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WHO WAS CICERO'S *REGINA*?

In half a dozen letters to Atticus written after the death of Caesar, between 16 April and 14 June 44 BC, Cicero refers to a *regina*, «queen»¹, who at one time resided in a Transtiberine villa². Alongside the *regina*, in one letter Cicero makes mention of a certain Caesar (*Att.* 14, 20 (374), 2), and, in another, of a man named Ammonius (*Att.* 15, 15 (393), 2; 15, 15 (393), 3). Given that Cleopatra VII of Egypt was a well-known contemporary queen who visited Rome and perhaps stayed in Caesar's villa across the Tiber³, Cicero's *regina* has been identified as Cleopatra⁴, Caesar as her son Caesarion (widely considered the illegitimate child of Caesar)⁵, and Ammonius as an Egyptian agent of Cleopatra, possibly the same man who was a legate of her father, King Ptolemy "Auletes" XII, twelve years earlier⁶.

¹ I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their advice and for the effort they put into correcting my mistakes, but they should not be held responsible for any of the ideas expressed in the article. I would also like to thank Professor E. Malaspina, Managing Editor of *COL*, for his kindness and consideration. All translations from Latin and Greek are mine.

² Cic. *Att.* 14, 8 (362), 1; 14, 20 (374), 2; 15, 1 (377), 5; 15, 4 (381), 4; 15, 15 (393), 2, 3; 15, 17 (394), 2 (the number in brackets refers to the chronological order of Cicero's letters as established by D.R. Shackleton Bailey). The Transtiberine location is noted in Cic. *Att.* 15, 15 (393), 3.

³ Dio 43, 27, 3 remarks that, when Cleopatra and her husband came to Rome in 46 BC, they lodged in Caesar's house.

⁴ Osgood 2006, 29 argues that Cicero could refer to Cleopatra simply as *regina* because of the unusual nature of her position as a ruler.

⁵ Grant 1972, 95; Gruen 2003, 272; Goldsworthy 2010, 220; 221; 231-232; 246. The date of the birth of Cleopatra's son is uncertain, and Roller 2010, 69 argues that Caesarion, on the evidence of Plutarch *Caes.* 49, 10 (cf. *Ant.* 54, 5-6), was born not much after Caesar left Egypt in 47; also Gray-Fow 2014, 43, 44-5; Sartre 2108, 91-96. In contrast, Eller 2011, 480, among many others, determines that Caesarion was born in 44 (see Sartre 2018, 96-104). The evidence of the contemporary Nicolaus of Damascus, reporting a rumour about Caesar, Cleopatra and Caesarion during 44, suggests that Caesarion was born before this (*Vit. Aug.* 20, 68; but see Sartre 2018, 99-100).

⁶ See Shackleton Bailey ad loc. Cic. *fam.* 1, 1 (12), 1 refers to Ammonius as the king's (Ptolemy's) legate in a letter to Lentulus Spinther in January 56. This Ammonius is credited with being Cleopatra's adviser still in 44 (Roller 2010, 72). On the supposed role of this man in engaging to deliver manuscripts to Cicero, see Gruen 2003, 270; Roller 2010, 72.

On the basis of these identifications, Cicero's letters from April to June 44 have been taken to provide evidence for the activities of Cleopatra and her entourage in Italy, as follows: that she and her son Caesarion resided for some time in Caesar's riverside villa, from perhaps late 45 until April 44⁷; that relations between Cleopatra and her agents, and leading Romans, like Cicero, were under strain during this period⁸; that Cicero was involved in an arrangement with Ammonius to obtain copies of manuscripts held in the library at Alexandria⁹; and that Cleopatra, her son and entourage departed from the city a month after the assassination of Caesar¹⁰, but they lingered in Italy until at least June (Cic. *Att.* 15, 17 (394), 2). It has even been suggested that Cleopatra, having first come to Rome in 46 (Dio 43, 27, 3), remained in Italy for the whole period from 46 to 44¹¹.

Although the designation of Cicero's *regina* as Cleopatra has been universally accepted¹², it should be noted that Cicero himself does not refer to Cleopatra by name¹³, and that there were other women whom he might have intended by this title, in particular, Eunoe, Queen of Mauretania, allegedly another of Caesar's regal mistresses in this period¹⁴. In addition, without the identification of Cicero's *regina* as Cleopatra, then

⁷ Cic. *Att.* 15, 15 (393), 3. Carcopino 1969, 312; Grant 1972, 87; Goldsworthy 2010, 221-223; 232; Roller 2010, 71; see Sartre 2018, 149-156. D'Arms 1998, 33-44 argues that Cicero's evidence reveals that Caesar owned these pleasure gardens in 46. Boatwright 1998, 71-82 also uses the Ciceronian evidence to allude to the villa of Caesar. For recent archaeological work on Transtiberine region, see Tucci 2004, 196-202; Catalli 2009, 1-9.

⁸ Cic. *Att.* 15, 15 (393), 2 reports a hostile encounter that he had with the *regina* when she was living in a villa across the Tiber (*trans Tiberim horti*), and he notes his dealings with members of her entourage, one formal episode involving a certain Ammonius, and another, with one of her agents, which took place in Cicero's own home and caused him considerable disquiet. On the hostility, see Grant 1972, 87; Roller 2010, 74; Gray-Fow 2014, 46; Sartre 2018, 151-153.

⁹ Cic. *Att.* 15, 15 (393), 2. See Roller 2010, 72; Sartre 2018, 152.

¹⁰ Cic. *Att.* 14, 8 (362), 1. Osgood 2006, 29 suggests that Cleopatra remained in Rome until after 11 April to ensure that the senate confirmed privileges granted to her by Caesar.

¹¹ Dio 43, 27, 3. Grant 1972, 87; Gruen 2003, 258-260; Tyldesley 2011, 104; Eller 2011, 481. Most express doubt that Cleopatra remained in Rome from 46 to 44 (Grant 1972, 91; Gruen 2003, 269-70; Goldsworthy 2010, 221-225; 232; 234; Roller 2010, 74-5; Skinner 2011, 118). Two visits are posed as a possibility by Gruen 2003, 269-273; Goldsworthy 2010, 224-225; Roller 2010, 74; Skinner 2011, 119. Gruen and Roller even suggest that Cleopatra may have suffered personal discomfort or perhaps risk by travelling from Egypt to Rome over winter 45/44. Yet extended periods away from Alexandria might have proved dangerous for Cleopatra (Grant 1972, 81; Peek 2011, 598-607; Roller 2010, 71-72).

¹² Gruen 2003, 269.

¹³ It is merely "educated guesswork", as Eller 2011, 479; Sartre 2018, 152-153.

¹⁴ Suet. *Iul.* 52.1. See Gray-Fow 2014, 45.

the Caesar who is noted in close connection to this woman could be any one of the Romans carrying this cognomen in 44¹⁵, and Ammonius need not be an Egyptian agent of the *regina*¹⁶. In essence, Cicero's letters alone are not enough to identify his *regina* as Cleopatra, and they do not place her securely in Rome in 44 BC.

Since Cleopatra's visit in 46 engendered much scandal in Rome because she and Caesar reportedly flaunted their on-going sexual liaison¹⁷, her visit to Rome in 44 should have attracted some attention, but, despite the fact that the period surrounding Caesar's assassination is very well documented¹⁸, Cleopatra's location is unregistered, and no source mentions overt contact between her and Caesar at this time¹⁹. In fact, contemporary and later sources repeatedly document the strength of Cae-

¹⁵ Julius Caesar, for example, had cousins named Sextus Iulius Caesar, and Mark Antony had an uncle Lucius Iulius Caesar. In his reference *de Caesare illo* (*Att.* 14, 20 (374), 2), Cicero could have been referring to one of these men, if previously discussed by Atticus.

¹⁶ The name is frequently carried by freedmen; see Shackleton Bailey ad *Att.* 15, 15 (393), 2, 3, and not limited to Egyptians. *Ammonii* are recorded on inscriptions from Mauritania (*CIL* 08, 09018 (p. 1960) = *CLE* 00253 = D 04428 = Saturne-02, p. 308 = *AE* 2012, +01795 = *EDCS*-23200026); Numidia (*BCTH*-1946/49-240 = *EDCS*-47200365; *CIL* 08, 02400; *CIL* 08, 17911 = *EDCS*-20100226); Africa (e.g. *ILTun* 00057 = *IL Afr* 00027 = *AE* 1922, 00054 = *AE* 1978, 00886 = *AE* 1980, 00901 = *EDCS*-08201701); and Italy (e.g. Mander 00196 = *EDCS*-57300068). So, the Ammonius noted in 44 (*Cic. Att.* 15, 15 (393), 2, 3) need not be the man whom Cicero (*fam.* 1, 1 (12), 1) knew as the Egyptian king's ambassador in 56, twelve years previously.

¹⁷ In 46, the relationship between Cleopatra and Caesar caused a scandal (*Suet. Iul.* 52, 3; *Dio* 43, 27, 3), and *App. B. Civ.* 2, 102 (cf. *Dio* 51, 22, 3) even reports that Caesar placed a statue of gold in the likeness of Cleopatra in front of the Temple of Venus Genetrix (*Walker* 2008, 41-42; *Roller* 2010, 72; *Gray-Fow* 2014, 45-46). In addition, Cleopatra seems to have won political benefits for herself and her kingdom, as *Dio* 47, 27, 3 notes that Cleopatra and her husband were enrolled by Caesar as friends and allies of the Romans, and it would seem, Egypt gained official independence (*Gray-Fow* 2014, 45).

¹⁸ *Suet. Iul.* 52, 1 reports that Caesar summoned Cleopatra to Rome to prosecute their love-affair (which began in Egypt in late 48 BC), but he stresses that Cleopatra departed from the city while Caesar was still alive. Cleopatra's visit in 46, when Cleopatra and her entourage lodged with Caesar, was notorious (*Dio* 43, 27, 3; *Hieron. Chron.* 1973; see *Sartre* 2018, 146-9). Which of Caesar's residences provided accommodation for the Egyptian party is unclear (the *domus publica* or perhaps Caesar's house in the Subura), but his house must have been relatively capacious, as it was big enough to host the *Bona Dea* festival in 62 (*Cic. Att.* 1, 12 (12), 3; 1, 13 (13), 3; 2, 7 (27), 3), during which Clodius got lost in its depths (*Plut. Caes.* 10, 2-3, «big house»; *Plut. Cic.* 28, 2); it boasted a host of serving staff (*Nic. Dam. Vit. Aug.* 25, 97); and it was stuffed with possessions (*Cic. Phil.* 3, 30).

¹⁹ *Suet. Iul.* 52, 3 relates a story that a tribunician law was to be proposed after Caesar's departure for Parthia, which would allow him to engage in polygamy, and *Dio* 44, 7, 3 notes discussion in 44 of a similar proposal, to allow Caesar to have sexual intercourse with as many women as he wanted because he still had had many mistresses. In his account, Suetonius strongly implies that Cleopatra was not in Rome in 44, and neither writer makes what should have been an obvious connection between discussion of Caesar's libido and a current liaison between Caesar and Cleopatra.

sar's relationship to his wife Calpurnia. In a version of events deriving from the contemporary Livy, Plutarch (*Caes.* 63, 8-9) claims that, on the night before the Ides of March, Caesar was, *as usual* (ὡσπερ εἰώθει), sleeping beside his wife, while another contemporary, Nicolaus of Damascus, adds that Calpurnia tried to keep her husband from going out on the morning of the Ides by clinging closely to him²⁰, suggesting that Calpurnia and Caesar still had a publicly acknowledged, physical relationship. Although Caesar's closeness to his wife might simply indicate that Caesar had "dumped" Cleopatra as his mistress at this point, such a severing of ties is at odds with further comments by Nicolaus who states that Caesar's attraction to Cleopatra in 44 was so powerful that Caesar was alleged to have been about to establish a worldwide kingdom in Egypt with her and Caesarion²¹. At the time of his death, therefore, Caesar was still seemingly fully committed to his liaison with Cleopatra, yet in Rome he was living in conjugal harmony with his wife. This paradoxical situation is explicable if we assume that Cleopatra was not in Rome but awaiting her lover in Egypt.

In the immediate aftermath of Caesar's death too, it was his wife and father-in-law who fulfilled all the usual domestic roles. In her capacity as overseer of their home, Calpurnia is depicted as chief personal mourner for her husband²², as well as arbiter of what were public and private goods in Caesar's possession²³, and Calpurnius Piso, as custodian of Caesar's will, ensured that its terms were implemented in full (*App. B. Civ.* 2, 135-136). In contrast, no source mentions how Cleopatra received the news of the death nor how she responded when the terms of Caesar's will were made known, despite her allegedly being on the brink of enjoying world-wide hegemony with her beloved Caesar. If Cleopatra's reactions did not attract any attention at this time, it was surely because she was not in Rome on the Ides²⁴.

²⁰ *Vit. Aug.* 23, 83. Nicolaus (24, 83) explains that Calpurnia was frightened by bad dreams. See also *V. Max.* 1, 7, 2; *Vell.* 2, 57, 2; *Plut. Caes.* 63, 9-11; 64, 4; *Brut.* 15, 1; *Suet. Iul.* 81, 3; *App. B. Civ.* 2, 115; *Dio* 44, 17, 1.

²¹ *Nic. Dam. Vit. Aug.* 20, 68; *Suet. Iul.* 79, 3. On the origin of the story, see Sartre 2018, 150-151.

²² *Nic. Dam. Vit. Aug.* 26, 97. Suetonius (*Iul.* 84, 4) remarks that some women cast their jewellery onto Caesar's bier, but he does not name them.

²³ *Plut. Ant.* 15, 1-2; *App. B. Civ.* 2, 125.

²⁴ Cleopatra seems not to have been residing in Caesar's urban house with Calpurnia. When Nicolaus describes the grief that gripped the women of the household upon seeing Caesar's mutilated body (*Vit. Aug.* 26, 97), Cleopatra is not named. It seems un-

In conclusion, there is not one specific reference to Cleopatra's presence in Rome either before or after Caesar's assassination, while Calpurnia has been attributed a relatively significant role both on and after the Ides of March. The dearth of evidence is particularly noteworthy, given that Cleopatra's relationship with Caesar was deemed one of the factors that prompted his assassination²⁵, and that Cleopatra might have been expected to react badly to the death of her paramour and intended partner in power. Although lack of evidence for Cleopatra's participation in the events of 44 is admittedly not proof that she was *not* there, omission of her role in any of the events surely raises a doubt about her presence in Rome, which, in turn, makes less certain the identification of Cicero's otherwise unnamed *regina* as Cleopatra²⁶.

In what follows, I will consider first the ways in which Cicero uses regal terminology. This will be followed by a discussion of Cicero's use of nicknames, particularly in the case of Clodia, to whom, in his letters to Atticus, he often attributes sobriquets. I will then examine the interaction between Cicero and Clodia in 45, focussing on Cicero's interest in buying her Transtiberine property. Next, with Clodia in mind, I will review the letters of Cicero that refer to his *regina* and suggest what his comments reveal about her activities, as well as what these letters now suggest about the currently accepted reconstruction of events in Rome in 44.

1. Cicero and regal terminology

Let us first consider how Cicero uses the term *regina* and its cognate *rex* in his correspondence. Apart from the specific references to the *regina* in the six letters to Atticus under examination, Cicero does not use this term elsewhere in his letters. In fact, he has used *regina* sparingly in his other works, but on each occasion of its use he nomi-

likely that she was in Caesar's Transtiberine villa either, as within a short time after the Ides of March, Caesar's *horti* became public property (Plut. *Brut.* 20, 1; 20, 3; Suet. *Iul.* 83; App. *B. Civ.* 2, 143; Dio 44, 35, 3). If Cleopatra had been living in the *horti*, this would surely have been noted.

²⁵ Nic. Dam. *Vit. Aug.* 20, 68; Suet. *Iul.* 79, 3.

²⁶ Cicero's *regina* is not linked in any way to the political dramas of 44. In mid-April Cicero does note her flight, *fuga*, seemingly southwards in Italy, which might suggest panic on her part, but, if this woman was Cleopatra in fear for her safety, why did she not return to Egypt straight after Caesar's assassination (see Carcopino 1969, 315)?

nates a specific individual as the queen in question²⁷. This is his usual practice too for the term *rex*. For example, whenever he refers to Ptolemy “Auletes” in his letters, he nominates him as *rex Alexandrinus*, «the Alexandrian king», *rex Ptolemaeus*, «King Ptolemaeus», or he links the term *rex* with a key part of the Egyptian realm, even though Ptolemy (as a king) was extremely well-known to Atticus and to his other correspondents²⁸. On the other hand, Cicero also uses the term *rex* in his letters in another way. In 59 BC, for example, he refers to both Caesar and Pompey as *reges*, «kings»²⁹, and, at the start of the civil war in 49, he predicts that the victor will be the equivalent of a *rex*³⁰. Cicero continues to nominate Caesar in this way after the defeat of Pompey³¹, and he repeats this characterisation even after Caesar’s assassination, which serves to condemn Caesar’s followers as *reges* for pursuing the same overweening power³².

From his usage of *rex*, we can see that Cicero applies the word in two quite different ways, either to indicate a ruling king, when he also in-

²⁷ He associates *regina* with the Lydian queen who had an affair with Gyges (*off.* 3, 38), with the goddess Juno three times (*Ver.* 2, 5, 184; *Dom.* 144; *Scaur.* 47), and, in a fragment from a speech concerning the Alexandrian King attributed to 65 BC, with his regnal consort (*Schol. Bob.* 9, 16).

²⁸ *Cic. Att.* 2, 16 (36), 2; cf. 4, 10 (84), 1; *fam.* 1, 5b (16), 1-2; 1, 7 (18), 4; 8, 4 (81), 5; *ad Q. fr.* 2, 2 (6), 3. In letters of 56 (*fam.* 1, 1 (12), 1-4; 1, 2 (13), 1-3), to Lentulus Spinther, Cicero does refer to Ptolemy simply as *rex*, but in the first letter in the series he has identified the king by mentioning Ptolemy’s legate, Hammonius. Spinther was already intimately involved with the issue (restoration of Ptolemy to his throne, *fam.* 1, 1 (12), 1-3), and Cicero is keeping him abreast of discussions by sending him copies of senatorial proposals (1, 2 (13), 4), which would have included the full titulature of the king. In other letters, Cicero links the king to Alexandria (*fam.* 1, 4 (14), 1-2; 1, 5a (15), 1-3; 1, 5b (16), 1-2). Other foreign kings are identified in the same way. For example, Artavastes is called *rex Armenius* (*fam.* 15, 2 (105), 2); *Armenius Artavasdes* (*Att.* 5, 20 (113), 2). For others, see *fam.* 15, 2 (105), 4-7; 15, 4 (110), 3, 5, 6; etc.

²⁹ *Cic. ad Q. fr.* 1, 2 (2), 16; *Att.* 2, 8 (28), 1; cf. 2, 12 (30), 1; 2, 13 (33), 2; 7, 7 (130), 5.

³⁰ *Cic. Att.* 10, 7 (198), 1; cf. 8, 11 (161), 2; 9, 7 (174), 3; see also *Att.* 7, 5 (128), 4; 7, 20 (144), 2; 8, 2 (152), 4; 10, 1 (190), 3; 10, 4 (195), 3; 10, 8 (199), 6; 10, 12a (204), 2.

³¹ *Cic. Att.* 11, 6 (217), 5; 13, 37 (346), 1; from 49 see also *Att.* 7, 11 (134), 1. The title for Caesar may also have been used in public (*Cic. Phil.* 2, 85), and Caesar is said to have joked that he was not *Rex* (Plut. *Caes.* 60, 3; Suet. *Iul.* 79, 2; App. *B. Civ.* 2, 108; cf. Nic. Dam. *Vit. Aug.* 20, 70; 21, 73; Plut. *Caes.* 61, 8; App. *B. Civ.* 2, 107-114; Dio 43, 20, 5). Cicero makes no direct link between Caesar as *rex* and his unnamed *regina* (cf. *Cic. Att.* 14, 21 (375), 3).

³² *Cic. Att.* 14, 11 (365), 1; also *Att.* 14, 21 (375), 3; *fam.* 11, 27 (348), 8. *Cic. Att.* 14, 9 (363), 2 also calls Caesar *tyrannus*, a sobriquet repeated many times and associated too with his successors: *fam.* 12, 1 (327), 2; cf. 12, 22 (347), 2; 12, 12 (387), 2; *Att.* 14, 5 (359), 2; 14, 6 (360), 2; etc. Cicero posthumously called Caesar «king» publicly (e.g. *Phil.* 2, 29).

cludes the name of the king or other details to make his identity clear or he exploits the title *rex* as a term of invective³³.

Given that Cicero does not add any markers to identify the *regina* mentioned in his letters to Atticus, this suggests that his *regina* was not in fact a queen in the sense of a ruler but rather the title was meant to be understood as a sobriquet.

2. Cicero and Clodia

As with the term *rex* to designate Caesar, Cicero also nominates characters of interest by sobriquets when corresponding with Atticus, and these serve to show off his literary knowledge or his sense of irony³⁴. Although it is usually powerful men who attract satirical pseudonyms (e.g. *Att.* 2, 9 (29), 1), women do not escape unscathed from Cicero's pen³⁵.

In 59, Cicero several times uses the Greek term βῶπις, «ox-eyes»³⁶, as a sobriquet for Clodia Metelli, a woman whom Cicero himself knew well (e.g. *fam.* 5, 2 (2), 6), and with whom Atticus was on particularly intimate terms³⁷. Why Cicero has chosen to use this particular epithet is uncertain, but βῶπις is a term associated most often with Hera (Juno), queen of heaven³⁸. So when Cicero designates Clodia with this epithet of Juno (whom he himself only ever calls by her title *regina*)³⁹, he would

³³ Cicero repeatedly calls his *inimicus* Clodius by the title *gladiator* (*Sull.* 18; *har. resp.* 2, 15), but no one has assumed that Clodius was in fact a gladiator. Cicero uses similar terms to denote his enemy Antony (Carcopino 1969, 265).

³⁴ Carcopino 1969, 263-267; Gougenheim 1953, 131-138; Rochette 2002, 41-45.

³⁵ *Cic. Att.* 1, 12 (12), 1; 1, 13 (13), 1 seems to refer to an unidentified woman by the name *Teucris*, alluding perhaps to some connection with Trojan origins, but many identify this nickname with Cicero's fellow-consul of 63 Antonius Hybrida (Buongiorno 2010, 29-37).

³⁶ *Cic. Att.* 2, 9 (29), 1 and Shackleton Bailey ad loc. Also *Cic. Att.* 2, 12 (30), 2; 2, 14 (34), 1; 2, 22 (42), 5; 2, 23 (43), 3.

³⁷ On the relationship between Clodia and Atticus, see Skinner 2011, 65-66, 147.

³⁸ Hera attracts the epithet βῶπις many times in the works of Homer (Deroux 1973, 410), but it is also applied to Clytaemnestra (Hesiod *frag.* 23a, 9), queen of Mycenae, who murdered her husband Agamemnon. Cicero accused Clodia of murdering her husband (*Cael.* 59-60), and he called her by the nickname *Quadrantaria* (*Att.* 2, 9 (29), 1), a shortening of *Quadrantaria Clytaemnestra*, a term allegedly coined for her by Caelius in a speech of 56 BC (Quint. 8, 6, 53). Cicero also publicly dubbed Clodia *Palatina Medea* (*Cael.* 18), who was another well-known queen of dubious repute. On Clodia's epithet βῶπις to indicate her eyes, see Griffiths 1996, 381-383; also Rochette 2002, 44; Skinner 2011, 65-66.

³⁹ The poems of Catullus also provide indirect evidence for a link between Clodia and the terms *regina*, *diva* and Juno. Catullus refers three times to a *regina*, ostensibly

seem to be alluding to Clodia's regal pretensions⁴⁰. Based on his use of the pseudonym βῶπις during the politically charged times of 59⁴¹, Cicero may well have been prompted to call Clodia by Juno's title *regina* fifteen years later, in the similarly difficult period that followed Caesar's death, when a modicum of discretion was sometimes required⁴². It is possible, therefore, that, to render Clodia's identity opaque to outsiders, in his letters to Atticus Cicero has designated her at one time as βῶπις and later as *regina*⁴³.

3. Cicero and Clodia's Transtiberine villa (horti trans Tiberim)

If we assume that Cicero's *regina* is Clodia, let us now review the comments Cicero made about her, in particular concerning her Transtiberine estate during 45 BC, as these will form the backdrop to his letters to Atticus of 44.

to Berenice (66, 19; 66, 39; 66, 89), but he suggests that Berenice is in fact his mistress (Clodia). Catullus (68a, 70) also calls his love *candida diva*, «shining goddess», and elsewhere he indirectly compares his mistress to Juno (68, 141 (or 68b, 101); cf. 70, 1-2; 72, 2). Catullus, therefore, compares Clodia to a queen, a goddess and even Juno. For discussion of the correspondence between Catullus' Lesbia and Clodia, see Deroux 1973, 410-413; Hejduk 2008, 4-9.

⁴⁰ During 60, when Clodia's husband Metellus was a consul, Cicero reported to Atticus that he hated Clodia, *illam [...] consularem* (*Att.* 2, 1 (21), 5), abhorring her parading of her status as wife of the consul. This perhaps led Cicero to think of Clodia in terms of a powerful regal consort, and thus as Queen Hera or Clytaemnestra. The connection between consular power and royalty is redolent of accusations made repeatedly against Cicero himself in 62 (Cic. *Sull.* 21-22; 25-26; 29); by Clodius in 61 (Cic. *Att.* 1, 16 (16), 10), and by others, even his nephew Quintus (Cic. *Att.* 13, 37 (364), 2). Fulvia, Antony's wife, is also associated with excessive power. On 22 April 44, Cicero says that Fulvia restored Deiotarus to his kingdom (*Att.* 14, 12 (366), 1; cf. *Phil.* 5, 11), and Orosius (*pag.* 6, 18, 17) agrees that she wielded regal power in 43/42. In one letter, in fact, Cicero (*Att.* 15, 4 (381), 4) refers first to his *regina* and then to Antony, whom he occasionally associates with kingship (*Att.* 14, 21 (375), 3; *Phil.* 2, 87; 3, 9; *ad Brut.* 1, 16 (25), 3), but the woman referred to as *regina* does not appear to be Fulvia. See letter 4 (Cic. *Att.* 15, 4 (381), 4) discussed below.

⁴¹ Deroux 1973, 409; Griffiths 1996, 381; Rochette 2002, 41.

⁴² Cicero remarks on the nosiness of letter-carriers (*Att.* 1, 13 (13), 1; cf. *Att.* 1, 16 (16), 16), and he uses nicknames or other devices when he wants to criticise without naming a person (*Att.* 1, 13 (13), 2, 4-5). See White 2010, 12-14.

⁴³ Another possibility is that the *regina* may have been short-hand for the wife of Marcus Rex, cos 68, whom Cicero sometimes simply calls *Rex* (*Att.* 1, 16 (16), 10; *fam.* 13, 52 (312)). His wife was Clodia Tertia, one of the three sisters of Clodius, the infamous tribune of 58, but whether she was still alive in 44 is uncertain. On the Clodiae, see Hillard 1973, 505-514.

Cicero's daughter Tullia died at the beginning of February 45 at Cicero's house in Tusculum (*Att.* 12, 46 (287), 1), and almost immediately Cicero made plans to purchase a property where he could live in semi-retirement, but he soon decided that the property should also accommodate a *fanum*, «shrine», in memory of his daughter. By mid-March, Cicero was focussing on properties close to Rome with river frontage (*horti*), specifically Transtiberine, since he wanted a location for the *fanum* that would catch the eye of a multitude of passers-by⁴⁴. On 14 March for the first time, he urged that Tullia's *fanum* be in situ by the end of the summer of 45⁴⁵, indicating his desire and urgency. To locate suitable properties, Cicero enlisted the aid of agents, including Atticus who would also see to the financial details involved in the transaction⁴⁶. Nevertheless, although he canvassed many properties, by early May 45 Cicero had still not made the requisite purchase.

Just before 7 May, however, Atticus seems to have alerted Cicero to Clodia's Transtiberine *horti* as an option, a villa that Cicero knew well⁴⁷. Although he agreed that her property was suitable⁴⁸, he added that he did not think that her estate was for sale⁴⁹. By 10 May, however, Atticus must have written again to Cicero about this property, since Cicero asked about Clodia's current whereabouts and movements (*Att.* 12, 42 (282), 1-2). By the following day, Cicero had virtually convinced himself that Clodia's property was for sale, and he placed it high on his list of

⁴⁴ On his need for a place of refuge (*Att.* 12, 13 (250), 2; 12, 14 (251), 3; 12, 15 (252)); the estate to include a shrine (*Att.* 12, 18 (254), 1; 12, 29 (268), 2; 12, 37 (276), 2); on *horti* (12, 19 (257), 1; 12, 12 (259), 1; 12, 21 (260), 2); *horti* on the bank of the river (12, 33 (269), 1); Transtiberine *horti* (12, 23 (262), 3); *horti* in the public eye (12, 23 (262), 3; 12, 28 (267), 1; 12, 37 (276), 2; cf. 12, 12 (259), 1; 13, 22 (329), 4); and a property with a house, not just a plot of land (12, 38a (279), 2). Cicero did not exclude his own property at Tusculum from consideration for a shrine (12, 37 (276), 2; 12, 41 (283), 3; 12, 43 (284), 3; 12, 44 (285), 2; 13, 26 (286), 1), since it had special resonance for him, as the location of Tullia's death (e.g. *Att.* 12, 46 (287), 1; Treggiari 2007, 135). On every aspect of the shrine and house, see Shackleton Bailey 1966, 404-413; Englert 2017, 41-66; see further <http://www.tulliana.eu/ephemerides/anni/45/045a06.htm>.

⁴⁵ *Cic. Att.* 12, 19 (257), 1; 12, 41 (283), 4; 12, 43 (284), 4; 13, 1 (296), 2.

⁴⁶ In the purchase of this property, *Att.* 13, 2 (297), 2; Atticus in charge of Cicero's finances in 45 (*Att.* 12, 13 (250), 2; 12, 18 (254), 3; 12, 17 (255); 12, 18a (256) etc.).

⁴⁷ On Clodia's villa, see *Cic. Cael.* 36; 38; 49; Skinner 2011, 116-117.

⁴⁸ Skinner 2011, 149 suggests that Cicero appears to be so familiar with Clodia's *horti* that he must have visited this residence a few times.

⁴⁹ *Att.* 12, 38a (279), 2. On 9 May Cicero also mentions that Atticus has written to him about Lentulus in the context of his buying *horti*, but Cicero dismisses Lentulus' role (*Att.* 12, 40 (281), 4). It is possible that Lentulus' mother-in-law was Clodia, as Shackleton Bailey argues (see also *Att.* 12, 52 (294), 2, as Clodia and Lentulus are juxtaposed in the context of Lentulus' divorce). On the identification of this Clodia as Clodia Metelli, see Hejduk 2008, 59; Skinner 2011, 116-117.

desirable residences⁵⁰. On 16 May, he noted that Clodia was still not yet in Rome, and he asked Atticus to estimate the cost of her property (*Att.* 12, 47 (288), 2). On 21 May he repeated this request, asking about Clodia and whether or not her *horti* were actually on the market (12, 52 (294), 2).

On 23 May Cicero (*Att.* 13, 1 (296), 2) confirmed that his purchase of *horti* and presumably the completion of the shrine were still very important to him, and he added that this would help allay his deep grief for Tullia; in fact, he claimed that he had his heart set on it⁵¹. A few days later, on 27 May, Cicero indicated that, if negotiations about other properties fell through, he might start direct discussions with Clodia (*Att.* 13, 29 (300), 2). Clearly, he and Atticus were continuing to hypothesise about the availability of Clodia's property, but no formal approach had been made⁵². On 28 May, Cicero (*Att.* 13, 31 (302), 4) discussed the *horti* of Scapula, and he subsequently focussed all his attention on buying the property, which was due to be auctioned on 13 July (*Att.* 13, 33a (330), 1). On 28 June, he reiterated his desire for *horti* (*Att.* 13, 18 (325), 1), presumably those of Scapula. In early July, however, Cicero was warned by a reliable source against buying Scapula's *horti* because of a law proposed by Caesar to change the course of the Tiber⁵³, which would adversely affect Scapula's estate.

Although it has been suggested that Cicero lost interest in the whole project at this point, either because Caesar's law served to dissuade him from purchasing any Transtiberine villa⁵⁴, or for philosophical and metaphysical reasons⁵⁵, Cicero himself gives absolutely no sign that he wanted to abandon the project that had consumed him for the previous six months⁵⁶: in letters to Atticus, Cicero had referred about thirty times to

⁵⁰ *Att.* 12, 41 (283), 3; 12, 43 (284), 3; 12, 44 (285), 2; 13, 26 (286), 1; 12, 47 (288), 1.

⁵¹ Treggiari 2007, 136; 139.

⁵² In *Att.* 13, 29 (300), 2, Cicero muses that Clodia's property is likely to be relatively cheap and that, since he will soon be repaid Tullia's dowry, he may be able to offer cash for her estate (Hejduk 2008, 60).

⁵³ *Cic. Att.* 13, 33a (330), 1. Caesar was still in Spain at this time (*Att.* 13, 20 (328), 1).

⁵⁴ Shackleton Bailey 1966, 411. Since Cicero was warned about only Scapula's estate, other properties were perhaps not affected. In any case, why drop the whole project? See Englert 2017, 51-52.

⁵⁵ Martelli 2016, 421-437; Englert 2017, 52-59.

⁵⁶ Before August Cicero inherited an estate from Cluvius on the Lucrine Lake (*Att.* 13, 46 (338), 3; 14, 16 (370), 1-2), but this property was near Puteoli and Pompeii, and Cicero had made it clear to Atticus that he wanted a suburban residence closer to Rome than Arpinum (*Att.* 13, 18 (325); cf. 13, 22 (329), 4). On philosophical reasons for not building a shrine to Tullia, see Martelli 2016, 435-437; Englert 2017, 535-539.

his desire to purchase *horti*⁵⁷; and in May Cicero had demanded that Atticus help him obtain his wish, since he vowed that he would never be free of guilt, if he did not have the shrine to Tullia built by the end of that summer⁵⁸. There is evidence, too, that Cicero was still in the market for property in 44. On 19 April 44, for example, Atticus asked Cicero whether he preferred a location in the country or by the sea⁵⁹, and he reported rumours about the sale of Cicero's estate at Cumae (*Att.* 14, 13 (367), 1). Cicero responded to Atticus on 26 April by saying that the stories about the sale were unfounded, but that he would be willing to exchange the Cuman estate for something more suitable (*Att.* 14, 13 (367), 5). In addition, in May 44, Cicero reports that he had a fund set aside to build the *fanum* for Tullia (*Att.* 15, 15 (393), 4). Although he had failed to obtain Scapula's *horti*, his love of Tullia kept him in pursuit of his goals well into 44⁶⁰.

In one of his letters about the *regina*, Cicero claims that this woman made promises (*promissa*), which he suggests that she broke, and he goes on to report that he had a face-to-face meeting with her at her Transiberine villa (*Att.* 15, 15 (393), 2-3). These references strongly hint that Cicero attempted to negotiate directly with Clodia for her property, as he previously told Atticus that he might⁶¹, but that the negotiations were unsuccessful. From this same letter, it is patent that Atticus knew of the negotiations and their failure, as Cicero takes pains to explain why these had failed and to convince Atticus that Clodia was at fault. Since Cicero's correspondence with Atticus from the second half of 45 does not refer to this event, any negotiations must have occurred in the period from January to early April 44⁶², when Cicero was in Rome and before he left again

⁵⁷ For his notice of Transiberine properties (*Att.* 12, 19 (257), 1; 12, 23 (262), 3), and proximity to Rome (*Att.* 12, 29 (268), 2; 12, 37a (276), 2; 12, 44 (285), 2).

⁵⁸ *Att.* 12, 42 (282), 2; 12, 41 (283), 2, 4. On his insistence on the shrine, see *Att.* 12, 18 (254), 1; 12, 19 (257), 1; 12, 20 (258), 2; 12, 35 (274), 1; 12, 36 (275), 1, 2; 12, 37 (276), 2; 12, 37a (277), 1; 15, 15 (393), 3; also 12, 43 (284), 3.

⁵⁹ In a letter of 17 April, Cicero says that he is delighted with the Cluvian property (*Att.* 14, 9 (363), 1), which suggests that he is responding to Atticus' puzzlement at his renewed interest in buying property when he has just acquired the estate at Puteoli.

⁶⁰ Cicero's powerful feelings of loss of Tullia continued for much time. See Englert (2017) 59-63.

⁶¹ *Cic. Att.* 13, 29 (300), 2; on his deep interest in her property, see *Cic. Att.* 12, 52 (294), 2). In June 45, Cicero (*Att.* 13, 10 (318), 3) was in contact with Lentulus Spinther, Clodia's presumed ex-son-in-law, and so he perhaps kept tabs on her property.

⁶² Cicero was certainly in Rome on 15 March 44 (*Att.* 14, 10 (364), 1), and so had plenty of time to meet and discuss matters with Clodia. His letters to Atticus generally reveal that he was away from Rome at the times of their penning.

on 8 April 44⁶³. What may have prompted Cicero to put a proposal to Clodia was that Caesar had done nothing about changing the course of the Tiber and his death on 15 March absolutely quashed the idea. Whatever Cicero's motivation, he and Clodia perhaps engaged in preliminary discussions through Clodia's agent Ammonius, after which they met in person to discuss the sale at the Transtiberine villa, but the sale collapsed. At this point, Cicero seems to have decided against buying any Transtiberine villa and to look farther afield for a suitable property.

4. Cicero and references to Clodia as *regina*

Since it appears that the sale of Clodia's Transtiberine property collapsed in acrimony, let us examine the content of the six letters that refer to Clodia as *regina*, to which I have appended translations.

1. In the letter to Atticus written at Sinuessa on 16 April 44, Cicero reports as follows:

Reginae fuga mihi non molesta est. Clodia quid egerit scribas ad me velim (*Att.* 14, 8 (362), 1).

The queen's escape does not worry me. I should like you to write to me what Clodia has done.

In this letter, Cicero's connection between the "queen" and Clodia has puzzled most commentators⁶⁴, but, if this was the first time that Cicero had used the nickname *regina*, he perhaps named Clodia to make the identity of the pseudonym clear⁶⁵.

⁶³ Cicero's presence was probably required (e.g. *Att.* 12, 21 (260), 4; 13, 12 (320), 4).

⁶⁴ Skinner 2011, 118-120 uses this reference to link Cleopatra to Clodia, suggesting that the queen stayed with Clodia in her *horti* in 44, explaining this and the later reference to *horti*.

⁶⁵ In a similar fashion, Cicero first calls Hirtius by name and then refers to him by his Greek nickname (*Att.* 14, 22 (375), 4). More often he reveals beforehand the identity of those to whom he will soon attach nicknames. Having discussed the role of *Gnaeus noster* [Pompeius] in the turmoil of 59, he then calls him by the nickname *Sampsiceramus* (*Att.* 2, 16 (36), 2), and in a reported case of adultery, he names the adulterer as Memmius, but then dubs him *Paris*, as also the cuckolded Luculli are called in turn *Menelaus* and *Agamemnon* (*Att.* 1, 18 (18), 3).

One possible interpretation of Cicero's comments is that Atticus had just informed Cicero of Clodia's hurried departure from Rome and asked his feelings on the matter⁶⁶. Atticus would have had knowledge of Clodia's comings and goings if he was in close contact with her, but his enquiry about Cicero's state of mind suggests that Atticus' loyalties lay with Cicero. Although Cicero claims that he is unperturbed by the "queen's" *fuga*, there is a note of urgency in his request for information about Clodia, which is heightened by the fact that he does not offer to put off discussion about her until he and Atticus next meet, as he does so often on other occasions⁶⁷. Cicero appears to be eager to hear what action Clodia has taken, suggesting that he felt threatened by her in some way⁶⁸. In the context of an on-going dispute about a contract, however, Atticus' vigilance and Cicero's anxiety are to be expected.

2. On 11 May, at Puteoli Cicero remarks:

De regina velim atque etiam de Caesare illo (*Att.* 14, 20 (374), 2)⁶⁹.

*I should like it to be true about the queen and about the so-called Caesar too*⁷⁰.

The phrase *de Caesare illo* has been translated by Shackleton Bailey as «about that Caesar of hers»⁷¹, but this translation has been influenced by

⁶⁶ Atticus was in Rome in the first half of April (*Att.* 14, 10 (364), 4), and he seems to have departed from the city on 11 May (*Att.* 14, 20 (374), 1). Cicero remarks to Atticus in a letter of 10 April that Rome is the centre of all news (*Att.* 14, 4 (358), 1-2), although in mid-April he does offer to send gossip to Atticus about what people at Baiae were up to (*Att.* 14, 8 (362), 1).

⁶⁷ Cicero often defers topics, saying that he will discuss them with Atticus when they meet, using terms like *coram agemus* or even just *coram* (e.g. *Att.* 13, 19 (326), 5; 13, 21a (327), 4; 13, 22 (329), 1).

⁶⁸ Shackleton Bailey on Cic. *Att.* 14, 8 (362), 1 suggests that Cicero's interest in Clodia is connected to her *horti*.

⁶⁹ On a similarly truncated form using *velim*, see *Att.* 15, 29 (408), 1, *De Planco et Decimo sane velim*; on the full form, see *Att.* 15, 4 (381), 4. It is possible that Cicero intended another meaning by his use of *velim*, as in «I should like **you to write to me** about the queen (and also about that Caesar)», as we see in the previous letter, *regina quid egerit scribas ad me velim*. On this style, see *Att.* 3, 10 (55), 3; 5, 2 (95), 3.

⁷⁰ «So-called» is a translation of *ille* offered by the *OLD*, as seen in *fam.* 15, 20 (208), 3, *Amore illo tuo singulari*.

⁷¹ Shackleton Bailey on Cic. *Att.* 14, 20 (374), 2. For the translation «about that Caesar of hers», surely *de eius Caesare* or even *de illius Caesare*, rather than *de Caesare illo*, would make possession by the *regina* a more natural phrase? On this use for *eius*, see, for example, Cic. *Att.* 5, 10 (103), 1, *de eius adventu*; *Att.* 10, 11 (202), 3, *de eius filio*; and for *illius*, see *Att.* 1, 5 (1), 4, *de illius querimoniis*; Cic. *Att.* 15, 4 (381), 1, *de illius nervis*.

the assumption that the *regina* was Cleopatra and «her Caesar» was Caesarion and should be now reconsidered, since according to the thesis of this paper the *regina* was almost certainly Clodia. In such a context, the phrase *de Caesare illo* makes little sense as «about that Caesar of hers», since Clodia did not have a «Caesar», but it is more likely to be a reference to a Caesar known to both Atticus and Cicero from a previous discussion, whom Cicero now designates «that fellow», «the so-called» or «the infamous». In addition, we should note that Cicero has inserted the conjunctival phrase, *atque etiam*, after the verb *velim*, not before, indicating that he has in fact separated the *regina* from *Caesare illo*⁷², and he has emphasised the distinction further by repeating the preposition *de* before both *regina* and *Caesare illo*⁷³. Cicero suggests that he is making the same wish, but about two (unrelated) people. The *regina* and *Caesar ille*, therefore, must have been two separate persons of interest not necessarily related by blood or even context⁷⁴.

Although Cicero's Caesar may not have been directly connected to the *regina*, we still need to consider the possibility that *Caesar ille* was the son of Cleopatra (and Caesar). Against this identification, however, we should note that Cleopatra's son was not generally called «Caesar», but almost always «Caesarion»⁷⁵; and that Caesar himself expressly de-

⁷² In letters to Atticus, Cicero sometimes uses *atque etiam* to connect two items directly, as in «and even» (1, 18 (18), 2, *Tamen vulnus etiam atque etiam ipsa medicina efficit*; 2, 1 (21), 8, *An libertinis atque etiam servis serviamus?*, but here the verb follows. When it precedes *atque etiam*, we understand «and also»: 10, 9a (200A), 1, *Nihil nisi atrox et saevum cogitat atque etiam loquitur*; 15, 26 (404), 5, *Novi si quid erit atque etiam si quid prospicies quod futurum putes, scribas as me quam saepissime velim*.

⁷³ For the use of a repeated *de* with *atque etiam*, see *Att.* 1, 15 (15), 2, *Tu me velim certiore facias quid de meis mandatis egeris, atque etiam quid de tuo negotio*, «I should like you to tell me what you have done about my commission and also about your own business». These are clearly two separate issues for discussion.

⁷⁴ The combination of *regina* and Caesar (or cognates) is not found elsewhere.

⁷⁵ He was called *Caesarion* by contemporaries: the Alexandrians (*Plut. Caes.* 49, 10); by Cleopatra (*Dio* 47, 31, 5) and Antony (*Dio* 50, 1, 5); and perhaps also by Nicolaus of Damascus (*Vit. Aug.* 20, 68). See Gray-Fow 2014, 38. There is official contemporary evidence for the title *Caesarion* from Egypt (*HGV PSI* 5, 549 perhaps is dated to 41 or 40 BC; but there is dispute about the date and identity of the Caesar: see Grant 1972, 83-84); Tyldesley 2011, 101-102; Sartre 2018, 93-95. Later ancient writers name him *Caesarion*: *Plut. Ant.* 54; 6, 81, 4; *Suet. Aug.* 17, 5; *Dio* 41, 37, 5; 49, 41, 1; 51, 6, 1. Although *Suet. Caes.* 52, 1 claims that in 46 Caesar allowed Cleopatra's son to be called after his own name, suggesting that he was called *Caesar*, elsewhere in his works he calls him *Caesarion* (*Aug.* 17, 2). In contrast, the reference to *Caesar ille* has been interpreted as notice of a miscarriage (Grant 1972, 95-96; Roller 2010, 69-65; Sartre 2018, 97), but this seems unlikely, given that Cicero identifies this child by name and as male, and he is elsewhere more specific about a miscarriage (cf. *Att.* 14, 20 (374), 2). Sartre 2018, 97 also suggests alternatively that

nied paternity of this boy through his will written in 45⁷⁶, which demonstrated that Caesar himself deemed Caesarion illegitimate in Roman terms and so ineligible to inherit his name⁷⁷. Given these objections, it would seem that *Caesar ille* was not Caesarion.

There is, however, another strong contender for the person being referred to as *Caesar*, namely Gaius Octavius. Having returned to Italy after the death of his great-uncle, Octavius laid claim to the name *Caesar*, along with Caesar's estate, and he formalised his standing in Rome on 6 May, just a few days before Cicero's letter of 11 May⁷⁸. Octavius was already an object of interest to Cicero, since in early April Cicero began discussing with Atticus what threat Octavius' arrival in Rome might pose to the tyrannicides⁷⁹, and, in a letter of 19 April Cicero specifically referred to Octavius' intention to accept Caesar's inheritance (*Att.* 14, 10 (364), 3). On 22 April too, Cicero reported that Octavius was being called *Caesar*, although he himself refused to use that name even to his face, despite Octavius' family and friends generally calling him *Caesar*⁸⁰. In letters of April, Cicero links Octavius both to Caesar's inheritance and to the name *Caesar*, and on this basis, when Cicero makes mention of *Caesar ille*, «that fellow Caesar», on 11 May, it should be considered that he is making a mocking reference to Octavius' adoption of Caesar's name.

Against this identification, we should note that further in this same letter Cicero nominates the young man as *Octavius*. How do we explain

Cleopatra had a stillborn child, but this would rule out Caesarion. In any case, if the woman is Clodia, was Caesar supposed to have been her lover too?

⁷⁶ Nicolaus claims that Caesar denied Caesarion's paternity in his will (*Vit. Aug.* 20, 68; cf. *Suet. Caes.* 52, 1-3). *Suet. Iul.* 52, 2 claims that Antony declared to the senate that Caesar had acknowledged paternity of Caesarion, but Antony's declaration was almost certainly made much later. In 32 Octavian made public the contents of Antony's will in which Antony had asserted Caesar's paternity of Caesarion (*Dio* 50, 3, 5), suggesting that Caesarion's paternity became an issue only at that time. What Antony had hoped to get from a testamentary declaration is unclear, since this would serve only to emphasise that Caesarion was illegitimate, but perhaps he wanted to set the record straight.

⁷⁷ E.g. Grant 1972, 87-88; 95; Goldsworthy 2010, 220; Tyldesley 2011, 102; Sartre 2018, 149-150.

⁷⁸ Osgood 2006, 31 argues that Octavian was in Rome for a short time around 11 April, which other letters by Cicero may confirm (*Att.* 14, 5 (359), 3; 14, 6 (360), 1), but, if so, he was not there for long. In fact, Cicero hints that Octavius would be in Rome only on 22 April (*Att.* 14, 12 (366), 2). On Octavius' intentions and opposition from Antony, see *Att.* 14, 10 (364), 3; on Octavius' acceptance of the inheritance, see *Att.* 14, 21 (375), 2; *Nic. Dam. Vit. Aug.* 18, 53-5 (Octavius is warned against taking the name by his step-father Philippus but took it before doing rounds of colonies); Lindsay 2009, 182-189; Levick 2010, 25.

⁷⁹ *Cic. Att.* 14, 5 (359), 2-3; 14, 6 (360), 1; 14, 10 (364), 3; 14, 11 (365), 2; 14, 12 (366), 2; 14, 20 (374), 5; 14, 21 (375), 4; 15, 2 (379), 3.

⁸⁰ *Att.* 14, 12 (366), 2. See Levick 2010, 26.

that Cicero has used two names for the same person? At the start of this letter, Cicero observes that he has received three letters from Atticus (*Att.* 14, 20 (374), 1), one sent from Rome on 7 May, and another two, dated 7 and 9 May, sent from Lanuvium (30 km south-east of Rome). It is in response to Atticus' first letter that Cicero denotes Octavius as *Caesar ille*. We know from a letter of 22 April that Cicero refused to name Octavius *Caesar* at this time, and so he may have adopted the form *Caesar ille* because he disparaged or even disputed Octavius' official assumption of the name *Caesar*, and he knew that Atticus felt the same way about the young man's new name. When, however, Cicero calls the young man *Octavius*⁸¹, he does so in response to Atticus' third letter sent on 9 May. This name is a reversion to Cicero's usual practice, which he followed until June⁸². As such, the name *Caesar* was not meant to be taken seriously, but as a joking reference to Octavius.

Let us return to Clodia. By inference, Atticus has responded to the question that Cicero asked on 16 April concerning what she had done. As Atticus was in regular contact with Clodia and her friends, he no doubt obtained first-hand intelligence about her activities while he was in the city, before he departed for Lanuvium. If so, then Clodia was in Rome in the early part of May 44, having returned from her hurried exit (*fuga*) from the city. Disappointingly, we have no idea of the nature of Atticus' information, but Cicero's response to this suggests that one item of gossip about her was baseless (*Att.* 15, 1 (377), 5), although he indicates that he wished this *rumor* were true⁸³. On this basis, perhaps Atticus had told

⁸¹ *Att.* 14, 20 (374), 5; also 14, 21 (375), 4. In the third letter Atticus has told Cicero that Octavius was intending to speak at a public meeting. On 18 May Cicero has received Atticus' report about this (*Att.* 15, 2 (379), 3). In general, Cicero was eager to hear news about Octavius and any comments made about Caesar's death, especially as these had powerful ramifications for the safety and security of Brutus and Cassius (e.g. *Att.* 14, 12 (366), 2).

⁸² In correspondence with Atticus, by 10 June, Cicero was calling the young man *Octavianus* (*Att.* 15, 12 (390), 2), making it clear that in theory he accepted the adoption (*Att.* 15, 12 (379), 2; 16, 8 (418), 1; 16, 9 (419); 16, 11 (420), 6; 16, 14 (425), 1. By October 44, Cicero regularly calls Octavianus *Caesar* in letters to those who are not his intimates (*fam.* 12, 23 (347), 2; cf. *fam.* 11, 28 (349), 6); in December 44 and January 43 (*fam.* 11, 7 (354), 2; 11, 8 (360), 2); in February (*fam.* 10, 28 (364), 3); in March (*ad Brut.* 2, 5 (5), 2). In correspondence with Atticus, Cicero calls him *Octavianus* from June until November 44 (15, 12 (379), 2; 16, 8 (418), 1; 16, 9 (419); 16, 11 (420), 6; 16, 14 (425), 1). With Tiro too, he refused to name the youth *Caesar* until November (*fam.* 16, 24 (350), 2).

⁸³ Although rumours abounded in Rome, on 26 April 44, Cicero wrote to Atticus to deny that he intended selling his estate at Cumae (*Att.* 14, 13 (367), 5). It is possible that there was also a rumour that Clodia was about to sell her *horti*. Since Cicero was in dispute about this property, he perhaps wanted such a rumour to be true.

him that Clodia had lost interest in pursuing a contract to sell the property to Cicero.

What Cicero wished to be true about Octavius is also not specified, but Cicero suggests indirectly that it was related to his acceptance of Caesar's name⁸⁴. Perhaps Atticus reported that Octavius' status as *Caesar* would be detrimental to Antony and, by default, helpful to the tyrannicides⁸⁵, whom both Cicero and Atticus supported. Once Cicero had read Atticus' third letter dated 9 May, however, which he received a day after the first (*Att.* 14, 20 (374), 5), he would have realised that the expectation of any enmity between Octavius and Antony was unlikely after Atticus informed him that the praetor Lucius Antonius appeared intent on cooperation with Octavius to the extent, at least, of allowing him to make a speech at a public meeting. Cicero must have dismissed Octavius as no threat to either of the two warring factions⁸⁶.

In this letter, therefore, Cicero reveals that Atticus has kept him abreast of what Clodia and Octavius were doing, both of whom were in Rome in early May, Clodia, for reasons unknown, and Octavius, to take up Caesar's name and inheritance. Cicero's reference to Clodia suggests that he and Atticus perhaps discussed her *horti*, but, as Cicero does not press Atticus for further details, he would seem to be less anxious about her activities than he was a month earlier. In the case of Octavius too, Cicero was also seemingly unworried about him, since he seems to consider his action in claiming Caesar's position as of no consequence.

3. Less than a week later, on 17 May Cicero writes to Atticus again from Puteoli, reporting:

De regina rumor extinguitur (*Att.* 15, 1 (377), 5).

The rumour about the queen is fading.

The rumour about Clodia was no doubt connected to the wish that Cicero expressed on 11 May, but, as noted above, we have no idea of

⁸⁴ Atticus had almost certainly witnessed Octavius' acceptance of the name *Caesar* in Rome on 6 May and had perhaps relayed details of this episode in his first letter to Cicero dated 7 May (*Att.* 14, 20 (374), 1-2).

⁸⁵ On 11 May, Antony was being forced to canvass support (*Cic. Att.* 14, 21 (375), 2); on 22 May, Antony was reportedly in trouble (15, 3 (380), 2).

⁸⁶ Discounted as a threat on 17 May (*Cic. Att.* 15, 1 (377), 3) and 18 May (15, 2 (379), 3); on 10 June, Octavius still considered a lightweight (15, 12 (390), 2).

its substance, but it may be related to the contract between Cicero and Clodia. As Cicero appears even less concerned about Clodia at this time, whatever threat he thought she posed must have diminished even further.

Cicero makes no link in this letter or elsewhere between the *regina* and *Caesar*, indicating that the activities and movements of these two people were not connected in any way⁸⁷.

4. In a letter of 24 May, Cicero writes to Atticus from Arpinum:

De Menedemo vellem verum fuisset. De regina velim verum sit (*Att.* 15, 4 (381), 4).

I wished that it had been true about Menedemus. I wish it were true about the queen.

On 18 May Cicero reported that Menedemus had been executed (*Att.* 15, 2 (379), 2)⁸⁸, but in this second reference Cicero says that he wished that the report had been true. He links his wish about Menedemus to Clodia through a play on words, wishing, therefore, that she were dead⁸⁹. This “joke” was in very poor taste, but it indicated the depth of Cicero’s loathing of Clodia. This would suggest that Cicero once again perceived Clodia as a significant threat to him.

5. From Astura in mid-June, Cicero gives details about the *regina* and members of her entourage:

Reginam odi.

id me iure facere scit sponsor promissorum eius Ammonius, quae quidem promissa[rum eius] erant φιλόλογα et dignitatis meae, ut vel in contione dicere auderem. Saram autem, praeterquam quod nefarium hominem, cognovi praeterea in me contumacem. Semel eum omnino domi meae vidi; cum

⁸⁷ Cicero mentions Octavius in a letter of the following day, 18 May (*Att.* 15, 2 (379), 3). He reports to Atticus that he agrees with him in disliking the tenor of Octavius’ speech delivered in Rome. Atticus was keeping Cicero informed about him.

⁸⁸ Menedemus was a leading Macedonian who had joined Caesar in the civil war in 48 (*Caes. civ.* 3, 34, 4), and who won Roman citizenship for his loyalty to Caesar (*Cic. Phil.* 13, 33).

⁸⁹ Given the similarity in phrasing to the letter of 11 May, it is possible that Cicero wished Clodia dead on the previous occasion too (*de regina velim*). If so, then he wanted *Caesar ille* dead too.

φιλοφρόνως ex eo quaererem quid opus esset, Atticum se dixit quaerere. Superbiam autem ipsius reginae, cum esset trans Tiberim in hortis, commemorare sine magno dolore non possum. Nihil igitur cum istis; nec tam animum me quam vix stomachum habere arbitrantur (*Att.* 15, 15 (393), 2, 3).

I hate the queen.

Ammonius, the sponsor of her promises, knows that I am acting in good faith. Her promises were for a contemplative life⁹⁰, appropriate for my standing, such that I should be prepared to say even in a public meeting. I have discovered that Sara, however, in addition to being a wicked man, is also rude. I saw him only the once at my home: when I enquired of him in a friendly manner what he wanted, he said that he was looking for Atticus. I cannot recall without great pain the arrogance of the queen herself, when she was on her property across the Tiber⁹¹. So, I will have nothing to do with these associates of yours. They think that I have scarcely the guts, let alone any strength of character.

Cicero begins with a bald statement of his hatred for the *regina*. This was not the first time that he made such a claim. In 60 BC, he expressed exactly the same sentiments about Clodia⁹². In the intervening years, there would have been little in their interaction that could have ameliorated Cicero's feelings. As is well known, Cicero and Clodia's brother Clodius were mutual, mortal enemies for over a decade, and Cicero fully exploited the opportunity of a public trial in 56 BC to vent his spleen on the family. On that occasion, when he defended Caelius, he made an all-out assault on Clodia's morals. Such long-standing, visceral enmity could perhaps never have diminished, and so Cicero's expressed hatred of Clodia in 44 is not surprising.

In this letter, Cicero appears to be responding to criticisms made by Atticus about Cicero's dealings with Clodia and her agent Sara, since he writes that his behaviour is justifiable and even publicly defensible. First, he intimates that he was deceived by Clodia's promises, and he names Ammonius, a participant in the contractual arrangements, as a witness of

⁹⁰ Plutarch associates φιλόλογος and its cognates with Cicero's retreat from politics into literature on two occasions: *Plut. Cic.* 3, 3; 8, 4; see also *Plut. TG et GG* 40, 2 (= *GG* 19, 2).

⁹¹ I have not translated *esset* as an epistolary form, since Cicero is recollecting an incident from the past; cf. Böhm 1985, 152, who also disputes the reading *esset*.

⁹² In a letter to Atticus, Cicero remarks that he hates Clodia: *ego illam odi consularem* (*Att.* 2, 1 (21), 5). In venting his spleen, Cicero suggests that he hates Clodia's display of power as the wife of the consul. Cicero's use of *odi* is redolent too of Catullus' poem concerning Lesbia/Clodia, *odi et amo* (85, 1), the composition of which is dated to the mid-50s.

their scope and intent⁹³. His comments suggest that Clodia reneged on part or all of these promises⁹⁴. Since Cicero does not explain the situation in full, Atticus must have been aware of what had transpired, and Cicero's level of vituperation against Clodia and her agent Sara reveals that these two had spoken to Atticus and blamed Cicero for the dispute.

After having attacked Clodia's promises, Cicero introduces Sara without a preamble⁹⁵, indicating that this man was already known to Atticus and that Atticus had perhaps asked Cicero about his role in the affair⁹⁶. Cicero immediately sets out to undermine Sara's character, first by calling him *nefarious*, «evil», and *contumax*, «insolent», and then by including a story to demonstrate Sara's rudeness and lack of credibility, which Cicero implies involved a lie about Atticus himself. In this anecdote Cicero makes a sharp contrast between his own display of good manners and the lack of such shown by Sara. In this way, Cicero makes a case that Atticus should not put any trust in this man. Cicero does not elucidate the specific role of Sara in the proceedings, but this man might have sought to negotiate with Atticus who was Cicero's financial agent⁹⁷,

⁹³ Given the date of the letter in 44, this Ammonius might be C. Avianus Hammonius, a freedman whom in 46 or 45 Cicero praised for his loyalty and recommended to Servius Sulpicius Rufus as a conscientious and unassuming business intermediary (*fam.* 13, 21 (287), 2; 13, 27 (293), 2). Even though he was in Greece in 46/45, he might easily have been in Rome on business in 44.

⁹⁴ Roller 2010, 72 argues that Ammonius, once the agent of King Ptolemy, was in a failed deal to supply Cicero with books from the library at Alexandria, and that this led to Cicero's unhappy meeting with Cleopatra in the Transtiberine villa. This interpretation relies on the identification of Ammonius as Ptolemy's legate and the *regina* as Cleopatra.

⁹⁵ Shackleton Bailey *ad Att.* 15, 15 (293), 2 points out that Sara is a shortened form of Sarapio, the name of an influential Egyptian friend of Caesar, whom Caesar unsuccessfully used as an intermediary during the struggle over Alexandria in 48 (*Caes. civ.* 3, 109, 4), and who was in 43 a governor of Cyprus appointed by Cleopatra (*App. B. Civ.* 4, 61). Since the name Serapio is common and Cicero makes dismissive references to this man (compare his strong affection for Caesar's Serapio in 49, *Cic. Att.* 10, 17 (209), 1), it is unlikely that Sara was in fact the high-ranking Serapio. Sara might also have been a shortened form for other common names, like Sarapammo, and it is also an alternative spelling for African Zama (*ILTun* 00614 = *AfrRom*-09-01-256 = *AE* 1942/43, 00111 = *AE* 1992, 01776: *EDCS*-08600910).

⁹⁶ Perhaps he is the Salas referred to by Cicero in 45 BC (*Att.* 12, 30 (270), 1), and his name has suffered corruption (see Shackleton Bailey *ad loc.*). In 45 Salas acted as an agent of a certain Clodius, and he wanted Cicero or Atticus to speak to this Clodius. The over-familiar attitude of Sara towards Cicero and his desire to get in contact with Atticus in 44 are near-repetitions of the episode of 45, and in fact Cicero may be relaying to Atticus in 44 an imperfect recollection of his meeting with Salas in 45.

⁹⁷ Cicero's finances were not a problem in early 44. On 11 March 45, Cicero reported to Atticus that his finances were in good health (*Att.* 12, 18 (254), 3), and they continued so until after 7 April 44 (15, 15 (393), 4), but by 9 May they were in a disastrous

after relations between Cicero and Clodia had become strained. Cicero was obviously greatly affronted by Sara's refusal to discuss matters in person and by his insistence upon approaching Atticus.

Having traduced Sara, Cicero returns to attack Clodia with more vigour. He links her display of *superbia*, «arrogance», to the *contumacia*, «contempt», shown to him by Sara, and this connection hints that she was similarly wicked, rude and a liar. As with Sara, Cicero describes a particularly distressing scene at her *horti*, when Clodia reportedly revealed her vile nature⁹⁸. He laments that he cannot think of her *superbia* without *dolor*, «great suffering», and his use of this word raises the spectre of the greatest, most recent source of his *dolor*, the death of Tullia in 45⁹⁹, whose unbuilt shrine was never far from his mind, as this letter further reveals (*Att.* 15, 15 (393), 3). The themes linked to Clodia in this letter (her promises to Cicero of a contemplative life in retreat, now destroyed; her arrogance when she met him in her *horti*; and the *dolor* he suffered by not being able to find a suitable place to build a shrine for his daughter) suggest that, although Clodia had made promises to Cicero, she changed her mind about selling her Transtiberine *horti* to him and treated him with disdain in the process.

Cicero concludes his discussion of the affair by making it clear that he wants nothing more to do with these acquaintances of Atticus (*istis*)¹⁰⁰, because they consider him lacking in strength of will, *animus*, and a coward. Cicero's *animi firmitas*, «poor resolve», had been identified as a problem as early as 7 May 45 (*Att.* 12, 38a (279), 1-2), when Cicero complained that not only had his correspondents Atticus and Brutus been criticising his weakness, but that many others were also gossiping that his mind was unsound because he was prepared to offer any terms to acquire a property for Tullia's shrine¹⁰¹. Because of the perception of Cice-

state (cf. 14, 18 (373), 1). On 13 June, Cicero stated that he would need to take out a loan (15, 15 (393), 4).

⁹⁸ Cicero obviously knew Clodia well enough to have called on her in her villa, as he had done in very early 62 (e.g. *Cic. fam.* 5, 2 (2), 6). See Grant 1972, 96-97; Goldsworthy 2010, 232-233; 269.

⁹⁹ Cicero remarked to Atticus about the *dolor* he suffered at his daughter's death (*Att.* 12, 12 (259), 1). The use of *dolor* is strikingly reminiscent of his statement in *Pro Caelio* 50, when Cicero reminds Clodia of the *dolor* he suffered in 58 when she inflicted suffering on his wife.

¹⁰⁰ In another letter to Atticus, Cicero makes it clear that *cum istis* refers to men with whom Atticus is on good terms (*Att.* 11, 18 (230), 2).

¹⁰¹ Mention of weak *animus* on 7 May 45 (*Att.* 12, 38a (279), 1-2). Cicero had been so eager to buy that he wanted to enlist Oppius and Balbus to do all they could to

ro's weakness, it is possible that Clodia decided to ask an outrageously high price for her property or to impose further conditions (e.g. to exclude part of the property from sale), and that she thought that Cicero would be too pusillanimous to refuse new terms.

In essence, this letter suggests that Cicero and Clodia agreed on preliminary terms for the sale of her Transtiberine estate, which were drawn up by Ammonius, but, when the principals met at the property to finalise the terms of the deal, Clodia may have changed the conditions of sale, causing Cicero to withdraw his offer¹⁰². After this, Sara and Clodia perhaps approached Atticus for help, and both seemingly complained to him about Cicero's lack of *bona fides*. Atticus must have requested an explanation from Cicero, which elicited this attack on Clodia and Sara¹⁰³. In response Cicero demanded that Atticus double-check all points with Ammonius, and he even claimed that he would be more than happy to repeat the terms of the contract publicly. On this basis, the letter appears to validate Cicero's case against Clodia and to hint that she was at fault in the matter of the contract.

6. On 14 June, from Astura, Cicero writes:

De regina gaudeo te non laborare, testem etiam tibi probari (*Att.* 15, 17 (394), 2).

I am happy that you are not troubled about the queen and approve the witness.

help him (12, 29 (268), 2). From these and others must have come the rumour that Cicero had lost his mind.

¹⁰² Cicero hints that he may have used an escape-clause to get out of the contract (*contra* Skinner 2011, 117), hence Clodia's discontent. Cicero's financial problems may have contributed to the collapse of the deal. Cicero averred on 27 May 45 that his desire for a suitable property outweighed financial considerations and that he might be able to offer cash to Clodia (*Att.* 13, 29 (300), 1; see also 12, 31 (272), 2; 12, 37a (276), 2), but throughout this same period and later Cicero admitted that he could not afford a property without dowry repayments from Dolabella: *Att.* 12, 12 (259), 1; 12, 29 (268), 2; 12, 40 (281), 4; 12, 47 (288), 1; 12, 51 (293), 3; 13, 27 (298), 2; 13, 29 (300), 2; 13, 2a (301), 1; 13, 2b (304); in 44: 14, 18 (373), 1; 14, 21 (375), 4; 15, 4a (282), 1. Cicero often seems uncertain about the state of his finances: *Att.* 12, 21 (260), 2; 12, 25 (264), 1. On 12 November 44 (*Att.* 16, 15 (426), 1-2), Cicero writes that he is thinking of taking strong action against Dolabella to get his money back.

¹⁰³ Cicero may have been so affronted by Clodia's display arrogance, *superbia*, in this episode of early 44 that he decided to call this haughty woman by a new acronym, *regina*, to reflect her wealth and her imperious attitude. On Cicero's connection of *superbia* to wealth, see *rep.* 1, 48; 1, 51; to success, *off.* 1, 90; to King Tarquinius, *rep.* 1, 62; 2, 46; *Tusc.* 3, 27; *Lael.* 54. Clodia exhibited features of wealth, success and dominance.

Atticus seems to have written that he had spoken to the witness, presumably Ammonius, who had agreed that Cicero had been the party injured in the dispute, and that he now supported Cicero's position. Atticus must have put his substantial weight behind Cicero and against Clodia, since we hear no more of her again in their correspondence. She must have decided not to pursue the matter. The affair concerning Clodia's Transtiberine property seems to have put pressure on the relationship between Atticus and Cicero, but this letter makes it clear that Cicero regained Atticus' complete confidence.

5. Conclusion

Given the anomalies in the ancient evidence concerning the location of Cleopatra in 44 and the suggestion that the term *regina* is a nickname for Clodia adopted by Cicero to make his criticisms of her opaque, let us now summarise what Cicero's references to his *regina* reveal.

First, in the negative: there is no evidence that Cleopatra and Caesarion were in Rome in 44 BC or that Cleopatra and her entourage resided in Caesar's Transtiberine villa. On this basis, Caesarion could not have been conceived in the period 45-44, as some have argued, but his birth must fall after Caesar's sojourn in Egypt in 48-47. In addition, there is nothing to show that Cicero interacted in any way with Cleopatra, since he does not mention her at all in any of his works. In addition, there is no evidence that Ammonius was an official of Queen Cleopatra or that Cicero approached this man to get copies of volumes from the library at Alexandria.

In the light of this reinterpretation of the evidence, however, there is added corroboration that Cicero and Atticus disparaged Octavius' assumption of the name *Caesar* in May 44.

On the positive side, we may add a codicil to the death of Cicero's daughter Tullia in 45. Cicero spent a huge amount of time and energy from February to July 45, trying to acquire a property on which he might situate a shrine for his daughter. In this period, Cicero considered buying Clodia's Transtiberine estate to serve both as a "suburban" retreat and as the location for Tullia's shrine. Cicero's letters about the *regina* in 44 indicate that he did indeed negotiate with Clodia for her Transtiberine estate and perhaps even engaged to buy it, but the deal collapsed. This

seems to have led to on-going bitterness between Cicero and Clodia, and Cicero seems to have feared that Clodia might take action against him over the contract. After intervention from Atticus, however, Clodia dropped the matter. Although Cicero did not buy Clodia's *horti*, these letters demonstrate that he did not waver in his commitment to try to find a suitable property for a shrine for Tullia, which would provide physical proof of his enduring love for his late daughter.

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