert* (Munich 1999) 29: “the three *legati* of the *proconsul* certainly conducted assizes on their own behalf, and it may be that they took responsibility for certain dioeceses”.

³⁵ P. Thonemann notes (*NC* 168 [2008] 179) that in 17 BC in a list of twelve *conventus* of Asia, two take their names not from a city, but from a district, one of which being the *conventus* of the Hellespont. He argues that this district probably dates back to the creation of the province. It existed in 51/50 (*Cic. Fam.* 13. 53. 2). In imperial times Cyzicus was its administrative center. It is possible that in 17 the name of the city was avoided because it had fallen from grace during the years 20 to 15. For a different view see D. Merola, *Autonomia Locale, Governo Imperiale* (Bari 2001) 159–162. The *conventus* of Asia have now been most fully discussed by J. Fournier, *Entre tutelle Romaine et autonomie civique* (Athens 2010) 41–98.

³⁶ Propertius 1. 6. 19–20, the quotation is from Atkinson (n. 3) 313.

³⁷ See the thorough discussion of B. E. Thomasson, *Legatus. Beiträge zur römischen Verwaltungsgeschichte* (Stockholm 1991) 56–58, who points out that *praequaestorian legati* are extremely rare. Assumptions that Tullus had been given “an independent command” or that he was a *propraetor* (see the discussion of P. Heslin, “Virgil’s *Georgics* and the Dating of Propertius’ First Book”, *JRS* 100 [2010] 56 n. 7) are unwarranted.

to the second or third century AD,³⁸ occur Βουλκάκιος Ἀλέξανδρος and Βού(λ)κάκιος Πόλλιος, obviously both Volcacii, two men possessing Roman citizenship. It can hardly be doubted that they inherited it and their Roman names from an ancestor who either had been freed by a Volcacius or had been awarded naturalization and had taken the name of the Roman who had been instrumental in helping him to the grant.³⁹ This Roman *nobilis* was most likely either the governor of Asia in one of Augustus' early years or his nephew Tullus.

Additional Note

After the present paper was finished, I saw Peter Heslin's study "Virgil's *Georgics* and the Dating of Propertius' First Book" in *JRS* 100 (2010) 54–68. He attacks the general consensus that the first book was published after the battle of Actium and argues for a date *before* it. He holds that certain passages do not refer to verses of Virgil's *Georgica*, but that it was Virgil who reacted strongly to the publication of Propertius' first book. This, in his opinion, was written between the beginning of 33 BC and the middle of 32, "most probably in the early months of 33" (60–61). Octavian, he says, designated his consular colleague of 33 to be governor of Asia for the following year as "a deliberate provocation of Antony" (61). In so doing, he "need not have seriously imagined that Antony would suffer Volcacius to enter and take over Asia as governor" (60).

Heslin notes "that Poem 1. 6 does not refer to the proconsulship as a *fait accompli* belonging to the past; more likely, it has yet to begin. Tullus is still in Rome with Propertius and his trip to Asia is referred to repeatedly in the future tense (1. 6. 31–36)" (p. 56). It is true that Tullus is still in Rome, but the poet has not the slightest doubt that he will go and will go very soon. Propertius could not be certain of that in the beginning of 33 BC,

³⁸ *BCH* 14 (1890) 538 no. 3, lines 13 and 15 (Th. Reinach publishing a copy of Cyriacus), now E. Schwertheim, Unpublished manuscript "Namenlisten" (of Cyzicus), B 10. L. Robert has corrected a name in line 5 (*RPh* 55 [1929] 127 no. 8 = *OMS* 2 [1093]), but neither he nor anyone else seems to have commented on the two Volcacii. I thank E. Schwertheim for permission to quote from his study.

³⁹ Among many parallels there is the contemporary one of the peripatetic philosopher Cratippus of Pergamon, who, as is known from Plutarch, *Cicero* 24, 7–8, received Roman citizenship from Caesar through the good offices of Marcus Tullius Cicero and was henceforth known as Marcus Tullius Cratippus (C. Habicht, *IvP* 3, *Die Inschriften des Asklepieions* [Berlin 1969] 164–165). A little earlier is the case of the poet Archias, who composed an epos celebrating the deeds of L. Licinius Lucullus and became a Roman citizen as A. Licinius Archias (R. Reitzenstein, "Archias", *RE* 2 [1895] 463–464).

while Antony was in full control of the East, including the province of Asia. The poet also encourages Tullus, together with his uncle, the governor, “to restore to our allies the ancient rights they have forgotten” (1. 6. 19–20). That is to say: both men would have the task to bring about a new, lawful order to the province, an order that respects the rights previously disregarded, no doubt an allusion to unlawful rule that has just come to an end, the regime of Antony. For these reasons I continue to believe that the poem (and book One of Propertius) were in fact written after, not before, the defeat of Antony.⁴⁰

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Привлекая к уже известным свидетельствам элегию Prop. III, 22, автор уточняет дату наместничества Луция Волкация Тулла в провинции Азия, а также обстоятельства жизни его племянника, адресата стихотворения Проперция.

⁴⁰ I must leave it to others to decide, whether priority belongs to Virgil or to Propertius in passages that seem to relate to each other.