

**Author and Authorship:
Caesar and his editors**

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**A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Ancient History,
Department of History
University College London (UCL)
2020**

Declaration

I, Francesco Strocchi, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

Whilst scholarship on Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* and *Civile* is notoriously vast, the three anonymous *Commentarii* of the *Corpus Caesarianum* have not been the object of extensive study. Moreover, a detailed survey of the whole *Corpus'* structural consistency and the officers involved in its completion has never been attempted. My thesis fills this gap and offers an alternative interpretation of the issues of authorship and anonymity surrounding the *Corpus*.

Chapter one analyses the cultural climate in which the *Commentarii* proliferated, examining the origin and content of the dispute between Caesar and Cicero on history, oratory and language. Thus, I argue that Caesar's *De Analogia* functioned as a theoretical prologue to the *Commentarii*. The literary form of the *commentarius*, and its peculiar report-based nature, is Caesar's attempt to assert his plain Latin in before a wide audience. In chapter two, I focus on the report as the core component of the *commentarius*, by analysing its format and classifying its content. Chapter three examines the “newsroom” of the *Commentarii*, namely how and by whom the information behind the texts was gathered and archived. The functioning of the “newsroom” suggests a constant work of editing across the *Commentarii*. It follows that no authors exist, but editors. Caesar's *familiares*, Hirtius, Balbus and Oppius, were the editors in charge of the work's completion. In chapter four, I focus on the definition of editorship and anonymity in relation to the *Commentarii*. As the narrative of the *res gestae* predominates over the authors' identity, editorship prevails over authorship, and anonymity becomes an intrinsic quality of the *Corpus*. Finally, in chapter five, I show how the events of years 44-43 BC are reflected in the last three *Commentarii*. The editors, and Hirtius in particular, do not merely finalise the drafting of the *Corpus*,

but are actively operating within the contemporary political landscape.

Impact Statement

Within the realm of academic scholarship, this thesis aims to have an impact within the broad fields of history and literary studies. More specifically, within the interdisciplinary field of classical studies it aims to have an impact in the sub-disciplines of Latin prose literature and Roman history.

Within classical studies, the thesis contributes to current scholarship on the field of Caesar studies and in particular on the *Corpus Caesarianum*, i.e. the two genuinely Caesarian and three anonymous *Commentarii* on Caesar's campaigns in Gaul and during the civil wars against Pompey and his allies. My research offers a comprehensive analysis of the structure and method of composition behind the whole Corpus and a new interpretation of the authorship and the anonymity of the *Commentarii*.

With regard to the more literary aspects, my thesis makes original contributions to the existing scholarship on the following subjects: a) the literary genre of the *commentarius* (informed by a politically-charged debate between Cicero and Caesar on history, oratory, and language); b) the report-based nature of the *Commentarii* and the postulated existence of a narrative hub behind the whole Corpus (in relation to which I introduce the three-sided concept of “newsroom”, as location, archive and entourage), and c) the vexed question of the authorship of the three anonymous *Commentarii* (by arguing in favour of the more appropriate notion of “editorship” and by offering a different definition of anonymity as intrinsic to the Corpus and not accidental).

Within the field of Roman history this thesis addresses the cultural and political impact of the *Corpus Caesarianum* during the turbulent period of the Late Roman Republic, by contributing to the understanding of their handling after Caesar's death, and the political implications of the last three books of the Corpus, arguing

that they do not merely serve to continue the account of the civil wars but are instead actively related to the contemporary political scene following Caesar's assassination.

Beyond classical studies, my research has the potential to impact upon the broader field of cultural studies by demonstrating the utility of its more comprehensive approach to the social context, meaning and fruition of literary and historical sources of such complexity as the *Commentarii*.

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	10
Abbreviations	11
0. Introduction	12
0.1 The multidisciplinary approach: the Corpus as a whole	13
0.2 Authorship, editorship and anonymity: scholarship and the <i>Commentarii</i>	19
0.2.1 Authorship	19
0.2.2 Editorship	26
0.2.3 Anonymity	28
0.3 The <i>Commentarii</i> : the name, the reports and the “newsroom”	30
0.3.1 The word <i>commentarius</i>	30
0.3.2 The existence of reports and the “newsroom” in the <i>Commentarii</i>	31
0.4 The political relevance of the last three <i>Commentarii</i>	37
Chapter 1 Caesar’s <i>Commentarii</i>: characteristic traits and purposes	39
1.1 <i>Commentarii</i> : a synchronic approach	43
1.2 <i>Commentarii</i> : how to write <i>de se</i> without writing <i>de se</i>	49
1.3 Caesar and Cicero dialoguing on history	51
1.4 Caesar the <i>expers</i> and Cicero the expert: dialoguing on oratory	56
1.5 The <i>De Analogia</i> and the <i>Commentarii</i> : dialoguing with Cicero on language	63
1.6 Conclusions	66
Chapter 2 <i>Commentarii</i> as reports	70
2.1 Contemporary responses to Caesarian <i>Commentarii</i>	70
2.2 The report format	77
2.2.1 The ablative absolute and the cumulative narrative	77
2.2.2 The timing: the use of temporal conjunctions and expressions	81
2.2.3 Distances	85
2.2.4 Military data	87
2.3 The report content: provenance, intelligence, minutes	91
2.3.1 Provenance	92
2.3.1.1 The reports of Q. Cicero and M. Varro: a documentary traffic	92
2.3.1.2 Reports in the <i>Bellum Alexandrinum</i> , <i>Africanum</i> and <i>Hispaniense</i> : the case of Vatinius, Sittius and Didius	96
2.3.2 Intelligence	99

2.3.2.1	The Nervii's rebellion	100
2.3.2.2	Before the battle of Munda	102
2.3.2.3	Letters from Pontus and reconstructing events in Further Spain	102
2.3.3	Minutes	105
2.3.3.1	The Remi's embassy	106
2.3.3.2	The <i>litterae</i> and the clash of reports	107
2.3.3.3	Caesar's thoughts and orders	110
2.3.3.4	Caesar's public speeches: the <i>contiones</i>	112
2.4	Intermediality and the style of the <i>Commentarii</i>	114
2.5	Reports as <i>Commentarii</i> ?	117
Chapter 3	The "newsroom" in the <i>Commentarii</i>: location, archive and entourage	120
3.1	The "newsroom": its location and how it works	121
3.1.1	The "newsroom" in the <i>Bellum Gallicum</i>	121
3.1.2	The "newsroom" between the <i>Bellum Civile</i> and the <i>Bellum Alexandrinum</i>	131
3.1.3	The "newsroom" in " <i>diversissima parte</i> ": Illyria	136
3.1.4	The "newsroom" in Further Spain	139
3.1.5	The "newsroom" in the <i>Bellum Africum</i>	143
3.1.6	The "newsroom" in the <i>Bellum Hispaniense</i>	151
3.2	The "newsroom" as archive	156
3.3	The "newsroom" as entourage: scribes, reporters and editors	160
3.3.1	Caesar's scribes	160
3.3.2	The reporters	165
3.3.3	The editors	177
Chapter 4	Editorship and anonymity in the <i>Commentarii</i>	191
4.1	Editorship	191
4.1.1	Suetonius on the <i>Commentarii</i>	191
4.1.2	The prefatory letter to Balbus	196
4.1.3	Editorial intervention and editorial "non finito": some examples	198
4.1.4	Editorial intelligence: a hypothesis	207
4.2	Anonymity	209
4.2.1	Anonymity: inside the text	209
4.2.2	Anonymity: outside the text	216
4.2.3	Anonymity and the audience	224
4.2.4	Persuasive anonymity: a conclusion	230
Chapter 5	The last three <i>Commentarii</i>: a tool of political interpretation	233
5.1	The political background	234
5.2	Hirtius' prefatory letter and Anthony	238

5.3	The <i>Bellum Alexandrinum</i> : Hirtius, Mark Antony and the <i>contentiones</i> in Rome	240
5.4	The <i>Bellum Alexandrinum</i> : Q. Cassius Longinus and Antony, the <i>hostis</i>	243
5.5	The <i>Bellum Africum</i> : Cato and his speech to the young Pompey	246
5.6	The <i>Bellum Alexandrinum</i> : M. Aemilius Lepidus	251
5.7	The <i>Bellum Hispaniense</i> : Sextus Pompeius	253
5.8	Conclusion	256
	Conclusions	259
	Bibliography	265

Acknowledgments

The roots of this thesis go back to the early nineties when, as young undergraduate, I attended Prof. Tschiedel's seminar on the *Bellum Hispaniense* during my Erasmus year in Eichstaett, Germany. Back at my university in Italy, the *Bellum Hispaniense* became the subject of my dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Zecchini. I am still very grateful to them both.

My deep gratitude goes to my two supervisors, Dr. Valentina Arena and Dr. Benet Salway: without their constant support and guidance, this thesis might have never been completed. A special thanks goes to Sam Thompson, for his invaluable help; a personal one to Cristiana, who has lived with Caesar and his acolytes for far too long.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to my daughter Matilde and to my son Jacopo: be honest, funny, fair and determined, and you both will achieve your dreams.

Abbreviations

- ANRW* Temporini, H., et al., eds. 1972. *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. Berlin & New York.
- FRHist* Cornell, T.J., et al., eds. 2013. *The fragments of the Roman Historians*, 3 vols. Oxford.
- LSJ* Liddel, H. G., Scott, R. & Jones, H. S., eds. 1940. *Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford.
- OCD* Hornblower, S. & Spawforth, A., eds. 1996³. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Oxford.
- OLD* Glare, P. G. W., ed. 1968-1982. *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Oxford.
- RE* Wissowa, G., et al., eds. 1893-1980 *Paulys Real-Enzyklopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft*, 84 vols. Stuttgart.
- TLL* *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, 1904. Liepzig.

For any abbreviations not listed above, readers are referred to the traditional tools of professional bibliographic research in the Classics, namely *L'Année Philologique*, *LSJ*, *OCD* and *OLD*.

Introduction

“The circumstances, timing, and (so) the thinking, of Caesar's writing (up) these *Commentarii* are, we shall find, hard to recover.”¹

The *Corpus Caesarianum* is composed of five *Commentarii*: namely the two genuinely Caesarian *Commentarii* (*Bellum Gallicum* and *Civile*) and the three anonymous *Commentarii* (*Bellum Alexandrinum*, *Africum* and *Hispaniense*). The art of recovering, the circumstances, the timing and the thinking of Caesar's and the anonymous *Commentarii* has been and still is one that scholarship consistently tries to master. Moreover, as Caesar died before completing the *Commentarii*, scholarship from the beginning of the last century has tried to answer the question of who the authors of the three anonymous *Commentarii* were.

My thesis argues that, while the literary style varies between the genuinely Caesarian and the anonymous *Commentarii*, the structure and the method of composition of the *Corpus Caesarianum* in its entirety are consistent and uniform. Essential to the creation of the whole Corpus, I argue, is the existence of a narrative hub, which I call the “newsroom”, whose workings are much more easily detected in the less polished anonymous *Commentarii*. I propose that, by acting as an information centre, the “newsroom” selected and edited the written material recording facts and data from the military campaign. The functioning of the “newsroom” explains how information was collected and flowed into the *Commentarii*, and how Caesar's entourage actively contributed to their completion.

By focusing on the method of composition of the *Commentarii* and the functioning of the “newsroom”, my study sheds light on two important points. Firstly, it offers a new interpretation and definition

¹ J. Henderson (1998), 37.

of authorship and anonymity in the *Commentarii*. I suggest that, in the case of the *Commentarii*, the action of the guiding hand and organising mind is more appropriately expressed as “editorship” than authorship, since the *Commentarii* consist of written material of varied provenance that needed to be collected and edited by the final compiler (the editor). On the other hand, anonymity is regarded as an inherent rather than as an accidental characteristic of the Corpus. Secondly, this novel understanding of the issue of anonymity enables a new appreciation of the three anonymous *Bella*, which should no longer be interpreted as a mere continuation of Caesar's work, but rather as works in their own right, whose function was not only to reflect, but also to act on the political scene of the time.

In the following pages, after considering the views of previous scholars, I first clarify the methodology behind my thesis, which enables me to identify the structural and functional uniformity of the five *Commentarii*. I then explain the terminology I will adopt throughout the thesis, by defining authorship and anonymity in the *Commentarii* and by introducing the concept of editorship.

Next, I set out my approach to each of the following aspects: the reasons underlying Caesar's choice of the *commentarius* form; the report-based structure of the whole Corpus and the functioning of the “newsroom” behind the five *Commentarii*; and the political aspects of the last three anonymous *Commentarii*.

0.1 The multidisciplinary approach: the Corpus as a whole

Present-day scholarship on the two Caesarian *Commentarii* is vast, whereas that on the three anonymous *Commentarii*, the so-called Continuator, is limited and rather occasional.² Scholars such

² Cluett (2009), 205 uses the term “generalistic” in order to emphasise the unsystematic and sporadic way in which the three anonymous *Bella* have been scrutinised by scholarship. No systematic treatment of the three anonymous books is yet available, beside Cluett's two contributions (2003) and (2009). Most recently Gaertner (2018) offers a stylistic analysis but does not include the whole Corpus.

as Luigi Loreto and Ronald Cluett have underlined that studies on Caesar's so-called Continuator are sporadic, and there are presently no historical commentaries on the three anonymous books of the *Commentarii*.³

Systematic investigations, which are considerably more philological than historical in approach, date back to the works of Alfred Klotz and Otto Seel, published between 1910 and 1967.⁴ From then on, scholarship has highlighted the stylistic ineptitude of the so-called Continuator at the expense of their historical and historiographical value.⁵ The distance between the Caesarian and the anonymous *Commentarii* has hence grown wider. More recently Jean-Claude Richard and Nicole Diouron, whilst updating the critical apparatus of the *Bellum Africum* and *Bellum Hispaniense* respectively, do not propose a general discussion of the *Commentarii* as a whole.⁶ More ambitious is the book of Jan Felix Gaertner and Bianca Hausburg on the Alexandrian War, but this is still a work focused predominantly on stylistic patterns.⁷

The reasons, I believe, for such limitations of past scholarship are especially twofold: they relate to the (pre)dominant figure of Caesar as author and the nature of the Latin found in the three anonymous works. Comparison with Caesar's style, "a pure, uncontaminated form of language, and an extraordinary skill at explaining his aims and objectives elegantly", looms large over all three anonymous *Commentarii*.⁸ Moreover, Thomas Rice Holmes' judgment on the Latin of the last work of the Corpus, the *Bellum Hispaniense* has been fatal to its later reception: he called it "the worst book in Latin literature", whose language is "generally

3 Cluett (2006) and (2009); Loreto (2001); see also Zecchini (2011b).

4 Klotz (1910), and (1927), Seel (1961), and (1967).

5 See, for instance, Rice Holmes (1923), vol.3, 298. More recently, Hirtius, Caesar's lieutenant and collaborator has been described by Meyer (2011), 211 as a "somewhat unskilled" author. See also Gaertner (2010), 243.

6 Richard (1997) and Diouron (1999). Andrieu's edition of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* dates back to 1954.

7 Gaertner/Hausburg (2011). The authors discuss the role of Hirtius and the genesis of the whole *Corpus Caesarianum*, well beyond the *Bellum Alexandrinum*.

8 Meyer (2011), 211.

ungrammatical and often unintelligible”.⁹ Such limitations, combined with the implied negative comparison with Caesar, have consequently impeded any investigation of the Corpus as an entity that, as I will show, is in fact structurally and functionally uniform. However, there are some elements that support an overarching reading of the five *Commentarii*. The very fact that the *Commentarii* were continued after Caesar's death might in itself be thought to indicate a shared view among the Caesarians. But there is more: I argue that such a continuation attests to the existence of a method of composition which was already in place. This method consists in collecting and editing the war reports, which were sent to Caesar's “newsroom”. Caesar deliberately chose this method, which, I believe, pre-dated his time, and which was already known to Roman magistrates and officers, as writing war reports was part of their duties. In his introductory essay to his edition of the anonymous *Bella*, Loreto argues that “strutturalmente (e perciò funzionalmente) non esiste alcuna differenza fra i nostri tre testi e i *Commentarii* più propriamente cesariani. Il solo livello di differenza è quello filologico: i nostri tre testi non rivelano la stessa mano redazionale – cioè quella di Cesare...”.¹⁰ In other words, while the literary style varies between the genuinely Caesarian works and the three anonymous *Bella*, the report-based structure and the method of gathering the written material both remain uniform. Caesar's *Commentarii* are stylistically refined, fully edited, and under the control of Caesar the author as the omniscient narrator, whereas the anonymous *Commentarii* are stylistically not comparable with the model, not completely edited, and, as the *Bellum Hispaniense* most evidently shows, their narrative falters at times.¹¹

My research builds on these aspects concerning the structural uniformity and continuity of the five *Commentarii*. My main intention

9 Rice Holmes (1923), vol.3, 298.

10 Loreto (2001), 35.

11 See Grillo (2011), 243.

is to establish whether and to what extent the structural uniformity of the *Commentarii* has an impact on the issues of authorship and anonymity of the Corpus, and on our understanding of the role played by the last three *Commentarii* during the tumultuous years following Caesar's assassination. I first show that the *Commentarii* are made up of reports, contributed by various people (Caesar's officers and close collaborators). This testifies to the existence of a narrative hub, the “newsroom”. I then proceed to show that the work of editing emerges as an essential element to understanding the completion and the handling of the whole Corpus.

In order to study the Corpus in its entirety, a multidisciplinary approach is needed. Such an approach helps not only to reconstruct the structure of the Corpus and the roles of the figures who participated in its completion, it also enables us to analyse its political and cultural value in its specific historical context and period of time. By reviewing collectively topics that scholars have previously tended to treat separately, the multidisciplinary approach of my investigation aims to uncover the original and uniform nature of the five *Commentarii*, whose distinction is presently understood on stylistic grounds and inevitably plays to Caesar's advantage.¹² Disciplines such as philology, prosopography and codicology can contribute to unveiling, respectively, the language of the *Commentarii*, the historical group of people involved in their editing, and issues concerning the Corpus' authorship as transmitted by the manuscript tradition. Concerning the language adopted in the *Commentarii*, the scholarship, as referred to above, tends to privilege the discussion on Caesar's Latin and its stylistic merit. The reasons why Caesar chose such a “pure and uncontaminated form of language”, are much less explored and only hinted at.¹³ For instance, Andrew Riggsby, in his monograph on the *Bellum Gallicum*, recognises the importance of Caesar's use of language -

¹² See above p. 14 and n. 5.

¹³ See above n. 8.

which has a “reader-oriented focus” and requires the existence of a “receptive audience” -, but he fails to scrutinise how and why this language might be relevant.¹⁴ However, according to Patrick Sinclair, the language in the *Commentarii* conveys not only a stylistic, but also a political choice.¹⁵ Sinclair points out that Caesar, during his Gallic campaign, wrote the *De Analogia*, a treatise on the Latin language. He believes that during his time as proconsul, in which he judged cases in the courts in Cisalpine Gaul, Caesar witnessed the difficulties that the Roman citizens in the province had with the Latin language. Partly due to this, in his treatise Caesar advocates a more approachable, understandable and “popular” Latin, which the *Commentarii* with their plain style fully embody.¹⁶ However, with the exception of Sinclair, scholarship has hinted only occasionally at a possible relation between Caesar's *De Analogia* and his *Commentarii*.¹⁷ Building on Sinclair's arguments I argue that Caesar first theorises in *De Analogia* and then adopts in his *Commentarii* an everyday and plain Latin, making language an asset of his cultural policy and a tool to reach a larger audience. The anonymous *Commentarii*, as I will discuss, continued such a policy, by actively engaging with the contemporary political context of the *res publica*.

Another thread in scholarship focuses on the existence of an inner circle devoted to continuing Caesar's account. In her recent critical edition of the *Bellum Civile*, Cynthia Damon argues that “in the conflict-filled months that followed the assassination, members of Caesar's inner circle and officer corps, specifically Hirtius and Balbus, but presumably others as well, initiated the publication of the narratives of Caesar's campaigns as a Corpus.”¹⁸ The identities of

14 Riggsby (2006), 4. Grillo (2012), 9 and (2018), 157-169, highlights Caesar's rhetorical devices in the *Bellum Civile*, without going much further than stylistic appreciation of Caesar's art of writing; see also Shauer (2017).

15 Sinclair (1994).

16 *Ibidem*, 93, see also ch. 2.2.4, 87.

17 See Grillo (2012), but also his literary approaches to Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*, Grillo (2018), 157-169. Most recently Garcea (2012) and Pezzini (2018).

18 Damon (2015), 11.

the presumed “others” and the nature of the intervention either of Hirtius, Caesar's lieutenant, or of Balbus, Caesar's close collaborator, have rarely been questioned by scholars. In a bid to pursue this line of inquiry, as Loreto hints, a prosopographical investigation into Caesar's entourage (scribes, officials, lieutenants) casts light on the existence of an editorial staff who were dedicated to collecting the reports and ultimately to publishing them in the form of *Commentarii*.¹⁹ I argue that these editors aim to complete the account of Caesar's *res gestae* and, to adopt an expression first formulated, rather cursorily, by Elisabeth Rawson, they were “content with their anonymity”.²⁰

However, in order to assess the nature of the anonymity in the whole Corpus, a codicological scrutiny of the manuscript tradition is necessary. Damon's recent edition, based on the fundamental work of Virginia Brown, discusses the history of the Corpus (specifically the *Bellum Civile* and the three anonymous texts that are transmitted by the same manuscripts) and implies, without further scrutiny, that uncertainty over the authorship of the anonymous *Bella* might date back to the time of Suetonius, the 2nd century AD.²¹ A less frequently debated issue, the anonymity of the last three *Commentarii* has been considered purely accidental and a consequence of a precarious manuscript tradition. In this study, however, I argue that anonymity is an intrinsic quality of the *Commentarii*, which is inherent to the method of composition behind the whole Corpus as well as a consequence of external factors such as Caesar's and Hirtius' deaths. The emphasis of the account in the anonymous *Commentarii* is entirely on the deeds - the *res gestae Caesaris* - whereas on the part of the editors there was no need to claim authorship.²²

Although the scholars referred to above - such as Riggsby on

19 Loreto (2001), 18 ff., Mayer (2011), 212.

20 Rawson (1985), 110, see ch. 4.2.2, 216.

21 Damon (2015), and Brown (1972), and (1981); see also ch. 4.1.1, 191.

22 For an explanation see below p.19ff.

the *Bellum Gallicum*, Damon and Grillo on the *Bellum Civile* - discuss broader topics such as language, the use of the third person, the report-based nature and the manuscript tradition of the texts, they focus on one *Commentarius* at a time. These arguments have never been subjected to a comprehensive examination and duly applied to the whole Corpus. My research fills this gap and shows the whole Corpus as a uniformly conceived, yet differently articulated, literary, editorial and political event: literary, since the *Commentarii* appear to be a unique narrative, which lack introductory chapters, a dedicatee and justification and are written in the third person and in a plain Latin; editorial, since not only did Caesar himself collect war reports written by various officers and put them together to create a literary work, but others, acting as editors, also resumed Caesar's method and intervened on the texts to continue the narrative of the civil wars; and political, because its creation took place during the troubled period of the Late Roman Republic and involved a group of intellectuals and men of the army, such as Hirtius, Balbus and Oppius, who actively operated in the political arena of the time.

0.2 Authorship, editorship and anonymity: scholarship and the *Commentarii*

0.2.1 Authorship

The word “author” identifies the originator, the one who gives existence to the script. In ancient Rome, the *auctor* was also engaged in (what we call today) the “editing process” preceding a work's publication.²³ In other words, the “*auctor*” alone issued the final version as ready to be copied and free to circulate.²⁴

In the modern world, authorship is defined as the fact of being the

²³ See *TLL*. II, s.v. *edere*, 1206-1210, Va-b.

²⁴ On editorship and authorship in Ovid see Martelli (2013), and especially on the concept of editing in literary theories, her pp. 1-34. See also Jansen (2012); on Cicero's editorial revision see Gurd (2006), and ch. 4.1, 191ff.

writer of a book, or more generally the creator of a work of art.²⁵ Scholarship has robustly examined to this day the authorial persona in the ancient Greco-Roman world in relation to literary genres such as autobiographies, memoirs, biographies and historical works.²⁶ Whereas the latter are works dealing “with some or all of the history of Rome” in a chronological order, autobiographies and memoirs – terms which are overwhelmingly treated as synonyms – are linked to the immediate events in the author's life.²⁷ In an autobiography, the author writes about himself and “grants a predominant space to his own actions”,²⁸ while in historical works the author claims “the competence to narrate and explain the past and simultaneously construct a persona that the audience will find persuasive and believable”.²⁹

The author of an autobiographical work narrates facts of historical importance, whereas the historian claims that his own account rests on “personal inquiry and investigation”.³⁰ Such a claim, which is quite persistent in ancient historiography, takes many forms, “from actual participation in the event to the more sedentary perusal of previous histories”.³¹ Participation and personal inquiry, however, are features that hint at the persona of the author, but not strictly autobiographical. Ancient biography also proves to be particularly challenging to define: whilst being “an account of the life of a man from birth to death”, biography remains “some kind of history” and can vary in form.³² In regard to biographies, for instance, Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* is narrated with a straightforwardly chronological approach, whereas its Suetonian counterpart combines chronology with thematically arranged

25 See *OED*, s.v. ‘authorship, n. 2.a’: <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/13361> [accessed 28.03.2019].

26 Marincola (1997), Kraus (1999), Harrison (2001), McGing/Mossman (2006), Marasco (2011), Marmodoro/Hill (2013), Sandberg/Smith (2018).

27 *FRHist.* vol.1, 8.

28 Marasco (2011), vii.

29 Marincola (1997), 1-2.

30 *Ibidem* 2. For a few instances, see note 37 below.

31 *Ibidem* 5.

32 Momigliano (1969), 79.

description.³³

A work edited by Christina Kraus, *The Limits of Historiography*, and another by Brian McGing and Judith Mossman, *The Limits of Ancient Biographies* have both examined the reasons why boundaries between the genres of history, biography and autobiography remain blurred.³⁴ As Christopher Pelling, one of the contributors to these studies, concedes, the case of Caesar (and the *Commentarii*) seems rather pertinent with regard to boundaries.³⁵ Caesar, both as a politician and as an intellectual, undoubtedly broke the physical and figurative boundaries of his time. Not only did Caesar cross the Rhine and the Ocean, he also changed the rules of Roman public life, a new calendar being one of the examples of his reforms. He was also “a truly bookish general”, not just because of his habit of writing “*inter tela volantia*”.³⁶ Caesar advocates the reform of the Latin language in order to make it more accessible to a larger audience. A work such as *De Analogia*, I believe, was written to support his idea of democratising the language and provided a theoretical ground to his *Commentarii*.³⁷ Caesar chose the form of the *commentarius* as better suited to conveying an accessible language of this kind. Thanks to Caesar, the *commentarius*, which was considered by contemporaries to be a draft-like piece of writing, reached the status of self-standing literary narrative. In this sense, the *Commentarii* themselves were boundary breaking. On a few occasions, Pelling questions how to define the *Commentarii*, asking precisely whether they are “only a draft for later proper historians to come to and elaborate” or how “they take away rather than offer an opportunity to later writers”.³⁸ While looking at how authors, such as

³³ With regard to biographical approach in Plutarch and Suetonius see Pelling (2011), 13 ff., and Gibson (2014), respectively.

³⁴ Kraus (1999), McGing/Mossman (2006). See a few observations on genre boundaries in Susanna Braund (2001), 141, who argues that “genre always involves a balance between consistency and innovation, framework and deviation. That is why” – she continues – “a study of genre is always concerned with boundaries.”

³⁵ Pelling (2006a), 255.

³⁶ Fronto 216.9, see below ch. 3.3.1, 160, whereas “bookish general” is Dugan's definition (2009), 188.

³⁷ See Sinclair (1994), Garcea (2012), see ch. 1.4, 63ff.

³⁸ Pelling (2006a), 255.

Plutarch, Dio and Suetonius, wrote about Caesar, Pelling argues that generic questions become difficult: “if you are writing history [sc: as Caesar does], you find yourself having to write biography instead”, and *vice versa*. In the end, he admits that “something like that - namely whether the Caesar's *Commentarii* are history or biography - may already be true of his own *Commentarii*.”³⁹ However, Pelling's assertions point to an important and intriguing question concerning the way that ancient authors wrote about their own actions, as well as how they intervened in their work.⁴⁰ A narrator - and a historian in particular - may intervene in his account either with regular narratorial comments (e.g. Herodotus), be almost completely unobtrusive (e.g. Thucydides), or be absent altogether (e.g. Xenophon in both the *Hellenika* and the *Anabasis*).⁴¹ Besides the early Roman historians whose narrative survived in too few fragments,⁴² authors such as Sallust and Tacitus “only rarely ... comment explicitly in their own person on events, characters, digressions, or problems with the tradition.”⁴³ John Marincola argues that the question of the author's voice - more precisely, whether a historian uses the first or the third person, especially while treating one's own deeds in one's own history - tells us “little about the author's actual method when he narrates his own *res gestae*”.⁴⁴ More important is “the perspective (or focalisation), between the questions 'who speaks?' and 'who sees?'”, as Marincola puts it. This perspective concerns the stance which the author adopts towards the facts he narrates and the characters involved in the account (characterisation and bias) and how he locates himself “with

39 *Ibidem*, 255.

40 On “*scribere de se*” see ch. 1.2, 49-51. Marasco (2011), viii.

41 See for instance, Hdt. 2.112-120, on his reliability and authority as historian; Thuc. 4.104.4 – 105.1, describing his own actions in the third person; Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.4, where Xenophon magnifies his own actions; Xen. *Hell.* 3.2.7, where “the man in charge” is Xenophon himself, but he omits his own name.

42 See, for example, *FRHist.* vol.I, 267, on Aemilius Scaurus, *de vita sua*; *FRHist.* vol.I, 278, on Rutilius Rufus' five books of *de vita sua*, and *FRHist.* vol.I, 271, on Q. Lutatius Catulus' *liber de consulatu et de gestis suis*.

43 Marincola (1997), 11, with the sole exception of Livy, who, in strongly Herodotean manner, sifts “through the tradition, comparing accounts and sources ... addressing the reader.”

44 *Ibidem*, 179.

reference to others in the larger framework of his history”.⁴⁵ A volume edited by Anna Marmodoro and Jonathan Hill takes up these points and further explores how the author's voice extends through the literary genres, with particular regard to the “persona of the author in antiquity”.⁴⁶ The approach of this volume is two-pronged, concerning itself with not only the different ways in which the authorial voice is presented in Greek and Latin texts of different genres (literature, history, epistolography, philosophy and history of art), but also how readers, or authors of later texts, perceive and manipulate the authorship of those texts. Ultimately, the author's persona is defined by multiple factors, such as the first person, the third person and the dialogic voice.⁴⁷ However, the same author's persona may shift and develop with his literary works. For instance, in his dialogues, such as *De Oratore* and *Laelius*, Cicero adopts a more “theatrical” style and, by becoming a character involved in his own dialogues, reveals a subtle, and more sophisticated authorial voice.⁴⁸ In other words, in order to understand the nature and the function of the authorship of a certain literary work, not only must the political and cultural context in which the author wrote has be borne in mind but also how the author may change his voice within his literary works, and which audience the authorial voice wishes to address.

Another approach endorsed by scholars of the ancient world draws on the works of two French philosophers Roland Barthes and Michael Foucault. Both discussed the question “what is an author?”, and argued for the so-called “death of the author”.⁴⁹ While asserting that the author as origin and source of all textual meaning is a modern invention, Barthes believes that “to assign an author to a

45 *Ibidem*, 180.

46 See Marmodoro/Hill, eds. (2013), 1.

47 *Ibidem*, 1-4.

48 Stroup (2013), 123-152, esp. 143ff. on Cic. *Lael.* 4.

49 See Barthes (1977), 142-148, Foucault's essay in Robinow (1984), 101-120. On their theories applied to ancient texts see, for instance, Halperin/Winkler/Zeitlin (1990), Goldhill (1995), Kraus (2013), 13-15.

text is to impose a break on it”, and that texts are ultimately “a multi-dimensional space in which are married and contested several writings, none of which is original”.⁵⁰ This vanishing of the author - resulting in his death - causes the liberation of the reader, who becomes the focus of the text. Foucault, as Schimtz explains, builds on Barthes' theory and develops the concept of “author function”, opting not to regard the author “as the source of all meanings; instead he proposes to examine in which circumstances and by which means individuals can fulfil this author function ...”.⁵¹ Such a theoretical approach has at least two interesting consequences: the author as individual might disappear in favour of an unspecified entity, such as the reader, who takes control in producing the meaning of the texts themselves.⁵² For the purposes of this work, Foucault and Barthes are of some interest because their theoretical assumptions show how the term “authorship” is a modern invention. As Jed Wyrick correctly points out, “our own notions about what constitutes an author are only partly applicable to the era that preceded the introduction of the printing press and copyright laws”.⁵³ On the other hand, in classical texts, as Irene Peirano demonstrated, authorship has a symbolic rather than a practical function, and seems to be determined by the cultural and historical contexts in which an author writes and lives.⁵⁴

In the case of the *Commentarii*, the term “author” bears multiple meanings and authorship is an inappropriate word to describe the authorial complexity of the *Commentarii*. To be precise, Caesar is certainly the author of the *Bellum Gallicum* and the *Bellum Civile*. However, in order to gather together the information

50 Schimtz (2007), 126. Thomas Schimtz' study introduces the two philosophers' stances on being an author, while offering a comprehensive discussion on which literary theories have been and can be applied to Greek and Latin literary works.

51 *Ibidem*, 127.

52 *Ibidem*, 127.

53 Wyrick (2004), 8; see also Schimtz (2007), 127; see Hall below in regard to Hirtius' contribution to the *Commentarii*.

54 Especially on the historical function of the author in Foucault and the function of authorship in classical texts see Peirano (2013), 251-285.

contained in each report, Caesar also acted as an editor, since he had to select and edit the written material. Hirtius is likely the author of the eighth book of the *Bellum Gallicum* but more appropriately he is an editor, namely someone who assembled and edited the written material of the Gallic and Civil Wars left behind by Caesar. Besides Caesar and Hirtius, reporters are also authors of the unrefined and unedited written material behind the *Commentarii*, as they were the sources of information provided from different theatres of war. After Caesar's death, the work of editing inevitably increased and, when Hirtius died in the middle of completing Caesar's work, the *familiares* continued to edit the written material which shapes the anonymous *Commentarii*.

These characteristic elements of the *Corpus Caesarianum*, such as the use of the third person, the report-based structure, and the involvement of more than one contributor in the composition and editing of the whole work alongside the absence of recognisable authors, all call for a redefinition of authorship in the *Commentarii*, as traditionally conceived, in favour of the more appropriate concept of editorship. For now, it suffices to show that in none of the scholarly contributions quoted above does the report-based structure seem to play a part in developing an argument, both to qualify the genre of the *Commentarii*, and to understand how the author(s) uses and intervenes in the written material.⁵⁵ As I demonstrate, such a structure emerges as a consistent pattern throughout the whole *Corpus*. More specifically, the report consists of a written document in which the magistrates in office and the lieutenants in the army wrote down facts and events related to their role. All five *Commentarii* are made up of these reports, written by different reporters (lieutenants). What differentiates the five *Bella* is the level of editing and stylistic refinement of their accounts. My research brings to light the structure of these reports, which is most

⁵⁵ An exception can be found in some hints by Hall (1996) and Osgood (2009).

clearly evident in the anonymous *Bella* and particularly in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, an unfinished work which is not fully edited and stands in contrast with Caesar's polished and edited works.

0.2.2 Editorship

The words “editor” and “editing” are modern concepts.⁵⁶ An editor is a person “who prepares the literary work of another person by selecting, revising, and arranging the material”. “Editing” is defined as the action “to prepare, to set in order for publication” that very same (literary) material.⁵⁷ In Roman times, in order to effect publication, “all an author had to do was give someone a single copy of his work, with stated or implied permission to let it be known to others”.⁵⁸ In other words, the editing was part of the author's work, and preceded the publication of that very same work.

With regard to the *Commentarii*, modern scholarship has never adopted the word “editor”, but only hinted at it. For instance, concerning the role of Hirtius in the composition of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, Lindsay Hall remarks that “where all documentary communication is hand-written, as for any ancient writer it was, the distinctions that appear clear to us between author and scribe, copyist and commentator, editor, secretary, 'literary executor', and publisher, lose much of their significance.”⁵⁹ After examining the linguistic clusters of the whole Corpus, Kestemont's recent essay

56 See *OED*, s.v. 'editor, n. 2': www.oed.com/view/Entry/59553, [accessed 17.04.2019], and s.v. 'editing, a': <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/59547> [accessed 17.04.2019] respectively. On the meaning of editorship see *OED*, s.v. 'editorship', www.oed.com/view/Entry/59557 [accessed 26.03.2019]. On the concept of publishing in ancient Rome and the art of divulgation, see Phillips (1981), and also Fedeli (1989), vol. 2, 354.

57 The words “editor” and “editing” derive from the Latin verb *edere*, which carries in Latin the prevalent, though not exclusive meaning of publishing, and more precisely of issuing a book. Editing, in the contemporary sense of the word, is best identified in Latin with *emendare*, *recte facere*, and *corrigerere*, since these verbs mean “to amend”, “to set right”, “to correct”. See, for instance, Cic. Att. 16.5.5: “I must examine and correct the letters; then and only then will they be published” (*eas (litteras) ego oportet perspiciam, corrigam; tum denique edentur*). A clear distinction between editing and publishing is also found in Att. 2.16.4: “then again he (=Quintus) so far relaxes as to ask me to correct and publish his histories” (*ita rursus remittit ut me roget ut annalis suos emendem et edam*), editing Quintus' history book, or Att. 15. 1a.2: editing (*corrigerere*) Brutus' speech. See instances in TLL. V, 2, 88.

58 Phillips (1981), 19, who quite effectively explains: “when an author said *edo* he meant: “I issue a book, you may read it”.”

59 Hall (1996), 412, who offers other instances of military reports, see 413 and footnotes.

concludes that its “significant stylistic heterogeneity ... represents Caesar’s compositional practice of relying on, and sometimes incorporating, the briefs written for him by his legates”.⁶⁰ As stated, there is no doubt that Caesar authored the *Bellum Gallicum* and the *Bellum Civile*, but also reworked and edited the reports written by his lieutenants. Hall admits that the example of Hirtius is of special relevance, since his “first task in composing an account of a campaign which he had not himself witnessed will have been to try to make sense of various military records, and to harmonise these with whatever he knew from Caesar's own lips or jottings or could glean elsewhere”.⁶¹ While discussing whether Hirtius is the redactor of the Alexandrian war, Hall argues that “the very existence of this [the *Bellum Alexandrinum*], and of the other works in the corpus not by Caesar himself, itself proves that substantial quantities of such material existed”. This written material not only existed, but also and subsequently must have been edited by both Caesar himself and later by Hirtius as well as Caesar's *familiares* (Balbus and Oppius). The harmonisation and composition of this material, as Hall calls it, is the work of editing, which, most evidently in the case of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, has not been brought to a complete end. Therefore, authorship merges with editorship in the case of the *Commentarii*. For this reason, I use the terms “editor(s)”, “editing”, “editorship” in this thesis to best describe the completion of the Corpus.⁶² The report-based method behind the *Commentarii* is strictly related to the editors' tasks and requires editorial skills. It is suggested that it would be more appropriate to talk about an editor rather than an author, since written material was there to be assembled into a continuous narrative. The recognition of editors in opposition to authors allows me to make several new considerations concerning the anonymity of the last three *Bella*, as well as

60 Kestemont et alii (2016), 94 with examples.

61 See Hall (1996), 413.

62 In the case of the anonymous *Commentarii*, I also use the term “final author” or “final compiler”, as synonyms of “editor”.

recognising that the account of the *res gestae* is more important than the identity of its compiler(s).

0.2.3 Anonymity

Previous scholarship has never regarded the three anonymous *Commentarii* as a point of reference for understanding the structure and the method behind the whole Corpus.⁶³ The three *Bella* (*Bellum Alexandrinum*, *Bellum Africum* and *Bellum Hispaniense*) are considered by scholars as a mere continuation of the genuinely Caesarian *Commentarii*. Moreover, until very recently, giving an identity to the anonymous authors of the Corpus has been a matter of guesswork by modern scholars. Fifteen attributions have been counted, based prevalently on stylistic grounds. Among them, Hirtius, Oppius, Pansa, Pollio, Sallust and Macer have been thought to have authored the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, Pollio, Sallust, but also Munatius Plancus and Vocontius Trogus the *Bellum Africum*, and a *praefectus equitum*, Q. Pedius, Q. Fabius Maximus, Arguetius and L.Vibius Paciecus the *Bellum Hispaniense*.⁶⁴ As shown by the names above, modern scholarship as a whole tends to reduce the debate on authorship and anonymity almost entirely to an issue of attribution, or, *rectius*, to the possibility or impossibility of identifying an author. Moreover, scholarship has worked on the assumption that anonymity is purely accidental, or a consequence of a precarious manuscript tradition.⁶⁵ One of the reasons for the lack of

63 On the meaning of anonymity see *OED*, s.v. "anonymity": www.oed.com/view/Entry/8060 (accessed 26.03.2019) respectively. On some theoretical discussion on the literary history of anonymity see Ferry (2012); recent works on anonymity and pseudonymity within Classics and without see Peirano (2012) and Mullan (2007), respectively. Some insights into the Latin world are also mentioned in Peirano (2013) and particularly in Geue (2017) on Juvenal, who considers anonymity to be "double-edged". For the absence of autobiographical elements in the anonymous texts and the idea that texts "could have been circulated anonymously" from day one, see *ibidem*, 17-18. See the very recent monograph by Geue (2019) that examines anonymity in Latin Literature from Augustus onward and which I have unfortunately not had the chance to read at the time of submitting this thesis. According to Markus Hafner (*BMCR* 2020.03.53), Geue considers anonymity, on one hand, to be a site of literary interest than a gap to be filled - for instance, by giving identity to the work's author -, and, on the other, to be a source of power and control towards the audience of that time.

64 On this subject, scholarship is especially vast. For a list and *status quaestionis* see Quetglas Nicolau (2005), 152-153, Mayer (2011), 214 ff., but especially the three editions of *Les Belles Lettres*, respectively: Andrieu (1954), xvi-xliii; Richard (1997) and Diouron (1999), xi.

65 Canfora (1993), 83 has a slightly different view: the *suppletor(es)*, as he calls the compiler(s)

scholarly attention received by the three anonymous *Commentarii* is that scholarship seems still at odds with the idea of anonymity. Albeit in a different context, commenting on Peter Knox's observation about the Pseudo-Ovid's *Epistula Sapphus*, Richard Hunter notes that "the authorless text ... has received a cold reception from classicists ... [who] have, on the whole, never been very comfortable with the anonymous, and this anxiety may indeed surface in aesthetic condemnation."⁶⁶ In the case of the *Commentarii*, such condemnation still receives credit among scholars.⁶⁷

Anonymity, I argue, is not an accidental consequence of the manuscript tradition, but an inherent characteristic of the whole *Corpus Caesarianum*.⁶⁸ Therefore, on the basis that "anonymity may mean many things, but one thing which it cannot mean is that no one did it", as Gass writes, my study engages precisely with the nature and the meaning of the anonymity in the *Commentarii*.⁶⁹ Though they are certainly peculiar in their linguistic oddities, the anonymous *Commentarii* function as a key to identifying the structure and composition of the whole *Corpus*.⁷⁰ My research examines the three *Bella* of the so-called Continuator by considering the following particular aspects: (i) the method behind their composition (editing), (ii) the persons (reporters and editors) involved in their composition, and (iii) their function in the contemporary political scene. Therefore, far from being a colourless extension of the authentic Caesarian works, the three anonymous *Bella* are instead understood as part of the editorial and political project that Caesar conceived for his *Commentarii*.

of the *Corpus*, are obviously anonymous for the sole reason they cannot hold comparison with Caesar. See Loreto (2001) explicitly on the existence of "redattori".

66 Hunter (2013), 91.

67 Meyer (2011), 189-232, calls Hirtius "unskilled", whereas the continuators are "faithful but careless".

68 Whether such a characteristic applies to the form of the *commentarius* prior to or contemporary with Caesar is a difficult claim to make as there is no extant evidence to support it.

69 Citation from Gass (1986), 270.

70 See ch. 2.2 and 3, 77ff., and ch. 3.1. 121ff.

0.3 The *Commentarii*: the name, the reports and the “newsroom”

0.3.1 The word *commentarius*

Although a *commentarius* might be “at times a sketch for some future historian”, Marincola argues that “it can also be a full-scale independent account”. This is the case for Caesar's works.⁷¹ Although they are “meant to be used as raw material”, Caesar's *Commentarii* “do not seem to follow a previous pattern”.⁷² It is perhaps this contradiction between raw sketchy material and the possibility of a refined account which makes the genre of the *Commentarii* subject to no more than a “scattered grasp”.⁷³ When examining the word *commentarius*, Riggsby analyses the noun diachronically, without giving synchronic attention to the contemporary use of the word, as is best attested in Cicero.⁷⁴ The synchronically contextualised approach which I propose in the thesis helps to understand the circumstances in which Caesar's *Commentarii* were created.⁷⁵ Such an approach allows us to locate Caesar's choice of the *commentarius* form within the cultural milieu of the late Roman Republic, in which Caesar and Cicero act as key intellectual and political protagonists of the time and appear to be in constant dialogue with one another on subjects such as history, oratory and language. Whether the *Commentarii* were considered by contemporaries, and by Cicero especially, as narrative history is a debated issue.⁷⁶ In his *Brutus*, a work that discusses the history of orators, Cicero recognises the originality of Caesar's style in the *Commentarii*: they are clear and unadorned.⁷⁷ However, Cicero

71 Marincola (1997), 192.

72 Marincola (1997), 192.

73 Grillo (2012), 8.

74 Riggsby (2006), 133-141. See also Nousek (2018), 97ff.

75 See ch. 1.1.

76 On the debate between Caesar and Cicero on history see ch. 1.3, 51ff., and related notes.

77 Cic. *Brut.* 262.

locates the *Commentarii* outside the genre of history, as preparatory material for historians to draw on.⁷⁸ A proper work of history, according to Cicero, cannot exclude *ornatus*, namely embellishment in style, which the *Commentarii* do not possess. But Caesar's attitude towards style and language is different from Cicero's.⁷⁹ In his treatise on language, the *De Analogia*, Caesar advocates an everyday and simple Latin language, which avoids every unheard and unusual word.⁸⁰ In this light, I suggest that the *Commentarii* are the natural output of Caesar's linguistic theories. However, Caesar's choice of the *commentarius* form invites further considerations about the use and the function of the *commentarius* to record personal actions. Concerning the *Bellum Civile* alone, Grillo suggests that, by writing his own *res gestae*, Caesar accomplishes two things in one: personal recollection and objective reconstruction.⁸¹ Building on Grillo's insights, I argue that the option of the *commentarius* might have helped Caesar to overcome the limits of autobiographies. Cicero was seriously concerned about the flaws regarding “*scribere de se*”, when he wrote to his friend Luceius.⁸² Most importantly however, by publishing his treatise *De Analogia* (while engaging in a long debate with Cicero on oratory as well as language), I believe that Caesar gave shape to his art of writing. More specifically, by choosing the *commentarius* form and through the “nudity” of his Latin, he was endorsing a more effective way of communicating his actions to a wide public.

0.3.2 The existence of reports and the “newsroom” in the *Commentarii*

Scholars have taken two elements for granted but have not investigated them in their own right: the existence of reports as

78 See ch. 1.3, 51ff.

79 See ch. 1.5, 63 ff.

80 See Garcea (2012), 132 = F2 Gellius 1.10.3-4.

81 Grillo (2011), 266-7.

82 Cic. *Fam.* 15.12.8. Flaws of “*scribere de se*” concern the credibility and the authority of the person, see for more details ch.1.2, 49ff.

sources for the whole *Corpus Caesarianum* and the existence of a narrative hub, or “newsroom”, behind the structure and the completion of the *Commentarii*.

The first to study the war report or “Kriegsbulletin” as a form which can offer systematic insights on the structure of the *Commentarii* was Eduard Fraenkel. He refers to the monotonous and asyndetic style of a passage from the *Bellum Gallicum*. His focus is on the style, precisely on “das Aufgeben des Asyndeton”, without considering any other pattern of the report.⁸³ On the other hand, James Adams has more systematically investigated the “stylistic conventions of military reports”, especially in the *Bellum Africum*, with particular attention given to the use of the ablative absolute.⁸⁴ Based on a close examination of nouns, verbs and expressions in Caesar's *Commentarii*, Eva Odelman claims that they are written in a “style administratif”. On this view, Caesar is primarily “un magistrat qui (...) résumait d'une manière exacte et fidèle ses mesures administratives”.⁸⁵ According to all these scholars, this way of writing predated the era of Caesar, as the magistrates of the Republic composed administrative documents in that style. In his landmark study on Caesar's *Commentarii*, Michael Rambaud provides a comprehensive and detailed list of reports and reporters ('les rapports de légats') in each work. In his analysis he includes the anonymous *Bella*, stating that “du début du *Bellum Gallicum* à la fin du *Bellum Africum*, la méthode est une...”.⁸⁶ However, the precise nature of this method remains under-explored, while the investigation of the genuinely Caesarian works is still predominant and no further investigation into the “reporters” has been conducted by scholars. Moreover, although the scholars

83 Fraenkel (1956), 189-194, quoting *BGall.* 7.90.2-7 and providing other examples from *BGall.* (5.40.3-6), Cicero's letters (*Att.* 7.14.1, 7.2.1, 9.13a.1), and the surviving inscribed *elogia* (*CIL* I², 638 and *CIL* I², pars 186-202).

84 Adams (2005), 74-77.

85 Odelman (1972), 1.

86 Rambaud (1953), 45-77; mysteriously, the *Bellum Hispaniense* does not share the same method.

referred to above have examined some formulaic expressions present in the narrative of the whole Corpus, no study has examined the report as a self-standing unit typical of the five *Commentarii*, or its implications for the literary as well as the political nature of these works. Interestingly, through the so-called computational model, a group of researchers of different disciplines dissected the five *Commentarii* by clusters and recurrent phrasing to conclude that even Caesar was “relying on, and sometimes incorporating, the briefs written for him by his legates.”⁸⁷ Perhaps more speculatively, in his recently published monograph on Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, Richard Westall believes that the account of Curio's defeat in Africa might have derived from reports taken from the Pompeian headquarters, which is indeed a possibility, as intelligence constantly operates by acquiring written material.⁸⁸ Josiah Osgood makes copious references to reports when he argues that the relationship between Caesar's activity as a writer and as a military commander allowed him to build a coherent narrative of the otherwise scattered campaigns in Gaul. Osgood writes:

At a minimum and most obviously, on a day-to-day basis, writing allowed the Roman army to keep track of and to organize its resources - through strength reports, duty rosters, and records of individual soldiers, as well as financial records, inventories, requisition orders, itineraries, daybooks, and the like. The great majority of days were spent not in battle but in camps, or moving between camps, and for this logistics was crucial. At any moment, Caesar should, in principle, have been able to obtain a fairly accurate record of his manpower and his supplies, and this facilitated both immediate redeployment as well as longer-term planning. The keeping of written records also contributed to an ideal of accountability in subordinates.⁸⁹

In the statement quoted above, not only is the presence of any

87 Kestemont et al. (2016), 94.

88 Westall (2017), 160ff.

89 Osgood (2009), 333-334.

sort of document granted by default, but also the keeping and handling of such reports.⁹⁰ However, the existence and functioning of a narrative hub in the *Commentarii* has never been properly explored by the scholarship. Still, Rambaud depicts Hirtius as “directeur du secrétariat tour à tour écrivant sous dictée et dictant”,⁹¹ whereas Jürgen Malitz prefers the notion of “Kanzlei” to designate the entourage close to Caesar. As seen above, Osgood hints instead at the procedure of “record keeping” as a common practice during military campaigns.⁹² Such a procedure, he continues, must have been “quite advanced” even in Caesar’s time, “given the complexity of enrolling legions and their lengths of service, salaries, and decorations”.⁹³ The extant evidence of record keeping, however, dates back only as far as the Roman imperial period, as amply documented by Sara Phang in her article on military records.⁹⁴ Phang refers to the finds of the Vindolanda *praetorium*, where the “prefect’s letters and administrative documents are mingled with household accounts”.⁹⁵ Moreover, while studying Roman military records in the second-century AD papyri, Robert Fink believes that, although “no actual remains of military records survive from the period before Augustus, their nature and extent is not beyond all conjectures”.⁹⁶ He notes that the *Commentarii* “include a wide variety of subject-matters: personal observation, reports of subordinates ... tactical and strategical considerations, bon mots, casualty reports and peace terms ...”.⁹⁷ Record keeping and paperwork also imply the presence of an archive, a place where the documents are not only stored but also consulted. Scholarship has

90 Osgood (2009), 328-358; see also on Caesar’s attitude towards the work of editing, Lindsay Hall (1996), 411-415, especially 412-13, and (1998), 13–20.

91 Rambaud (1953), 56-58.

92 Malitz (1987), 51ff., on Caesar’s ‘Kanzlei’, but with no reference to the *Commentarii*; Osgood (2009), 328ff., especially on letters and the power of writing. See also Lindsey Hall (1996), 412, Cristofoli (2010), 463-464.

93 Osgood, (2009), 33 and n. 27.

94 Phang (2007), 286–305.

95 Phang (2007), 290.

96 Fink (1971), 6. Indeed, this is a somewhat conservative observation by his own admission, as he continues by quoting instances of the institution of the census, intended both by Greek and Romans for military purposes.

97 Fink (1971), 420.

debated the nature, scope and location of archives in the Roman world.⁹⁸ However, it seems highly likely that the magistrates in office, provincial governors in particular, kept these documents at hand and made use of them according to the licence of their offices.⁹⁹

As seen above, scholarly discussion on the report-based nature of the *Commentarii* has hitherto focused especially on some recurrent literary clusters and has so far been limited to the genuinely Caesarian works.¹⁰⁰ Building on these insights, I argue instead that the report structure lies behind the whole account, as contained in the five *Bella*. Reports are the hidden or half-visible material that underpins the five *Commentarii*. They concern the practice of setting down notes on a regular basis about what has happened during a military campaign at a particular moment. Reports are also the medium, being draft material of informative nature which is ready to be transformed into narrative material. The report-structure, understood both with regard to its format and content, is a recurrent pattern of the whole Corpus and the backbone of its narrative. The report-based nature points to the method that Caesar adopted in composing his work, namely the way he gathered information and organised it into the narrative of the *Commentarii*. My research examines in detail passages from the whole Corpus in order to illustrate how the narrative of the war and the actual military campaign progressed together, or, to echo the words of Osgood, how effectively and simultaneously the pen and the sword worked in the case of the *Commentarii*.¹⁰¹

Once the report structure of the *Commentarii* is made clear, my research turns to focus on how the “newsroom” works. The aim of such a narrative hub was to gather war-related documents but

98 *Archium* or *archivium* is a word of late Latin, see *TLL.*, II, 466. On archives in the Roman Republic, on terminology and with case studies, see Moatti (1993); Culham (1989), 100-115; on Roman augural - but not only - archives Affleck (2013), 126-131.

99 On paperwork generated by the Roman army and governor's archives, see Austin/Rankov (1996), 142-169, in particular 155-161.

100 With the sole exception of Adams (2005).

101 See chapter 2.2.1, 77ff.

also to function as a well-informed intelligence centre and as an archive. The three anonymous *Commentarii* demonstrate how the “newsroom” works, since the report-based structure is more evident due to the unfinished editing of the narrative. The definition of a “newsroom” which I adopt is threefold: it is a location, an archive and an entourage which consisted of a group of people, who, with different degrees of involvement, made the *Commentarii* possible in the way that they came to us. However, these three elements - location, archive, and entourage - cannot be sharply differentiated. They are intertwined as there is no archive without a location, and no archive without people to administer it. Although the identities of the reporters and the editors might still be hard to pin down with certainty, I scrutinise those identities and show how crucial the handling of the “newsroom” and the control of the archive might have been. As “there is no political power, without the control of the archive”, I argue that in the months after the Ides of March 44 BC Caesarians such as Hirtius, Balbus and Oppius handled the archive in order not only to complete the works of Caesar but also to exercise control over the information released.¹⁰² Studying the “newsroom” allows us to make a distinction between the Caesarians, who contributed with their reports to the account of Caesar's *res gestae*, and those collaborators, the *familiares*, who tried to complete the Corpus. In other words, the distinction runs between the reporters and the editor(s). In this way, the “newsroom” operates with functional and structural uniformity throughout the Corpus. Moreover, its functioning helps us (i) to identify the Caesarians who contributed as reporters and editors to the whole account and (ii) to better understand the work of editing, which the five *Commentarii* underwent as well as (iii) its political function at the time of their composition.¹⁰³

¹⁰²See Darrida (1996), 5, who, in the first chapter, discusses the definition of archive, from etymology to its implication in the collective imaginary. Also, on archives and how they differ from libraries, see Martinez-Senseny (2013), 401-417.

¹⁰³On authorship and editorship, see ch. 4, 191ff.

0.4 The political relevance of the last three *Commentarii*

Especially in the last decade, scholarship seems to have reconsidered the importance of the three anonymous books, at least on the linguistic front. While discussing various aspects of language standardisation in the *Bellum Africum*, Adams suggests that the repetitive and formulaic style “was typical not only of Caesar but also of administrative style ... a characteristic of the genre and not a mark of incompetence”.¹⁰⁴ In a similar vein, Gaertner reconsiders the language of the *Bellum Hispaniense* as “pre-standard” Latin since there was “not yet a commonly accepted norm of correct Latin in the 40’s”.¹⁰⁵ The very recent reconsideration of the language of the last three anonymous *Commentarii* coincides with a renewed scrutiny of their historical value. “Soldiering on” was the expression recently used by Cluett to describe the last three *Commentarii*.¹⁰⁶ While admitting that the so-called Continuator offered “not the finished product but the raw material with which others would work”, Cluett argues in favour of the complexity of the political relationship between the Continuator and Caesar. They are soldiers, in Cluett’s opinion, detached from the politics of Rome and who identify themselves “with both their military commander and the minutiae of the camp life.”¹⁰⁷ Due to the draft status of their work and their attention to trivial details, the so-called Continuator provide “a unique window onto Caesar’s reception by his subordinates and how [they] ... refashion his message”.¹⁰⁸ The true merit of Cluett’s analysis is that it offers a comprehensive study of the works, which transcends the prejudice regarding the language.¹⁰⁹ In the last three *Commentarii*, themes such as Caesar’s omnipresence and superior

104Adams (2005), 77, n. 24.

105Gaertner (2010), 251.

106Cluett (2009), 197.

107Cluett (2009), 200.

108*Ibidem*, 200.

109By Cluett firstly, (2003), 120 and (2009), 200. Gaertner (2018), 265ff., focused mainly on the *Hispaniense*.

agency, the *virtus* of his men and his own *fortuna*, recur frequently and are highlighted and compared. The officers behind the reports share with the original Caesarian *Commentarii* not only the method, but also the catchphrases of the Caesarian propaganda.¹¹⁰ The three anonymous *Bella*, however, are more than a collection of minutiae that echoes Caesar's propaganda. More precisely, I argue that they underwent editorial revision and are the result of assembling and combining reports from different officers. These officers are reporting from different provenances and occasionally even on the same events from different perspectives. Although almost completed, editing was a process that was undertaken on-the-go, so to speak, whose ultimate aim was to reach a wide audience in Rome and beyond, as the two genuinely Caesarian *Commentarii* did. The editors' urgency in completing the *Commentarii* suggests that the purpose of speaking to a contemporary audience (the wider civic community, the army and the provincials), namely to readers and listeners of the years 44/43 BC. As a result, the last three *Commentarii* not only “shed light on the political culture and mentalities of some Romans during the years 48-45 BC”, as Cluett suggests, but also, and more importantly, are texts actively operating within the contemporary political scene following the Ides of March in the years 44-43 BC, for which purpose they were designed.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰Still valuable on Caesarian propaganda is Syme (1939); see also Collins (1952) and Yavetz (1983). On high-sounding words such as *felicitas*, see Murphy (1986), 307-317; on the use of *celeritas* and *felicitas* see for instance Vatinius' account, *BAlex.* 42-47, see ch. 3.1.3, 137ff.

¹¹¹Cluett (2003); 120, who are the Romans is not clear. On this see below ch. 5, 233ff.

Chapter 1

Caesar's Commentarii: characteristic traits and purposes

The *commentarius* form was a deliberate choice on the part of Caesar. Until that time, the *commentarius* had been thought of by his contemporaries, such as Cicero, as a draft-like written material.¹ It constituted “a collection of notes to be used for a work of history”.² In Caesar's hands, the *commentarius* attained the status of a literary work in its own right. Through the *Commentarii* Caesar narrated his own *res gestae*. In doing so, the *Commentarii* also became a self-standing work of history.

Cicero himself grappled with the idea of writing a *commentarius* on his own exploits as consul. In fact, he did write a rough version of one in 60 BC, which he wanted to be completed by his friend, the philosopher and historian Posidonius.³ Five years later in 55 BC, Cicero also tried to persuade another historian, his friend Lucceius, to write about the events of his consulship.⁴ Posidonius amicably rejected the offer by saying that Cicero's draft-like piece was already polished and well-written. As for Lucceius, we do not know his reaction, only the reasons for Cicero's request. The orator feels that the fact of writing one's own history, *scribere de se*, lacks credibility and authority, and, therefore, a historian such as Lucceius ought to take charge and polish the written material, which Cicero provides in the form of a *commentarius*.⁵ A few years later, Caesar's *Commentarii* appeared on the political and cultural scene of Rome. Cicero cannot ignore their novelty: the form of the *commentarius* as a self-standing work of history.

The two relished discussing cultural issues with irony and a certain subtlety. Their variously competitive relationship dates back

¹ See Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.10.3, *Att.* 2.1.12. and *Brut.* 262.

² Garcea (2012), 111.

³ Cic. *Att.* 2.1.2, letter dated 3rd June 60 BC.

⁴ Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.10.3.

⁵ See below, p. 45.

to their school environment, as they happened to share the same teachers, such as Antonius Gniphus, as I will discuss below.⁶ However, it is around the *Commentarii* that what I will call the cultural dispute between Caesar and Cicero reaches its climax.

Cicero's judgment on Caesar's *Commentarii* appears in a work on oratory written in 46 BC, the *Brutus*.⁷ This reference to Caesar's work in the *Brutus* cannot be casual, and it is surely of at least equal relevance that Caesar is the only living orator quoted in the *Brutus*. Much has been written on the reasons for this inclusion and on the nature of Cicero's judgment.⁸ However, Cicero's lines are uncontroversial, as they entail references to the style of the *Commentarii*, to their relationship with the genre of history, and also, albeit indirectly, to oratory. Cicero's judgments on the *Commentarii* follows a comment by "Atticus" on Caesar's *elegantia*.⁹ Cicero has his friend saying that Caesar shows himself to be a great orator when he combines his *elegantia* with *ornatus* (embellishment), implying that *elegantia* alone is not sufficient. According to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* - an anonymous text dated between 86 and 70 BC - *elegantia* is thought to comprise linguistic purity (*purus sermo*) and grammatical correctness (*dilectus verborum*).¹⁰ Both in the *De Oratore* and the *Brutus*, Cicero employs the same terminology and deals with the word *elegantia* and both linguistic purity and grammatical correctness.¹¹ According to Cicero's *De*

⁶ On "cultural competitiveness" between Caesar and Cicero, see Rawson (1985), 113 and Fantham (2009), 144. See also Leeman (1963), 157, who speaks of a "community of literary convictions" between the two.

⁷ Cic. *Brut.* 262.

⁸ Gurd (2007), 60 interprets the lines "paradoxically containing a profound criticism" towards Caesar; Pelling (2006), 18-19, suggests Cicero's judgement is part of a sophisticated game which the two men, as intellectuals and men of letters, play with generic convention. Kraus (2005), 98, believes Cicero "advises leaving the *Commentarii* unmolested", and that Cicero is not fully praising Caesar's work. See also Brugnoli (1993), 585, and Lowrie (2008), 144. More neutral Gotoff (1984), 1, whereas Cluett (2009), 192, speaks of praise on the part of Cicero.

⁹ Cic. *Brut.* 261. See below p. 51ff.

¹⁰ On the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, see Calboli (1993) and Hilder (2015). On *elegantia* both in Caesar and Cicero see the thorough treatment in Lemanto (1995), 3-127.

¹¹ Cicero makes extensive use of the term *elegantia* in the *De Oratore* (11 times) and especially in the *Brutus* (27 times). In the latter, for instance, Cicero acknowledges the linguistic purity of several orators, but he never omits to emphasise for each of them their lack of instruction, their capacity to move the audience, literary learning and talent (see Scribonius Curio (*Brut.* 213), Calidius (*Brut.* 274), Aurelius Cotta (*Brut.* 202), Laelius and

Oratore, *elegantia* is not a defining quality of an accomplished *orator*, but is instead what every Roman citizen needs to master *Latine loqui*, being a sort of essential quality.¹² Cicero's Atticus, in other words, is praising Caesar, but at the same time suggests that his oratory does not use *ornatus* with due frequency, or, *rectius*, that “*ornatus* plays a secondary role” in Caesar's speeches.¹³ The praise of “Atticus” sounds disingenuous and prepares the reader for the reference to Caesar's *Commentarii*. There is a dose of irony which Cicero reserves for Atticus himself, that is worth noticing here. The comment on Caesar's infrequent use of *ornatus* comes from the very same Atticus, whose historical work Cicero has defined as unrefined and lacking in *ornatus*.¹⁴ Cicero's insistence on Caesar's *elegantia* is “the result of a polemical attitude to the model of eloquence illustrated in the *De Analogia*.”¹⁵ This treatise, which Caesar composed on language cites eloquence as consisting in one's choice of vocabulary (*verborum dilectum originem esse eloquentiae*),¹⁶ and “in the true, etymological, value of the word *elegantia*”.¹⁷ Such a choice is not for the purposes of embellishment, but rather concerns a style that places a primacy on linguistic correctness, which is aimed at conveying a message clearly and unequivocally.¹⁸

Probably written in the year 54 BC, the treatise *De Analogia* is dedicated to Cicero, and Cicero himself quotes from it in his *Brutus*.¹⁹ Most likely taken from the proem of the *De Analogia*, the lines contain Caesar's recognition of Cicero's supremacy in

Cornelius Scipio (*Brut.* 86, 89, 211, 258), etc.). See *TLL*, s.v. *elegantia*, V. 2, C 2a-b.

12 Cic. *De Orat.* 3. 1-3. See below p. 64.

13 Garcea (2012), 110.

14 No extant fragment remains of Atticus' historical work mentioned by Cicero (*Att.* 2.1.1-2), but the wording is significant as Atticus does not display any use of *ornatus*: “*sed tamen ornata hoc ipso quod ornamenta neglexerant*”.

15 Garcea (2012), 109.

16 Cic. *Brut.* 253.

17 Garcea, (2012), 82.

18 See Sinclair (1994).

19 Cic. *Brut.* 253 = Caes. *de Anal.* F1 A-B Garcea. On the dating of the *De Analogia*, see Garcea (2012), 24-26. A work that was contemporary to Caesar's *De Analogia* is Varro's *De lingua latina* in twelve books; both works were dedicated to Cicero. On the significance of these treatises “in putting forward an ideologically buttressed politics of language”, see *ibidem*, 13.

eloquence, which counterbalances Cicero's acknowledgment of Caesar's linguistic skills. The very same lines conceal an underlying and subtle polemical intent: though praises are exchanged, the two men's views on language and its use in oratory are different.²⁰ As stated above, the references made by Cicero's Atticus regarding Caesar's speeches and his *elegantia* introduced Cicero's opinion of the *Commentarii*. These paragraphs (from 261 to 262) show that Caesar's view on language led him to publish his exploits in the form of the *Commentarii*.

Cicero's praise of the *Commentarii* is more apparent than real, since the orator subtly expresses his reservations on Caesar's work. The first reference is indeed to style: Caesar's *Commentarii* are admirable - they are bare, straightforward and beautiful and this is undeniably so (*nudi ... omni ornatu orationis tamquam veste detracta*). By echoing the comment made by "Atticus" on Caesar's *elegantia verborum*, Cicero affirms that Caesar's *Commentarii*, although certainly worthy of praise, fail to comply fully with the ideal of *ornatus*. Moreover, in Cicero's opinion, the *Commentarii* are so well-finished that no historian would dare to work on them. Such a warning against attempting to re-write Caesar's own account is directed by Cicero to other historians. They might still be tempted to try though, since the form of the *commentarius* was perceived by Cicero's contemporaries as draft-like material to be polished. The orator here seems to suggest that the *Commentarii*, despite being well written, are still material to be potentially polished by historians. In other words, by stating rather subtly that Caesar's works are draft-like and lack *ornatus*, Cicero seems to locate the *Commentarii* as a genre outside the *genus historicum*.²¹ History, according to Cicero's famous definition – which should be treated with caution, as argued

²⁰ See Sinclair (1994), 94, who argues that "despite his exaggerated deference to Cicero, Caesar seems to be on the attack", see also Brugnoli (1993), 595.

²¹ On Cic. *Brut.* 262, see Dugan (2005), Kraus (2005), 98, and Gurd (2007), 60, who notes: "paradoxically, this high praise contains a profound criticism. Caesar's texts cannot be the basis for any communal rewriting, for their very purity leaves them isolated on the political stage."

below -, is oratory at its best, *opus oratorium maxime*.²² The fact that Caesar delivers a self-standing work, which is no longer a draft-like material but retains the unadorned style of a *commentarius*, is at odds with what Cicero might expect from a work of history. The subtle hostility in Cicero's *Brutus* is not only aimed against Caesar's *Commentarii*, but also against his oratory, his style and most likely against the way that he communicates with the audience. Caesar, according to Cicero, produces (a kind of) history through a medium, the *commentarius*, which, rather than being preparatory to history, becomes a vehicle for an unadorned language, and the account of one's own *res gestae*.

This first chapter begins by providing a historical picture of the contextualised use of the word *commentarius* at the time of Cicero's and Caesar's writing. It explores how both authors confront each other on the subject of history, oratory and language in relation to the *Commentarii*. Such an exploration leads me to conclude that Caesar's use of language, which differs from Cicero's, was perceived by the contemporaries as being at the root of his decision to compose the *Commentarii* and that, therefore, when analysed in this context, the *De Analogia* may be considered the work which is conceptually proemial to the *Commentarii* themselves.

1.1 *Commentarii*: a synchronic approach

Caesar never mentions the word *commentarius* in his writings. More specifically, no prefatory comments are found in his *Commentarii* and no programmatic method (that deals with issues such as why and for which audience he wrote) is explicitly stated or plainly explained by him or by his so-called Continuator throughout the whole *Corpus Caesarianum*.²³ The word *Commentarii*, in relation

²² Definition in Cic. *Leg.* 1.5, see Dyck (2004), 73. On the relationship between oratory and history in Cicero, see below p.51.

²³ With the exception of Hirtius in his prefatory letter to Balbus, *BGall.* 8. *praef.* 2 (twice), and *BGall.* 8.48 (twice). On the title of Caesar's work, besides the contemporary Cic. *Brut.* 262, discussed below, and Suet. *Iul.* 56.1, see Kelsey (1905). On Hirtius' prefatory letter, his editorial work and the manuscript tradition Pecere (2003), 183-227, an important study on the perception and the use of *Commentarii* in oratory, through Cicero and Quintilian.

to Caesar's works, also appears exclusively in the works by contemporaries Cicero (*Brut.* 262) and Hirtius (*BGall.* 8 praef. 2ff., and *BGall.* 8.48) and later in Suetonius (*Iul.* 56.1ff.). Interestingly, the word *Commentarii* is followed by the genitive of specification *rerum suarum* in Cicero and Suetonius, and by *rerum gestarum* in Hirtius, to explain the noun *Commentarii*, which by itself would evidently have been too generic. Significantly, it seems that the term cannot stand alone. Hence the noun itself, *commentarius*, seems to refer generically to the form (a year-by-year account in a draft state) and less to the content (i.e. a war diary, the account of a magistrate in office), as the need for the specifying genitive suggests.²⁴

The word *commentarius* has a wide range of meanings: it implies recording events and deeds at the time or shortly after their occurrence, documenting the activities of institutional bodies and their agents (magistrates, *collegia*, councils). It also refers to works of writers, widely dispersed in time, space and social status, such as grammarians and jurists.²⁵ Current scholarship tends to interrogate the noun *commentarius* diachronically, without paying comparative attention to the use of the word in Cicero as Caesar's contemporary.²⁶ The range of meanings listed above inevitably indicates a variety in content and topics, which Riggsby ascribes to "human intentionality rather than being pre-existing categories".²⁷ These characteristics, including the word's different meanings, the

²⁴ According to Premerstein (1900), 726ff., Cicero was the first Latin author to use the word *commentarius*. Moreover, the form *commentarius* is originally an adjective which has been substantivised. Originally the word implied agreement with a masculine noun such as *liber*, see Meyer (2004), 32-33, who suggests that *Commentarii*, sometimes called *libri Commentarii* or simply *libri*, were bound together in a format or on a support different from the *tabulae*. *Commentarius* is a partial translation of the Greek term Ἰπτόμνημα and the simultaneous use of the two terms occurs in Cicero as the first and sole instance in the Late Republic, in which they denote a sketch work in need of a literary elaboration. This can be seen in two letters to Atticus, dated March to June 60 BC, which refer to his memoir on his consulship written in Greek (*FRHist.* vol.II, 39, T1 = *Att.* 1.19.10 and *FRHist.* vol.II, 39 T3, 2 = *Att.* 2.1.2). The diminutive *commentariolum* (neuter) appears for the first time in Q. Cic. *Pet.* 58; see also Cic. *De or.* 1.5; *Fin.* 4. 9 and *Phil.* 1.16. See also Rüpke (2015), Brill online.

²⁵ See for instance, *commentarii* related to magistracies (Varro *Ling.* 6.88; Livy 1.31.8; Tac. *Hist.* 4.40) and to priestly colleges (Cic. *Brut.* 55; Quint. 8.2.12), as works of a juridical nature (Cic. *De or.* 2.224, Gell. 1.12.18) or related to grammarians (Varr. *Ling.* 6.95; Cic. *De or.* 1.240; Gell. 3.12.1). For a fairly complete list, see Riggsby (2006), 134.

²⁶ Riggsby (2006), 133-155, see n. 1.

²⁷ See Riggsby (2006), 134, and 239, n. 5 to 12, for all the entries on authorship.

works' diverse authorship, and their disparate form and content, are already present and implied by the use which Cicero himself makes of the word. As Riggsby's inventory shows Cicero uses the word *commentarius* in relation to magistrates (Cic. *Rab. Post.* 15; *In Verr.* 2.5.54), priestly colleges (*Brut.* 55; *Div.* 2.42), jurists (*De or.* 2.224), grammarians (*De or.* 1.240), philosophers (*Div.* 1.6; *Off.* 3.8 and 3.121) and schoolchildren (*De Or.* 1.5).²⁸

As the flexibility of the term *Commentarii* was well known to Cicero, I will now consider how the word was employed throughout the first century BC and its possible links to Caesar's works. In the year 55 BC, Cicero urged his friend Lucceius to compose the record of Cicero's own achievements as a public officer: "If you want to undertake the case, I will prepare *commentarii* on all the facts (*commentarios rerum omnium*) ... meanwhile do not make any further delay and polish thoroughly the material you have (*ea quae habes instituta perpolies*)".²⁹ According to this passage, *commentarius* constitutes material that is not refined and not ready to be published, which implicitly requires not only stylistic embellishment and ornament (*ea quae habes perpolies*), but also an external intervention provided by either, Cicero hopes, an intellectual (Posidonius), or a friend and collaborator (Atticus and Lucceius).³⁰ In his commentary on the extant *testimonia* and the fragments of Cicero's memoirs on his consulship,³¹ Drummond argues that: "the application of the term (...) does not justify the assumption that *commentarius* as memoir is properly an elaborated version of a

²⁸ A contemporary use of the word is only attested in Varro, *Ling.* 6.88 and 6.95, see n. 25.

²⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.10.3; the verb *perpolio*, referring to his lost *Consilia*, is employed in *Att.* 14.17.6. However, it is possible that the words "*ea quae habes*" refers to Cicero's other written material. Translations are mine unless otherwise stated.

³⁰ Writing to Atticus in June 60 BC (*Att.* 2.1.2), Cicero says that Posidonius, who has been invited by Cicero to produce a more embellished (*ornatius*) account of his memoir (*ὑπόμνημα*), had refused to embark on such a work and had been frightened off. See following note.

³¹ "Memoirs" include the Latin prose *commentarius* (*Att.* 1.19.10) – of which no further trace survives – and the Greek prose memoir (*Att.* 1.19.10), which Cicero calls *ὑπόμνημα* in *Att.* 2.1.12, likely a single book, of which a dozen *Testimonia* (*FRHist.* vol.II, 39, T1-T12) remain. Of these we have only one fragment (*FRHist.* vol.II, 39, F1), plus two which are unassigned but possibly from the Greek version (*FRHist.* vol.II, 39, F2-F3).

magistrate's own record of his term in office.”³² Moreover, as seen above for Caesar's works, *commentarius* is a generic noun, a synonym of notebook, in which information is collected, such as the minutes of meetings, and which is therefore extendable to all kind of authors and genres. Bearing the meaning of a notebook, albeit one strictly related to an administrative office, the term occurs in the speech against Verres.³³ Similarly, in the correspondence between Caelius Rufus and Cicero, the phrase *Commentarii rerum urbanarum* refers to summaries of civic events and minutes of speeches held in the Senate.³⁴ In the case of the speech *Pro Sulla* (62 BC), Cicero had his *commentarius*, his private notes, published rather than kept at home.³⁵ Such semi-official state documents, summarily sketched out, were sources of information and acquired a certain historical value. For instance, in the *Pro Rabirio* Cicero, who was consul at the time of the speech (63 BC), refers to an otherwise unknown set of “*regum Commentarii*”, whose style is *acerbus*, i.e. not only “harsh”, but “unripe”: “this man [Titus Labienus] dares to call himself *popularis* ... although he sought out all these cruel punishments, all these cruel words (*suppliciorum et verborum acerbitates*) not from your and your fathers' memory but from the *Annales* and the *Commentarii* of the kings.”³⁶ What is noteworthy about this passage for the present discussion is that the association between style (*verborum acerbitas*) and *Commentarii* is established. Not only did Labienus find in the Annals and *Commentarii* of the kings ancient and cruel punishments, but also the harshest words with which to prosecute Rabirius. In the *Brutus*, the very same work where Caesar's *Commentarii* are also quoted, it is noticeable how Cicero refers to *commentarii* as old records, which mention historical events and provide dates.³⁷ In one of these passages, he writes:

³² *FRHist.* vol.I, p. 371.

³³ Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.54.

³⁴ See Cic. *Fam.* 8.2.2.9 and *Fam.* 8.11.4.1 respectively.

³⁵ Cic. *Sull.* 43 and 45.

³⁶ Cic. *Rab. Post.* 15. On the *eloquentia popularis* David (1985), 68-71.

³⁷ See Cic. *Brut.* 55 and *Brut.* 60.

- "Accius wrote that Livius was captured in Tarentum ... Atticus writes, and we find confirmed (*invenimus*) in ancient *Commentarii*".³⁸

In the lines above, the verb *invenimus* implies time spent researching sources of information which were not immediately available but which were probably preserved in public or private archives, where the reference work might have been hard to track down.³⁹ Interestingly, in the *De finibus*, when visiting young Lucullus' library in Tusculum and asked by Cato which books he was looking for, Cicero claims: "I came to get Aristotle's *Commentarii*, which I knew were here, I replied, I can read them during what is a rare holiday for me".⁴⁰ In this passage *Commentarii* refers to Aristotle's esoteric works, as opposed to his acroamatic or exoteric writings (i.e. which were intended for oral delivery), as explained elsewhere in the *De finibus*:

"On the supreme good two different kinds of works were written, one more written for a public audience (*populariter*)⁴¹ which they called exoteric, the other more specialised (*limatius*), which took the form of *commentarii* ...".⁴²

The word *limatius* is variously translated as "wrought" or "specialised", with the sense of *subtilius*, *abstrictius*, *nudius*.⁴³ It also seems to denote the opposite of *ornatus*⁴⁴ and recalls *nudi recti* and *venusti*, which are epithets attached to Caesar's *Commentarii* in

³⁸ Cic. *Brut.* 72.

³⁹ Within the context of literary research, *invenire* bears the connotation of "finding out" as a result of researching: see Liv. 4.7.10; Varro *Ling.* 5.23; Vitruvius 10.7.5. For full list, see *TLL*. VII, 2. 141. In Varro, *Ling.* 6.88 the verb *invenire* related to *Commentarii consulares* constitutes, to my knowledge, the only extant reference to *Commentarii* written by consuls.

⁴⁰ Cic. *Fin.* 3.10.

⁴¹ Rackham (1931) translates "popular in style", while Woolf (2001), 121, has "popular". The adverb is genuinely Ciceronian, which refers to *populus* as to an audience, as addressee, receiver or to be pleased, more than qualifying a style and without political reference (as in *Leg.* 1,19, Dyck (2004), 112. Among the instances listed in *TLL*, see especially *Fin.* 5.12; *Verr.* 2.1.151; and *Clu.* 93; 134 and 139.

⁴² Cic. *Fin.* 5.12.

⁴³ "Wrought" is in Rackham (1931), 403, "specialised" in Woolf (2001), 121 and Annas (2001), 121, and the Latin synonyms in Madvig (1876), 621.

⁴⁴ A Ciceronian obsession at a point where ironically Fronto, 125, remarks on Cicero's neglect of style, which should have been more brief, terse and unadorned (*necessario brevius et expeditius et densius et, quod interdum res pascit, inornatius*).

Cicero's *Brutus*.⁴⁵

Throughout the *Philippicae* (composed in the years 44 to 43 BC), on the other hand, the *Commentarii* appear to refer to Caesar's personal notes and memoranda. When in the hands of Antony, Cicero polemically affirms that they were sold like programmes for gladiators: "What am I to say about the endless memoranda (*de Commentariis infinitis*), the innumerable handwritten documents? There are peddlers who actually sell them openly like programmes for the gladiators."⁴⁶ This forgery factory (*falsorum commentariorum et chirographorum officina*)⁴⁷ overseen by Antony recurs several times,⁴⁸ in the case of Deiotarus⁴⁹ and with regard to a tax-free allocation of land to Sextus Cloelius.⁵⁰ The same irony, displayed in the speeches against Antonius, is observable in the letter to Octavianus: "He [Antonius] wasted public money ... according to the instructions of Caesar's notebook (*ex commentario*)."⁵¹ Numerous references to Caesar's *Commentarii* in Cicero's *Philippicae*, as personal notes and memoranda, could possibly have reminded readers and listeners of the *Commentarii* of the *res gestae* or *res suae*, which were already published and in circulation. This would represent an additional irony on the part of Cicero, who both draws attention to the existence of a massive production of written documents by Caesar, yet is still dismissive of the *Commentarii* as rough, untrue and manipulable documents.⁵² It follows that the choice of the *commentarius* form allows Caesar to engage actively with Cicero on literary issues such as how to write history and what style to adopt in writing it. One of these issues concerns precisely how to *scribere de se*, namely how to write on one's own deeds. A

⁴⁵ See below ch. 1.3, 51ff.

⁴⁶ Cic. *Phil.* 2.97 as translated by Shackleton Bailey (2010).

⁴⁷ Cic. *Att.* 14.13A.2.6 again *ex falsis ... Commentariis*, quoting Antonius' letter, which mentions Caesar's memoranda, *Att.* 14.13.6.9.

⁴⁸ Cic. *Phil.* 1. 16 *commentariolis ... libellis*, in which the two diminutives belittle the importance of the documents, see also 2. 35; 5.11 and 5.12.

⁴⁹ Cic. *Phil.* 2.95.

⁵⁰ Cic. *Phil.* 2.43. On forgeries, although mainly focused on early Christian Authors, see Ehrman (2013), 1, 11-148.

⁵¹ Cic. *Ad Oct.* 3.10.

⁵² See n. 50.

problem, as I will examine below, which Caesar seems to overcome with his *Commentarii* and which Cicero discusses with his friend, the historian L. Lucceius.

1.2 *Commentarii*: how to write *de se* without writing *de se*

In the letter, mentioned above, to L. Lucceius, who was completing a history of the Italic and civil wars, Cicero invites his friend to write and celebrate his own achievement as consul against the Catilinarian conspirators and he adds:

“If something restrains you [from writing about my consulship], I shall perhaps do what some often censure, namely to write about myself (*scribam ipse de me*) ... But as you do not fail to notice, this genre has several shortcomings (*vitia*): who writes about himself must be more modest when praise is due ... also this genre has less credibility and less authority (*accedit etiam ut minor sit fides, minor auctoritas*)”.⁵³

According to Cicero, writing one's own life's story, seriously compromises the *fides* and the *auctoritas* of the person and his place in history. More correctly, as Misch affirms: “the literary form in which the career of a historic individual was to be described, suffered and lost influence and convincingness if the author was the person concerned.”⁵⁴ This sceptical attitude towards autobiographies written by contemporaries re-emerges in Cicero's *Brutus*.⁵⁵ There, Cicero complains that both Aemilius Scaurus' and Lutatius Catulus' autobiographies are no longer read, while no mention is made of Rutilius Rufus' *De vita sua*, despite the fact that the man's qualities are highly praised by Cicero. Autobiographical works seem to have been inaugurated, as far as we know, by Scaurus' *De vita sua*, which was apparently a complete account of his life, rather than just of a particular set of events in relation to his consulate in 115 BC.⁵⁶

⁵³ Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.8, translation by Grillo (2011), 243, on Lucceius see above p. 44.

⁵⁴ Misch (1973), 187. A largely forgotten work, but still extremely valuable for the general overview of autobiographies in the ancient world.

⁵⁵ Cic. *Brut.* 112 (on Scaurus and Rutilius) and 132 (on Catulus).

⁵⁶ *FRHist* vol. I, 18 M. Aemilius Scaurus, p. 268ff.: every hypothesis of almost every historian must be treated with caution, due to the incomplete *testimonia* and scattered extant

Later on, Lutatius Catulus composes his *De consulatu et rebus gestis suis*, which is written in the first person and focuses on his consulship, in 102 BC.⁵⁷ Rutilius Rufus' *De vita sua* is also known, and was likely an account of his exilic retirement composed in the first person.⁵⁸ While Cicero turns to Lucceius to write about his own consulship, Caesar overcomes the obstacle of *scribere de se* by adopting the *commentarius* as an original tool. This document was already in use to report facts and deeds, displaying at the same time involvement and distance, memory and objectivity.

Examining the narrative strategies adopted by Caesar in his account of the Civil War, Grillo concludes that “through such strategies Caesar advances a double claim: to endorse his memories of facts that he never experienced (as he has not always witnessed the events he gave account to), and to report his own deeds with objectivity worthy of a historian”. Caesar's bold narrative devices, such as the choice of the third person, place the *Commentarii* at the intersection between memoirs and history. In doing so, Caesar implicitly accomplishes two things at once: “a personal recollection and an objective reconstruction of the civil war.”⁵⁹ Arguably, by choosing the medium of the *commentarius*, Caesar was consciously able to fuse together memoirs and history. The choices were only two: the actor could find an expert rhetorician and historian to write about him or on his behalf, as Cicero attempted to do with regard to Lucceius and to Posidonius or the actor could be the narrator and write prose *de se*, as Scaurus and Sulla did.⁶⁰ The option of the *commentarius* as adopted by Caesar goes far beyond the mere status of a draft or document, and reveals its functionality as a tool to overcome the limits of autobiography and

fragments.

57 *FRHist* vol.I, 19 Q. Lutatius Catulus, p. 271ff. Cicero's opinion on Lutatius' style (*Cic. Brut.* 132) is remarkable, as discussed below in ch. 4.2.1, 209ff.

58 *FRHist.* vol. I, 21 P. Rutilius Rufus, p. 271ff., but no more could be said on “form, scope, content and economy of the work” due to the elusive state of the fragments.

59 Grillo (2011), 266-7, believes that Pollio's remarks on Caesar's objectivity uncover what Caesar laboured to conceal, i.e. his absence from some theatres of war (*Suet. Iul.* 56,4).

60 See above p. 49.

at the same time serving as a vehicle to write *de se*. However, the differences between Caesar and Cicero were not limited to how to *scribere de se*. The two statesmen were subtly yet consistently debating not only on history, but also on oratory and language and the *Commentarii* were at the heart of that debate, as I argue in the following sections.

1.3 Caesar and Cicero dialoguing on history

As mentioned above, for Cicero, history is oratory at its best, an *opus* that requires stylistic embellishment and ornament. The definition of history as “*opus oratorium maxime*”, which has been lengthily debated by scholars, appears in the proem of Cicero's *De Legibus* (*Leg.* 1.5) and is spoken by one of its protagonists, Atticus.⁶¹ Such a definition seems to suggest that history as a genre is completely dependent upon rhetoric. A few years earlier, in another dialogue, the *De Oratore* (dated to 56 BC), Cicero has the orator Marcus Antonius discuss in a more elaborate fashion the stylistic qualities which are appropriate to historical writing.⁶² According to Cicero's Antonius, history-writing in Rome “was a simple, unadorned narrative, immune from rhetorical influence”, as historians of the likes of Herodotus and Thucydides had yet to make their mark in Rome.⁶³ In other words, since “a rhetorically enhanced

⁶¹ On Cic. *Leg.* 1.5, see Dyck (2004), 73. On the definition of history in the proem of *De Legibus*, see Nicolai (2000), 105-125, who argues that history, according to Cicero, is certainly related to rhetorical skills but is incompatible with political activity, which is, by contrast, a prerogative of a proper orator; for a similar interpretation and for further references see Dolganov (2008), 23-38. On the proems of Ciceronian works, see Baraz (2012), 131-159.

⁶² Cic. *De or.* 2, 51-64. On the relationship between oratory and history in Cicero and especially in the *De Oratore* and the *De Legibus*, see Leeman-Pinkster, 249-252 who argue that Cicero regards history-writing as a branch of rhetoric, and Petzold (1999), 252-265ff., who sees in Cicero's view on writing history the culmination of the orator-statesman career. Woodman (1988), 78-116 and 197ff., emphasises the importance of style not only in Cicero's idea of history-writing, but also in the reception of historical texts; see also Fantham (2004), 147-152, who adds that Cicero “pays more attention in characterizing history to its richer and varied content than to its style”, namely in characterizing history as a form of literature in its own right. Fox (2007), especially 111-148, takes a different approach; he focuses on the historical settings of both the *De Oratore* and *De Legibus* and, while recognising the rhetorical quality in Cicero's idea of history, points out that Cicero in the *De Oratore* depicts the absence of rhetoric not only in Roman historiography but more generally in Roman society.

⁶³ Fox (2007), 139. On Marcus Antonius the orator, see below n. 71.

historiography was still to come” into Roman culture, Cicero's definition of history in the *De Legibus* is, according to Fox, to be more observational than “validatory”.⁶⁴ Caesar's *Commentarii* appeared on the literary and political scene when Cicero had already broached the possible encounter between the disciplines of history and oratory. It is also noteworthy that between 60 BC (when he sent his *commentarius* to Posidonius) and 46 BC (the date of composition of the *Brutus*), Cicero never ventured to write history. The orator believed, on one hand, that writing one's own history, *scribere de se*, lacked credibility and, on the other, that writing history was an undertaking proper to a retired senior statesman, with time on his hands.⁶⁵ However, Fox argues that, “were Cicero to set his mind on history, he would doubtless be able to contribute his stylistic expertise”.⁶⁶ It is by beginning from stylistic considerations that the orator expresses his opinion on Caesar's *Commentarii*. Cicero's well-known lines in the *Brutus* clearly state the connection between Caesar's style and the style of the *Commentarii* and their possible use by the historians:

“Brutus: His [sc. Caesar's] orations certainly seem to me very admirable. I have read many of his speeches and also the *Commentarii* on his deeds which he himself wrote. [Cicero] They are deserving of great admiration. For they are clear, direct, and charming, with all decorative language removed like an article of clothing (*nudi enim sunt, recti et venusti, omni ornatu orationis tamquam veste detracta*). But while he was hoping to provide material that others could draw from to write history, he may have done fools a favour, men who would scorch them with curling-irons, but he put wiser heads off of writing. You see, nothing is sweeter in history than pure and shining brevity.”⁶⁷

64 *Ibidem*, 139. I agree with Fox's argument here, which looks far beyond the content of the *De Oratore* section, in which Cicero's Antonius debates about history. Fox (2007), 119 concludes that Cicero observes, more than validates “the need to integrate rhetoric into the Roman political process”. Validatory is his term, *ibidem*.

65 Cic. *De leg.* 1.3.9.

66 Fox (2007), 143.

67 Cic. *Brut.* 262, as translated by Riggsby (2006), 141. On the translation of *nudi, recti et venusti* see Kraus (2005), 97-115, at 98: “bare, upright and graceful”, but then 112: “nude, erect and sexy”, Hendrickson (1939), 227: “like nude figures straight and beautiful”.

From the inclusion of this comment on the *Commentarii*, it is plausible to deduce Cicero's intention to engage with Caesar's contemporary literary innovation. Perhaps due to the popularity that Caesar's work seems to have enjoyed, Cicero seems to be uneasy with the dictator's *Commentarii*. As he suggests, they are not a work of history and they are certainly not a work of oratory.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Cicero seems to identify the *Commentarii* as a stand-alone genre, while commenting on their stylistic features. Interestingly, with regard to *laudationes* and funeral speeches, Cicero's critical view appears in a language strikingly similar to that adopted in *Brutus* 262:

“Our *laudationes* which we usually deliver in the Forum have either the nude and unadorned brevity of a witness' deposition (*aut testimoni brevitatem habent nudam atque inornatam*), or they are written for a public delivery like a funeral oration, which is an unsuitable occasion to gain distinction in rhetoric.”⁶⁹

This passage in the *De Oratore* (composed in 55 BC) hints at a link between style and distinction in oratory. If the style is *ornatus*, oratory is to be praised; by contrast, *nuditas* and unadorned technique are characteristics of writing intended merely for public delivery, which is distinct from oratory. Moreover, as Cicero's Antonius points out, in order to make *laudatio* a distinctive piece of oratory, the *ornatus* has to be *more Graecorum*, i.e. in the manner of the Greeks, rather than the non-rhetorical and nude style of the older (previous to Cicero's time) *laudationes*.⁷⁰ This harsh judgement expressed on the ancient *laudationes funebres* is reinforced a decade later in a few lines in the *Brutus*, where Cicero clearly affirms how full of falsifications those speeches could be: aristocratic

⁶⁸ Cicero himself seems to hint at the popularity of the *Commentarii* in *Marcell.* 28-29, as detailed below at ch. 4.2.3, 219.

⁶⁹ Cic. *De or.* 2.341.

⁷⁰ On Marcus Antonius, the orator and Cicero's point of view in the *De Oratore* see Fantham (2004), 26-48, Dugan (2005), 90-104, who dwells on the Cicero's presence/absence in the *De Oratore*. On the difference in style and content between old (relative to Cicero's time) and new *laudationes*, see Pina Polo (2004) 143ff., and Pepe (2011), 141.

families took advantage of the opportunity to celebrate themselves, adding achievements, events and kinships that were either fabricated or elaborated in order to raise their prestige and charisma.⁷¹ It is also worth noting that Cicero's opinions regarding *laudationes* seem to echo those he expresses towards Caesar's works and style. By being unadorned and not composed *more Graecorum*, the *laudationes* stand outside the realm of oratory. Moreover, as they contain misinterpretations and fabrications, the *laudationes* are also untruthful (and partial).⁷² Similarly, in Cicero's eyes, the unpolished nature of the *Commentarii* demonstrates their exclusion from the realm of history, since the latter requires a more adorned style, the *ornatus*.⁷³ Caesar's simplicity, in contrast with Cicero's oratorical *copia*, set the dictator apart from the oratory as championed in the *Brutus*. Furthermore, behind the flattering and ironic judgment of style, Cicero's opinion betrays the admission that Caesar's books were inimitable and perhaps difficult to challenge in terms of historical accuracy.⁷⁴ Cicero “treats Caesar's style as a unique event outside the *Brutus*' scheme of oratorical development”, mentioning him “within a digression that he marked as exceptional by his being the only living speaker discussed in the work”.⁷⁵ Such exceptionality also emerges from the references to that particular kind of *commentarii*, which in oratory, as Cicero shows, means a more or less elaborate notebook, prepared by the speaker to support his performance in court during a court-trial. In the context of

⁷¹ Cic. *Brut.* 62 and Pepe (2011), 140, n. 21.

⁷² The same point is found in Livy 8.40.4 and 27.27.1, who speaks of memories corrupted by funeral eulogies. On the historical values of the *laudationes* as a tool of propaganda, see Ramage (2006). On the possible connection between *orationes*, *Commentarii* and *laudationes* see Pecere (2010) 117ff. 119, n. 83.

⁷³ Perhaps “the *inter tela volantia* [as Fronto (224.15) on Caesar] complex” affects Cicero's judgment on *Commentarii*. Cicero claims (*De leg.* 1.9) that in order to embark on the project of writing history, he has to be free from care and occupation (*et cura vacare et negotio*). His idea of being fully dedicated to history-writing might have seemed at odds with Caesar's habit and ability to write not only on history, but on language and even poetry, while in the middle of campaigning. See Rawson (2014), 259-283 and Marchese (2011) 152-162.

⁷⁴ On Asinius Pollio's remark on Caesar's *Commentarii* in Suet. *Iul.* 56.4, see Kraus (2005), 99-100. See also Grillo (2011), 243-271.

⁷⁵ On oratory in the *Brutus* see Dugan (2005), 177, quotations, *ibidem* 185 and 186. In regard to Cicero's praise of Caesar's eloquence, see Suet. *Iul.* 55 and on Caesar's oratorical ability see Quint. 10.1.14; 10.2.25; 12.10.11; Tac. *Dial.* 21.5 and 25.3.

oratory, according to Cicero, the *commentarii* were perceived as drafts, although they were sometimes well edited. Just as Caesar's *Commentarii* could not be regarded as the finished work of history itself, but only a preparation for it, they were seen as being a long way from a polished *oratio*. For instance, of the much admired orator Lucius Licinius Crassus, Cicero says: “he left parts of this speech in writing”, pointing out that “more was spoken than written down (*plura etiam dicta quam scripta*)”.⁷⁶ In the same passage he quotes Crassus' speech against his fellow censor:⁷⁷ “that one is not a speech, but almost headings and a draft (*commentarius*) of a speech”.⁷⁸ Cicero (*Brut.* 312) also speaks of himself in similar terms:⁷⁹ “there onward many [cases] followed, which I made public to the court carefully elaborated (*diligenter elaboratas et tamquam elucubratas*)”, citing older orators, such as Servius Galba,⁸⁰ Gaius Carbo, Tiberius⁸¹ and Gaius Gracchus.⁸² Here the fact that Cicero refers to his own speeches as made public after they have been carefully elaborated shows that the *commentarius* is the draft-like form, which is less finished than those same speeches. The passage concerning Crassus, who said much more than he left in written form, is an explicit reference to the existence of the *commentarius*.

To conclude, the *Brutus* shows us that Caesar's *Commentarii*, due to their bare style, stand outside the realm of history. As seen above, Cicero regards history as a genre that requires rhetorical

⁷⁶ Cic. *Brut.* 160 and *Brut.* 164, respectively.

⁷⁷ Cic. *Brut.* 164.

⁷⁸ Moreover, as further evidence that “*Commentarii*” is too generic a noun and in need of a specification, see Quintilian's work, in which there is a clear difference between *Commentarii* as notes handwritten by the speaker, which are not subject to publication (Quint. 2.4.27; 4.1.54; 4.3.16 etc., especially 10.7.30, Cicero himself admits the practice in *De or.* 1.152), and *Commentarii in libros digesti*, which are elaborated with the help of *servi litterati*, and are perhaps ready to be published (Quint. 10.7.30, quoting the orator Servius Sulpicius Rufus, contemporary to Cicero).

⁷⁹ Quint. 7.10.30 refers to Cicero's habit of writing down notes in form of a *commentarius* to support his speeches. See Pecere (2010), 117 ff. and 125 ff.

⁸⁰ Cic. *Brut.* 87. But Cicero refers to notebooks even in *De or.* 1.208 “which I put down in my *commentarium*”; *De or.* 1.240; in *De or.* 2.224 the term is related to *publicus* (the first and sole occurrence in Cicero). See also Cic. *Att.* 7.3.7.4, where *commentarius* is used to denote an account of Cicero's financial position.

⁸¹ Cic. *Brut.* 104 for both Carbo and Tiberius.

⁸² Cic. *Brut.* 106.

skills and the most adorned form of oratory.⁸³ According to extant sources, oratory was a discipline in which Caesar and Cicero competed and excelled from the time of their early education.⁸⁴ Cicero's oratorical studies are at the core of his writings on the subject: as *homo novus*, he was determined to fulfil his ambitions through strenuous practice, taking up the study of philosophy and rhetoric in Greece in his youth.⁸⁵ Whether Caesar followed a different pattern, as a born-and-bred aristocrat, is hard to establish, due to the *lacunae* in the literary tradition regarding his youth and education.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, a speculative approach to his education might reveal a disposition towards oratory and perhaps explain his preferences and choices as an artful man of letters and a writer.

1.4 Caesar the *expers* and Cicero the expert: dialoguing on oratory

In a passage of his *Praeceptum Demonstrativae Materiae*, the rhetor Emporius (4th -5th century AD) briefly refers to Caesar's oratorical education, claiming that the dictator “at the same time has to be blamed because he did not acquire enough reputation of skill in oratory (*non adeptus sit famam oratoriae facultatis*), so that his lack of Greek rhetorical practice was evident (*Graecae exercitationis expertem fuisse manifestum sit*)”.⁸⁷ What we know about Caesar's Greek education, and how proficient he was in spoken Greek contrasts decisively with the definition of *Graecae exercitationis expers*, which appears to be largely inappropriate considering how Cicero – and later Quintilian and Tacitus – regarded Caesar's

⁸³ See above p. 51.

⁸⁴ On Caesar's oratory, see Cic, *Brut.* 261, Vell. Pat. 2.36.2; Plut. *Caes.* 3. 2-3; Quint. 10.1.114, Tac. *Dial.* 21.5, Plin. *Epist.* 1.20.4, Gellius *NA.* 19.8.3, actually citing Fronto. For an exhaustive discussion on Caesar's eloquence, see van del Blom (2016), 146-153.

⁸⁵ On Cicero's oratorical education, see Dugan (2005), 173ff.; on Cicero's oratorical excellence see Narducci (2010), 27-90 and bibliography.

⁸⁶ On the *lacunae* in Suetonius' life of Caesar, see recently Henderson (2014) and on Plutarch's biography of Caesar, as commented by Pelling (2011).

⁸⁷ Emporius, 568.22-26 H., in Halm (1863). Pirovano (2012), 430-457, discusses the possible reconstruction of the lost opening chapters of Suetonius' and Plutarch's *Life of Caesar*. On this subject, see also Zecchini (2011), 63-72.

oratorical performances.⁸⁸ Pirovano suggests that Emporius might have read the comment in the missing introductory chapters of Suetonius' biography of Caesar, and that Caesar's lack of Greek rhetorical practice might have its origin in the controversy surrounding the Latin rhetorical "school", which was opened by L. Plotius Gallus circa 90 BC.⁸⁹ The *Lex Licinia Mucia* (95 BC) and the *Lex Plautia Papiria* (89 BC) had granted Roman citizenship to most of the Italian allies (*socii*) and the Italian elites were now finally allowed to access the Roman magistracies.⁹⁰ In those same years, and particularly in 92 BC, thanks to Plotius Gallus' school, Latin rhetoric, which had been prohibited in Rome by the censors, enjoyed a surge in interest among the Italics themselves and began to acquire its fully-developed identity - as opposed to Greek rhetoric, practised and cultivated exclusively by the traditional senatorial elite.⁹¹ Marius and Cinna, who were consuls several times during that decade, championed and supported the Italics' requests against the *nobilitas* and the Senate, who instead wanted to preserve their exclusive political legitimacy and their cultural supremacy.⁹² Marius was not only "exceedingly attached to Plotius Gallus", but he also congratulated himself for not being an expert in *Graeca facundia*.⁹³ Indeed, according to Marius, mastering the Greek language was useless to a man who pursued *virtus* and who dedicated his entire life to military service.⁹⁴ By emphasising the family bonds that he

88 On Caesar's Greek education see Suet. *Iul.* 4 and Plut. *Caes.* 3.1 on attending the lectures of Apollonius Molo. On Caesar's command of Greek, see Caesar's words on crossing the Rubicon and at Pharsalus, Plut. *Caes.* 46.1.

89 On Suetonius as a source for Emporius see Pirovano (2012), 450ff. On Gallus' school see Suet. *Gramm. et rhet.* 26. See also Sen. *Controv.* 2, 5, and Quint. 2.4.2, who identifies him as the first to teach in Latin.

90 On the *Lex Licinia Mucia* and the *Lex Plautia Papiria*, see Tweedie (2012) and Zecchini (2011), 66 and n. 12 with bibliography.

91 Bloomer (2011), 37-52 wrote exhaustively on the subject of Roman schooling, on Plotius Gallus and his school of impudence (*Iudus impudentiae*), as Tacitus called it, *Dial.* 35.1 after *De or.* 3.93.

92 On Marius' and Cinna's policies, see especially Lovano (2002). See below pp. 46-49 on bilingualism.

93 As Cicero states in *Arch.* 20: *itaque ille Marius item eximie L. Plotius dilexit*; describing Marius, Sall. *Iug.* 63.3: "he trained himself by performing service in the army rather than by learning Greek eloquence or refinement of city life (*non Graeca facundia neque urbanis munditiis*)".

94 Sall. *Iug.* 85.32.

shared with Marius,⁹⁵ Caesar seems to be reinforcing his image as *vir militaris*, in Marius' wake, something he seems to have done throughout his entire career.⁹⁶ Whereas Cicero excels in oratory (as Caesar, albeit with some irony, admits), Caesar seems to be a Roman who was not devoted to oratory for the sake of oratory, but who construed his image in terms of distant appreciation of the philhellenic culture of the *nobilitas*.⁹⁷

Cicero's *De Oratore* plays a crucial role in defining the perfect orator. The principal mouthpiece for that definition is that same Crassus who, when in office, censored Plotius Gallus' school. Cicero has Crassus presenting the proper orator as the fusion of Greek and Roman culture, a man who declaims in Greek and then translates into Latin. Such double (and bilingual) performance is a trait of oratorical distinction (at which Cicero himself excels),⁹⁸ and results in a very utopian and idealised classroom, a school of virtuosi, where Latin texts and authors of poetry and prose “can be taken up, discussed, poked and played with”.⁹⁹ This exemplary cultivation of the oratorical self appears entirely foreign to the workaday training practised in Gallus' school. Indeed, Plotius did not use Greek material and case study speeches for Latin training purposes. Instead, he preferred to perform rhetorical exercises in Roman contexts, as if excellence in oratory could be achieved almost exclusively through the medium of Latin.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Plotius Gallus is not named in the *De Oratore*,¹⁰¹ but he clearly seems to be the target of Cicero's Crassus in regard to teaching style, with his emphasis on vocal training and delivery. “Crassus” despises those

95 Marius married Iulia, Caesar's aunt, (Plut. *Caes.* 5.1-2). On Marius as Caesar's political inspirational model, see Zecchini (2001), 117-124.

96 See McDonnell (2006), 300, who also notes the limited influence and conventional use of the Greek idea of *virtus* found in the *Commentarii*.

97 Cic. *Brut.* 253 = *Caes. de Anal.* F1 A-B Garcea (2012), see n. 106.

98 See Cic. *Brut.* 310.

99 Bloomer (2011), 46.

100 So concludes Bloomer (2011), 50 to 52. On Plotius see Quint. 2.4.41-42, who quotes Cicero's opinion.

101 This might denote an eloquent absence, in order to avoid any possible conflict over the orators in fashion (i.e. following Gallus), who were too popular at that time and more subtly to mark a difference from an oratorical practice that seemed too favourable to Caesar's interests and faction.

who speak loudly, which he thinks reveals a lack of preparation and the absence of written support.¹⁰² A decade later in the *Brutus*, oratory is represented as the perfect fusion of Greek and Roman culture, since “the quality of Latin oratory advances in proportion to one's knowledge of Greek culture”.¹⁰³ Likely, in the eyes of Cicero, Plotius Gallus plays “the vulgar foil”, who undermines the prestige the orator can achieve through studying Greek culture. Interestingly, the *De Inventione*, written thirty years before the *De Oratore*, is less idealising and contentious. This was a notebook (*commentariolum* as Cicero retrospectively calls it!) on rhetoric and oratory, which “held out the promise of oratorical excellence through the medium of Latin”.¹⁰⁴ Yet later in life, Cicero distances himself from practical training in voice and delivery, which he considered to be stylistically excessive.¹⁰⁵ Cicero's evolution from the *De Inventione* to the *Brutus* sheds light not only on his view of what a skilled and ideal orator is and the cultural environment in which he is best nurtured, it also points towards the controversy and the subsequent debate on a more Latin-centred education. In the age of the *De Oratore* and the *Brutus*, what was under threat was not just oratory, but the Roman republic and its values: solely Latin-speaking schools could result in to demagogic and low-class speakers.¹⁰⁶

The silence which Cicero reserves for Plotius Gallus and his schooling seems puzzling.¹⁰⁷ Possibly such a reticence is intentional as he is deliberately choosing to distance himself from the oratorical

¹⁰²The attack on Gallus is also launched by Varro, *Sat. Men.* 157 Riese (who describes a member of Gallus' school braying like an ox driver - *bubulcitarat*) and 186 Riese, where the rhetor is mocked as “this *gallus* (cock) who provokes a tribe of brawlers (*gregem rabularum*)”. References to brawlers (*rabulae*) *in foro*, in contrast with the cultured orator, are found in Cic. *De or.* 1.202, Cic. *Orat.* 47 and Quint. 12.9.12.

¹⁰³Cic. *Brut.* 205 and 310, quotation from Bloomer (2011), 47.

¹⁰⁴Bloomer (2011), 39 defines the *De Inventione* as “a lightly polished version of lecture notes from a rhetorical school”. See Cic. *De Or.* 1.2.5, where Cicero uses the word *commentariolum* to describe the *De Inventione* as an unfinished (*inchoata*) and crude (*rudia*) work and states he should publish something more polished (*politius*) and exhaustive (*perfectius*) on the subject.

¹⁰⁵Bloomer (2011), 48 quotes Cic. *De Or.* 2.86, who describes a student who does not orate but shouts.

¹⁰⁶*Ibidem*, 49.

¹⁰⁷Such silence is also noticeable with regard to his own early education, which strangely corresponds to the scattered and incomplete references to Caesar's juvenile education. See above p. 56ff.

education which sprang from those schools for political reasons. Notoriously, Cicero had been dissuaded by friends from attending Plotius Gallus' school, to which he had seemed at first attracted.¹⁰⁸ He might have sensed a dangerous proliferation of “demagogic and low-class speakers”, and risked alienating himself from the “high minded and aristocratic exemplary cultivation of self”, which he wanted to share with the *crème de la crème* of Roman society.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps Cicero's and Caesar's different views on education could be explained by a different approach which developed from the same schooling environment. Unsurprisingly, Cicero and Caesar happened to share at least one teacher, Antonius Gniphos, who was of Gallic birth, exposed as a child, enslaved and then freed.¹¹⁰ Gniphos, who was a tutor of Caesar during Caesar's boyhood (around 89 BC), became a grammarian and a teacher in rhetoric. When he held his declamation on market days, Cicero was among his audience at the time of his praetorship (66 BC).¹¹¹ According to Suetonius, Gniphos wrote a book entitled *De Latino Sermone*,¹¹² and Caesar's interest in Latin grammar and language might have originated during Gniphos's tutorship.¹¹³ Not only that, Gniphos's Gallic origin might have played a part in recognising the importance of a language that was more easily shared between Gauls (provincials) and Roman citizens.¹¹⁴ Arguably, in belonging to that second class of teachers who were despised later in life by Cicero, Antonius

¹⁰⁸Suet. *Gramm. et rhet.* 2.

¹⁰⁹Bloomer (2011), 47.

¹¹⁰Cf. Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 7.3 and briefly in Bonner (1977), 26-27. The interest Caesar cultivated in Gaul might have its emotional origin in Gniphos's accounts and teaching. The common Gallic birth of Gniphos and Plotius Gallus appears to be purely coincidental, as the cognomen of the latter might suggest.

¹¹¹As Bloomer (2011) notes. On Gniphos's life and education see the brief summary in Bonner (1977), 26-27.

¹¹²Suet. *gram.* 7.1, see Garcea (2012), 17 and 20-21.

¹¹³Fantham (2009), 144, argues that Gniphos might have been the teacher who assigned the competitive exercise on the comedian Terence to Cicero and Caesar (*FPL* 66M = 153BL and 91M = 192BL, respectively). In those epigrams, composed when the two were barely of adult age, the pure speech (*purus sermo*) is clearly praised. No evidence seems to support her argument though. See also Rawson (1985), 113, who suggests a certain “cultural competitiveness” between Caesar and Cicero, citing Caesar's apparently deep regret that Menander was better than Terence.

¹¹⁴See Riggsby (2006), 128, on the reasons for Caesar's stance on a communal and shared use of the language, also quoted by Garcea (2012), 9.

Gniphō and Plotius Gallus are conspicuously absent in his writings, and the latter seems to become the target of the orator “Crassus” in Cicero's dialogue, as discussed above.¹¹⁵

In Cicero's eyes, Gallus (and perhaps the Gallic Gniphō) might have represented the originator(s) of an exclusively Latin rhetoric at the expense of the Greek expertise and practice, in which the aristocratic class of *virtuosi*, as celebrated by Cicero, excelled. While for Cicero excellence in Latin speech could be achieved through bilingual (Greek and Latin) mastery and fluency, Caesar's goal might have been for a more accessible Latin, which had its roots in his (early) education and which he cultivated in his oratorical practice. This Latin was probably what he heard during his court hearings as proconsul in Cisalpine Gaul, where he witnessed the natives' difficulty in grasping the Latin language with confidence.¹¹⁶ According to Plutarch's *Life of Caesar*, the dictator clearly dislikes the comparison between the way a soldier speaks and the eloquence of a consummate orator.¹¹⁷ The context of this passage from Plutarch shows that Caesar renounced being a first-rank orator in favour of excelling in power and being a military commander. Perhaps it was not so much that he gave up oratory, but simply that he chose another cultural and literary path, which was more compatible with his military and political career. Interestingly, “Atticus” expresses his judgment on Caesar's eloquence in Cicero's *Brutus*, precisely and deliberately in paragraphs preceding his famous “appreciation” of the *Commentarii*:

“Thus by joining to this careful selection of Latin words (*ad hanc elegantiam verborum Latinorum*) – which is still necessary even if you are not an orator, but just as a free Roman citizen – those typical

¹¹⁵See the extract from Cicero's letter to (the otherwise unknown) M. Titinius, as quoted in Suet. *Gramm. et rhet.* 26.1. More on Plotius Gallus and this passage in Kaster (1995), 291 ff.

¹¹⁶On the importance of court hearings, see Sinclair (1994), 92–109, on Caesar's discussion on the nature of Latin language in his treatise on grammar, *De Analogia*, and his rivalry with Cicero on oratory. On the circumstances of his proconsular duties see *ibidem* 95ff. For more on language in the *Commentarii*, see Hall (1998), especially 13–23.

¹¹⁷Plut. *Caes.* 3, 4 [= fr2 Tschiedel (1981), 76–79]. See also Pelling (2011), 143–4.

ornamentations of oratorical style, he produces an effect as of a well painted picture placed in a good light."¹¹⁸

As seen above, the mere virtue of *elegantia verborum* does not make one an orator. Rather, it is ornamentation that provides the proof of the true orator.¹¹⁹ In other words, *elegantia verborum* is considered insufficient for excellence in oratory. In Cicero's conception, Caesar seems not to achieve the status of oratorical excellence;¹²⁰ moreover, Caesar appears to be keen to set himself apart from oratory, not only when he objects to any comparison between the soldier's way of speaking (i.e. his own) and the eloquence of an orator (such as Cicero), but also by giving Cicero the epithet of *princeps eloquentiae*.¹²¹ Despite his talent, Caesar seems to fail deliberately to acquire prominence in oratory on account of his occupations and duties as statesman and general. Interestingly, this aspect is traceable in the sources as well: for instance, while praising the energy and force of Caesar's oratory, Quintilian once again emphasises his *elegantia sermonis* as his prominent and distinctive quality, but does not mention *ornatus*.¹²²

To conclude, it may be that Emporius' statement on Caesar's oratorical skills (*non adeptus sit famam oratoriae facultatis*) recalls the Ciceronian judgement and makes more explicit Cicero's oratorical excellence, as is (ironically) stated by Caesar himself in a passage of the *Brutus*.¹²³ On the other hand "*Graecae exercitationis experts*", applied by Emporius to Caesar, hints at a lack of interest in oratory as theorised and practised by Cicero, and could be read as an indication of a cultural policy, which was designed to give priority to a

¹¹⁸Cic. *Brut.* 261, translated by Hendrikson (1939), 225.

¹¹⁹See Garcea (2012), 109.

¹²⁰On *Brutus* 261 Lowrie (2008), 142 notes that the metaphor of the picture in the light is a matter of clear perception and concludes that "if the ornamentation and the good light are removed, the craftsmanship would be harder to perceive".

¹²¹The soldier versus orator comparison is in Plut. *Caes.* 3.4, the praise in Cic. *Brut.* 253 and Plin. *NH* 7.117.

¹²²See Quint. 10.1.114.

¹²³On Cic. *Brut.* 253, see below. On the relegation of Caesar's works as missing masterpieces, see Grillo (2012), 1-2. On the *De Analogia*, which is today considered an abstract treatise on grammar, isolated as such, see Garcea (2012), v-viii and 18-19.

more accessible and readable Latin (as theorised in his treatise *De Analogia*, put into practice in the *Commentarii*). This indeed portrayed a different model of *Romanitas*, one which appraised and endorsed Roman culture not as opposed to Greek but as fully free-standing and original.¹²⁴ As language came under scrutiny in the late Roman Republic and significant scrutiny in the case of the *Commentarii*, I now examine how Caesar approaches the question of the Latin language in his works.¹²⁵

1.5 The *De Analogia* and the *Commentarii*: dialoguing with Cicero on language

In the treatise *De Analogia* Caesar stressed the importance of a more accessible Latin.¹²⁶ Written while returning to his army after his administrative tasks as proconsul in Cisalpine Gaul, the two books of this work are mostly dedicated to the subject of Latin grammar. Although they survive in only a few dispersed fragments, the *De Analogia* shows that “Caesar advocated reforming the language, [and] regularising declension and conjugations in accordance with logical principles of similarity and the usage of everyday conversation”.¹²⁷ Moreover, Caesar's treatise competed with Cicero's *De Oratore*, and challenged the latter's assertion of the oratorical virtues and the social exclusiveness of those educated in those virtues.¹²⁸ Cicero himself quotes a few lines from the *De Analogia*, where Caesar declares, diplomatically but clearly against Cicero's view, the usefulness of a plain and colloquial Latin:

“Furthermore, if in order to be able to proclaim their thoughts with preeminent distinction, not a few orators have exerted study and practice – and we must consider you, who are the virtual reader and architect of this eloquence, to have worthily advanced the fame and honour of the

¹²⁴See above pp. 57ff.

¹²⁵See above p. 41.

¹²⁶To paraphrase Garcea, analogy is the practice of rational deduction from existing forms in other similar words, rather than of defence by common usage.

¹²⁷Sinclair (1994), 93.

¹²⁸See Cic. *De or.* 3.37ff., On the four requisites of the good orator see below p. 65 and n. 135.

Roman people; must we then dismiss the knowledge of the simple and mundane conversational style? (*hunc facilem et cotidianum novisse sermonem, num pro relicto est habendum?*).¹²⁹

While eulogising Cicero, in the form of a rhetorical question, Caesar remarks upon the importance of simple and everyday diction. As Garcea noted, Caesar “calls for an extremely selective *dilectus verborum* in relation to any word that might risk creating an obstacle to the transparency of the message as a result of its antiquated, non-standard or new nature”.¹³⁰ Moreover, since in Rome “scholarly discussion was conducted by people active in political life”, the study of language stood at the core of a more ambitious cultural policy.¹³¹ Sinclair correctly argues that the strategy of linguistic systematisation observed in the *De Analogia* is directly linked to the social context, in which Caesar operated as a proconsul in office. Moreover, the codification of the Latin language became “an instrument for controlling the new multi-ethnic situation arising from the most recent conquests” in Gaul.¹³² The intention of Caesar's works - which was theoretically asserted in the *De Analogia* and, I argue, applied in the *Commentarii* - is to democratise the grammar and to make Latin more comprehensible and accessible, i.e. by turning it into a convenient instrument for provincials and the wider civic community.¹³³

Caesar's and Cicero's dispute on oratory and language might date back to their schooling. Later in life, as seen above, Cicero distanced himself from a strictly Latin-centred education.¹³⁴ Moreover, in Book 3 of the *De Oratore* Cicero's Crassus theorises the ability of *ornate dicere* as being the most prominent among the

¹²⁹Cic. *Brut.* 253, as translated by Sinclair (1994), 94.

¹³⁰Regarding the removal of obstacles, see Caesar himself (*De Analogia*, F2 Garcea = Gell. *NA* 1.10.3-4), who affirms: “Avoid, as you would avoid a rock (*tamquam scopulum*), every unheard and unusual word (*inauditum atque insolens verbum*)”.

¹³¹Garcea (2012), 9, 10 and 13 respectively.

¹³²Garcea (2012), 13.

¹³³See Garcea (2012), 111-113 and Pezzini (2018), 182-183.

¹³⁴See the lines in Cic. *Brut.* 253, quoted above at ch. 1.3, 52, where Caesar praises Cicero for extending with his oratory the boundaries of the Roman genius with his oratory.

requisites of the good orator, whereas correctness and clarity are mere prerequisites, and constitute elementary instruction which is not part of rhetorical training.¹³⁵ Caesar, by contrast, places emphasis on the correctness of language as he pursues a *sermo facilis et cotidianus*, an everyday and simple language and an eloquence founded on a conscious and rational use of Latin.¹³⁶ The “normalisation” of language might have found its natural expression in the account of Caesar's deeds as a tool that made his writing highly readable and made available to a wide audience. The choice of a *sermo facilis et cotidianus* illustrates a policy designed to simplify communication between authority in office and a larger community, and to abolish redundancy and obsolescence in laws, as Caesar's legislation also demonstrates.¹³⁷ If the language is clear and accessible, embellishment becomes useless and perhaps elitist. Caesar's *Commentarii* are the natural consequence of that policy of simplifying communication between political and military authority and a wider audience. As Rawson wittily notes, Caesar's stylistic choices and approach suggest “little patience with highly coloured historiography”.¹³⁸ As mentioned above, the absence of a methodological proem and an explicit programmatic intent in the account makes the narrative immediately clear and usable by the audience. In this sense, too, the *Commentarii* are self-explanatory. We are far from Cicero's theoretical assertion that the purity and correctness of the language are merely prerequisites and that only the *ornatus* gives prominence to oratory and history. Caesar, the intellectual general and bookish military leader, is producing an account of events, the *Commentarii*, and adopting a simple and

¹³⁵Cic. *De or.* 3. 37-55. Four requisites are specified: the ability to speak with grammatical correctness (*Latine*), with clear expression (*plane*), ornately (*ornate*) and with pertinence and congruity regarding the subject of the speech (*apte congruenterque*). On those lines see Sinclair (1994), 92, Garcea (2012), 109ff., and Pezzini (2018), 185.

¹³⁶At the expense of *ornatus*, as Quintilian recognises (10.1.114).

¹³⁷On simplifying the existing legislation, see Suet. *Iul.* 44.2, as remarked upon by Rawson (1985), 212ff. On Caesar's reforms, see Yavetz (1983), 58-160, who listed thirty-seven laws and measures, and Moatti (1997), 122ff. On the politicisation of rhetoric and grammar see Sinclair (1994), 92ff.

¹³⁸Rawson (1985), 110.

mundane language to do so.¹³⁹ Cicero, on the other end, insists on the supremacy of the *magnus orator*, on the belief that “the glory arising from exercising eloquence is superior to that won by military victories”.¹⁴⁰

Not only does Cicero place Caesar at one remove from history, oratory and language (as envisaged by Cicero), but Caesar consistently sets himself apart. Caesar's particular approach, which perhaps arose during his schooling and then grew and matured in the time between his proconsulate in Gaul and his dictatorship, results in a very distinctive policy in the literary field: to communicate in a plain and simple Latin language, to give a distinctive and original account of his deeds, and to differentiate himself from the elite of the *nobiles*, who preferred the distinctiveness of a virtuous oratory and the primacy of a Greek education.

1.6 Conclusions

As seen above, Cicero views the *Commentarii* as archival (or originally archival) and draft material. Through Caesar such material becomes ready to circulate among a larger audience, making it less of a draft, and more of a *volumen*, a work that can circulate and be read.¹⁴¹ It can be reasonably assumed that this evolution of the word *commentarius* from the medium to the content, and from an archival to publishable work, took place with Caesar, who thereby achieved a kind of legitimation of the genre of the *commentarius*.¹⁴² However, to define *commentarius* as a genre, as Rüpke does, one may be a mistake.¹⁴³ More correctly it can be defined as a codification of recorded deeds and events, with the aim of writing memoirs. The noun *commentarius*, as used to denote a generic form, designates,

¹³⁹“Bookish general” is Dugan's definition of Caesar, see his (2005), 188-189.

¹⁴⁰Garcea (2011), 90ff.

¹⁴¹On the meaning and the use of *volumen*, see Cavallo (1995), 37-69.

¹⁴²On the habit of writing *Commentarii* by the emperors after Caesar, see Marincola 1997, 181 n. 29. Arguably, Caesar offers the authoritative model for recording one's own deeds, as Misch (1973), 209 says, and Augustus might have regarded his *Commentarii* as models, especially if we value his “editorial” intervention on all Caesar's entire literary production (on this see Zecchini (1993), 191-205).

¹⁴³Rüpke (1992), 201-226.

as Cicero attests, “sources or collections of material, which a writer or speaker might utilise”.¹⁴⁴ While Cicero himself believes in the need to refine and to adorn an account to make it history, Caesar responds with the *commentarius*, a report-like account, a worthy bearer of a recognisable, contemporary and easy language (*sermo facilis et cotidianus*).¹⁴⁵ With the *Commentarii* he is displaying – over and above his well-known oratorical prominence and aristocratic education - an ambitious cultural programme, with language at its heart, as anticipated in the *De Analogia*, with the *Commentarii* as a practical outcome of this programme.

Caesar turned the *Commentarii* into a self-standing work in its own right, carving out, if not a genre, then at least a personal and original work and a profitable space for propaganda. Transforming (what was perceived or considered as) rough material into an orderly and neat work was quite an original challenge taken on by the magistrate and *pontifex maximus* Caesar. Yet the *Commentarii* also represented a ground on which to engage in a controversy with Cicero and most likely to bypass the traditional senatorial audience in order to reach the wider public. Eden's statement about Caesar's work - that it “could serve as a *commentarius*, it was more than a *commentarius*” - comes back into focus here.¹⁴⁶ By using a word associated with notebooks, documents and reports, Caesar produces an account in which both style and content, language and narrative all convey a political message. In other words, Caesar conceives a contemporary account of his and his legions' deeds with a distinctive and original style, whose “nudity is a custom”.¹⁴⁷ Grillo's and other scholars' studies have set out “to reconsider Caesar's *Commentarii*'s style, rhetoric and architecture in order to disclose its art and ideology” and “to acknowledge the indissoluble unity of

¹⁴⁴See above ch.1.1, 45ff. and related footnotes, with the quotation from Kelsey (1905), 225.

¹⁴⁵Cic. *Brut.* 253, quoting Caesar's *De Analogia*.

¹⁴⁶See Eden (1962), 74-117, who presents a more philological approach, whereas here I affirm the political and cultural value of the *Commentarii* as an instrument of propaganda and as a vehicle of language.

¹⁴⁷Kraus (2009), 164.

literary form and historical reconstruction".¹⁴⁸

As the theoretical foundation of an everyday and clear language (*sermo facilis et cotidianus*)¹⁴⁹ had been formulated by Caesar in the *De Analogia*, Caesar's treatise served as a linguistic "proem" to the *Commentarii*, setting out to exemplify the plain style that would be easy to read and listen to by the general public, soldiers and provincials.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, whenever the composition and publication of the Gallic *Commentarii* took place (year by year during the campaign or in a single version in 51 BC),¹⁵¹ his *Commentarii* seem to be his personal attempt to impose his (Caesarian) Latin and the practical use of his grammar and rhetorical style, for the benefit of a wide audience.¹⁵² More importantly, Caesar's strategy illustrates once more "the rhetorical nature of classical historiography",¹⁵³ in which style (literary form, language) and content (historical reconstruction) are indivisible. As Woodman demonstrated, in antiquity "the reception of historical texts is focused on the style in which they were written".¹⁵⁴ This is a revelatory assertion if applied to Caesar. His choice of the *Commentarii* is original, thanks to the use of the third person and the widely recognised "nudity" of his Latin. Such a choice, however, is also eminently political: by publishing the *Commentarii*, Caesar not only gives shape to his art of writing but writes the history of his own *res gestae*, in order to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.

Having discussed the implications of Caesar's choice of the *commentarius* form, I will now turn to look more closely at the *commentarius* form itself. In particular, the next chapter explores the

¹⁴⁸Grillo (2011), 3. See also Damon (1994), 183-95, on the importance of understanding the intra-textuality of Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, as well as Riggsby (2006) on how the *Gallicum* relates to contemporary discourses.

¹⁴⁹Citation from Cic. *Brut.* 253, quoting Caesar's *De Analogia*.

¹⁵⁰As adopted by Augustus, who "*Linguae Latinae non nescius munditiarum patris sui in sermonibus sectator*" in Gell. *NA* 10.24.2.

¹⁵¹On the date of the publication of the *Bellum Gallicum*, the most up to date bibliography is in Meyer (2011), 194ff., notes 25-27.

¹⁵²Sinclair (1994), 92 ff.

¹⁵³Cf. Grillo (2011), 2.

¹⁵⁴Woodman (2007), 142, see also Wiseman (1979) and again Woodman (1988).

report-based nature of the Corpus, by providing instances from all five *Commentarii*.

Chapter 2

Commentarii as reports

The following pages focus on the report structure of the *Commentarii*, specifically by exploring the constant and dynamic relationship between the final account and the reports, its sources.¹ This chapter also shows that the report-based nature of the Corpus demonstrates the existence of a news collection point, consisting in and gravitating around the military headquarters. I call such a point the “newsroom”, or narrative headquarters, a place where written material is recorded and achieved.² Then, after focusing on the interaction between the report and its adaptation into the narrative of the *Commentarii*, the chapter goes on to contend that the literary status of the *Bella* cannot be determined only by the style and the quality of the Latin language, but also by the level of intervention which the final author applies to the existent written material. Finally, I argue that the report as a unit can itself be considered a *commentarius*.

However, before examining the report-based nature of the Corpus, I wish to look first at the view of the *Commentarii* shared by the contemporaries, specifically by starting with Hirtius and Cicero.

2.1 Contemporary responses to Caesarian *Commentarii*

Whether pushed by Balbus' invitation or simply thanks to his familiarity with Caesar, the fact that Hirtius intervenes to continue the account (horizontally as Kraus says)³ hints at the existence of material already available, “simply” needing to be organised as a more coherent narrative, and, above all, points to the inherent

1 See Intro 0.3.2, 31ff.

2 See on “newsroom” ch. 3.1, 121ff.

3 Kraus (2005), 99 discussing “three ancient readings” of Caesar, respectively Cicero, Hirtius and Pollio, writes that Hirtius, “wary and modest, nevertheless finds a way to complete Caesar's work, realising that while vertical elaboration (that is adding layers of literary polish) is impossible, horizontal elaboration – continuation – is not.”

quality of the *Commentarii* (and of that available material referred to above) as drafts, potentially usable by historians to write more ambitious and embellished accounts.⁴ As described in the previous chapter, the latter remark is contained in Cicero's subtle comment on Caesar's *Commentarii*: Caesar's talent makes his *Commentarii* untouchable, as only impudent historians could make any use of them, but they are also outside the realm of history, somewhere else, in a territory unknown to Cicero.⁵ It seems to me that this draft-like nature should not merely feed a scholarly discussion on the literary quality and the genre of the *Commentarii*, as so far it has and still does, but should point also more incisively to the method Caesar adopted in his works, namely the way in which he gathered information and organised it into the narrative of the *Commentarii*. Hirtius' opinion that Caesar's work must be completed may imply Hirtius' acknowledgement of that method, which consists in working on report-based material. As unthinkable as it is to compete with the model, yet the material and the purpose of that material are still there to be used, and the method to be continued.⁶

Whereas Cicero remarks on style, Asinius Pollio instead engages less subtly with Caesar as a historian, by questioning (and distrusting) his method of collecting information and writing history. Whether taken from the prefatory chapters of his *Historiae* or elsewhere, Asinius' passage as recollected by Suetonius in *Iul.* 56.4 is unequivocally critical:

“Asinius Pollio thinks that they (sc. the *Commentarii*) were put together quite carelessly and without regard for truth (*parum diligenter parumque integra ueritate compositos*), since Caesar both thoughtlessly believed in

4 Regarding Hirtius, Lindsay Hall (1996) correctly argues that “if he (Hirtius) did not write the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, then the very existence of this, and of the other works in the *corpus* not by Caesar himself, itself proves that substantial quantities of such material existed which, in turn, it would be very odd for Hirtius not to have sought and used for the project described in his *Preface to BGall.* 8.”

5 See ch.1.3, 51ff.

6 See *BGall.* 8. *praef.* 3-5, a passage which sounds, according to Kraus (2005), 99 and n. 5, like an “implicit invitation to re- or over-write them”.

many accounts others gave of their actions and gave an incorrect account of many of his own deeds (*pleraque et quae per alios erant gesta temere crediderit et quae per se*), either intentionally or even through lack of memory; Pollio also thinks that he would have re-written and amended them (*existimatque rescripturum et correcturum fuisse*).⁷

As a military man first, then as an intellectual and historian committed to writing the *Historiae*, an account of the wars (Gallic and civil) he personally witnessed, Pollio had to engage with Caesar's own work, which was, borrowing from Osgood, “not just a version of the Gallic war, but the version, fending off other efforts to tell the story in a way less useful to him”.⁸ However, although the context from which the Suetonian passage is taken from remains unknown, Asinius Pollio seems here “to deal with his own credentials as historian of the period” and “to vindicate his account from the charge of partisanship”.⁹ Such partisanship is what Pollio finds in Caesar's *Commentarii*. For the ancient Roman historical writers, as Woodman clearly demonstrates, the notion of “*veritas*” is rendered with “impartiality”, namely absence of prejudice for and bias against anyone.¹⁰

As this Suetonian passage shows, a work like the *Commentarii*, resting largely on partisan sources and personal notes, fails to provide the accurate (*diligenter*) and full *veritas* a historical account requires. Pollio instead provides accuracy, according to Quintilian, who emphasises more than once *diligentia* as one of his characteristics as an orator and man of letters.¹¹

7 Scrutinies of Pollio's passage in Kraus (2005) and in Pelling (2006), 3–26. On Pollio's historical method and his competitor historians, see both Morgan (2000), 51–69, and Grillo (2011) 23–25, whereas Balsdon (1957), 19–28, ventures to supply a few examples of the “sort of thing” Pollio criticised, for instance the mutiny of the *Legio IX* at Placentia in January 49.

8 Osgood (2009), 352.

9 *FRHist* vol. I, p. 441.

10 Woodman (1988), 73.

11 Especially 10.1.113: “*Multa in Asinio Pollione inventio, summa diligentia ...*”, but also Quint. 10.2.26 and 12.10.11. An echo not only of *diligentia* but also of *memoria* can be discerned in Cicero's lines on Caesar's oratorical talent, which Pollio seems ironically to recall and overturn when judging the *Commentarii*: (*Caesar*) *rem videbat acute, componebat diligenter*,

Moreover, the statement quoted by Suetonius not only, as Damon incidentally notes, “may have contributed to Pollio's justification for writing a history of the period himself”,¹² but also testifies to his independent judgment by being highly critical of the method by which the deeds have been gathered and reported in Caesar's *Commentarii*. This method seems to be put under scrutiny by Pollio in the Suetonian passage. Firstly, the clause “*quae per alios erant gesta*” has been variously translated as either “accounts or reports of actions” or more simply “actions performed by others”.¹³ As the preposition *per* is sometimes used where one would expect *ab*, with little difference in meaning, namely either for the intermediate agent or the responsible agent, the passage “*quae per alios erant gesta temere crediderit*” can be rendered and seems to be a condensed way of saying “the accounts which others gave of their actions”, i.e. the exact parallel with Caesar's account of his actions: other people gave accounts of what they had done, as Caesar did.¹⁴ However accurate the translation might be, in which manner and on which written format the *gesta* performed by others could have reached Caesar's desk, seems hard to establish, if not as *gesta* accounted and reported by others. Nevertheless, the lines above pertain to literary criticism: in the eyes of Suetonius, who quotes three authors in a chapter fully dedicated to Caesar as a writer, Asinius Pollio's opinion differs from Cicero's and Hirtius' statements. In Pollio, the criticism extends to the *veritas* and the *diligentia* of the narrative; therefore, Pollio believes (*existimat*) that Caesar wanted to rewrite them and make amendments so that the account would finally

memoria valebat (Cic. *Brut.* 227).

12 Damon (1994), 183, n. 3.

13 Below are a few English translations showing how they swing from actions to accounts/reports: Rolfe (1914): “since in many cases Caesar was too ready to believe the accounts which others gave of their actions and gave a perverted account of his own (...)”. Graves (1957): “Caesar did not always check the truth of the reports that came in and was either disingenuous or forgetful in describing his own actions.” Kraus (2005): “since Caesar often rashly believed the accounts which others gave of their actions and (...) gave faulty account of his own.” Grillo (2011): “since often Caesar heedlessly trusted other people's accounts and falsely reported those he witnessed, either intentionally or from forgetfulness”; but Drummond (2013) in *FRHist.* vol. II, 867: “since Caesar afforded uncritical credence to many actions performed by others and gave an erroneous account of many of his own (...)”.

14 See “*per*” in Kühner-Stegmann (1955), 249-50.

acquire respectively *diligentia* and *veritas*.¹⁵ Here Pollio patently questions the method used by Caesar as a historian and sheds light on the way in which Caesar gathers information and facts. Asinius Pollio clearly considers and criticises two ways of collecting facts (*quae gesta*) in the *Commentarii*: one is *per alios*, the other *per se*. In the first instance, Caesar uncritically believed what has been reported to him by others, i.e. at every location from which he was absent; in the second, he gave out (and published) accounts in an incorrect fashion either intentionally or by misremembering.¹⁶ As discussed above, one can reasonably assume that *per alios gesta* refers to actions told by and known through others, not necessarily solely performed by others, as *per se* concerns operations not exclusively carried out, but even merely supervised by Caesar. However, both the “*per alios gesta*” and the “*per se gesta*” have been first presented to, then narrated by Caesar.¹⁷ The format through (*per*) which Caesar was informed of those actions are written documents: the reports. Moreover, in the Suetonian passage the verb *componere* suggests a composition of different pieces (*parum diligenter parum integra veritate compositos putat ...*), and the following subordinate clauses explain (... *cum Caesar ... crediderit et ... ediderit*) that Caesar believes in others' accounts, to

15 As the word “*re-scripturum*” seems to involve the *Bellum Gallicum* and *Civile*, Pollio's comment sounds suspicious, and those *Commentarii* seemed complete, yet not fully so, in the eyes of his contemporaries. Either Pollio is reporting what he heard from Caesar, or he is talking about the material (the reports) that was brought to Caesar, but not finished, due to the dictator's death. In any case, *re-scripturum* connotes the process of editing and giving shape to that material. Ultimately this is a very dense statement by Pollio, whose complexity and intertextual reference every translation fails to credit, as its language appears to be intentionally studied. The adverb *temere* is perhaps an echo of *BCiv.* 2.38.2: “*his auctoribus (=perfugis) temere credens consilium commutat*” (regarding Curio's imprudence in taking action against Juba, by rashly believing some deserters' account).

16 The admission that Caesar would have rewritten and corrected the *Commentarii* serves as evidence to Pollio to prove the lack of *veritas* in Caesar's scripts (and also as an implicit admission that Caesar was aware of the failings of his *Commentarii*). Whereas Morgan (2000) believes instead that the stern criticism of Caesar by Pollio is slightly softened by this conciliatory final sentence, Damon (1994), 183, n. 3, speculates that this statement may have contributed to Pollio's justification for writing a history of the period himself.

17 Very few occurrences in classical Latin, perhaps significantly in Cicero, *Nat. D.* 2.75 and almost identically 2.81: “*ab eaque [natura] omnia pulcherrime geri*”, otherwise in late Latin, see Gregorius M. *moral.* 3.55.625c. *Contra Tac. Agr.* 22.4: “*Nec Agricola umquam per alios gesta avidus intercepti*”, unanimously translated as “the deeds of others” or “the others' achievements”. “*Per*” here seems entirely to connote an agent as “*ab*” would, although the clause refers to Agricola's attitude and quality, as opposed to Caesar, who, in Suetonius, is the recipient and the collector of others' deeds, as he writes them down.

which he added his own.¹⁸

In addition, the passage implies not only the existence of written material, made available to Caesar, but also the (subsequently logical) presence of a “narrative” headquarters, to collect all the information, a “newsroom”, which gravitates around Caesar, in the *praetorium*. As the commander's residence, often a tent, *praetorium* denotes the headquarters of the *castra* in the republican period, a place where the council of the senior officers is held.¹⁹ Interestingly, perhaps not casually, *praetorium* in Caesar's works refers only to the enemy (Pompeian) headquarters and seems to be a place both of cold crime and luxury.²⁰ In Caesar's headquarters, by contrast, there is only work to be done, and *praetorium* activity is taken for granted, as from that tent Caesar seems to supervise, command and *write*.

The word *praetorium* referring to Caesar's headquarters appears only in *Bellum Africum* 31.4 and depicts Caesar in his fully operational attitude, as he is not issuing orders on the spot (*at haec non ipse per se coram*) but sitting in his headquarters (*in praetorio sedens*), because his skills in warfare are outstanding (*mirabili peritus in scientia bellandi*). The difference with Pompeius' behaviour in the *praetorium* is contrastingly patent.

Regarding Pollio's passage in Suetonius, further observations can also be added, as some sort of co-authorship seems implicitly

18 *Componere* in the meaning of “put together” is well attested, see *TLL* III, 2113; however, when related to written materials, *componere* is used as synonym of *scribere* *TLL* III, 2123. In Suetonius' passage, Cicero has *scribere* and Hirtius *perscribere*, Pollio has *componere*. Perhaps it is just a matter of synonyms, nevertheless, Pollio's general tone is not on style or elegance and rapidity in writing, but on the method of composition. A statement not so clearly put forward in the scholarship, as for instance both Morgan (2000) and Grillo (2011) refer prevalently to autopsy as Pollio's method, whereas what Pollio disapproves in Caesar's *Commentarii* appears to be their lack of impartiality, due to the inaccurate collections of unquestioned accounts.

19 On the location of the *praetorium* see Keppie (1984), 36ff. Recently on the origin of the name, which seems to derive from the earliest magistrates in the Roman Republic, the praetors, see Drogula (2015).

20 Precisely *BCiv.* 1.76.1 and 4 (the killing of the Caesarian soldiers by the Pompeians takes place in the *praetorium* under Afranius and Petronius), *BCiv.* 3.82.1 (the ironical remark by Pompey, who commands a second *praetorium* for himself, as the victory over Caesar's army seems granted), and *BCiv.* 3.94.6 (Pompey, despite the imminent defeat, returns to the tent, mistrusting his fortunes).

suggested. Caesar cannot have been alone in gathering accounts.²¹ The purpose of collecting information, certainly inherent in his role as magistrate in office and commander, becomes visible here as a narrative project, something planned, systematised in some way, but shared with his collaborators, who perhaps recognised the importance of the reports as a first-source medium, not merely as documents to be dispatched to authorities and/or to the headquarters, but as part of a more ambitious project: the account of the military campaigns.

Scholars do not cite Asinius Pollio's passage (in Suetonius in *Iul.* 56.4) as (in)direct evidence of the report-based nature of the *Commentarii*, they instead focus on the historiographical, so to speak, value of Pollio's assertion, as here he is contesting Caesar's veracity. Christine Kraus, for instance, discusses the consequences of what she calls "the Pollionic strand in scholarship", which underlies three historical questions: the composition of the *Bellum Gallicum* (namely when the books were written and how they were disseminated) and "the narrative faultiness" within the text;²² "the authenticity and integrity of some of the *Bellum Gallicum*'s less generically appropriate material" (such as the ethnographic sections) and the propaganda of its content.²³ Here, scholarship fails to consider (and Kraus merely touches upon) what in Pollio's passage seems obvious: the method, namely the way in which Caesar collects and uses the material to produce the narrative of the *Commentarii* and to set an example for his collaborators, who were already used to the practice of reporting to their general.²⁴ Above all,

21 "Cum ... quae per alios erant gesta ... crediderit" implies written material of different provenance (and authorship), as well as Suetonius' mention of co-authorship: his section (Suet. *Iul.* 56ff.) starts with Hirtius as continuator of the *Bellum Gallicum* and continues with the uncertainty over the three anonymous *Bella*, an uncertainty disputed between Hirtius and Oppius.

22 Kraus (2009), 102. It is not clear why Pollio might have referred solely to the composition of the *Bellum Gallicum*, as Kraus insists. On the other hand, Grillo (2011), 265, explicitly connects Pollio's remarks to the *Bellum Civile*, due to his conspicuous absence in Caesar's *Commentarii* as an active protagonist in the civil wars.

23 Kraus (2005), 102, but the same questions can be applied to the *Bellum Civile*, as she cannot help admitting (*ibidem* 99ff.).

24 Kraus (2005), 102, collaterally observes that the composition of the *Bellum Gallicum* "developed from, and may have had the first incarnation as, Caesar's and his officers'

the method as Pollio portrays it questions the *veritas* (in its combination with *diligentia*) in the *Commentarii*.

In order to understand the method and the practice of reporting applied to the *Commentarii*, I will look at the characteristics of the reports, namely their format and their content, starting by looking at some military expressions in sources such as Plautus and Cicero, then by examining the ablative absolute and the so-called cumulative narrative. By examining these topics, my investigation reveals, for the first time, that the method of gathering the written materials is similar throughout the whole Corpus. Such similarity casts new light on the narrative technique, the style and the language of both the genuinely Caesarian and the anonymous *Commentarii*.

2.2 The Report format

2.2.1 The ablative absolute and the cumulative narrative

Plautus' comedies offer a couple of examples of military discourse through a sequence of ablative absolutes. In *Persa* (753-5) Plautus mocks a victorious general: *hostibus victis, civibus salvis, re placida, pacibus perfectis, bello extincto, re bene gesta, integro exercitu et praesidiis*. In *Amphitruo* (188-9) Sosia, the protagonist of the comedy, repeats two of the ablative absolutes quoted above and adds another: *victores victis hostibus legiones revenunt domum, duello extincto maximo atque internecatis hostibus*. As the ablative absolute is rare in Plautus, the passages above are clearly a parody of clauses used in military reports, specifically of “the general's prayer of thanksgiving” (the *gratulatio*).²⁵ Linked to war dispatches and the language of the generals, Plautus' expressions were obviously in use outside the theatres, written in official documents and read out in public speeches. As Plautus' comedy implies, the

reports to the Senate”.
25 Adams (2005), 76.

audience was capable of recognising them.

The ablative absolute usage is further exemplified, as Adams notes, in the dedication to the ancestral gods of Egypt by the prefect of Egypt, the poet Gallus: a sequence of six ablative absolutes, whose content is clearly military.²⁶ Another scholar, Odelman, quotes the *tabula triumphalis* of Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, cited in Livy.²⁷ “Une parodie brillante de ce [sc: Palutus] style” can also be found in Cicero's letter to Atticus 4.18.5: “*Confecta Britannia, obsidibus acceptis, nulla praeda, imperata tamen pecunia exercitum ex Britannia reportabant.*” The orator recapitulates the content of a letter from Caesar and from his brother Quintus, deployed as a lieutenant in remote Britannia. However, when talking about his own proconsulate in Cilicia, Cicero puts himself into the military context.²⁸ This letter belongs to Cicero's and Marcus Caelius Rufus' epistolary exchange (17 from Caelius out of 26 in total), of late 51 and early 50 BC, and the ablative absolute that appears in the letter (*Parthico bello nuntiato*) is the only one Cicero uses in this correspondence, and remarkable in view of its extensive use by Caelius.²⁹

As seen above, the use of ablative absolutes is prevalently related to military narrative and according to Leeman is ten times (proportionally) more frequent in Caesar than in Cicero.³⁰ Such frequency is well attested by the anonymous *Bella*, which feature

26 Adams (2005), 74, who extensively discusses the ablative absolute and other expressions in the *Bellum Africum*. The scholar points to the old phraseology “*incolumes reportavit*” in the Gracchan *tabula triumphalis* - which is also in Plautus (*Bacch.* 1071) and recurs in Caesar, *BGall.* 4.15.3 and 5.22.2 and *BAfr.* 70.5, later in Livy 29.27.3 - and two expressions: “*vi expugnando*” et “*cum eo nuntio*”, the first acquired from the tradition as it can be found, for instance, in Plautus, in *CIL VI 1300* and in Vatinius' letter to Cicero (*Fam.* 5.10b), which is an “imitation of Caesar and joint use of traditional language”.

27 Livy 41.28. 8-9. See Odelman (1972), 158, adds two later inscriptions: *ILS 62 (Elogia at Forum Augusti)* and 628 (the governor of Mauritania under Diocletian).

28 *Cic. Fam.* 2.10, see also *Att.* 5.20.3 and *Fam.* 15.4.9. The *Bellum Africum* with an almost identical phraseology 61.1. The whole letter has more than a military nuance, but see also of the same time two letters to the Senate, *Fam.* 15.1: the iterated use of the verb *nuntiare* and nouns as *nuntii* and *litterae* and again the ablative absolutes “*quo nuntio adlato*”, “*his rebus adlatis*” etc.

29 See Pinkster (2010), 186-202, and Hutchinson (1998), 80-100, who explicitly refers to a military narrative in the case of Sulpicius Galba's letter to Cicero, *Fam.* 10.30; he also argues that Cicero writes the letter to Cato (*Fam.* 2.10 quoted above) in a “Caesarian fashion” and with an “effective and soldiery brevity”.

30 Leeman (1963), 176-177.

extensive usage of the ablative absolute.³¹ Moreover, sequences of ablative absolutes are robustly present in Caesar and well distributed throughout the anonymous *Bella* too.³² Besides the ablative absolute, it is worth noticing that the cumulative character of Caesar's narrative is also made clear by the participial construction as well, sometimes in conjunction with the ablative absolute.³³ Adams, in my opinion correctly, argues that the military reports that constitute Caesar's *Commentarii* and - I shall add - those of his so-called Continuator are not in a style that "Caesar had to invent entirely for himself, whatever his own input".³⁴ Beyond its mere usage, the ablative absolute reveals here the nature of the Caesarian narrative, which is "constantly progressing step by step for each piece of information given through finite verb forms and participial construction", as the ablative absolute also is. In other words, the military narrative, or the narrative that is of and based on reports, reveals a cumulative structure as opposed to a periodic structure.³⁵ Situations and events are narrated in succession as "most sentences can be divided into small independent successive pieces of information (information units) understandable in themselves, each intrinsically connected to the forward moving of

31 See Gaertner/Hausburg, (2013), 63 who distinguish, all in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, some formulaic ablative absolutes from others "linked with the preceding sentences by means of a connective relative, a demonstrative pronoun, *enim* or *interim*. Among them, for instance: *inde re bene gesta*, *BAlex.* 26.3 and *BAlex.* 47.1, or expressions such as "*re cognita*" in *BAlex.* 54.2, 56.2 and 57.2. On the *Bellum Africum* see Adams (2005), 76, n. 22; on the *Hispaniense* instead with a reduced usage, replaced by an abundant recurrence of adverbs of time and temporal indications, see Rambaud (1953), 89, who does not mention ablative absolutes as a pattern of reports, but only occasionally as "ligatures".

32 On the anonymous *Bella*, examples of ablative absolute in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* are in Gaertner/Hausburg, (2013), 63-4; regarding ablative absolutes in the *Africum*, besides Adams' article quoted above, see also Militerni (1996), 38, somewhat brief, yet providing some occurrences; instances in the *Hispaniense* are in Gaertner (2010), 244, who argues that "the summarising ablatives absolute at *BHisp.* 1.1, 4.1, 18.1 ... indicate that the author is aware of the stylistic conventions of military reports and of some of the techniques of historical narratives".

33 See topically *BCiv.* 2.22.1. I rely on Oldsjo (2001) 201, who presents a general theory of tense and aspects in Roman historiography, whose large-scale excerpts are taken from Caesar's original *Bella*. He also gives a fairly complete list of ablative absolute sequences from the unprecedented 6 in a row (*BGall.* 2.25.1 and *BCiv.* 3.103.1) to 3 in a row (20 examples).

34 Adams (2005), 75, echoing Leeman (1963), 176; see n. 107.

35 Oldsjo (2001), 324ff. on ablative absolute and the cumulative structure of historical narrative, distribution in main and subordinate clauses and sequence in Caesar, and 483-5 on ablative absolute and its grounding, namely whether it describes a background or a foreground situation.

the narrative.”³⁶ Different from, if not opposed to, an account, which by nature is constantly progressing in time, is the advanced period, characteristic of Cicero: what has been called periodic narrative. As borrowed from Oldsjo, “the periodic style is mainly a rhetorical device, delineating a logical and causal structure ... and it is generally used for setting forth one's case, arguing for or against someone or something, or discussing philosophical, literary or moral issues.” Even when Cicero describes his military experience in the epistolary form, he tends to embellish the account, by adding a rhetorical nuance to it. However, once the account is stripped of adornments, the Ciceronian narrative is logically progressing in time and appears report-based, as it offers facts and names, while describing actions.

Another aspect of the cumulative style might be its reception: arguably, as well as paratactic sentences, cumulative narrative might have been more suitable for a wide audience.³⁷ Regarding the *Bellum Gallicum*, Odelman speaks of “stil administratif” as she argues that “César se rattache à la manière d'écrire habituelle aux magistrats romains”.³⁸ Despite the fact that magistrates' reports and dispatches do not survive, texts of official content such as laws, *senatus consulta*, imperial documents and works of jurists reveal, according to Odelman, “un fonds commun de trait de style, parfois fixés et faciles à reconnaître mais qui parfois ne se laissent préciser qu'avec peine”. This common ground appears to be the language of these official documents, which seems concise, impersonal and objective. However, beyond the language, other patterns are retraceable.³⁹ Thanks to a formulaic device such as the ablative

³⁶ Oldsjo (2001), 325 also for the following citation.

³⁷ On the audience of the *Bellum Gallicum* see Wiseman (1998), 2-3, who points to the recurrence of the expression *populus Romanus* as a sign of addressing an audience wider than the Senate and the *equites*. On audience see ch. 4.2.3, 224ff.

³⁸ Odelman (1972), 1 and 2 for the following citation; the scholar lists which words and phrases better describe the administrative style and become formulaic (see recapitulatory tables on p. 180).

³⁹ Objectivity is a contemporary category; perhaps the alleged objectivity refers more to the perception: as the information arrives from authorities, the message must look more effective and forceful than objective.

absolute, situations and events can be recorded and listed, while other data (names, locations, military forces, numbers of losses, prisoners, etc.) can be “entered”.⁴⁰ Military and administrative reports cannot be regarded as distinctive only on the basis of the ablative absolute and their formulaic nature: their narrative is as cumulative as their content is aggregate, namely the reports gather data in order firstly to record then to provide information.

In the “stil administratif” the idea of reporting acquires the sense of listing and cataloguing not just events and facts, but also data, as the military aspects of this recording work seem to be granted by the circumstances (the military campaign) and by the purpose (to keep the headquarters informed as much as the authorities in Rome and specifically the Senate). The data contained in the report format are visible throughout the whole Corpus and generally concern timing, distances and military data. In the following sections those data are discussed separately and illustrated by examples.

2.2.2 The timing: the use of temporal conjunctions and expressions

Not only does the timing consist of clear indications of hours and the passing of time, which in some cases are annotated carefully (with words such as *hora*, *vigilia*, *dies*, *nox*, as noted below), but it also moves the narrative forward through conjunctions such as *dum*, *cum* and *interim*. For instance, the conjunction *interim* connects one scenario to another, and hints at a recapitulatory list of facts that occurs simultaneously or must have occurred simultaneously at the time of data collection. More precisely, *interim* signals transition, or a change of time and location, as the adverb

⁴⁰ As seen before, even the conjunct participle in the main clauses behaves as the ablative absolute, and as examined below (ch. 2.3.2.1, 100), not only the narrative of the report is cumulative but even its content: the aim of the report is to give as much information as possible to the commanders to help them decide on the next steps and move forward.

often marks the transition to another item.⁴¹ Often this occurs in combination with other data, by specifying the timing and duration, by assembling actions in ablative absolute and in a recapitulatory attitude.⁴²

For instance, Ariovistus sends ambassadors to Caesar (minutes of the embassy and Caesar's thoughts follow, *BGall.* 1.42). They agree to meet five days later (*dies conloquio dictus est ex eo die quintus*). But in between (*interim*), other messengers are sent to and fro, again minutes of Ariovistus' request follow, and the account proceeds until the appointed day arrives at the agreed location (*BGall.* 1.43.). *Interim* separates the content of a letter sent by Domitius to Pompeius from the measures Domitius takes to defend Corfinium (*interim suos cohortatus tormenta in muris disponit ... BCiv.* 1.17.1-3) and the minutes of a *contio* in which he desperately promises to share his possessions with the soldiers as prizes in the event of victory (*BCiv.* 1.17.4).⁴³ The account moves ahead once again with an *interim*, as word has been brought to Caesar by the people of Sulmo, a town seven miles away from Corfinium, who report their present situation: the scenario changes with Antonius sent by Caesar to deal with the resistance put up by the Pompeians in the town. Distances, names, numbers of *cohortes* deployed, and actions taken are annotated in the account, as partly reported by Antonius, who the same day returns to the garrison with the surrendered Pompeians (*BCiv.* 1.18).

41 See, for instance, *BAlex.* 4.1; *BAfr.* 22.1 and 34.1ff.

42 See also *BCiv.* 1.60: while engaged at Ilerda with *Afranius*, Caesar obtains their obedience, and a list of populations follows; *BCiv.* 2.3: *interim* introduces the actions of the Pompeian Nasidius, who comes from Sicily to Massilia with his fleet, while the account begins with the Caesarian Trebonius. While fighting in Utica, Curio in the meantime orders the merchant ships to move away (*BCiv.* 2.25.6); Milo's actions in Turi, while the account gravitates around Caelius Rufus, *BCiv.* 3.12; in *BCiv.* 3.32, *interim* introduces a list of tributes, suffered by the eastern provinces under Scipio: the chapter seems to recollect detailed information from a local source. On *interim*, *dum* and *cum* as ligatures Rambaud (1966), 70 and *passim*. Copiously Gaertner/Hausburg (2013), 35, 57 and *passim*, with instances from the entire Corpus as well as Militeri (1996), 13ff.

43 Pompey's letter would be read by Domitius a few days later, who dissimulated its content during a war council (*BCiv.* 1.19.1). Interestingly, the content of Pompeius' message also appears also in *BCiv.* 1.19.4. The letter was either intercepted by the Caesarians or known afterwards.

Similarly, at *BCiv.* 3.51, the starting clause, *interim certior factus P. Sulla*, precedes Sulla's victorious action against the Pompeians; curiously, the chapter contains a comment by Caesar on Sulla's decision not to pursue the enemy, and it is punctuated by the twice-repeated observation that Sulla was left in charge of the camp by Caesar. Such repetition might suggest the presence of two overlapping reports, the one from Sulla and the other from Caesar, and/or a failed revision of the text. Regarding the anonymous *Bella*, the frequency of *interim* is particularly noticeable in *Bellum Africum*, more than in *Alexandrinum*,⁴⁴ as the conjunction is employed almost every time the theatre of war changes.⁴⁵

A conjunction like *dum* connects different theatres of war and refers instead to previous events, before introducing new ones. “*Dum haec in Aegypto geruntur*” (*BAlex.* 34.1) is the most peculiar clause: as the events in Egypt, with Caesar present, take place, Domitius engages with Pharnaces in Pontus. While giving orders for the siege of Massilia (*dum haec parat atque administrat ... BCiv.* 1.37.1), Caesar sends Fabius to Spain, where the latter successfully dislodges the enemy according to Caesar's orders: a whole, yet small, episode is here introduced and delimited by *dum*.⁴⁶ The same can be seen in *dum haec ad Ruspina fiunt* (*BAfr.* 33.1, *geruntur* at *BAfr.* 36.1): here the account might intersect the (same?) report/s from Ruspina with the facts that happened in the meantime.⁴⁷ In other words, the conjunction works as a signal to mark simultaneous

44 On *interim* in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* see Gaertner/Hausburg (2013), 57 n. 120. It is absent in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, save for one occurrence, 28.4, in a very dubious passage.

45 Almost eighty occurrences, of which the most significant in terms of change of scenario and actors might be *BAfr.* 4.1, Plancus' request to talk to Scipio; *BAfr.* 8.1, the messengers sent to Sardinia and other orders, while moving the camp to Leptis; *BAfr.* 12.1 and 13.1, Caesar's and Lepidus' movements respectively; the arrival of Numidian troops *BAfr.* 18.1; Cato at Utica reproving the young Pompeius *BAfr.* 22.1; Sittius and King Bogud joining forces, while King Juba departs from his kingdom *BAfr.* 25.1-2.

46 See also *BGall.* 1.27.4, 3.17.1, 4.34.3, 5.22.1, 6.7.1 etc.; *BCiv.* 1.36.1, 1.56.1, 2.1.1 and 3.112.11, *BAfr.* 53.1 and *BHisp.* 36.1.

47 In the meantime the account between chapters 33 and 36 sees the arrival of *legati* from Acylla, the following expedition of the Caesarian Messius to Acylla and the siege attempted by the Pompeian Considius, but not only that: (*per id tempus*) Sallust arrives in Sicily and *interim* is welcomed by the inhabitants of Cercina, etc. Still the clash of several reports and information looks remarkable here, and may have been hard to edit, as the editor has to twice repeat the clause “*dum haec in Ruspina fiunt/geruntur*”, in order to take up the account where he left it off.

events and perhaps, I would add, the final author might have deduced such simultaneity simply by reading timing annotations as registered in the reports, before “simplifying” or “summarising” such annotations with conjunctions such as *interim* and *dum*.

Similar in use and meaning are words and expressions such as *sub idem tempus* and *eodem tempore*, sometimes almost obsessively repeated;⁴⁸ likewise conjunctions such as *cum* and *postquam* might indicate not only a habit of giving temporal annotation to the facts of the day, but also the existence of procedures to be annotated in perhaps daily drafts.⁴⁹ Particularly in the *Bellum Africum* the adverb *postquam* is often followed by thinking verbs such as *intellego/animadverto* and, in terms of content, followed by minutes, which are not merely observational, but also verbalise and register thoughts and impressions.⁵⁰

The timing consistently provides details about a particular manoeuvre or the length of an engagement. Notably, the *hora X (decima)* must be a topic, considering its frequency in the *Bellum Africum*: the armies stay drawn up *a mane usque ad hora X (BAfr. 61.1)*, fasting a *quarta vigilia usque ad horam X diei (BAfr. 69.5)*; Caesar withdraws to his camp *in horam X commoratus, (BAfr. 78.9)*. For instance, Caesar does not want to engage in battle, because it is too late (*quod post horam X diei res agebatur*” *BAlex. 10.5*) as nightfall inspires more confidence in the enemies. *Hora* and *vigilia* are key words, as they frequently appear in the *Bellum Africum* and the *Bellum Hispaniense*,⁵¹ less in Caesar's own account, but when

48 Especially in the *Bellum Hispaniense*: more than 30 occurrences of *tempore*, in diaristic fashion and in combination with *praeterito, insequenti, nocturno; superiore tempore in BAfr. 87.3, nocturno, BAfr. 95.2 and eodem, BAfr. 77.3* (with the detail of army reinforcement). See for instance in Caesar's works: *BGall. 1.11.3 or 1.37.1*, where the simultaneity of two different events is recorded, and the minutes of the new embassy follow; *BCiv. 3.11.2 or 3.24.1*, after which follows the account from Antonius' point of view.

49 Regarding *cum* see Tixi (2015).

50 See also *BAfr. 79.1 and 81.1*: after acknowledging the enemy's battle line, Caesar disposes his army accordingly (*quo postquam Caesar pervenit et animadvertit aciem*).

51 See *BAfr. 19.5*: an engaging contest from the fifth hour to sundown; *BAfr. 38.1*: Caesar's inspection lasted “*minus semihora*”; see also *BAfr. 70.5, BHisp. 27. 3*: “*luna hora circiter sexta visa est*”, where “*visa est*” indicates the need for annotating the timing as precisely as possible. With regard to *vigilia*: *BAlex. 73.1*, before the fight at Zela the timing in the passage is not only marked by the word *vigilia* (and *proxima nocte* as intensifier) but even by *prima luce* in a sequence of 4 ablative absolutes.

adopted, they are accurate.⁵²

Dies seems to be a more generic indication of time, yet interestingly, as in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, *dies* is employed to summarise a certain yet inaccurate timing: *paucis diebus, multos dies, superioribus diebus*, as in the case of Ventidius' success over Octavius (*BAlex.* 47), which is punctuated by temporal annotations and other data. Similarly, Cassius Longinus' murder is marked precisely, and the following events (Titius recruiting a native legion and the mutiny while camped at Ilipa) are timed according to a sequence of passing days.⁵³ This generic phraseology appears to replace the dates as they are absent in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, whereas the *Bellum Africum* is more adherent to a very precise timing, sometimes taking for granted or failing to indicate which day the time is measured from.⁵⁴ In the *Bellum Hispaniense* the first chapters are presented as a day-by-day account, for instance with the repetitive *insequenti die*.⁵⁵

2.2.3 Distances

Distances, too are accurately registered, almost always related to military manoeuvres and positions, somehow justificatory of a particular fact or merely descriptive. Around Bibracte the way in which Caesar lines up his army “*ab hostium castris not longius mille et quingentis passibus*” is annotated with accuracy (*BGall.* 1.41.5).⁵⁶ Caesar draws up his ships, leaving a gap of 400 *passus*, a distance adequate for deploying his vessels (*BAlex.* 14.1).⁵⁷ In the *Bellum*

⁵² *BGall.* 1.25 on a fight, which lasts “*ab hora septima ad vesperum*” and in *BCiv.* 1.80.3 and 4, which documents a tactical chase by the Caesarian cavalry.

⁵³ *BAlex.* 52.2 and 57.

⁵⁴ See Sallustius' arrival at Cercina, legions embarked by the proconsul Alienus and ships safely arrived *quarto die*, *BAfr.* 4ff.

⁵⁵ *BHisp.* 14.2; 21.3; 25.1; 28.1 and other phraseology such as *postero die, eo die, hoc die, eius diei insequenti tempore, huius diei extremo tempore*, following Rambaud (1966), 89 as *BHisp.* “tend à énumérer les événements journée par journée” (at least from ch.11 to 28). An occurrence which also suggests an elementary collection of data by the final author and reveals how the method consists prevalently in gathering information, a reason sufficient for the material to be divulged.

⁵⁶ *BGall.* 1.22.1, see also 1.43.2, and at least other ten occurrences only in the first book of the *Bellum Gallicum*. See *BCiv.* 1.41.3, positioning the army at Ilerda; *BCiv.* 3.37.2 and 3.38.1.

⁵⁷ See *BAlex.* 18.3: the enemies swimming to the safety of the town; *BAlex.* 59.2: Cassius' camp four miles from Corduba.

Africum distances are quantified from one camp to the other and are clearly formulaic: *a suis castris passus CCC* (*BAfr.* 30.1 and 65.1), *ab eis castris* (*BAfr.* 67.3), *a Scipione* (68.1), *ab eo longe* (68.1), *ab suis castris* (75.1), *V milibus passuum ab suis castris, ab Scipionis vero II milibus passuum* (chiastic pattern, 77.4), *ab suis munitionibus* (78.2), *a castris presidioque* (80.3); or from a location: *ab oppido* (10.1 and 41.1), *a portu* (63.1).⁵⁸ Justificatory is the account of Domitius' actions in Pontus as he pitches camp roughly seven miles from Nicopolis, but in a narrow pass, which Pharnaces takes advantage of (*BAlex.* 36.4), as well as the fortifications work of the Caesarians because of the proximity of the enemy's camp (*cum spatio non amplius passuum mille, BAlex.* 73.3).

For example, *Bellum Africum* 63.1 begins by emphasising Caesar's *celeritas* in covering the distance between Leptis and its harbour and the dictator's boldness in confronting Varus' flotilla, whereas the short distance covered in one day is tactically explained as a slow advance due to enemy's incursions, (*BAfr.* 70.1).⁵⁹ In the *Bellum Civile*, the author knows that the nature of the place, which is *v milia passuum proxima itineris campestris*, has also been reconnoitred by the enemy as well, as each scout returns to his own camp with the same account (*BCiv.* 1.66.4). This annotation is also the result of a well-informed operation of intelligence, which allows Caesar to take the following tactical decision: to move the troops out of the camp *albente caelo* and to proceed with the account. Of a more descriptive nature are the passages where the words *longitudo* (length) and *altitudo* (high) recur as in the case of the dimensions of the wall built from Lemanus lake up to Lura mountain (*BGall.* 1.8.1) or, when Pompeius raises twenty-four forts, in a

⁵⁸ See the use of *longe*, *non amplius*, *non minus* in *BAfr.* 24.2; in *BHisp.* 8.6, and in *BHisp.* 29.1.

⁵⁹ See *BAfr.* 12.1, a passage both informative and explicative on intelligence while Caesar was advancing about three miles from his camp; in *BAfr.* 39.1 Caesar's move is motivated partly by the closeness of the enemy ranks; on Scipio's plan for the battle at Uttizza, *BAfr.* 59.4, as well as the impasse in fighting at *BAfr.* 61.1; *BHisp.* 41.4 and 5 notes the scarcity of water and timber for the Caesarians.

compass of fifteen miles (*BCiv.* 3.44.3), and Trebonius raises a mound in *altitudinem pedum lxxx* (*BCiv.* 2.1.4); very precise information is given on the length of the poles and the beams (*BCiv.* 2.2.2 and 4) and, for instance, the height of the fortifications' barricades armed by the Alexandrinians (*BAlex.* 2.1).⁶⁰

2.2.4 Military data

Military data occurs repeatedly in the five *Bella* also: not merely the names of the legions (i.e. the numbers), but also legions' activities are recorded in conjunction with a specific theatre of war and a change of scenario. For instance, *BGall.* 1.10.3 concerns the enrolment of two legions and the march of five back to Gaul;⁶¹ whereas *BCiv.* 1.40 describes the activities of the Caesarian Fabius and his legions, as well as of Plancus and his legion, both reporting to Caesar. The *Bellum Alexandrinum* consistently identifies the legion by its Roman numeral and at least ten instances occur solely in its Spanish chapters alone (*BAlex.* 48 to 64)⁶². In the *Bellum Africum* legions are frequently mentioned, each with their proper numbers, whereas in the *Hispaniense* data concerning the cavalry are amassed with an obsessive precision. The recording of cavalry' skirmishes is frequent: for instance, Paciaecus' plan to get through Ullia's defences (*BHisp.* 3.3-8); the movements of the *equites*, when a thick mist surprises them (*BHisp.* 6.4), and the accurate count of horsemen killed, wounded or captured.⁶³ In the *Bellum*

⁶⁰ See again *BAlex.* 18.3, 29.1 and 72.2 at Zela. The occupation of African soil for no more than *milia passuum VI* (or III), *BAfr.* 24.3, as the length of the plain to Ruspina, *BAfr.* 37.4, and 68.1 on the distance between Zela and Scipio's camp. Descriptive distance in *BHisp.* 7.1: the river Salsum from Ategua; Aspavia from Ucubi, *BHisp.* 24.1 and Carteia from Corduba, *BHisp.* 32.6.

⁶¹ See *BGall.* 2.8: not only the battle at the river Aisne against the Belgae, which involved six legions, but also the description of the location and of Caesar's tactical decisions, likewise *BCiv.* 3.28.6: the battle in the vicinity of Lissus and the detailed numbers of soldiers and ships.

⁶² *BAlex.* 33.3, 39.1: from the arrival of *Legio xxxviii*, embarked by Domitius Calvinus, 9.3, to the very detailed composition of Calvinus' army, 34.3-5. Occurrences of the word *Legio* differently inflected are numerous throughout the Corpus and generally are matched with Roman numerals, see the still useful, yet dated, work by Meusel (1914).

⁶³ As respectively in *BHisp.* 13.1, 15.1-5, 21.1-3, more instances in F. Stocchi (1996), 99-112, and Storch (1973), 381-383 both articles discuss the authorship of the *Bellum Hispaniense* as arguably related to a member of the cavalry.

Alexandrinum fleets (ships and vessels) are accurately counted in significant actions, or as losses and reinforcements, as the engagements in Alexandria and in Illyria between Octavius and Ventidius are prevalently nautical. After starting on a generic note regarding the fleets employed in the Alexandrian conflict (*BAlex.* 1.1), the account zooms in with the description of one Rhodian ship attacked by four decked vessels (*BAlex.* 11.1). After revealing what the enemy Ganimedes declared to his council (clearly some intelligence), the losses of the Alexandrinians are mentioned (*BAlex.* 12.3). In the following chapter, the account explains how quickly the enemy recovers and rebuilds its fleet, by providing the numbers of the new enemy fleet and the Caesarian one, (*BAlex.* 13.4 and 5).⁶⁴

Even the number of *cohortes* employed in an operation indicates detailed information with a list of other engaged troops, especially when the *cohortes* are positioned or drawn up to fight. Albeit present in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*,⁶⁵ this is especially evident in the case of the *Bellum Africum*, which reports more frequently on *cohortes*. For instance, a few veteran troops are employed by Caesar in the rear of the column, while marching to Leptis (*BAfr.* 7.5 as in 10.1); six are left behind as garrison at Leptis (*BAfr.* 9.1 and 29.2); thirty are sent out to forage at Ruspina (*BAfr.* 10.1); three to guard a fort (*BAfr.* 80.2); all attacking at Thapsus (*BAfr.* 82.4). The *Bellum Hispaniense* always matches the numbers of cohorts with the cavalry,⁶⁶ whereas at the beginning of chapter 30 the forces of the two contenders and curiously the Pompeian legions are counted metonymically as thirteen eagle standards and the Caesarian as eighty cohorts, i.e. ten legions.

⁶⁴ See also Euphranor's squadron of four Rhodian ships, *BHisp.* 15.5; the outcome of the battle, precise regarding Roman losses, *BAlex.* 16.6; the precise number of ships captured, *BAlex.* 47.2; Longinus' assembling one hundred ships, *BAlex.* 51.3.

⁶⁵ See *BAlex.* 17.1, as Caesar conceives a plan and embarks in smaller crafts, he attacks the narrow bridge in the Alexandrian harbour by putting ashore three cohorts 19.3 and 20.5; see also *BAlex.* 31.1 and *BAlex.* 57. The word *cohortes* twice refers to enemy troops, the Alexandrinians at *BAlex.* 2.1 and the left-behind troops of Pharnaces at *BAlex.* 76.3.

⁶⁶ With the sole exception of *BHisp.* 26.6, a very lacunose transcription of a letter from Cnaeus Pompey intercepted by the Caesarians. See for instance, in pursuit of Pompeius after Munda, *BHisp.* 38.1 and 3; in *BHisp.* 6.4 the successful Pompeian ambush against Caesar's cavalry.

Losses on both sides are counted, and when related to the Caesarian side, are often presented with a justificatory tone or by mentioning the value of fighting, despite the negative outcome of the skirmish or battle, as perhaps a little implausibly yet bureaucratically: *ex his circiter lxxx interfectis, reliquis in fugam coniectis, duobus (!) amissis in castra se receperunt*, only two Caesarian losses are reported (*BCiv.* 3.37.7).⁶⁷ For instance, the losses after the naval battle at the Alexandrian harbour are noted with “precise approximation” (*BAlex.* 21.4).⁶⁸ Moreover, as the count of losses is provided, numbers of soldiers (belonging to infantry or cavalry) and centurions are given. For instance, the account describes with extreme precision the aftermath of the Ilerda battlefield, by giving numbers of killed and wounded and also victims' names: *Nostris in primo congressu* (“in the initial encounter”)⁶⁹ *circiter lxx ceciderunt, in his Q. Fulginus ex primo hastato legionis xiiii ...* (*BCiv.* 1.46.4-5). Most noteworthy is the passage in which the fighting around Dyrrachium is explicitly recapitulated: *cum horum omnium ratio haberetur, ad duo milia numero ex Pompeianis cecidisse reperiebamus* (*BCiv.* 3.53.1).

The use of *ratio* in the quoted clause clearly shows an editing procedure: the author is here gathering information, likely extracted from different, yet simultaneous, daily reports, as the use of *reperiebamus* (regarding the losses for the Pompeians) confirms Caesar also has access to Pompeian sources (*BCiv.* 3.53.1). The chapter continues with killed and wounded Caesarians, again fairly detailed (*BCiv.* 3.53.2-3).⁷⁰

Not only timing and numbers of military personnel, but also letters, dispatches, embassies, envoys, deserters and scouts are

⁶⁷ Noteworthy is the use of the formulaic expression *se recepere*, as noted by Adams (2005), 75, joined with *incolumes*, here with *missis* as in *BCiv.* 3.46.6, see also *BCiv.* 3.52.2.

⁶⁸ See *BAlex.* 40.4: *xxxvi legio in loca se superiora contulit non amplius ccl desideratis*. On *BHisp.* see above n. 63, mostly horsemen.

⁶⁹ As translated by Damon (2016), 71.

⁷⁰ Even the number of arrows fired at the fort are overzealously counted, and the “heroic” shield of the centurion Scaeva, which had 230 holes.

recorded.⁷¹ All these data are generally listed together and joined with dates in a recapitulative context often at the beginning of a new sequence of events.⁷² Those patterns do not need to appear in every account, namely every time the narrator moves to a new scenario; that is partly because of the selection he makes in regard to the data and partly due to the different nature of the events as they happen. Moreover, the format in its cumulative and data-based narrative is not strictly repetitive, but is highly recognisable, as in almost every scenario the accounts tends to provide a set of data and proceedings, according to the information given. In other words, those data do not need to be consistent and present simultaneously but are trackable whenever a development or change of scenario takes place and are part of the cumulative narrative, namely they occur every time a sequence of actions occurs. Therefore, the data might be cumulative, in the sense that they add further data by providing the account with elements and details that make the narrative progress. The anonymous books especially, and more particularly the *Bellum Africum* and the *Bellum Hispaniense*, are revelatory as repositories of data collection.

Before investigating the report content, two observations are here worth making here regarding the format: given that the provision of data increases from Caesar's *Bella* to the anonymous books as much as the level of authorial intervention and editing decreases, the three *Bella* show a contiguity with the reports much closer than the Caesarian ones. Arguably, the literary legitimacy of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, *Africum* and, especially, *Hispaniense*

71 Austin/Rankov (1995) offer a comprehensive survey of intelligence particularly during the Late Roman Republic (39-108), by providing many examples taken from the entire Corpus, especially the *Bellum Gallicum*, *Civile* and *Africum* (index at 285-6). The scholars describe the acquisition of tactical intelligence through Roman sources - such as advance guards (*procuratores*), scouts (*exploratores*, *katascopoi*) and spies (*speculatores*) - and non Roman sources, such as prisoners, captured civilians, deserters, refugees and local inhabitants.

72 See for instance *BCiv.* 1.39: the detailed description of Afranius' and Petreius' army and Caesar's at Ilerda, numbers of *legiones*, *cohortes* and soldiers are listed, with a quick reference to previous chapters (*ut supra demonstratum est*), and also some rumours are recorded regarding Pompeius' manoeuvres; at *BCiv.* 1.41 timing and distances are provided, with the usual precision.

owes its existence to the adoption of the written materials and the method of gathering them, which are grounded in the genuinely Caesarian works. Although describing a standard report remains difficult, due to the lack of a direct source, namely the reports themselves, the report-based nature of the *Commentarii* can nevertheless be recovered by looking at the content of the reports, as explained below.

2.3 The report content: provenance, intelligence, minutes

While exemplifying the report content, this section discusses how the report as a source emerges and interacts throughout and as part of the narrative of the Corpus. At least three main features define the report content: the provenance, i.e. the location or theatre of war where the information comes from; the intelligence, namely the gathering not only of secret information (thanks to scouting, patrolling and deserters), but also of letters and embassies; the minutes, or rather the modality of reporting the content of the intelligence and the substance of Caesar's arguments, decisions and train of thought, more often than not through the device of *oratio obliqua* and in a few cases of transcription.⁷³

As mentioned above, there are external factors, which attest to the presence of other report-based sources: the obvious absence of Caesar in certain locations as he was involved in other theatres of war, Hirtius' and Pollio's statements as asserted respectively in the prefatory letter to Balbus and in the Suetonian passage.⁷⁴ Regarding specifically the anonymous *Bella*, Hirtius admits - still in his prefatory address to Balbus - to not having taken part in the Alexandrian and African campaigns, as he writes that he learned of these campaigns partly from Caesar himself (*Bella quamquam ex parte nobis Caesaris sermone sunt nota*).⁷⁵ Even if Hirtius recalls by heart

⁷³ A verbatim transcription of a letter Pompey sent to the citizens of Urso appears in the *Bellum Hispaniense* 26.4, see ch. 3.1.6, 155.

⁷⁴ See ch. 2.1, 70ff.

⁷⁵ Hirtius, *BGall.* 8. *praef.* 8.

Caesar's *sermo*, to complete the account he must have plausibly drawn on other (likely written) sources.⁷⁶ Memorising both oral accounts and entire campaigns with such a level of detail without writing them down seems an impossible task.

2.3.1 Provenance

Likely the clearest feature throughout the accounts, provenance concerns from where and from whom a certain set of information comes from. The attempt to detect provenance might be helped by the extensive use Caesar makes of “rapidly-moving messengers”, who bring news from one camp to another (i.e. the headquarters).⁷⁷ Evidence not only of provenance, but also of this rapid communication between the officers and their general is provided firstly by looking at three topical episodes in the genuinely Caesarian works (concerning Q. Cicero in Gaul, M. Varro in Spain), then at a few passages taken from the other *Commentarii*.

2.3.1.1 The reports of Q. Cicero and M. Varro: a documentary traffic

Concerning the provenance of reports, the fifth book of *BGall.* is exemplary, as Caesar disposes the legions for wintering in different states of Gaul by setting them under the command of his lieutenants: Quintus Cicero is one of them, assigned to the Nervii's territory (*BGall.* 5.24.1-8). Unexpectedly led by the Nervii, another rebellion arises, and Cicero tries to communicate with Caesar, but his dispatches are intercepted as the roads are surveilled and the messengers captured, despite the promise of rewards if they succeed (*BGall.* 5.40.1). Nevertheless, the account proceeds with the siege of Cicero's camp at the hands of the Nervii (*BGall.* 5.40.3),

⁷⁶ Hirtius, *ibidem*, continues: “we nevertheless perceive (*audimus*) in one way the things that fascinate us because of the novelty of the events or our admiration, and in another way the things that we will one day have to say in testimony *pro testimonio sumus dicturi*). Not just a programmatic statement, but also of method: when it is time to write, the act of listening becomes different, more attention is due as “*audimus*” here is not mere listening but keeping in mind what may be perhaps told in order to be written down.

⁷⁷ Osgood (2009), 336, quoting *BGall.* 3.9, 5.10, 7.9 and 7.41.

until some of the Nervii request a meeting with Cicero (*BGall.* 5.41.1), who refuses to meet their requests (*ab hac spe repulsi Nervii vallo, BGall.* 5.42.1). The siege therefore continues for more than a week: on its seventh day, a fire breaks out in the Roman camp, caused by flaming arrows from the enemy (*BGall.* 5.43.1-2). Despite the adversities and the momentum gained by the enemy, the legionaries bravely resist (*tanta militum virtus atque ea praesentia animi fuit ...*) as the account credits (*omnes acerrime fortissimeque pugnarent, BGall.* 5.43.4), until it zooms in to focus on the bravery of two centurions, Pullus and Vorenus (*BGall.* 5.44.1). After several aborted attempts to send envoys to Caesar (*quanto erat in dies gravior et asperior oppugnatio ... tanto crebriores litterae nuntiique ad Caesarem mittebantur ..., BGall.* 5.45.1), he is finally informed through the expedient of a message hidden in a javelin, carried out by a Gallic slave (*BGall.* 5.45.2 and 4), and takes actions (*acceptis litteris hora circiter undecima diei – the hour is precisely indicated – nuntium ad M. Crassum quaestorem mittit, BGall.* 5.45.1).

The description of what happened inside Cicero's camp comes from Cicero himself and his account: the cumulative narrative, the punctuated timing of the siege (*noctu*), some data about the layout of the fortifications, the name of the Gallic slave (loyal to Cicero) arguably recall the format of the reports. Perhaps the failed attempts to send him dispatches were also recorded as Caesar learns of them when the whole sequence of events at Cicero's camp is made known to him afterwards. Likewise, the episode of the centurions might record an exemplary attitude in a difficult moment, which has been dramatised at the time of the editing. Moreover, in terms of content, the embassy of the Nervii is described in detail as his reply to them (perhaps in justification of Caesar's delay), whereas the particularities on Cicero's health and his personal endurance and bravery sound auto-celebratory (a trait he shared with his brother

Marcus; this may have been left in the final text by Caesar by way of subtle irony).

Provenances are various in the *Bellum Civile* too: the most evident is the account of Curio's deeds in Africa, which covers half of book two (*BCiv.* 2.23-41). The account of Varro's actions and surrender to Caesar at Corduba (*BCiv.* 2.17-20) might be both a result of intelligence from the Caesarian party and direct access to Varro's sources. A close look at these chapters reveals first-hand information, due to the familiarity and friendship Caesar entertains with Varro. It is Varro, who, by knowing the events in Italy which are favourable to Caesar, talks in friendly terms about Caesar (*amicissime de Caesare loquebatur*)⁷⁸. Nevertheless, subsequent to the dispatches from Afranius, who was besieged at Ilerda in Hither Spain, Varro takes a series of actions and measures hostile to Caesar and in support of the Pompeians, such as, for example, exacting a levy in the province (*BCiv.* 2.18.1), gathering supplies of corn to support the Pompeian resistance at Ilerda and Massillia (*BCiv.* 2.18.1), ordering the inhabitants of Gades to build ten ships and contracting others (*BCiv.* 2.18.1) and collecting money and treasures from the temple of Hercules in Gades (*BCiv.* 2.18.2). The account proceeds by quoting the alleged, but definite, sums Varro promises to Roman citizens (*BCiv.* 2.18.4), and the plan of the military campaign Varro is about to initiate (*ratio autem haec erat belli, BCiv.* 2.18.6), whose ultimate strategical aim would have been (*existimabat*) to take refuge on the island of Gades and to prolong the war from there (*BCiv.* 2.18.5). The accuracy of the information suggests that its source is more likely to have been from Varro's entourage than from Caesarian intelligence, and in any case after Varro's surrender, possibly when he renders to Caesar "the book of accounts" (*relatis ad eum publicis cum fide rationibus ...*), while handing over the money (*... quod penes eum est pecuniae tradit ...*)

⁷⁸ Rare use of *loqui* plus infinitive, as the minute follows, perhaps reporting a meeting of the two or, more likely, collecting Varro's talks through intelligence, *BCiv.* 2.17.3.

and indicating the amount and the locations of the supplies (... *et quid ubique habeat frumenti ac navium ostendit, BCiv. 2.20.8*).

Those Varronian chapters are also punctuated by, if not comments, annotations, which Caesar likely makes and includes in order to impugn Varro's actions: for instance, the letters Afranius sends to Varro, written in an exaggerated style (*haec latius et inflatius Afranius perscribebat, BCiv. 2.17.4*), and Varro's assertions, formulated in office at the tribunals, that Caesar was losing battles and suffering many desertions, at least according to what appears to be trustworthy messengers (if rather derisive perhaps towards the writer Varro: ...*haec se certiis nuntiis, certiis auctoribus comperisse, BCiv. 2.18.3*). Similarly, ironic would seem the observation that Varro moves according to the movements of fortune, likely made to explain his indecisiveness (*se quoque ad motus fortunae movere coepit, BCiv. 2.17.4*). The account here is thoroughly self-defensive (slightly vindictive) and somehow anticipates the inevitable conclusion: Varro's surrender. Above all, the audience is already aware not only of Afranius' pomposity, but of his defeat and humiliating capitulation at Ilerda.⁷⁹

As noted above, it would be utterly futile merely to dissect these paragraphs, questioning which report is which, whether each comes from Varro's staff or Caesar himself, as the eventual text is largely controlled by Caesar's authorship. However, first by gathering information directly from Varro – which would otherwise not have been accessible to the dictator -, then through editing those facts and news, the account reveals its method, its narrative logic. Cicero's and Varro's episodes have much in common in terms of method and narrative logic: after a first admission of contact, the events are reconstructed retrospectively by working on reports and then reassured/reinforced by Caesar's acknowledgement and intervention. Still, in regard to Cicero's deeds in Gaul and Varro's in

⁷⁹ Afranius' and Petreius' and "eorum amici" exaggerated reports is a leitmotif, as in *BCiv. 1.53*. On Afranius see Damon (1994), 193.

further Spain, Caesar elaborates what sources of information he already has available in his military campaigns: a constant traffic of documents, letters, dispatches, reports - a hub of information, ready to be used, filtered and adapted.

2.3.1.2 Reports in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, *Africum* and *Hispaniense*: the case of Vatinius, Sittius and Didius

In the *Bellum Alexandrinum* the report provenance appears more evident, as this *commentarius* contains the accounts of varied theatres of war, specifically: Egypt, Pontus, Illyricum, Further Spain, and again Pontus. The obvious deduction might be that different sources and gathering of information and not merely Caesar's absence from the region might explain the break of continuity in the account - for instance - of the Pontus campaign, pertaining to which I might hypothesise that not only the intervention of Caesar himself but perhaps his personal report might be the origin of this discontinuity.⁸⁰ Moreover, a single theatre of war (the *provincia*) does not coincide with a singular report-based source. Such a break of continuity is also obvious in every *Bellum*, however, in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* it is more pronounced.

For instance, in case of Illyricum (*BAlex.* 42-47), a hiatus emerges between (the account of) the events during the quaestorship of Cornificius, the arrival of Gabinius (*BAlex.* 42-43) and the decisive intervention of Vatinius. On the one hand, we are informed of the actions of the duo Cornificius-Gabinius, until the defeat while withdrawing at Salona, detailed with the exact losses and constant justificatory remarks. On the other, we rely on Vatinius' prompt reaction, as he was acquainted of the situation in the province (*crebris litteris Cornificii*), his clear war strategy and final victory. Interestingly, the transition from Cornificius, Gabinius, and

⁸⁰ The name of the whole book is somehow misleading: the Alexandrian war constitutes only one third of the whole account, as if the title has been the inevitable consequence of a failed thorough revision, see on Hirtius and the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, Gaertner/Hausburg (2013), 160ff., and ch. 3.1.2, 131ff.

Vatinius, and the final paragraphs of Vatinius' victory over the Pompeian Octavius are described in a recapitulatory fashion: when one report merges into another, some repetition occurs, as the necessity of concluding the account and opening a new one falls to the editor.⁸¹

In the *Bellum Africum*, reports have clearly different origins (the places they are written), as the account describes a constant change of scenario; moreover, reports are collected first at the headquarters (the place they are sent to), then arranged at an editorial level, as the following two episodes concerning the young Pompeius and Sittius show.⁸²

After being reprimanded by Cato (*BAfr.* 22.1ff.), young Pompeius moves with a small fleet and army from Utica (*BAfr.* 23.1) to Ascurum in Mauritania, the kingdom of Bogud, where he unsuccessfully attempts a siege (*ita re male gesta*, *BAfr.* 23.4) and therefore set off with his fleet to the Balearic Islands. Such pieces of news come from a well-informed and report-style source, which keeps the headquarters posted on Pompeius' operations, likely from a Caesarian informer in Bogud retinues or from Sittius' intelligence.

After Thapsus, while (*dum*) the Pompeian Considius retreats and is killed, *interim* another Pompeian, Vergilius, surrenders to the proconsul Caninius as he is cut off *terra marique* and all his friends and allies have been killed or put to flight: among them Suburra, King Juba's general, and his troops, who have been destroyed by Sittius, eventually Vergilius accepts the assurances offered by Caninius (*BAfr.* 93.1ff.). But the account of Sittius' victory over Suburra comes only at *BAfr.* 95 (again an *interim*): a detailed and eulogistic report, as Sittius emerges as a vigorous and efficient man

81 As in *BAlex.* 47.1 (*suisque omnibus incolumibus recepit incolumis*); notably and not casually Vatinius uses formulaic expression while writing to Cicero (*Fam.* 5.9; 5.10 c; 5.10b and 5.10a), see ch. 3.1.3, 136 and 3.3.2, 165 on Vatinius as reporter.

82 What Rambaud (1953), 56ff., calls "le secrétariat de Cesar", namely the "newsroom", reasonably located in the *praetorium* (see above ch. 2.1, 76ff.). See also the use of *interim* and other adverbs of time as mentioned above, which is (perhaps) the most revelatory sign of editorial intervention, combined with the ablative absolute and data collections.

in the army: not only does he defeat Suburra (two ablative absolutes: *pulso exercitu ipsoque interfecto*), but while taking a small force (*cum paucis*) to join Caesar, he falls on Faustus Sulla and Afranius, promptly lays an ambush and captures them.⁸³ Here are the facts from Sittius' point of view. However, such facts - Suburra's defeat and killing - were already known by Vergilius and recorded at the level of the headquarters and/or the entourage of proconsul Considius, as chapter 93 proves.

Concerning the *Bellum Hispaniense* the contiguity between Caesar and the reporter/s appears consistent, at least until chapter 36. The following chapters present instead in a patchwork of news coming from different locations, as the “mopping-up” operations post-Munda affect the entire region leading to the final outcome of the war. Whereas the first part of the *Bellum Hispaniense* seems to be a day-by-day account almost until the battle of Munda, the account takes two routes, one follows Caesar, the other describes young Pompeius' escape at Carteia, his death and the acts of the Caesarian Didius thereafter. Two (or more) reports cross the narrative, which is set in different theatres of war: while (*dum*) Caesar was attacking other towns (Hispalis, Asta and Gades), a fighting takes place (*seditione concitata ... caedes fit magna*) at Carteia, Pompeius, wounded, suffers defeat and flees with twenty warships (*BHisp.* 37.2). It is not only the Caesarian Didius, in command of a small fleet in Gades, who chases Pompeius as soon as the news of his escape reaches Didius (*simul nuntius allatus est*), but also a contingent of cavalry and infantry also follows on the ground. After three days ashore, Pompeius docks to get water (*dum aquantur*), Didius hastens to reach him and “*navis incendit, non nullas capit*”. Pompeius' flight now becomes desperate, as he takes refuge in a place with a natural defensive position and the Caesarians push on as they know the location thanks to scouts sent

⁸³ See in the same eulogistic tone Sittius' two previous actions, who clearly was updating the headquarters and therefore in turn instructed and informed: *BAfr.* 25.2 and 36.4.

on ahead.

The work of intelligence, the descriptions of the attacks on the final refuge, the tactical defences of the enemy, Pompeius' detailed wounds and final flight appear to come from a single source, which reports from the Caesarian contingent and/or Didius' staff likely to Hispalis. This town, perhaps unsurprisingly, seems to be the location of the headquarters, where the information is gathered: the day-by-day account ends in Hispalis (*BHisp.* 35.1 and 36.2-4), the same town where Pompeius' head is taken (precisely on April the 12th), while Caesar is in Gades (*BHisp.* 38.3), and finally Caesar comes back (*BHisp.* 40.7) and summons its inhabitants to hold a speech (*BHisp.* 42.1:). Interestingly, Hispalis' name returns three times with a repeated emphasis on Caesar's movement from Gades (*BHisp.* 39.3; 40.7 and 42.1),⁸⁴ in order to summon up three sets of facts: the flight and death of Pompeius (*BHisp.* 36 to 39.2), the death of Didius (*BHisp.* 40.1 to 40.6) at the hands of the Lusitanians, Munda being besieged by Fabius Maximus and the conquest of Ursao (*BHisp.* 41). The grand finale of the speech – whose extent we ignore, as the manuscripts abruptly terminate at *BHisp.* 42.7 – takes place at Hispalis: the minutes are interesting, partly rendered in indirect speech, and seem to be a manifesto, if not an apex of propaganda, as noted below.

2.3.2 Intelligence

By intelligence is meant not only recording not only the presence of *exploratores*, *speculatores* (scouts, spies) and *perfugii* (deserters), as information carriers, but also to listing and collecting information from embassies and documents, such as letters and dispatches.⁸⁵ Such recording and listing reveals a common practice

⁸⁴ Some sort of formulaic or recapitulatory pattern is at work here (more than the clumsiness of the author), as in *BHisp.* 39.3; *BHisp.* 40.7 and *BHisp.* 42.1).

⁸⁵ Austin/Rankov (1995), for instance 45 on *BGall.* 1.41.5 or 48 on *BCiv.* 3.41.4 regarding *exploratores*, 55 on *BHisp.* 13.3 and *BAfr.* 35.2-5 concerning *speculatores* etc. See also Sheldon (2005), 126-137.

throughout the entire *Corpus* and shows not only the military habit of scouting and spying but also the existence of a location for collecting the news, the “newsroom”. The cases below (the Nervii's uprising, the events preceding the battle of Munda and concerning Pontus and Further Spain) exemplify the functioning of the “newsroom” throughout the five *Commentarii*, in which intelligence plays an important role.

2.3.2.1 The Nervii's rebellion

In the frenetic aftermath of the Nervii's uprising (*BGall.* 5.46ff.), the Gallic account provides an example not only of how intelligence works, but also of how information is recorded in order to react or counter-react to simultaneous events. When Caesar knows Cicero is under siege by the Nervii, he sends dispatches both to Crassus and to Quintus Fabius, whose winter quarters are respectively in the country of the Bellovaci, twenty-five miles away from Caesar (*BGall.* 5.46.1), and in the territory of the Morini. The orders to Crassus are to leave immediately, which he promptly does (*BGall.* 5.46.3). Again the format is customary: reception and action (*acceptis litteris ... Caesar nuntium mittit, BGall.* 5.46.1); content (*iubet proficisci ..., BGall.* 5.46.2); reception and action (*exit cum nuntio Crassus, BGall.* 5.46.3). A similar pattern recurs in the case of Quintus Fabius, who, having received an envoy from Caesar (*BGall.* 5.46.3), is asked to march to the land of the Atrebates and join his general there (*BGall.* 5.46.3). However, as the reunion is somewhat delayed, the main account records it later on (*Fabius, ut imperatum erat, not ita multum moratus in itinere cum legione occurrit, BGall.* 5.47.3). The format also recurs concerning Labienus, but here it is more circumstantiated. Caesar writes to Labienus ordering him to head towards the Nervii, if he is in a position to do so (*BGall.* 5.46.4). Unfortunately, Labienus cannot carry out the order (as he explains in a message dispatched to Caesar, *BGall.* 5.47.4-5), because of the

Treviri, who are threatening him not far from his winter camp. Nevertheless, Caesar approves of his decisions (*consilio eius probato*, *BGall.* 5.48.1). The account, likewise its main protagonist, finally reaches the Nervii and the besieged Cicero (*BGall.* 5.48.2). By replying to Caesar, Labienus makes clear not only his tactic (*litteras remittit, quanto cum periculo legionem educturum esset*, *BGall.* 5.47.4) but informs Caesar of other contingent facts such as the detail of operations undertaken by the Eburones and the forces of the Treveri's contingent, which is stationed three miles from his own camp (*BGall.* 5.47.5).

Besides the minutes and the detailed data, the account provides, it is noteworthy how the communications between the winter camps and the headquarters operate effectively, which once more suggests the existence of a centre, where to and whence all the dispatches arrive and leave from. Moreover, as every step and/or failure – of the timing of reception and shipping - the communication system incurs is recorded, I shall logically deduce the existence of a writing centre, a “newsroom”, which connects and organises the documents (as letters and dispatches), and which ultimately produces recapitulative documents, the reports. The account (especially its maker, Caesar) demands precision and pace. Moreover, the constant flow of data can guarantee an up-to-date and well-informed overview of the present situation. Yet it remains unclear whether and to what extent the actions recorded in the report are entered in the same sequence in the final account. Nevertheless, Caesar works on reports, which chronicle events daily, and those documents can hardly have been organised anywhere other than in Caesar's headquarters, likely under his supervision, namely in the *praetorium*.⁸⁶ This material functions as the cumulative narrative described above: it allows the account to progress.

⁸⁶ See above ch. 2.1, 68.

2.3.2.2 Before the battle of Munda

When Caesar arrives at Munda, he knows from the scouts (*renuntiatum est ab speculatoribus*, *BHisp.* 28.1) that Pompeius is in battle formation. Thus, informed of the facts (*hoc nuntio allato*, *BHisp.* 28.1), he prepares for fighting. The chapter continues by giving reasons why Pompeius lines up the troops: he dispatches letters to the citizens of Ursao saying Caesar does not want to engage in battle as his troops are too inexperienced (*Ursaoniensium civitati ... antea litteras miserat Caesarem nolle in vallem descendere*, *BHisp.* 28.2). Such letters assure the Ursaonienses that their help was not needed by Pompeius (*BHisp.* 28.3). The intelligence here is still working, first with the verbal report of the *speculatores*, then in the interception of letters. Letters to Ursao have been intercepted previously (*BHisp.* 26.3-4), to be precise the day before. Moreover chapter 26 lists a sequence of desertions, specifically three Roman knights from the town of Asta (names given at *BHisp.* 26.2), who report further desertions from Pompeius' camp. Later on (*insequenti die*, 27.1), some slaves provide information about fighting that took place on the fifth of March at Soricaria (*BHisp.* 27.2). But the method of recording here is noteworthy: first the account takes note of information (with verbs such as *nuntiare* or *certiorem facere* and nouns such as *litterae* and *nuntii*) and its content. Then, once the information is acquired, the account moves on.⁸⁷

2.3.2.3 Letters from Pontus and reconstructing events in Further Spain

As King Pharnaces intercepts Caesar's couriers and letters sent to Domitius, the governor of Asia (*BAlex.* 38.1), he learns

⁸⁷ See *BGall.* 5.40 quoted above on Q. Cicero. See on this phraseology Adams (2005), 76. At the beginning of the *Bellum Africum* the forces of the enemy are reported to Caesar's entourage by local inhabitants, *BAfr.* 1.1. Frantic sequence in *BAfr.* 32.4 and 55.1.

(*cognoscit*, 38.1) the difficulties Caesar is experiencing in Egypt. Knowing their content (*qua re cognita*, *BAlex.* 38.2) Pharnaces resolves to draw out the time, to take advantage of the current situation and ultimately to move on. Interestingly, by admitting the interception of documents, the account here not only justifies the impending defeat suffered by Domitius, it also acknowledges even the enemy intelligence. That could reflect a retrospective report, drafted by Domitius' staff, or the possession of further letters of the same tone, which would explain why Domitius was more concerned about Caesar's position (*BAlex.* 39.1). And the way in which the information is recorded is standard: the letters first, then their content, then the subsequent actions. The same is true in Spain: the greedy Caesarian Quintus Cassius Longinus receives letters from Caesar (information: *interim litteras accepit a Caesare*, *BAlex.* 51.1), who invites him to bring an army across to Africa (content: *ut in Africam the exercitum traheret ...*, 51.1). Once those dispatches have been read, Longinus summons the legions (moving on: *itaque ipse in Lusitaniam proficiscitur*, *BAlex.* 51.3)⁸⁸.

The final editor of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* has the (difficult) task of reconstructing a very confusing sequence of events in Spain, which take place around Corduba. After the description of the mutiny and the subsequent pacification between Pompeians and Caesarians under the command of Marcellus (*BAlex.* 58-59.1), Cassius Longinus reappears (*BAlex.* 59.2), and his actions are accounted for in a report-like fashion (cumulative narrative): within two days (*eo biduo*), he camps three miles distant (*circiter III milia passuum*) from Corduba in a favourable position (*in oppidi conspectu loco excelso*), and he sends dispatches to King Bogud of Mauritania and M. Lepidus, the proconsul of Hither Spain, asking them to provide him with assistance to himself as soon as

⁸⁸ See also *BAlex.* 56.1-2 as Longinus learns (*cognoscit*) that Pompeius has been defeated at Pharsalus, from dispatches sent by Caesar, he reacts (*qua re cognita*) with mixed feelings.

possible.⁸⁹ Immediately thereafter, the editor makes a comment on Longinus' way of fighting, regarded as aggressive, and goes on to describe the engagements between Longinus and Marcellus: Marcellus' indecisiveness is justified and praised (*BAlex.* 60.2), as are the soldiers from both armies (Cassius' army: *bono equitatu*, *BAlex.* 60.4 and 61.1: *fidei magis quam virtuti legionum*; Marcellus' army: *copiis pedestribus multo firmior, habebat ... veteranas multiisque proeliis expertas legiones* *BAlex.* 61.1), whereas Longinus is despised (*cuius rei deformitate atque indignitate*, *BAlex.* 60.1). The account records the acknowledgement of the letters by Bogud and Lepidus from Longinus' point of view; in both cases the timing and dates are provided.⁹⁰ As similar comments follow the arrival of Bogud and Lepidus, the editor seems to anticipate the outcome of the whole episode, through the admission that, as usual during the civil war, some towns were supporters of Cassius, but large numbers were supporters of Marcellus, and the recording of the arrival of Lepidus, which is expressly aimed at reconciling Longinus with Marcellus and their army. The tone of those chapters becomes conciliatory, as if all the protagonists except Longinus (and his ally King Bogud) act in order to avoid any further civil strife between the Pompeians and the Caesarians, and perhaps in accordance with orders dispatched by Caesar, as all the events take place after the victory at Pharsalus. The existence of Caesar's order would explain why Marcellus put himself in the hands of Lepidus *sine dubitatione* (*BAlex.* 63.2): they had agreed it in advance under Caesar's auspices.

The editor has sources derived from at least two reports, if only for the obvious reasons that both Longinus is and Marcellus is/becomes Caesarian, and that the legions refuse to accept any more divisions between Longinus and Marcellus. One report comes from Longinus' entourage or from his deputy Quintus Cassius, the

⁸⁹ See *BAlex.* 59.2.

⁹⁰ King Bogus at 62.1; Lepidus at 63.1.

other from Marcellus' staff. Lepidus' intention to resolve the dispute between Marcellus and Longinus (*ut sine ullo studio contentiones componeret*, *BAlex.* 63,1) right away reveals the likely existence of a precise order from Caesar (and a previous constant exchange), and the arrival of Trebonius as the new governor might have been the final measure and the logical consequence of this exchange of orders. The comments made throughout the whole episode, on Longinus' behaviours and departure, demonstrate the editor's personal intervention and struggle to give uniformity and sense to the written material and the complexity of the events in Further Spain⁹¹. The incongruous repetition of the camp set-up (Lepidus joins his camp to that of Marcellus before Bogud's attack versus Marcellus joins his camp to that of Lepidus after Bogud's attack) confirms the existence of two different reports and proves a lack of revision by the final author, perhaps also due to the confusion of the events around Corduba.⁹²

As described in the previous section with regard to the *speculatores*, intelligence also operates as a service as well, through scouts, fugitives or deserters and reveals how the army was organised in terms of gathering information from the enemy side. The movements and the outcomes of their activities are recorded, likewise the letters or the dispatches. This brings us to conclude that letters are source material for the report, as what matters is their listing and their minutes.

2.3.3 Minutes

Minuting consists in outlining the content of letters, dispatches and orders, and in writing down dialogues and speeches during embassies and assemblies.⁹³ This section provides examples of

91 Perhaps Longinus' plan might have been to sail off, to reach Rome and meet Caesar to give and provide an explanation in person, as Loreto (2001), 388, suggests.

92 *BAlex.* 63.3: Lepidus as subject, in a chapter where he enters the story: *interim Lepidus etc.* In *BAlex.* 64.1 Marcellus is the subject and joins the camp as soon as Cassius leaves the scene.

93 On the meaning of the term "minute" see *OED*, s.v. 'minute, n.III':

how embassies, letters, thoughts and orders as well as public speeches are minuted throughout the *Commentarii*, revealing how *oratio obliqua* represents an intrinsic pattern of the reports and a way to index arguments and make them easily available.⁹⁴

2.3.3.1 The Remi's embassy

Not only rumours but even Labienus' dispatches confirm the imminent uprising of the Belgae (*BGall.* 2.1). Caesar lists the causes of their conspiracy: adverbs such as *primum*, *deinde*, *partim* and *etiam* punctuate the narrative, reflecting personal thoughts on the rumours and the dispatches (*his nuntiis litterisque commotus Caesar ...*, *BGall.* 2.2.1). Actions have to be taken, and he himself moves out with the usual alacrity. To be precise: Caesar makes an annotation in the text to the effect that he asks the still-friendly Gaulish tribes to keep him informed about the Belgae, and as they immediately do so, he resolves to leave, and within fifteen days he reaches enemy territory (*BGall.* 2.2.3-5). In response the Remi send an embassy, whose eminent messengers, Iccius and Andocumborius, announce their total obedience to the *populus Romanus* by giving a series of reasons for their decision and inform Caesar about the Belgae's and their allies' movements (*BGall.* 2.3.2-5). The dialogue continues as Caesar demands details of the insurgent tribes (*BGall.* 2.4.1). The envoys reply by providing an accurate inventory of the enemies' forces (*BGall.* 2.4.1-10). Once the Remi have fully answered, Caesar pays them compliments (*BGall.* 2.5.1) and commands them to gather their assembly and give hostages as a guarantee. Such requests are immediately

www.oed.com/view/Entry/118997 [accessed 18.03.2019]. See for instance, the letter exchange between Q. Cicero and Caesar in *BGall.* 5.48.3ff., see above ch. 2.3.1.1, 94. The semantic range covered by the English term minutes is occupied by, but not limited to, various meanings of the terms *breviarium* (*OLD*, p. 241, col. 2), *exemplum* (*OLD* definition 9a, p. 639, col. 3), *libellus* (*OLD* definition 2a, p. 1022, col. 3), and, of course, *commentarius* (*OLD* definition 2a, p. 363, col. 1).

⁹⁴ The use of *oratio obliqua* is extensive in the genuinely Caesarian works, amounting to 32 percent in the first book of the *Bellum Gallicum* according to Leeman (1963), 176, and it is likewise present, I would add, in the so-called Continuator.

granted (*quae omnia ab his diligenter ad diem facta sunt*, *B Gall.* 2.5.1). Caesar then talks to Divitiacus, chieftain of the Aedui, to whom he explains his plan, and once the orders have been given, he proceeds. As seen above, firstly regarding the rumours and Labienus' letters and then the much more widely detailed embassy of the Remi, the account moves on as soon as the process of collecting this information is acknowledged. Such a process can develop only thanks to an up-to-date system or register of facts and events taken recorded as they happen as it helps the general and his collaborators (constantly in touch even when located far from each other) to take action thanks to the fact that they are informed. It is difficult to deny the existence of written materials, that helped Caesar to take his decisions and to act on the recently gathered intelligence. Perhaps the primary aim of such a written material was to help the decision makers to conduct the campaign according to the information available. Whether the content of those minutes is strictly true or historically distorted by Caesar remains irrelevant to the present argument. In this sense the general and the narrator march together, as the Caesarian victories are not only the result and the consequence of military knowledge but also of a well-organised intelligence married with the capability of organising the data into an easy-to-read (and listen to) narrative.⁹⁵

Given the circumstances of the war and its ten-years length, as well as Caesar's well-known *celeritas* in writing, the “bookish general” might have found it expedient to transform material which was already existent and available as part of the strategy of conquest.

2.3.3.2 The *litterae* and the clash of reports

In the case of the *litterae*, very often their content is reported in indirect speech (one exception being the letter of the young

⁹⁵ On the location of these documents see above notes 19-20.

Pompeius in *BHisp.* 26.3-4). For instance, in the midst of the events prior to the battle of Dyrrhachium (*BCiv.* 3.57.1), Caesar sends to Scipio a letter via their mutual friend Clodius (*huic dat litteras mandataque ad eum ...*, *BCiv.* 3.57.2). Its content is expressly introduced by a clause unique in the whole Corpus: ... *quarum (litterarum) haec erat summa*.⁹⁶ The main elements follow thereafter in the usual infinitive clauses. The negative influence of another Pompeian, Favonius, causes Clodius' attempt to fail, as he is not admitted to a meeting (*BCiv.* 3.57.5). Besides the usual sequence: *dat litteras - quorum summa – mandata refert* and *infectaque re* (ablative absolute) *sese recepit*, Caesar learned of Favonius' unfavourable influence over Scipio only when the war was over (*ut postea confecto bello reperiebamus*, *BCiv.* 3.57.5). Although the annotation about Favonius sounds like a late insertion by Caesar, when writing and editing his account, it is nevertheless a sign of serviceable and planned intelligence, as the use of *reperiebamus* indicates. In search of more supplies Caesar sends dispatches to Sicily (*BAfr.* 20.5);⁹⁷ specifically, he was looking for stocks of hurdles and timbers, iron and lead. The content of the letters is revealed by the level of detail. The dictator also writes to the communities in Africa to inform them of his arrival in the province (*BAfr.* 26.1), to urge Alienus and Rabirius Postumus to ship an army to him as quickly as possible (*BAfr.* 26.3). In drafting these latest letters, sent to Sicily by a *catascopus* (a reconnaissance vessel), Caesar's statements appear in an infinitive clause: (he writes that) the province of Africa is about to be destroyed by its enemies (*Africam provinciam perire funditus averti ab suis inimicis*) and (that), unless they promptly help with supplies, nothing except the mere soil of Africa and not even a roof for shelter would be left intact (*quod nisi celeriter foret subventum, praeter ipsam Africam terram nihil, nec*

⁹⁶ Meusel's Lexicon fails to list this meaning of *summa* among the occurrences of the Caesarian *Bella*, see vol. II.2. 2046-2047.

⁹⁷ A redundancy: not only he sends letters but also envoys, either to highlight the urgency or to spread out the dispatches to several locations in Sicily.

*tectum quidem ... reliquum futurum, BAfr. 26.6).*⁹⁸

The contents of dispatches are exposed even as intelligence is operating: for example, while assaulting Ullia, the young Pompey is forced to come to his brother Sextus' aid in Corduba. Letters circulate between the two as Sextus urges Cnaeus (*litteris fratris excitus, BHisp. 4.4*) to prevent Caesar from capturing Corduba (*BHisp. 4.3*). Another message, sent by the young Pompey to his partisans in Ursao, is intercepted by the Caesarians and contains an indirect encouragement to its inhabitants - that is, Caesar will not fight as his troops are full of inexperienced recruits (*BHisp. 28.2*) - reinforced by Pompey's belief (*existimabat ...*) that he could succeed (*totum se facere posse, BHisp. 28.3*) thanks to the lay of the land at Munda and the enemy fortifications (*BHisp. 28.3*). After the enemy's move has been discovered and Pompey's reason for entering battle explained due to the interception of the letter sent to Ursao, the final compiler clumsily intervenes by re-affirming the nature of the landscape in Baetica (*superius demonstravimus - at BHisp. 8 -, loca excellentia tumultis contineri ...*, *BHisp. 28.4*), as just asserted by Pompey himself (*existimabat ... natura loci defendebatur*). The whole chapter is a recollection of the intelligence operation prior to the battle at Munda. The pattern is the same as noted above regarding the letters: the news that Pompey deploys his army comes to cognizance (*nuntiatum est a speculatoribus Pompeius de tertia vigilia in acie stetisse, BHisp. 28.1*); once known (*hoc nuntio allato*), Caesar counter-reacts. Moreover, the double (narrator's and Pompey's) statement on the landscape is repeated at the beginning of the following chapter, as not only Pompey's troops not only benefit from the topographical situation, but also from the town's fortifications (*ut auxilia Pompei duabus defenderentur rebus, oppido*

⁹⁸ Interestingly, the reporter continues quoting a third set of letters dispatched to Sicily and observing Caesar's behaviour, *BAfr. 26.5*. A revelatory chapter, as it seems clear that the reporter is here listing three letters shipping and recording the contents of the dispatches (one out of Caesar's writing) and Caesar's thoughts, perhaps personally witnessed or fully recorded in the reports.

et excelsi loci natura, *BHisp.* 29.1). Such comments follow a brief description of the location (*BHisp.* 29.1) and precedes descriptive and repetitive lines on the soldiers' feelings and on the first moments of the battle of Munda.⁹⁹

The passage above might bear witness to the clash of at least two reports (one which lists the spies plus the intercepted letter, i.e. the intelligence prior to the battle, the other at the time of or following the battle, summarising its first skirmishes) and the lack of revision.¹⁰⁰

2.3.3.3 Caesar's thoughts and orders

Not only the *litterae* but also Caesar's orders as well seem to be recorded as minutes.¹⁰¹ For instance, with the aim of responding to Scipio's tactics near Ruspina (*quibus rebus cognitis*), Caesar gives orders to his troops outside the fortifications to retire inside the camp and to keep working (*BAfr.* 31.1) and to the cavalry to hold the position. The fact that such orders have been issued from the headquarters (*in praetorio sedens*) and not from the rampart of the camp shows not only Caesar's military talent, but also how the communication system works: Caesar instructs scouts and messengers (*BAfr.* 31.4).¹⁰² The chapter continues by reflecting on Caesar's attendance strategy. He does not want to lead his forces into the field not because he lacks confidence, despite the acknowledged inexperience of his young recruits, but because he wants to achieve a "quality victory" (*sed referre arbitrabantur, cuiusmodi victoria esset futura*); winning now would mean defeat of an enemy made up of remnants. Those lines seem to recall

⁹⁹ *BHisp.* 29.5.

¹⁰⁰ See also *BHisp.* 32.7 as the Pompeian Caucilius asks for a litter for the wounded Pompey, as the young commander is unwell and needs help to escape safely (*eius verbis nuntium mittit eum minus belle habere: ut mitterent lecticam ...*). The infinitive verb *habere* and the subjunctive reflect the transcription of the brief dispatch as intercepted by the Caesarian spies.

¹⁰¹ See *BHisp.* 18.7 Caesar's order to the inhabitants of Ategua to set fire to a wooden tower in exchange for their lives appears to be a statement in *oratio obliqua* (*id si fecisset, ei se promisit omnia concessurum*), likely present in the written source.

¹⁰² See above ch. 2.1,70.

Caesar's thoughts that might have been recorded or remembered by the compiler of the *Bellum Africum*; but the fact that they are collected together with orders and dispatches suggests the practice of recording them in the same set of documents. Their self-justificatory tone (the reasons not to lead the army to fight) could have been contemporary to the event (Caesar's choice shared with his entourage) and not only retrospective, i.e. from the point of view of the editor.¹⁰³

In a letter to Gabinius after the victorious outcome of Pharsalus, and while pursuing Pompeius, Caesar writes his orders in response to the fugitive Pompeians' move to Illyricum (*BAlex.* 42.4). The account sounds like a transcription of Caesar's dispatch: Gabinius must go to Illyricum with his newly recruited legions, join his troops with those of Cornificius (*coniunctis copiis* – ablative absolute – *cum Cornificio*), and repel whatever danger might arise in the province (*si quod periculum ... depelleret*). Caesar adds a further instruction first and then a personal comment: if the province does not need large-scale forces to maintain its own security, Gabinius should transfer the legions to Macedonia, as Caesar believes (*credebat*) that the whole area and region would revive the war so long as Pompey is alive (*omnem illam partem regionemque vivo Cn. Pompeio bellum instauraturam esse*). This last comment might summarise the conclusion of the letter from Caesar's point of view, as the use of the verb *credere* suggests. However, the tone is proper to a general who gives orders and accounts for them. Moreover, the mention of Pompey as being alive dates the document and makes it contemporary to the events in Illyricum at the time of Cornificius and Gabinius' arrival. Such a dispatch is also either the direct source of the account or is included in the reports generated by Gabinius/Cornificius and Vatinius' entourage.

The same can be said with regard to Caesar's dispatches

¹⁰³*BAlex.* 37ff. describes Caesar's orders as unknown to his troops and perhaps to his staff as well.

received by the greedy Q. Cassius Longinus before Pharsalus (*litteras accepit a Caesare ut ...*, *BAlex.* 51.1), who is ordered to bring an army to Africa and to reach Numidia through Mauritania (*perque Mauretanium ad finis Numidiae perveniret*), as King Juba would probably be adding larger reinforcements (*quod Iuba miserat auxilia*) to the ones already sent to Pompey (*maioraque missurus existimabatur*). Again, the reason for the directive (i.e. moving across to Africa) and the detail of the journey through Mauritania perhaps to collect King Bogud are explained. However, some intelligence is operating here, as Juba is suspected of reinforcing Pompey's army, while the underlying Caesarian strategy is to prevent the gathering of enemy allies in the Pharsalus theatre of war.¹⁰⁴

2.3.3.4 Caesar's public speeches: the *contiones*

The *Commentarii* also report the minutes of assemblies (*contiones*) of the people or of the army summoned to direct, instruct or inform the audience regarding the campaign and its consequences, as in the partially extant speech that Caesar gives at Hispalis in *BHisp.* 42.1ff.¹⁰⁵ The day after his arrival (*insequenti die*), once he has summoned the crowd (the ablative absolute *contione advocata*), Caesar reminds (*commemorat*) the people of Further Spain how much they benefitted from his offices (*initio quaesturae suae ... insequente praetura ... suo item in consulato ...*) throughout the years up to the present war (*hoc bello et praeterito tempore*). A sequence of seven infinitives and six ablative absolutes follows the verb “*commemorat*” until the indirect speech becomes direct, as Caesar addresses the crowd in the second person plural. Here the

¹⁰⁴It has been noted (see Way (1955), 92, n. 2) that no mention of Juba's troops is made at *BCiv.* 3.3ff., whether – I would add – due to Caesar's failure of memory (*memoria lapsus*) or because Juba never succeeds in sending the troops, preferring instead to enforce his hold of the province while waiting for the Pompeians.

¹⁰⁵On the *contiones* the bibliography is extensive; amongst the most significant contributions see Pina Polo (1989), Morstein-Marx (2004), Hoelkeskamp (2013), 11-28, Mouritsen (2017). On the *contiones* in the army see Sluiter/Rosen (2004). However, no text looks at the way the *contiones* are minuted and reported, especially in the context of the *Commentarii*.

report seems to contain the minutes of the *contio* as it happened, as the speech shows the simplicity of the language adopted and the directness of its content.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, its formulaic style, diachronic content (from quaestorship to present war), and its dramatic parataxis might suggest live written minutes of the speech transferred into the narrative of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, as perhaps the contribution of the editor is limited to the transition from the third person singular to the second plural.

A similar structure is present in the *contio* that Cassius Longinus calls to address his army after receiving dispatches from Caesar (*BAlex.* 52.1). Here he explains (*exponit*) that he is simply carrying out Caesar's instructions and that he would reward them (the soldiers) with 100 sesterces and by keeping the fifth legion in Spain. After the summoning (*ex contione*), the account describes the assassination attempt on Longinus experiences after midday on the same day (*BAlex.* 52.2).¹⁰⁷ As seen above for the letters, between *habita contione* (the same ablative absolute as *contione advocata*) and *ex contione*, the reporter sketches the occasion and the contents of the summoning with a cumulative narrative, by using ablative absolutes and verbs of saying and commanding, plus subjunctives and infinitives.

The *contio* that Caesar holds at Thapsus the day after his victory appears similar (*postero die divina re facta contione advocata*, *BAfr.* 86.3, again timing and two ablative absolutes). In front of the inhabitants he praises his troops and rewards them. Thereupon he marches to Utica, leaving behind Rebilus at Thapsus,

¹⁰⁶On the content and style of the *contiones* and their audience, see discussion and instances in Morstein-Marx (2004), 243-278; on Caesar's *contiones* see van der Blom (2016), 305-312, on Cicero's *contiones* see Manuwald (2012), 153-175 and for examples of style in Cicero's Speeches on Agrarian Laws, see Manuwald (2018).

¹⁰⁷Exemplary also regarding the events in Hispania Ulterior under Cassius Longinus is *BAlex.* 57, a chapter that is very report-based and written from the point of view of Longinus' headquarters. Tribune Titius reports (*nuntiat*) a mutiny at Ilipa, and details of the mutiny follow; Longinus holds a meeting (*habito consilio*) and dispatches the quaestor Marcellus to Corduba. After a few days, Marcellus' indecisive behaviour is reported to Longinus, or to be more precise, reports regarding Marcellus vary (*paucis diebus ... namque id varie nuntiatur*). Longinus therefore reacts, leaving his headquarters, by turning to Segovia, where he speaks to the army (*habita contione*) and tries unsuccessfully to rally his troops to fight against their fellow Romans.

Domitius at Thysdra and letting Messalla precede him on his way to Utica.

A comparable pattern can be seen, for instance in the *Bellum Civile*: after Varro surrenders in further Spain, Caesar is in Corduba, where he addresses one by one the different ethnic groups of that region (*contione habita Cordubae omnibus generatim gratias agit: civibus Romanis ... Hispanis ... Gaditanis ... tribunis militum centurionibusque*, *BCiv.* 2.21.1); a sequence of political measures follows, as the account moves from indirect speech subjunctive to historical present (*pecunias remittit ... bona restituit ...*, *BCiv.* 2.21.2-3).¹⁰⁸ Then Caesar marches to Gades, having been in Corduba for three days, and there he appoints Cassius as governor, assigning him four legions (*BCiv.* 2.21.4). The narrative here seems to include the minutes of the *contio* and the decisions taken slightly after (and perhaps announced during) the public meeting with the locals. The measures are listed as previously annotated in the diary report; once adapted for the final text, the account inevitably moves on.

2.4 Intermediality and the style of the *Commentarii*

Up to this point, this chapter has been concerned with the report format and content and their relationship with the narrative of the whole Corpus. In this final section I approach the report as a medium in relationship to its final recipient, the *Commentarii*, and I refer to such a relationship as intermediality. Intermediality has only recently become an analytical paradigm for ancient studies. It generally concerns the interaction between at least two media and the reception of the message those media contain. As Karla Pollmann and Meredith Gill explain in their pioneering edited volume “St. Augustine beyond the book”, intermediality “refers to the juxtaposition of at least two media in the reception of ideas” and

¹⁰⁸Similarly, for instance, *BCiv.* 3.73.2 *contionem habuit* followed by *habita contione*, *BCiv.* 3.74.1.

“focuses on the interaction of various media”.¹⁰⁹

As the present chapter outlines, the *Commentarii* are constantly experiencing an interaction between themselves and their sources, and are themselves in progress. More accurately, the *Commentarii* are the outcome of report-based material, material that, according to its nature, can be the background to every military move to be taken by the commander in chief and can constitute *in nuce* the (daily) written task, that a man in the army and an officer is expected to perform. In this sense, the general Caesar and the writer Caesar are very close to one another: the latter is simply extending what the former has to deal with daily. In my view, the relationship between this material and the resulting account can be defined as intermediality or of an inter-medial nature. The two media (the report and the final text) are in constant interaction, with the immediate consequence being the alteration of the report as source in the visible account of the *commentarius*.¹¹⁰ As the relationship between literary texts seems ongoing here, one would argue less in favour of intermediality than intertextuality. However, besides the possible blurriness of these terms, the texts here are not strictly literary; the reports, the letters and the dispatches are, rather, written material, with no literary refinement. This written material is also a medium, namely a tool which moves from one point in space and time to another. There is also a process, which does not entirely lie in the creative mind of the writer, but consists in collecting data, writing, sending, receiving, eventually summarising and selecting into a transformed format and content: the *commentarius*. Such interaction between the report and the account of each *Bellum* does not allow for precise discernment between the two. Nevertheless, a

¹⁰⁹Pollman/Gill (2012), 2ff., They also add that intermediality “is predominately interested in the result of this interaction”, whereas transmediality “denotes transfer of content from one medium to another”, and “highlights the process of the transition from the original medium to the targeted medium”. Such disciplines might have minimal differences and overlapping meanings, however, they both refer to the relationship between two media. See on such new terminology the prefatory pages of Grishakova/Ryan (2010), 1-7.

¹¹⁰In this context I take text to mean the final version of the *Commentarii*. As far as report is concerned see Intro. 0.3.2, 31.

pattern emerges through the narrative, which reveals itself more clearly when the data tend to be overwhelmingly present, aggregate and in some cases overly specific, when the report provenance appears certain, and when the content of dispatches seems accurately detailed. Hence the intermediality, though existent, is unbalanced either when the data are “filtered” and “digested” by the narrator or when the data are collected as “unfiltered”. Moreover, the surfacing of the report often depends on how the account has been filtered and adapted to the narrative by the final author, who intervenes on the material. Its emergence also reveals the proximity of the very same author to the source, his familiarity with it (which is a familiarity with the military life), and the constant tension between the data from the field and certain topics of Caesarian propaganda (such as *celeritas* and *clementia*), as examined in chapter four.

Through the lens of intermediality (between the report and the *commentarius*) the character of urgency is also revealed, not only by the quality of the language throughout the *Commentarii* (especially the Latin of the so-called Continuator, with its distance from standard Latin, its alleged approximation, or closeness to the spoken Latin or to the *sermo castrensis*), but by the editing itself, namely by the fact of giving order to documents, that would otherwise be scattered and drafted raw material. Moreover, the question of the quality of Latin emerges at this stage as related to the administrative and military nature of the reports, concerned as they are more with the collection of data than literary style.¹¹¹ Therefore, the differences in style are a consequence not merely of different authorship but of various reports originated by various reporters. Hence style is not the key to determining the different authorship but, conversely, the varied paternity of the reports causes

¹¹¹Willi (2010), 242, suggests that Caesar “would have disapproved more of the ‘archaisms’ and ‘poeticisms’ allowed for *ornandi causa* by Cicero, than of the ‘colloquialisms’ and ‘vulgarisms’ used consciously or unconsciously by his less respected imitators”. Regarding the Latin of the *Bellum Africum* and its similarities with Varro, see Adams (2005), 73-96. On the Latin adopted and defended by Caesar versus Cicero, see ch.1.4, 52.

the uncertainty with regards to authorship. Considering the material available, it seems less appropriate to speak of authors than of reporters (or report compilers) at a first stage and of editor/s at a second stage of refinement.

As Caesar would have refined the material with his talented narrative and stylistic talent, the aim of the editor/s was to finish the account of the civil war, i.e. to accomplish what the death of Caesar and Hirtius prevented. The refinement seems to be an attribute of the writer Caesar and of Hirtius as well, and its absence might have been a function of time, namely the deaths not only of the original author, but also of his first continuator Hirtius, and perhaps of Oppius as well.¹¹² However, before proceeding to examine the role played by Caesar's entourage in collecting and publishing the *Corpus*, I shall now draw some conclusive remarks and raise a hypothesis on the reports as sources of the *Commentarii*.

2.5 Reports as *Commentarii*?

As seen above, all the facts of the war are generally detailed, and are accompanied by temporal annotations and ablative absolutes. These facts describe events that had just happened or that were presented by way of background to the subsequent events. Moreover, an assemblage of data of this kind is organised so that the narrative develops in a cumulative fashion; as the actions are assembled and accumulated, so are the data. Some information is collected from different theatres of war, through intelligence (i.e. by capturing enemies, welcoming deserters and intercepting sources) and minuting the content of embassies, dispatches, letters, councils, speeches and dialogues. Such material has not only been accurately collected and archived, but also annotated, written down with some formulaic language, in a format and content not

¹¹²In the following chapter I focus on the role and the identity of the reporters and Oppius and Hirtius as leading figures among the Caesarians, who are believed to be the authors/editors in charge of Caesar's literary works.

immediately patent to us, yet retraceable. The nature of this material is first-hand, military/administrative, in one word “documentary”. Such material reported the military campaign and the actions of the men in the army, and it was accountable to the headquarters and to the magistrate in office himself, who could use it to acknowledge the current situation and take decisions on the subsequent measures to adopt, before dispatching to the authorities and the Senate in Rome. Ultimately, the source from which this material has been collected is the report. The recurrent topics, the formulaic expressions, the format and the content are revelatory of its existence, hidden inside the text, yet visible as disseminated throughout the narrative. Are the reports the *Commentarii*? There is no direct evidence, but as the *litterae* were the correspondence exchanged by that the different actors exchange in a military campaign, it seems logical to conclude that what Caesar and his entourage were reading on a daily basis, namely the containers of the data, are *Commentarii*.¹¹³

To take my hypothesis even further, the published *Commentarii* are metonymically named after the parts that are put together to compose them into a whole. Those parts become the whole, as in metonymy. The final purpose of the *Commentarii*, namely to provide an account of the entire military campaigns, is the same as that of each singular report: to record a set of events taking place in a specific location and range of time. The report contains what the *Commentarii* more effectively amplify and assemble, in a more discursive, narrative way. The absence of any direct reference

¹¹³Rambaud (1953), 90 also suggests it, by quoting Nipperdey (1847), 5ff. on the possible coincidence between ephemerides and *Commentarii*. However, he prudently concludes: “l’insuffisance des documents, la singularité du *Bell. Hisp.*, n’autorisent, hélas, que le doute”. *Ephemerides* appears as A synonym FOR Caesar’s *Commentarii* in Plut. *Caes.* 22.2 and in Symm. *Ep.* 4.18.5, moreover, some manuscripts of *BGall.* are titled *C. Caesaris Ephemeris* - see on this Wightman (1975) 93-107. Besides the fact that *hypomnemata* was not the only possible translation of *Commentarii*, such word usage might testify in favour of my metonymy hypothesis: *Commentarii* can be named *ephemerides* as they look like them, because they are made up of them. Implicitly, as his article’s focus is elsewhere lays, namely on the control Caesar exercised over information regarding his Gallic campaign, Osgood (2009), 339, instead refers to generic “letters”, whether *litterae* or *epistulae* is not clear: “Letters allowed Caesar to communicate intelligence within Gaul, but they also allowed him to send reports of his doings back to Rome—most importantly, to the Senate—giving his own version of events.” “Reports” as synonymous with letters, records, dispatches recur frequently in scholarship.

to the reports as *commentarii* and the absence of any self-reference in the text (except in Hirtius' prefatory letter and the eighth book of *Bell. Gall.*) might suggest that they were taken for granted, symptomatic of a consolidated habit, shared by army officers and magistrates on duty. Perhaps the formulaic style of the reports made the language easy to remember, as the reports had to be written (dictated) by magistrates in office and men in service; part of their duties was to give account and evidence of their actions. In my view, it is the method behind the *Commentarii* that makes the whole Corpus a uniformly conceived work. The process of having been continued by others, instead of proving their lack of homogeneity, is evidence of their uniformity and adherence to a method - since to be continued by others seems to be an intrinsic characteristic of the *Commentarii*, as the officers and lieutenants are regularly sending to and providing the headquarters (the *praetorium*) with the reports. Any difference in style and language, more generally in the Latin adopted, might be explained by the nature of the account, as being composed of different reports, by different levels of editing or by different authors and editors in a given period of time. In the next chapter, I examine how the "newsroom" works and, as hinted above, try to identify and possibly name the group of authors among Caesar's entourage who acted as editorial staff committed to the task of collecting and publishing war reports before and after Caesar's death.

Chapter 3

The “newsroom” in the *Commentarii*: location, archive and entourage

This chapter explains how the “newsroom” works throughout the whole Corpus. More precisely, it looks at the “newsroom” as a location, as an archive, and as an entourage (scribes, reporters and editors), who dealt with the writing and completion of the five *Commentarii*. The chapter shows that the “newsroom” provides Caesar with the necessary information (letters, minutes, intelligence, losses, distances, timing), helps him maintain contact with the legates' outposts, and confirms the efficiency of the campaign as a hub of (digested) news. After Caesar died, the written material which was left behind - most likely, in the dictator's archive - became the source for the continuation of the *Commentarii*. The following discussion seeks to identify the members of Caesar's entourage in charge of the *Commentarii*, and to reconstruct the relationship between the Caesarians, the *Commentarii* and the political climate at the time of the civil wars. Timing and location are elements that reinforce the distinction, which is maintained throughout the chapter, between reporters, i.e. Caesarians such as Asinius Pollio and Munatius Plancus, and editors, i.e. the *familiares*, namely Balbus, Oppius and Hirtius. Lastly, I argue that the *familiares* operate the “newsroom” not only in order to complete the accounts, but also to exercise control over the information released. As such, they are the most likely editors of the last three books of the Corpus. The written material on the civil wars was of political relevance: it was collected and edited by the *familiares*, who played an important political role during the tumultuous months that followed Caesar's assassination.

3.1 The “newsroom”: its location and how it works with and without Caesar

3.1.1 The “newsroom” in the *Bellum Gallicum*

The military campaigns were underpinned by a well-organised and daily exchange and collection of intelligence and data in written format; this practice was an ongoing and shared occupation. As seen in the previous chapter, Caesar's collaborators and lieutenants were used to being constantly in touch with their headquarters and each another. As argued above, the location of such activity might have been the *praetorium*, with staff dedicated to the practicalities of a “newsroom”, under the supervision and the dictation of Caesar or of his lieutenants.¹

In the *Bellum Africum* (31.4), for the first time in the whole Corpus, we have a glimpse of how the “newsroom” operates in the *praetorium*.

“... so remarkable was his skill and knowledge of warfare (*mirabili peritus scientia bellandi*) that, making use of scouts and messengers, he issued the necessary instructions as he sat in his headquarters (*in praetorio sedens*).”²

The passage is revelatory of how Caesar works and how the orders are given according to the information gathered. For instance, thanks to the messengers and scouts, Caesar is able to issue instructions to the troops. Those instructions are fairly detailed in the previous lines and they are almost transcribed in the account, as the final author found them in the report. It is the precision of the orders that allows the final author to laud Caesar's talent as commander, but it is also a sign of the “newsroom” at work, minuting the content of those orders.³ From the narrator's (and the reporters')

1 See on reports and the *praetorium* chapter 2.1, 70ff.

2 Translated by Way (1955), 193.

3 On Caesar not doing much autopsy, see Austin/Rankov (1995), 60ff., who quote this

point of view the “newsroom” was taken for granted, as for the sake of the narration there is no need to mention where information was collected and the writing took place. Nevertheless, a few passages hint at the existence of document-gathering and archiving activities.⁴ The most explicit appears in the fifth book of *Bellum Gallicum* (5.47.2):

“He [Caesar] put Crassus in charge of Samarobriva, and assigned him a legion, because he left there the baggage of the army, the hostages of the states, the public documents (*litteras publicas*) and all the corn ...”.

The reference to the *litterae publicae* reminds us directly of the presence of an archive and a chancery, perhaps not fully active as Caesar heads off to the south.⁵ Interestingly though, the description of what the Samarobriva headquarters contains is exceptional, as generally the narrative ignores the location of the command centre: in terms of the progression of the account it is not relevant where the archive lies and the writing takes place. The general, contrary to his habits, ends up remaining in the north of Gaul for the winter between the same year 54 and the year 53 BC. The 5th book covers two winters: 54 and 53 BC. In the first months of the year 54 BC Caesar orders his lieutenants to build a fleet for the forthcoming expedition to Britannia, and he then departs for Italy as was his custom every year (*discedens ab hibernis ... in Italiam, ut quotannis facere consuerat, BGall. 5.1.1*). Once in Italy, he holds the assizes in Hither Gaul (*conventibus Galliae citerioris peractis, BGall. 5.1.5*), and he deals with raids in Illyricum caused by a rebel population, the

passage, adding that it is a “remarkable vignette of Caesar's working methods”; on Caesar's role as supervisor see Loreto (1993), 308-310.

4 See also *BGall. 7.55.2*: Caesar describes what he leaves behind in his headquarters in Noviodunum (*omnes obsides Galliae ... pecuniam publicam ...*).

5 *Litterae publicae* seems to be a generic term for documents but could also mean archive. Rambaud (1974), 146, explains *litterae publicae* quite broadly as “archives de l'armée, rôles et états de service, comptabilité, dossiers de rapports d'ou sortiront les Commentaires”; as according to Meyer (2004), 225-227, *litterae* can be taken as a synonym of *tabulae*, it is possible to advance the hypothesis that in this passage *litterae publicae* are displayed for public consumption by the soldiers, like the *tabulae* (several instances *ibidem* 225, n.40 and 41).

Pirustae.⁶ In a few lines the report-based method is strictly applied: once he is informed of the incursions, he reacts swiftly by exacting a levy; then the *Pirustae*, upon learning of this (*BGall.* 5.1.7), send an embassy, whose minutes are briefly recorded. After accepting their statement, Caesar issues orders and the threat that he will bring down war on them, if they are not obeyed (*sese bello civitatem persecuturum demonstrat, BGall.* 5.1.8). Once the matter has been settled (*his confectis rebus, BGall.* 5.2.1), he finally returns to his winter quarters in northern Gaul, ready to set sail for Britannia.

The paragraphs referred to above are a report in miniature. They prove that the narrative machine is well oiled, and confirms that, although cursory, the *res gestae* are attentively described according to the usual pattern. The assizes (*conventus*), by contrast, are only mentioned (as things done) and are not further reported. They are part of the proconsul's tasks and appear in the Gallic Commentaries to mark Caesar's return to Italy; they also remind us of the industry the proconsul displays to reaffirm his sense of duty.⁷ In the late summer of 54 BC, however, fearing an uprising in Gaul, Caesar leaves Britannia, determined to winter on the Continent (*cum constituisset hiemare in continenti ... , BGall.* 5.22.4). Whether "continent" means Cisalpine Gaul or northern Gaul is intentionally vague. Caesar appears determined to wait in Gaul until the legions are in their winter quarters, whereas the intention to leave northern Gaul seems subtly implied (*Ipsae interea quoad legiones conlocatas munitaque hiberna cognovisset, in Gallia morari constituit, BGall.* 5.24.8). After sending L. Munatius Plancus to the country of the Carnutes, he receives the information that all his lieutenants have reached the winter quarters and are fully settled (*BGall.* 5.25.5).⁸ Such a statement seems a late reassurance that justifies the response to the imminent uprisings of the Gallic tribes. The narrative

6 On Caesar's policy in the area see Santangelo (2016), 101-129.

7 On the importance of his work as a circuit-court judge see ch. 1.5, 63ff.

8 The first and only appearance of Plancus in the *Gallicum*, extensively ch. 3.3.2, 165.

continues by setting a time for the account to follow: the rebellion of the Gauls happened within a fortnight (*BGall.* 5.26.1), the first to be attacked being Titurius' and Cotta's camp.⁹ Caesar's legate Titurius believes that Caesar has headed to Italy (*Caesarem arbitrari profectum in Italiam, BGall.* 5.29.2), whereas Titurius' colleague Cotta suggests the general is wintering in the area as he might be ready to send reinforcements (*BGall.* 5.28.5). A revelatory assertion comes towards the end of the book: [*Caesar*] *cum tribus legionibus circum Samarobrivam trinis hibernis hiemare constituit, et quod tanti motus Galliae exstiterant, totam hiemem ipse ad exercitum manere decrevit* (*BGall.* 5.53.3). Wintering in northern Gaul (around Samarobriva) sounds like a decision taken at that time, an assertion that is repeated and almost contradicts the paragraph at *BGall.* 5.25.5. If Caesar decided (*decrevit*) to remain, it means that before the uprisings, he not only contemplated the possibility of leaving, but actually left, until he was forced to come back due to the rebellion.

There is more: the “newsroom” is not operating as usual; the lack of information makes the late months of the year 54 BC very difficult to deal with. If, on the one hand, the uprising was, if not completely, largely underestimated, on the other, the information exchange between the winter camps was poor, if not nonexistent. Certainly, the enemy might have impeded the communication between the camps, but, interestingly, the communication between Caesar and Quintus Cicero is seriously obstructed. Moreover, the well-oiled mechanism of information exchange seems rather compromised, as Caesar did not have the news of the Eburones attack on Titurius' and Cotta's camp. Those two circumstances suggest that Samarobriva was not operative as a “newsroom”, in other words, that Caesar was in motion and heading to Italy. As Caesar's resolve to winter in Gaul is repeated several times in the account, so is the news of the death of Titurius and Cotta: Caesar

⁹ Recently, on Titurius Sabinus and partly on Cotta, see Hanson (2015), especially 20ff. On Cotta see ch. 3.2, 156 and n. 108.

learns more particulars of their death from some prisoners (*de casu Sabini et Cottae certius ex captivis cognoscit, BGall. 5.52.4*), having been previously informed either by Quintus Cicero and/or by Labienus.¹⁰ The narrative omits to state clearly when Caesar knows of the disaster, the whole account being likely and entirely reported to him by Labienus (*BGall. 5.37.6*), since few survivors made their way to Labienus' winter camp and informed the legate of what had happened. Thus, Labienus is afterwards the source for information about the disaster: the narrative locates the events before the Nervii's siege of Quintus Cicero's camp. The sequence of the events and Labienus as source suggest that Caesar had to reconstruct what happened some time after the disaster, as he did not have any information until Labienus provided him with an update. Such an update occurs only when Labienus replies to Caesar's letter: it would have been too dangerous to leave the camp, considering what had happened with the Eburones and Titurius (*BGall. 5.47.4*). This is when Caesar learns of Titurius' and Cotta's defeat for the first time (*BGall. 5.47.5*), in other words with a considerable delay, as he is assembling an army to bring help to Cicero's legion besieged by the Nervii. Surprisingly, Labienus does not inform Caesar straight away, but only when he receives the order to bring out the legion to fight in support of Caesar: he cannot do so as he fears he cannot withstand an enemy emboldened by the victory over Titurius. Certainly, there is intentionality on the part of Caesar in distorting the account of the year 54 BC. Rambaud does not fail to notice it, as his coinage of "déformation historique" suits the 5th book well: the expedition in Britannia has not been as successful as depicted, the responsibility for the disaster falls entirely to the imprudence and lack of judgment of Titurius and Caesar's reaction that was very late, due partly to his underestimation of the Gallic tribes' uprising.

Such distortion, however, seems not entirely intentional, but

¹⁰ On Quintus Cicero in the 5th book see Hanson (2015), 32ff.

also the result of a lack of information. In other words, Caesar can only reconstruct the events retrospectively, as he has no grasp on them as they happen, but only after they have happened.¹¹ With regard to the rebellion in Gaul, Caesar acts without having the whole picture or having it only at the last minute.¹² Information and action run almost simultaneously in the *Commentarii*. However, when knowledge is lacking, the accounts cannot square all the events in a logical and fully explained sequence, as in the case under scrutiny. The “newsroom” has not been working effectively. As mentioned above, the main omissions of the whole account concern where Caesar is when the rebellion begins. The passage at *BGall.* 5.22.4 and the repeated assertions suggest that Caesar is heading to Italy, a statement the reader might choose to reject, as it is put in the mouth of Titurius, who does not appear authoritative, considering his destiny.¹³ Nevertheless, Caesar only waits for the legions to be settled, and perhaps, as on the occasion of the expedition to Britain, might have placed Labienus in command (*BGall.* 5.8.1).¹⁴ While Caesar and all his legates and quaestors were on the island, Labienus was in charge of everything that was taking place in Gaul, and more importantly, he was expected to act accordingly (*BGall.* 5.8.1). In the case of the rebellion, Labienus is the first to be informed, partly because his camp was the closest, partly because he was the most authoritative and experienced commander. Either Caesar makes one of his *omissis* (was he too far away to react as promptly as he allegedly says?), or Labienus was about to engage the Treveri with his own legion, knowing that Caesar was too distant to intervene. Characteristically, the account twice repeats the imminence of the Treviri's attack on Labienus (*BGall.* 5.47.4 and

11 To these chapters Pollio's judgment might reasonably apply: see ch. 2.1, 70ff.

12 Moreover, if he calls Labienus to intervene in the rescue of Cicero, he must believe no rebellion is taking place at Titurius and Cotta's camp; he can only accept Labienus' decision to stay put.

13 Titurius' destiny makes him an untruthful source: by putting Caesar's departure for Italy in his mouth, the narrator suggests the opposite, see Riggsby (2006), 93-95.

14 Which might explain why Labienus is the first recipient of the news from Titurius' and Cotta's camp, besides the possibility that Labienus' winter quarters are the closest.

5.53.2): yet again a symptom of a confused handling of the information from and to the winter camps. Throughout the whole book the narrative is indeed faltering, whereas the sources are clear (Quintus Cicero and Labienus). What is not working is the centre, the “newsroom”, which is not in place. What is missing thus is not the reporting, but the location where the reports are gathered. To be precise, the “newsroom” is with Caesar, it follows him to Illyria and then to Britannia, Labienus being left on the continent. Once back in Gaul, Caesar holds an assembly at Samarobriva, assigns the legions to winter quarters in a different fashion, and waits for them to be positioned. Then, two weeks later the rebellion takes place. Caesar and his “newsroom” take control of the campaign when a second assembly is held (most likely in Samarobriva), and the narrative then eventually progresses. The communication and the intelligence are back on track: Caesar and his quaestor L. Roscius are in contact with one another, and the rebellion ceases, as soon as the rebels learn of Caesar's victory.¹⁵ What happens in between is a lack of coordination, likely due to the absence of a centre, the lack of an operative headquarters, as it was following Caesar. Although believed to be possible, the revolt was underestimated: it occurred after the departure of Caesar to Italy (*BGall.* 5.26.1), and it was coordinated. Cicero himself is unaware of the death of Titurius (*BGall.* 5.39.1), at least until the Nervii's embassy puts pressure on him (*BGall.* 5.41.3), a circumstance which suggests that there was no effective communication between the camps took place effectively, confirmed by the fact that Labienus was unable to disseminate the news of Titurius to the other legates and to Caesar himself.¹⁶ Interestingly, the account is not solely intentionally distorted, as Rambaud argues, but it is reconstructed as a result of an uncoordinated and/or non-existent exchange of information. The narrative does not progress with the events, or borrowing from

¹⁵ *BGall.* 5.53.6-7.

¹⁶ *BGall.* 5.41.4.

Osgood, the pen and the sword are not moving forward simultaneously.¹⁷ Between the impossibility of ignoring the disaster of Titurius and Cotta and the importance of Caesar's resolve to fight back, the narrative reconstructs the events in the absence of a central hub, as there is no (live) access to the information as it happens. Therefore the "historical distortion" of the account is a consequence of the lack of information in the "newsroom", a price to pay in a narrative that relies consistently on reports and on the fastest possible way to gather them at the centre. Not necessarily a permanent location, the "newsroom" is instead mobile, and it moves in parallel with Caesar.

A striking example of a live and parallel pace of events and narrative can be found in the third book of the *Bellum Gallicum*, a situation similar to that in the fifth book: a revolt of massive proportions which the Roman army has to deal with. Caesar dispatches his lieutenants throughout Gaul's regions (*BGall.* 3.11ff.), and, with the infantry, he follows Decimus Brutus along the coast, who is heading to the territory of the Veneti with his fleet (*BGall.* 3.11.5). As the Veneti are being fought by land and sea and then defeated (*dum haec in Venetis geruntur ... BGall.* 3.17.1), Titurius Sabinus reaches the borders of the Veneti with three legions. Titurius resists "the taunt of the enemy" and "with a mixture of subterfuge and style" beats the Veneti and their allies (*BGall.* 3.17.1 – 3.19.4). When Titurius Sabinus learns of Caesar's naval victory and Caesar knows of the victory achieved by Titurius, the states and tribes of that part of Gaul surrender to Titurius. The account explicitly says "simultaneously" (*eo tempore*, *BGall.* 3.19.5), the information exchange (Caesar to Titurius and Titurius to Caesar) being in place and in full. The same expression (*eodem fere tempore*, *BGall.* 3.20.1) signals the opening of Publius Crassus' *res gestae* in the land of the Aquitanes. Once Crassus defeats them, and almost all

¹⁷ Osgood, (2009), 353.

the regions surrender (*BGall.* 3.27.2), at the very same time (*eodem fere tempore*, *BGall.* 3.28.1) Caesar leads his final defensive campaign against the Morini and the Menapii. As the summer comes to an end, the general places his army in winter quarters. As writing and fighting proceed accordingly, whether the narrative is describing Caesar's own or his lieutenants' actions, the third book of the *Bellum Gallicum* runs smoothly. No matter how biased or not the account might be, the different chiefs communicate with one another more quickly and almost live (*eodem fere tempore*).¹⁸ Moreover, the fact that Gallic tribes, not strictly involved in the fight, are keen to surrender once they know the outcome, hints indirectly at effective intelligence on the part of the lieutenants Titurius and Crassus (*BGall.* 3.19.5 and *BGall.* 3.27.1).

The beginning of the third book reveals once more the existence of rapid communication, on one occasion almost identical to that recounted in book 5. While setting off for Italy, Caesar sent Galba to the states of the Seduni and other tribes (*cum in Italia proficisceretur Caesar*, *BGall.* 3.1.1). The account details Galba's first attempt to settle at winter camp, the sudden revolt of those tribes, and the way in which he deals with the uprising, eventually managing to find a proper place to overwinter (*BGall.* 3.2.1 – 3.6.5).¹⁹ Once Caesar's "newsroom" learns of it, Caesar heads to Illyria as he believes Gaul is fully pacified (*BGall.* 3.7.1). The detailed reports come from Galba; meanwhile Caesar is on the move, specifically between going to and arriving in Italy and before visiting Illyria.²⁰ However, as he reaches Illyria, another revolt starts; this time it is Publius Crassus who informs Caesar. Once briefed (*quibus de rebus Crasso certior factus*), the general, too far from northern Gaul (*quod ipse aberat longius ...*), gives orders to Crassus

¹⁸ Transitional formulas denoting simultaneity, such as "*eodem tempore*" or "*dum haec geruntur*", occur very often in the *Commentarii*, see ch. 2.2.2, 81.

¹⁹ On this passage and its comparison with Dio's account of Galba, see Zecchini (1978), 52-55.

²⁰ Interspersed with comments on the bravery of his legate (perhaps from Galba himself), Caesar was rightly concerned about the lack of corn.

and his legates to build a fleet (*BGall.* 3.9.1). Having issued these commands (*his rebus administratis ...*), weather permitting, he heads back north to reach his army (... *cum primum per anni tempus potuit, ad exercitum contendit*, *BGall.* 3.9.2). Here the information exchange is working well, despite Caesar's distance from the theatre of war. He exercises some control over the events, without being present: Galba's handling does not force him either to come back or to stay nearby, as in the case of Crassus' report. Instead, while completing his business first in Italy and then in Illyria, he does give instructions. On this occasion, while reticent on his movements in Italy and Illyria, the "newsroom" is fully operational and works well: contacts are in place both while Caesar is travelling and when stationary in his quarters. It is also worth noticing the *brevitas* of some clauses: for instance, when the information is acknowledged or the command given, the language becomes formulaic, repetitive, and when the sequence between information received and the following directive is established, the narrative swiftly moves ahead.²¹ Nevertheless, the "newsroom" is not always fully functional, as the difference between the third and the fifth books prove. Although the circumstances are the same, the effectiveness varies, and the account reflects how the "newsroom" operates, no matter whether it is functioning or not.

In the fifth book, the information does not reach the centre. For unstated reasons, perhaps because the centre is moving possibly to Italy and with Caesar, the communication is faltering in nature: the winter camps are unable to exchange information between themselves and with the centre. Neither headquarters and nor any person are made aware of any event (*certior factus*). As a consequence, the narrative does not move forward, instead at times it tends to be repetitive and chronologically confused: either due to

²¹ Expressions such as *certior factus* in *BGall.* 3.5.2 concerning Galba's actions, or *BGall.* 3.9.1; repeated in *BGall.* 3.9.3, concerning the Veneti, with progressive narrative in full here: "*his rebus celeriter administratis ... contendit. Veneti ... cognito Caesaris adventu, certiores facti.*", see also *BGall.* 3.7.1 as Caesar heads of to Illyricum.

the clash of several reports or because of a total or partial lack of information. In other words, the account runs fluently only when the information is immediately available and easily reconstructed. Defeat does not make the task of reporting easy; nevertheless, the reporting itself is clearly not as effective as it appears to be in other circumstances. It is worth noticing, however, that, as for the fifth book of the *Gallicum*, the anomalies in reconstructing the sequence of facts are fairly evident, yet they are left exposed. The events seem adjusted to resemble logic more than fully to comply with it.²²

3.1.2 The “newsroom” between the *Bellum Civile* and the *Bellum Alexandrinum*

With Caesar absent from a theatre of war, the “newsroom” still works steadily, but differently. In literary terms, the final editor (no matter his identity) can build the account thanks to the “newsroom”, which receives, retains and makes the written material available to the final user. In military terms, the “newsroom” keeps the general and his lieutenants constantly informed and, as stated above, allows the campaign (the sword) to progress as well as the narrative (the pen).²³ After Pharsalus, Caesar's plan sounds fairly straightforward: to follow Pompeius wherever he goes, in order to prevent him from renewing the war by means of any further recruitment (*Caesar ... persequendum sibi Pompeius existimavit ... ne rursus copias comparare alias et bellum renovare posset, BCiv. 3.102.1*). In the same line, cursory only at first sight, the remark “he [Caesar] left all else aside” (*omnibus rebus relictis, BCiv. 3.102.1*) is in fact extremely poignant.

What the “all else” refers to is primarily where all the Caesarian forces are arrayed. In such a hasty scenario, however, it

²² Those anomalies might be the result of a lack of editing, or they might suggest that the account ignores the possibility of a second reading on the part of the audience, as if, at least in the case of the *Bellum Gallicum*, listeners only (the *audientes*) are the only intended recipients. On audience see ch. 4.2.4, 230.

²³ See Intro, 0.3.2, 30 and ch. 3.1, 121ff.

is worth exploring how effectively the “newsroom” can work. The decision to pursue Pompey in the East and on to distant Egypt with a small contingent inevitably makes it difficult for Caesar to communicate with the Caesarians located elsewhere, for instance in Illyria and in Spain, as the narrative itself shows.²⁴ After giving the number of losses on both sides at Pharsalus, the account refers to what was happening in the harbour of Brundisium (*BCiv.* 3.100) and in Sicily (*BCiv.* 3.101). At the time of the battle of Pharsalus (*eodem tempore*, *BCiv.* 3.100.1), since the Pompeian Decimus Laelius was blockading the harbour of Brundisium, Vatinius adopts the same tactic (*BCiv.* 3.100.2) that Antonius used against Libo months earlier in the very same spot (deploying small craft in occasional fighting and cavalry to prevent the enemy from landing).²⁵ Nevertheless, Laelius persists in the siege until he learns about Pharsalus. Once aware of the defeat, he leaves (*BCiv.* 3.100.3). Before their defeat, the Pompeians were clearly succeeding in this siege, as their prevalence on the southern Adriatic Sea secured safe transport to Laelius of the supplies from Corcyra and Dyrrhachium (*BCiv.* 3.100.3), notwithstanding Vatinius' replicating Antony's tactic for repelling the enemy. This piece of news comes from Vatinius himself, the outcome of Pharsalus being the moment when the communication with Caesar's headquarters took place. Again, around the same time, namely before Pharsalus (*isdem fere temporibus*, *BCiv.* 3.101.1), the Pompeian Gaius Cassius attacks Caesar's fleet, one part of which positioned in Messina's harbour, Sicily, under M. Pomponius, the other in Vibo, in continental Italy, commanded by the praetor P. Sulpicius, together presiding over the Strait. Cassius catches Pomponius by surprise and in disarray

24 As much ground as he can with the cavalry only, and the legion to follow accordingly, *BCiv.* 3.102.1.

25 Here “*antea demonstravimus*” recalls *BCiv.* 3.24. On the use of clauses such as *ut antea* or *supra demonstravimus* see Westall (2000), 108ff., arguing for Caesar's inclusive attitude towards the reader, and Batstone/Damon (2006), 144-148. However, the narrator here acts more as an editor, in some cases failing to include what *supra* and *antea* are referring to, as for Curicta at *BCiv.* 3.67.5.

(*BCiv.* 3.101.2). Before the arrival of Caesar's cavalry with the news of his victory (*BCiv.* 3.101.3), the people of Messina feared for their own survival. But after the news is brought (*opportunissime nuntiis allatis*, *BCiv.* 3.101.4), Cassius drives the fleet to Vibo. By deploying the same tactic as used before, the Pompeian is fiercely attacked by Caesarian veterans, there to recuperate (*BCiv.* 3.101.5-6). Once again, the victory announcement turns the tide against the Pompeians (*BCiv.* 3.102.7), as Cassius is forced to head away with his - still almost intact - fleet (*BCiv.* 3.102.7).

Interestingly, both these chapters are punctuated by and terminate with the same comments: the victory in Thessaly is held up as a deterrent to the Pompeians to stop attacking the Caesarian bases.²⁶ These chapters reveal the perilous situation of the Caesarians in each of the three locations and how difficult it was for them to stay in touch before and after Pharsalus. The emphasis on the motivational aspect of the victory counterbalances the struggle suffered by the contingents without fully denying the difficulties the Caesarians experienced. The urgency of communicating the outcome in Thessaly highlights such difficulties, of which Caesar was aware. Nevertheless, information is gathered, and the narrative proceeds further, from now on entirely focused on Caesar's pursuit of Pompey (*BCiv.* 3.102 – 3.106.1) and the dynastic dispute in Alexandria (*BCiv.* 3.106.2 – 3.112.12): no reference to any other theatre of war or location is provided. The account reveals a scrupulous work of intelligence on Caesar's part, as all of Pompey's moves are very well known and forestalled: for instance, the edict published at Amphipolis in Pompey's name, whose aim was not clear (... *existimari non poterat*, *BCiv.* 3.102.4), or the precise timing of Pompey's journey in the east (*ad ancoram una nocte ... paucis diebus venit ... biduum tempestate retentus*, *BCiv.* 3.102).²⁷

²⁶ To which may be added the annotation in the same chapter that the Pompeians thought the Caesarians were fabricating the news of Caesar's victory, *BCiv.* 3.101.7.

²⁷ See also on receiving the news that Pompey was in Cyprus (*BCiv.* 3.106.1); the messages sent between the cities allied to Pompey and the Pompeians and Pompey's understanding of

Disseminating the news of the victory at Pharsalus helped turn sentiment among the locals and the Roman businessmen in cities such as Antioch and Rhodes in Caesar's favour, with the Pompeians warned not to go there (*BCiv.* 3.102.6 and 3.102.7). Notably, Caesar's approach impels Pompey to leave the area twice (*BCiv.* 3.102.4 and *BCiv.* 3.102.8), as if Caesar's victory and his rapid arrival are the decisive factors in Asia, forcing Pompey to abandon his plans to make for Syria and instead head towards Egypt.²⁸ Pompey's decision is made in Cyprus (*ibi cognoscit consensu omnium*, *BCiv.* 3.102.5-6). Pompey's death is described entirely cursorily, as a simple fact of the war, before Caesar knows of it (*BCiv.* 3.104.3), namely when he finally arrives in Alexandria (*Bciv.* 3.106.4). Pompey arrives at Pelusium, on the Nile estuary, when Caesar is still pursuing him in Asia. Somewhere in Asia, once he hears Pompey has been sighted in Cyprus, Caesar conjectures that his enemy is in Egypt, unaware that Pompey has already been killed (*cum audisset Pompeium Cypri visum, coniectans eum in Aegyptum iter habere ...*, *BCiv.* 3.106.1).

The narrative has an evident coherence as the information is edited and placed in a logical order. A sign of the work's consistency lies in the timing of events such as the trajectory of Pompey's journey towards Egypt and his death. Both are anticipated in the account before being known to Caesar himself. More than a repetition, the double occurrence is an accurate way of assembling and putting in sequence facts, mostly acquired through intelligence. As already noted, however, book three of the *Bellum Civile*, although coherent, is not fully complete: rather than having an ending, the work merely stops, as the casual final line "*haec initia belli Alexandrini fuerunt*" demonstrate.²⁹ Elements of incompleteness are

the situation (*ibi cognoscit consensu ... nuntiosque dismissos ... recepti non erant missisque ad eos nuntiis*, *BCiv.* 3.102).

²⁸ Also L. Lentulus as well, *BCiv.* 3.102.7, then killed in prison at *BCiv.* 3.104.3.

²⁹ Batstone/Damon (2006), 29-32. Grillo (2012) 167ff., defines these final chapters as "an ending without an end"; on the final clause's editorial nature, most likely from a copyist, see Grillo (2012) 168 n. 25.

visible in the text: for instance, the defeat of the Caesarian fleet at Curicta, captained by Gaius Antonius, is mentioned three times in the third book,³⁰ but the capitulation, which occurred in the summer of 49, was never fully narrated at the appropriate juncture, namely in the second book of the *Bellum Civile*.³¹ The casual annotation “*omnibus rebus relictis*” (*BCiv.* 3.102.1) hints at a conscious plan on the part of Caesar. It does not mean Caesar overlooks his contingents throughout the Mediterranean Sea and the continent, but rather that Caesar does not consider the threat of the Pompeians, dispersed after Pharsalus, imminent or more important than preventing Pompey from re-organising himself. Nevertheless, delays in sending orders and underestimation on Caesar's part inevitably ensued. While heading to and then being in Egypt, information between the Caesarians takes time to be exchanged, due to the distances and the positioning of the enemy, who could also obstruct, if not intercept, the dispatches. While informed of Pompey's movements, Caesar admits to guessing Pompey's final destination (*BCiv.* 3.106.1).³² The “newsroom” is here (in the final chapters of *Bellum Civile*) at the service of Caesar's military plan (pursuing Pompey) and gravitates around him, now fully committed to settling the dynastic dispute in Egypt. Moreover, and curiously, what seems to be lacking in the narrative of the *Bellum Civile* are the contemporary events, namely what is happening *eodem tempore* in Illyria, Greece and Spain (Citerior and Ulterior), whereas the events that occurred in southern Italy, the outpost at Brundisium, and the two at Messana (Sicily) and Vibo are included. The omissions might have been only postponed, to be inserted and coherently allocated

30 *BCiv.* 3.4.2; 3.10.3-6; 3.67.5. These three references would have been incomplete without the accounts given by Appian, *BCiv.* 2.41, 2.47, Lucan 4.402-580, Florus 2.13.31 and Dio 41.40.

31 Perhaps he was already in possession of the report concerning Curicta (today's Krk in Croatia), too late to insert it into the account of the second book, or as the narrative spread, he referred to the event, intending to write about it later but failing to do so, see briefly Batstone/Damon (2006), 30 and 122-123, on the *incommoda*, namely the setbacks Caesar and Pompey suffered which the *Bellum Civile* “imperturbably” records.

32 The fact that Caesar was guessing, and no information was available is confirmed a few lines later: he asserts that he trusts himself and his achievements, *BCiv.* 3.106.3.

in the completion of the account of the civil wars, namely the *Bellum Alexandrinum*.³³ At this stage of the war, priorities are different. Nevertheless, Caesar includes in the final section of the *Bellum Civile* only a few of the events that happen far away from him. Contacts are certainly in place, as references in the *Alexandrinum* attest.³⁴ What is different is the point of view: Caesar the general is distant, and Caesar the author is dead. The Caesarians are the protagonists of the battles and the narrators.

3.1.3 The “newsroom” in “*diversissima parte*”: Illyria

Chapters 42 to 47 of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* are entirely devoted to the events in Illyria.³⁵ The aftermath of Pharsalus is a matter of strategic importance, as the civil war continues; Caesar inevitably has to manage different theatres of war, and his “newsroom” is on the move, as it follows him on his journey to Egypt. Illyria is one of them. Governed by Q. Cornificius, as propraetor, the province becomes the refuge of the Pompeian Octavius, in his flight from Pharsalus (*BAlex.* 42.3).³⁶ Despite Cornificius having apparently confronted Octavius successfully (*BAlex.* 42.3), Caesar, while engaged in the distant pursuit of Pompeius (*BAlex.* 42.4), sends Gabinius to join forces with Cornificius and secure the province. Despite Gabinius' good will, in the midst of great difficulties (*magnisque difficultatibus coactus*, *BAlex.* 43.1), the campaign and the mission fail. After his defeat at nearby Salona, Gabinius dies of illness (*BAlex.* 43.3). Besides the minute of Caesar's order to Gabinius and the detailed losses of Gabinius' army, the account

³³ On the *Bellum Alexandrinum* as an edited assemblage of several reports, see ch. 2.3.1.2, 97. Recently, although mostly focused on vocabulary and syntax, Gaertner Hausburg (2013), especially 88-94.

³⁴ See *BAlex.* 34.3 and 38.1 Caesar's dispatches to Domitius in Pontus; to Gabinius 42.2; 51.1, and 56.1 to Longinus.

³⁵ On Vatinius, see ch. 3.3.2, 166, and Gundell (1955). On Vatinius' first campaign in Illyria see Wilkes (1984), 40-45; on both Gabinius and Vatinius, see Sašel Kos (2004), 141-166. On Gabinius, Von der Muehll (1910), 423-430. On Gabinius in Illyria, Marasco (1997), 307-326. On the post-Pharsalus strategic plans of Caesar and Pompey, but limited to the period between June and October 48 BC, see Loreto (1994).

³⁶ On Q. Cornificius, see Broughton (1952), 2, n. 16, 276.

appears justificatory and rather judgemental.³⁷ Both facing the same difficulties, whereas Cornificius pursues a yet defensive but forward-thinking policy, Gabinius relies too much on his own qualities (*virtute et scientia sua confisus*, *BAlex.* 43.1), and on Caesar's well-known good fortune in battle (*BAlex.* 43.1). Dwelling on the leitmotif of fortune as a key factor in war, the concluding lines underline for the second time Cornificius' *patientia* and for the first time Vatinius' *virtus*.³⁸ Then, having just been introduced to the account, Vatinius intervenes as he learns what happened to Gabinius in Illyria (*cognitis rebus quae gestae erant in Illyrico*, *BAlex.* 44.1). Thanks to the frequent dispatches from Cornificius (*crebris letteris Cornifici*, *BAlex.* 44.1) he heard of treaties agreed between Octavius and the native communities, and of the attacks suffered by the Caesarian garrisons in the province (*BAlex.* 44.1). His position at Brundisium gives him access to a copious amount of information: he exchanges with Gabinius, Cornificius and the communities in Illyria, intelligence being fully operative. Vatinius also writes to Calenus, the Caesarian based in Achaia, asking for a fleet, a request too urgent to be quickly satisfied (*litteras ad Calenum misit uti sibi classem mitteret*, *BAlex.* 44.2). After assembling a "fleet from nowhere"³⁹ and despite his personal health and that of his troops, Vatinius pursues Octavius as fast as he can (*BAlex.* 44.1).⁴⁰ Nearby Tauris, the Caesarian engages in battle with the Pompeian, trusting entirely to fortune (*BAlex.* 46.1), as the numbers of the enemy fleet and the size of their vessels and were largely superior. The description of the naval engagement is rendered extensively and vividly: *virtus* is noted several times, the combatants are evenly matched but the courage of the Caesarians superior (*BAlex.* 44.1 and 46.4 twice). The

³⁷ Respectively *BAlex.* 43.1 as discussed below, and *BAlex.* 43.3-4.

³⁸ *BAlex.* 43.4.

³⁹ Loreto (1994), 35.

⁴⁰ The paragraph *BAlex.* 44.1 is a long section that minutes many events in a few lines. The motif of the *gravis valetudo* might be a topic for Vatinius, whose appearance was often mocked by Cicero, see for instance *Cic. Vat.* 39, and *Att.* 2.9.2 and even *Plut. Cic.* 9.3. On Vatinius' *strumae* (goitre) see Bonsangue (2013), 58-72.

account provides a list of captured vessels, and of the measures Vatinius takes until, with the complicity of the townsfolk of Issa, the enemy breaks free, heading to Sicily and then to Africa (*BAlex.* 47.2). In an action that is part lightning attack, part a proper campaign, Vatinius successfully, yet momentarily, pacifies Illyria and then returns to Brundisium.⁴¹ The narrative reminds us of the triumphant nature of this endeavour was, at least twice with formulaic clusters, almost obsessively reiterated.⁴² This section of the Illyrian chapters comes entirely from Vatinius' report. However, and most relevantly, the same account does not mention any contact with Caesar's "newsroom". The legate's staff is the central hub of the whole campaign in Illyria, no dispatch from Caesar's headquarters is acknowledged and minuted, the last contact the account registers being the order to Gabinius at 42.4, namely before the appearance of Vatinius. The omission may be intentional, to make Vatinius the sole architect of his own *res gestae*. Even so, for the whole Illyrian expedition, Caesar's headquarters remain suspiciously absent. The omission as a merely narrative choice seems hard to sustain. When looking at the big picture, it seems unlikely there was no communication between Caesar and Vatinius but the timing references in the account are too generic. By contrast, Vatinius and Cornificius are constantly in touch, during and long after Gabinius' intervention.⁴³ Given that Brundisium was the Caesarian outpost closest to Illyria, the town in southern Italy gained the status of a Caesarian hub, and Vatinius was there. Therefore, if not total, the lack of communication appears serious, given the distance and the winter season.

In the Illyrian section the "newsroom" is dislocated. The

41 Momentarily as, when proconsul in Illyria, he will again fight the Dalmatians, see his letters to Cicero, *Fam.* 5.10c. The result is a diversion as the enemy joins the Pompeians now in Africa; see Loreto (1994), 32ff.

42 *BAlex.* 47.1 "*re bene gesta*" and 47.5 "*re praeclarissime gesta*", and formulaic clauses twice in the same period, *BAlex.* 47.1 "*receptui... suisque omnibus incolumibus*" and "*eum in portum sese recepit*" and again *BAlex.* 47.5 "*victor se Brundisium incolumi exercitu et classe recepit.*"

43 *Cum crebris litteris Cornificij*, *BAlex.* 44.1, perhaps exaggerated by Vatinius.

dislocation is not only physical, to Brundisium, but also narrative: Caesar is distant, both as general and as author. Whether the final editor of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* sourced the written material from Caesar's archive or directly from Vatinius remains hard to establish. In any case, since any contact with Caesar is absent, it seems likely that the recovery of Vatinius' journal took place after the Ides of March. With the account of Illyria, the narrative has no longer Caesar at its centre. It is at this stage that Caesar the author ceases to be active. Nevertheless, because of and thanks to the shared practice of reporting, the account of the civil wars continues.

3.1.4 The “newsroom” in Further Spain

As seen in the previous section, communication between Caesar's headquarters in Alexandria and the other Caesarian outposts is in still place.⁴⁴ There are three important references: an order sent by Caesar to Gabinius (*BAlex.* 42.4-5), then a set of instructions first (*BAlex.* 51.1), and informative dispatches later (*BAlex.* 56.1) to Q. Cassius Longinus.⁴⁵ The first item to Gabinius is an order that Caesar sends after Pharsalus, while he is successfully pursuing Pompey (*BAlex.* 42.4). Caesar commands Gabinius to set out for Illyria, as he has heard that his opponents are heading there.⁴⁶ The instructions, described in detail, are intended to halt a possible revival of the Pompeians in the area, namely in Illyria on account of its proximity to Macedonia (*BAlex.* 42.5).⁴⁷ Taken at least one month after Pharsalus, the decision proves that in the immediate aftermath of Pharsalus Caesar underestimated the Pompeian threat to that province and was caught by surprise. Nevertheless, Vatinius gains control over the Pompeians in Illyria,

44 Here and from now on, *Bellum Alexandrinum* means the parts concerning the events in Illyria and Spain, conventionally and metonymically comprised in the name *Alexandrinum*.

45 As reiterated at *BAlex.* 52.1, whereas at *BAlex.* 56.2 the instructions are the same but sent later.

46 Perhaps in Brundisium, as Loreto hypothesises (1994), 35.

47 The instructions being two-fold: to join forces with Cornificius, and, if the situation allows it, to move to Macedonia (*BAlex.* 42.4-5).

whereas in Spain the Caesarians are fighting not the Pompeians but amongst themselves. The account has to go back in time, before the battle of Pharsalus. In mid-spring 48 BC, contacts between the headquarters and the province are in place: Caesar sends dispatches to Q. Cassius Longinus, governor of Hispania Ulterior, commanding him to march across to Africa, in order to put pressure on the kingdom of Numidia, where Juba was thought to have sent reinforcements to the Pompeians (*BAlex.* 51.1). Other letters are sent by Caesar, informing him of the victory over Pompey after Pharsalus (*BAlex.* 56.1). Q. Cassius Longinus, however, does not set sail for Africa: he survives an attempted murder at Corduba, and suffers mutiny and discontent from the provincials and even from the Caesarian party in the region.⁴⁸ The intervention of Lepidus, the governor of Hither Spain, and the arrival of Trebonius, as the newly appointed governor of Further Spain, delivers momentary stability to the province.⁴⁹ Whether Caesar, after Pharsalus, expects Longinus to be already in Africa, remains unclear.⁵⁰ As Caesar informs Cassius Longinus about Pharsalus, he seems also to reiterate the previous order and the request for money, as Longinus' prompt action implicitly suggests. However, as the information exchange between Thessaly and Further Spain took time, Longinus' handling of the situation certainly delayed the expedition to Africa.

Here the narrative itself displays a change of perspective that hints at difficult communication between Caesar's "newsroom" and the other commands in the Roman world. The account progresses not from Caesar's point of view, the centre, but from the commanders, who are not only in, but also write from a different theatre of war. The "newsroom" is as dislocated as the narrative, which runs according to the point of view of the commanders in charge of the area, in the present case Further Spain. The editor

48 On Q. Cassius Longinus, see Münzer (1899), 1740-1742, a brief treatment in Loreto (2001), 380-381.

49 See chapter 2.3.2.3, 102ff.

50 Loreto (1994), 46-47.

intervenes on the material that seems to have been gathered independently and at a later time.⁵¹

In the account of Further Spain, a sign of the dislocated “newsroom” appears in the expressions “*litteras accepit a Caesare*” (*BAlex.* 51.1) and “*litteras a Caesare missas accepit, quibus cognoscit*” (*BAlex.* 56.1). The ablative absolute “*litteris acceptis*” acts as a cluster to let the narrative proceed, according to the order given and written in that very same dispatch. However, in the Gallic and Civil accounts it is Caesar who receives the dispatches, whereas the point of view of the Spanish section shows an entirely “local” perspective: dispatches are here sent by Caesar.⁵² The incipit of this section, which confines Caesar to a temporal and physical distance, sounds symptomatic: “*eis autem temporibus, quibus Caesar at Dyrrachium Pompeium obsidebat et Palaepharsali rem feliciter gerebat Alexandriaque ...*” (*BAlex.* 48.1). The editor here seems to feel obliged to explain what the simultaneity consists of, since the time between April 48 BC - the siege of Dyrrachium - and winter 48 to 47 BC - the conflict at Alexandria - appears rather long. As noted above, the central “newsroom” twice enters the account by repeating the same orders (collecting money and preparing the expedition to Africa) in two different circumstances. Perhaps three times, since Lepidus' intervention comes not only as requested by Cassius Longinus (*BAlex.* 59.2), but also in accordance with Caesar's instructions, as Lepidus intends to resolve the conflict between Longinus and Marcellus impartially (*ut sine ullo studio contentiones Cassii Marcellique componeret, BAlex.* 63.1). The portrait of Cassius Longinus reveals a man prone to corruption and avidity: his unpopularity, according to the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, being more a

51 Again, despite the fact that remains difficult to prove the provenance of such material, Caesar's archive seems the most obvious origin, see below ch. 3.2, 156ff.

52 The sole exception in *BCiv.* 3.14.1-2: Calenus, according to Caesar instructions – *ut erat praeceptum a Caesare* – puts the army on ships at Brundisium, but he receives a letter from Caesar and recalls the whole army back to Brundisium. A short paragraph, which shows Caesar in total control of the communications and Calenus' quick response to the dictator's orders; this is likely Calenus' report, inserted in a narrative context fully commanded by the “newsroom”. See Meusel (1951), 468-471.

consequence of his character than the result of his policies. However, Caesar considered Longinus a trustworthy associate: the province, still a Pompeian fiefdom, needed strong handling, which Cassius Longinus was able to guarantee.⁵³ Trustworthy to a point that, three years later, Caesar talks of Cassius Longinus with no hostility, whereas, on the contrary, the *Bellum Alexandrinum* actually seems to sympathise even with one of the plotters behind Longinus' attempted murder, L. Laterensis.⁵⁴ Moreover, as argued in chapter two, the account interweaves two reports, one from Cassius Longinus' entourage and the other from Marcellus' staff, as the incongruous repetition of the camp set-up demonstrates.⁵⁵

Despite contacts being in place, the central “newsroom” is confined to the backstage and does not appear to provide written material other than the two reiterated orders to Cassius Longinus. The flow of the narrative seems to suffer here from the decision Caesar takes to follow Pompey and subsequently to deal with Egypt. Moreover, elements such as the long lapse of time the account covers, the local reception of Caesar's dispatches, the portrait of Cassius Longinus and the conflicting combination of two reports denote independence from the central “newsroom”, perhaps an inevitable independence. Most likely, the reports have not been coherently assembled and put in context with the simultaneous events in the East and in Egypt, or they have not reached Caesar's “newsroom” (a possibility the reiterated order to Longinus to head to Africa suggests). However, the dislocation of the “newsroom” from the centre invites other considerations. The first is confirmation of the practice of registering facts and compiling reports, which each officer shared. The second pertains to the availability of those reports: since the editor had the opportunity to source and compare

⁵³ On how Cassius Longinus is portrayed here versus the consideration Caesar seems to have towards him, *rectius*, his office in the *Bellum Hispaniense* (42.4), see ch. 5.4, 246ff.

⁵⁴ Caesar summons a *contio* of the people at Hispalis, accusing the provincials of having designed the murder of Cassius, a Roman magistrate (*BHisp.* 42.4).

⁵⁵ See ch. 2.3.2.3, 102, concerning *BAlex.* 63.3 and 64.1.

them, I will postulate the existence of an archive, where the reports are collected and ready to be consulted.⁵⁶

The narrative of the *Commentarii* always returns to and responds to the “newsroom”, in Caesar's headquarters. Throughout the whole Corpus, the events happening far from the centre are always narrated from the point of view of the centre: exceptions to the rule start clearly from Illyria and Further Spain in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*. These two accounts are self-centred, meanwhile Caesar's “newsroom” is far away and peripheral. The narrative reconstructs the facts and events of the two provinces from reports and written material, which did not pass through the centre, but most likely appears to be of archival nature. In other words, when looking solely at the narrative, the accounts of the events in Alexandria and in Pontus are uniformly treated from the point of view of Caesar, the hub where all the information gathered follows and coincides with Caesar, in the “newsroom”.⁵⁷ There is no other (Caesarian) source that acts as another centre, as in the case of Spain and Illyricum. The news is digested and properly edited, and then inserted in a progressive narrative. The incipit of the Pontus section is where the central hub reappears: Caesar, once in Syria, learns from Roman envoys how unstable the situation in Rome has been (*BAlex.* 65.1).⁵⁸

3.1.5 The “newsroom” in the *Bellum Africum*

Immediately after the description of Caesar working in the *praetorium*, the account reports Caesar's thoughts concerning the guilty conscience and the lack of confidence on the part of his enemies (*BAfr.* 31.5). They do not dare to attack Caesar's camp

⁵⁶ See below on Caesar's archive, ch. 3.2, 156.

⁵⁷ To be precise, the chapters concerning the *Bellum Ponticum*, i.e. the campaign against *Pharnaces*, are in two parts: the first gravitates around the reports of Domitius Calvinus, the second has Caesar's “newsroom” at its centre.

⁵⁸ This is not a coincidence, with Hirtius being in Antiochia as bearer of news of the situation in Rome, see *Cic. Att.* 11.20.1, where Hirtius intercedes with Caesar on behalf of Cicero's brother Quintus.

because his own name and prestige weaken the morale of their army (*BAfr.* 31.6). Caesar's defences are exceptional: high ramparts, deep ditches, well-hidden stakes, scorpions and catapults (*BAfr.* 31.7). These protections were necessary to shield an army of small size, made up of inexperienced soldiers (*BAfr.* 31.8). Yet the account continues by stating that Caesar would not lead his army - made of few and fresh recruits - on the open field and not because of his lack of confidence in his victory, but in order to prevent bloodshed (*BAfr.* 31.9). He decides to wait for reinforcements, including his veterans, and endure the enemy's vanity (*BAfr.* 31.10). The reference to his few and inexperienced soldiers is repeated twice in close succession, while the account gives two different reasons for Caesar's decisions, one being strictly military, the other genuinely political. The first explains Caesar's tactic: he wants to maintain his position without engaging in any fighting, before the arrival of fresh troops. The latter instead concerns an element of propaganda: it is a bloody victory Caesar wants to avoid (*cruenta victoria*), no matter how inferior in number and inexperienced his army might be: the enemies lack confidence and have a guilty conscience, as they have already been pardoned once by Caesar.

The repeated detail relating to the small army and the recruits indicates an imperfect mixture of two documents/sources, which are not ideally combined and edited. Both the sources try to explain Caesar's orders as minuted in the preceding lines (*BAfr.* 31.1-3). It may reasonably be supposed that the military explanation comes from an insider at the headquarters; its nature is factual with a description of the defences, likely deriving from a high-ranking officer who verbalised and shared Caesar's thoughts of the moment. The political one seems to be responding to an ongoing issue, the motive for Caesar's refusal to fight, which has been discussed among the soldiers and needs to be answered by the Caesarians.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ The paragraph begins with an *excusatio non petita*: "*neque idcirco copias quamquam erant paucae tironumque non educebat in aciem, quod victoriae suorum diffideret*", a clause which

These two sources seem to take shape at the time of the campaign, as they are commenting on and following Caesar's orders and thoughts "live". The military explanation appears to be like an objective reason responding to the inner circle of the officers, the political one is propagandistic and responds to the public in order to placate or reassure *in primis* the immediate audience of soldiers. The fact that the documents are contemporary to the events might imply that they both were archived in the "newsroom".

Repetitions and inconsistencies, however, point to the existence of different reports, at least two, that occasionally overlap. Although visible upon closer scrutiny, both are from the point of view of the headquarters, likely deriving from officers close to Caesar, attending the *praetorium* when decisions are taken, and action followed. For instance, an area near Uzitta, the same location where the skirmishes take place, is once described as a "*locus quidem perimpeditus*" (*BAfr.* 58.5) and then as a "*palus*" (*BAfr.* 61.3).⁶⁰ The change is likely the result of two different sources, and a missed revision on the part of the author-editor, perhaps distracted by the excursus on the battle formation of both the armies (*BAfr.* 59-60).⁶¹ The rendering of the battle of Thapsus is the most revelatory of incongruences, but throughout the whole account the difficulty of merging the reports emerges consistently.⁶²

On the 4th of April, Caesar leaves Aggar and, on the same day, he pitches his camp near Thapsus, walling up the town and seizing several suitable points for forts (*BAfr.* 79.1). A few lines below, the

implies that it was exactly the common opinion among the soldiers (*BAfr.* 31.9). Therefore, the official position was that the fight has to be postponed, as otherwise the victory would have been too cruel.

60 From a "very broken ground" to a "marsh", according to Way's translation.

61 The expression "*non arbitror esse praetermittendum*" (*BAfr.* 59.1), which introduces the order of battle, echoes the "*non videtur esse praetermittendum*", which zooms in on an episode of heroism by a veteran (*BAfr.* 84.1). Those insertions might hint at a change of source and are quite revelatory as to how the final compiler works.

62 Loreto (2001) 29, whose suggestions I am here developing. The scholar adds that Caesar's understanding of the Numidian tactic is too much anticipated (*BAfr.* 15.1), as his reaction to it comes much later in the account (*BAfr.* 69. 5; 71. 1; and 73.2). See also the *mirifica corpora*, amazing bodies, of the Gauls and Germans; the description returns twice in *BAfr.* 40.5 and 40.6; perhaps even the reiterated admission of the inadequacy of Caesar's cavalry (twice *BAfr.* 72.1 and 72.2) might indicate an overlapping of reports.

day before (*pridie*, still the 4th of April), Caesar has built a fort nearby a saltwater lagoon, while he himself establishes a crescent-shaped camp and a ring of siege works around Thapsus, in order to counter a possible manoeuvre by Scipio (... *ipse cum reliquis copiis lunatis castris Thapsum operibus circummunivit*, *BAfr.* 80.2). In both cases the chapters continue with Scipio positioning his troops for battle, following Caesar's moves. The two accounts do not fully contradict each other; the first seems more generic on the camp and the forts, whereas the second inserts the strategical *praesidium* at the salt water lagoon and details the shape of the camp (*lunatis castris*). Even the temporal annotation (*pridie*) suggests a different point of view, as well as that the information in possession of the reporter concerning locations and *castra* has a different origin. No philological amendment to the texts could eliminate the discrepancies the account provides in the passages above.⁶³ It may be concluded that Caesar's unambiguous and recapitulatory version might be gravely missed here: it seems likely that no-one else but he would have likely had an overview of all the fighting, since the account of the battle lacks a unifying vision of its unfolding. For instance, the account omits the key facts of the Caesarian battle central line and the positioning of the other seven legions.⁶⁴ The reason for victory is not immediately evident. The crucial moment, the breaking through at *BAfr.* 83.2-4, remains unexplained, or it can perhaps be deduced from what is said a few lines above, when the Pompeian army is spasmodically trying to move out (*modo inconstanter immoderateque prodire*) whereas the Caesarian army was already disposed in lines and impatient to fight (*BAfr.* 82.2-3).⁶⁵ Moreover, the account inserts the marginal, yet heroic, action of a

⁶³ Especially Klotz (1950) throughout the whole account, and Bouvet (1997), 104-105.

⁶⁴ Only the 5th, the 8th, the 9th and the 10th legions are deployed, the others, although present, are not mentioned. On the positioning and legions, see the still remarkable Kromayer/Veith (1924), III, 2, 834, *contra* Loreto (2001), 450-452.

⁶⁵ Loreto (2001), 460: Pompeians suffer "una crisi di schieramento", namely that Scipio's army is caught by surprise, still engaged in fortifying the camp, (*BAfr.* 81.1), whereas Caesar's army was ready to fight and disposed in three lines.

veteran (*BAfr.* 84.3): perhaps due to a lack of more pertinent material that would better explain the circumstances of the battlefield. The narrative then describes a sortie from the town of Thapsus by the garrison under the command of Vergilius: either to bring aid to their fellow Pompeians or to abandon the town (*BAfr.* 85.1). The mention of these two alternative options proves that the timing of the sortie was unclear or unknown to the compiler. However, a few paragraphs later, Vergilius' soldiers in Thapsus are described as obstinate and unwilling to surrender, despite Caesar's personal appeal to the besieged Pompeians (*BAfr.* 86.2-3). Most likely, the engagements were recorded from different points of view, as is inevitably in the case in an unpredictable battle, but Vergilius' soldiers cannot first be cowardly and then obstinate moments later. At least two, but perhaps more reports are gathered here. The problem, however, lies in combining and comparing them, and that is where the compiler sometimes fails.

In the *Bellum Africum* the “newsroom” functions as a hub, by gathering reports from other locations. For instance, Caius Messius writes from Acylla (*BAfr.* 43.1), where he has been sent by Caesar (*BAfr.* 33.1). The generic mention of a garrison in *BAfr.* 33.1 (*a Caesare praesidio dato*) becomes a contingent of three cohorts in *BAfr.* 43.1: such specification suggests - again - a dual point of view, one from the centre, one from the *praesidium*.⁶⁶ Sent with a fleet by Caesar at the start of the campaign (*BAfr.* 8.3), Sallust eventually reaches Cercina, where on his arrival the ex-quaestor C. Decimus decides to escape (*BAfr.* 34.1). Welcomed by the inhabitants, he accomplishes his goal by dispatching corn to Caesar's camp in Ruspina on some merchant vessels - present in large numbers at Cercina (*BAfr.* 34.2); a description of Decimus' flight and the vessels is also given. However, in a few lines later, Sallust is named differently and introduced again by a temporal clause (*interim*

66 As noted, rather cryptically, by Loreto (2001), 29.

instead of *per id tempus*). The episode has clearly been hastily resumed by the compiler, either from two different dispatches by Sallust or from a much longer one. Chapter 34 includes the simultaneous arrival of the second convoy of legions and cavalry sent by the proconsul Alienus from Lilybaeum in Sicily (*BAfr.* 34.4 ff). The coincident landing of the corn and the convoy from respectively the quaestor Sallust and the proconsul Alienus suggests that Sallust communicates Decimus' escape before the dispatch of the corn.⁶⁷ Again, the “newsroom” continues to record facts to a day-by-day timeline rather than literary fashion. Thanks to these faltering steps however, the work of the “newsroom” can be perceived. Most importantly, the compiler seems to handle, no matter how well, written materials, which have already been organised by the “newsroom” in a chronological order. The most significant source external to the “newsroom” is Publius Sittius from Mauritania and Numidia. A military adventurer, Publius Sittius was an *equus* from the Campanian town of Nucera. In the *Pro Sulla* (62 BC) Cicero mentions Sittius, who in 64 BC was in Further Spain and Mauritania on unspecified business, but no doubt to escape his huge debts in Rome. Condemned in a trial on an unknown charge in 57 BC, he went to exile in Africa, leaving behind his son according to a letter Cicero sends to Sittius.⁶⁸ Once in Africa, he became known for leading his own private army, the Sittiani. Unmentioned in the account of Curio's unfortunate expedition to Africa, Sittius enters the African war without any introduction, unlike any other of Caesar's other legates. A partisan of Caesar, his connections with the local chieftains made him valuable throughout the whole campaign. Most likely, Sittius worked as an agent for Caesar. As shown below, contacts between the two certainly took place, and intense

⁶⁷ Interestingly, the name of Decimus appears only in *BAfr.* 34.2, whereas in *BAfr.* 8.3 Caesar's orders to Sallust are to go to Cercina, which was under an unspecified enemy occupation. Perhaps the same specification on the garrison, which Messius reports from Acylla, is here given by Sallust while writing from Cercina.

⁶⁸ Cic. *Fam.* 5.17.

intelligence might have operated. The order Caesar sent to Cassius Longinus in Spain could have been twinned with a similar dispatch to Sittius, the latter being on familiar terms with the Caesarians in Further Spain. Either way, Sittius did not improvise any of his moves. For instance, in the *Africum*, the adventurer forces Juba to withdraw his forces from Scipio's army, in order to regain control of his own territory. Sittius attacks Cirta and two other unspecified towns; the particulars of the agreement which the inhabitants make with the Caesarian occupant comes from an insider, Sittius. He reports on the invasion of Numidia, in chapter 36 among the information about Cato's levies and the embassy from the town of Tysra to Caesar. The news of Juba's return to supply Scipio's army again comes from Sittius' point of view, as details of the contingent are provided, and the exchange of letters between the king and Scipio is also recorded (*BAfr.* 48.1-2).⁶⁹

A change of perspective, however, takes place between these informative paragraphs and the following section: the account rather abruptly registers the apprehension inside Caesar's camp upon Juba's approach and the reactions from both Caesar's army and Scipio after the king's arrival (*BAfr.* 48.2-3).⁷⁰ Two reports are sequenced here, inexpertly amalgamated: one from the Numidian sector, one from inside the *praetorium*. I shall return later to this insider-source, but for now it is worth noticing the strategical importance of Sittius on the Numidian flank of the campaign. For instance, the occupation of Cirta is a move Sittius certainly coordinated with Caesar, who therefore must have been regularly informed by Sittius. Moreover, considering the desertion of several Gaetulians and Numidians and his knowledge of Juba's plans,

69 The specifics of the Numidians that ride without bridles occur three times in the text: at *BAfr.* 19.4, here and at 61.2.

70 Perhaps not casually, *BAfr.* 48.3 "*erat in castris Caesaris*" resembles the caesura at *BAfr.* 80.1 "*erat stagnum salinarium*". See also *BAfr.* 40.1 and 50.1; while geographical, the incipit "*erat*" introduces new events, and may be a sign of a change of source or of an editorial intervention.

Sittius' intelligence is shown to operate regularly.⁷¹ Still from Sittius' point of view comes the news concerning the victory over Saburra, Juba's lieutenant, who was killed by Sittius (*BAfr.* 95.1). Faustus Sulla's and Afranius' deaths - caused by an unspecified disagreement in the army - are again reported from Sittius' quarters: while joining Caesar, Sittius happens to encounter the two Pompeians, on their route to Spain. As Faustus' wife and children are pardoned and set free by Caesar, a meeting between Sittius and Caesar must have taken place, likely on the route to or at Zama. The news of Scipio's and other Pompeians' deaths, while en route to Spain by sea, reached Caesar and Sittius at Zama: their ships were outnumbered by Sittius' own fleet at Hippo (*BAfr.* 96. 1-2). Of interest is the rendering of Pompeian C. Vergilius' surrender to proconsul Caninius: the result either of a transcript of Vergilius' letter to Caninius, or most likely Caninius' report on their meeting, as the proconsul offers safe passage for Vergilius and his children (*BAfr.* 93.3).⁷² In Utica, ambassadors from Zama arrive to ask for Caesar's protection from King Juba's second attack (*BAfr.* 92. 1-4); based on these envoys' reports, the account has just minuted in detail Juba's failed attempt to enter Zama, after his defeat at Thapsus (*BAfr.* 91. 1-4). The "newsroom" follows Caesar from Utica to Zama: in the course of this journey, several native leaders come to him to beg forgiveness (*BAfr.* 92.3); meanwhile, the rumour of his *clementia* was spreading around (*BAfr.* 92.4). The adverb *interim* punctuates these final chapters almost obsessively. While certainly proper to the final paragraphs, such recapitulatory fashion, nevertheless, suggests the existence of a chronological catalogue, archived *in situ*, i.e. in the "newsroom".⁷³

⁷¹ Sittius is constantly in touch with Bogus, King of Mauretania (*BAfr.* 25.2), Sittius was certainly a source of intelligence concerning Juba's movements, before and after Thapsus (*BAfr.* 48.1 and 94-95.1), and most likely in regard to the young Pompey's failed expedition to Auscurum (*BAfr.* 23.1-3), a town in Bogus' kingdom.

⁷² As noted by Loreto (2001), 466, Vergilius' statement twice mentions Utica, the town likely considered the last Pompeian stronghold even by the Caesarians. Hence, once Cato is dead, and Caesar enters Utica, all is lost and Vergilius surrenders.

⁷³ On the use of *interim* see ch. 2.2.2, 81; on the recapitulatory style of the last chapter see

Throughout the whole *Bellum Africum*, the “newsroom” follows Caesar and keeps the headquarters constantly updated from other locations such as Sittius' area of influence. However, for the first time since the account of the Gallic war, Caesar is here critically observed from within. In half of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, Caesar is absent. Others are the main protagonists of the events in Illyria, Spain and Pontus. There, he is inevitably distant, being engaged with the Egyptian succession first then with *Pharnaces* after. In the *Bellum Africum*, by contrast, instead Caesar appears to be an object of close scrutiny; while certainly the main character, he is observed at close hand and from inside the headquarters.

3.1.6 The “newsroom” in the *Bellum Hispaniense*

The *Bellum Hispaniense* spans over 42 chapters, until its abrupt end. For the first 35 chapters, namely up to the aftermath of Munda, the account follows a day-to-day chronicle from the central headquarters: what the narrative records coincides with the events happening from the point of view of the centre, where Caesar is. Whether relevant or not, the facts are recorded as they arrive at the centre, the moment they arrive. No other event that happens in a different theatre of war is registered, no fact extraneous to the daily routine of the war. The narrative seems fully self-centred. From chapter 36 onwards, and until the sudden end of the *Commentarius*, the account records events from different points of view: the unrest in Carteia, the Caesarian Didius chasing the young Pompey, the killing of Didius by the Lusitanians, Fabius Maximus capturing Munda and Urso. Yet, the “newsroom”, to which these facts are reported, seems to follow Caesar and to be located, perhaps permanently, in Hispalis, where the dictator holds his final speech to the provincials.⁷⁴ The often monotonous chronicle of the first chapters gives way to the articulated account of the final chapters,

especially *B Gall.* 7.90, and *B Hisp.* 10ff.
74 See *B Hisp.* 42ff.

where events happen simultaneously in different locations. The transition from a day-to-day to a simultaneous narrative contains several implications, worthy of being further investigation. The absence of any other simultaneous event other than the present ones might simply signify that nothing else happened worth recording. The account seems rather uncomplicated and prevalently concerns the performance of the cavalry.

After the introductory lines on the status of the conflict and the province, the account follows a chronological sequence, sometimes by adding details that have been incidentally omitted before. The use of “*praeterito tempore*” and “*suo loco praeteritum est*” does not necessarily mean a lack of accuracy in the chronology, but rather it shows how the events are listed.⁷⁵ The use of these expressions hints at an *addendum*, as if the new fact is added to the report as soon as it has been acknowledged. For instance, in chapter 10, the day after the engagement at Castra Postumiana (*insequenti luce*), Arguetius arrives at Caesar's camp with cavalry from Italy, bringing with him five standards taken from the inhabitants of Saguntia. The account then records an omission (the arrival of another contingent of cavalry from Italy, led by Asprenas), not mentioned in its proper place (*suo loco praeteritum est*). Where the arrival takes place, remains unstated; nevertheless, the previous reference to the cavalry functions as a reminder to the following one. The very same night of Arguetius' arrival (*ea nocte*), Pompey burns his camp and sets off Corduba. An otherwise unknown King Indo, who arrives with cavalry, dies while pursuing the enemy column too eagerly. The day after (*postero die*), the cavalry captures fifty carriers of supplies to Pompey; other facts, subsequently, are recorded the same day (*eo die*), up to the third watch (*et noctis tertia vigilia*). Before this time (*hoc praeterito tempore*) something else happened, but that was already reported in chapter 11.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ See the report format discussed in ch. 2.2, 77ff.

⁷⁶ *BHisp.* 12 (entire chapter) repeats the pattern, but provides more information: *postero die*,

The catalogue of incidents might appear disconnected, as Way defines it.⁷⁷ Indeed, between Arguetius' arrival, Pompey's escape to Corduba, and Indo's death, no apparent connection exists, except the most obvious one: these are the events of that day, recorded as they happen. The lines above, frequent in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, are likely the closest witness to a report, a day-to-day record of incidents, connected only by the occasion of the war in a unity of time. The account provides the reader/listener with the same structure shared by the other *Commentarii*: style and content, as defined in the previous chapter, are similar, data are provided abundantly, the three narrative categories of provenance, minutes and intelligence are consistently present. However, the account reports obsessively (to our eyes at least) on the cavalry. As specified above, the military operations might have been a matter exclusively involving the cavalry, due to the ground and the orography of the province. Cavalry deployment sounds tactically congenial to a rapid resolution of the war, as eventually the cavalry won the battle of Munda. However, such preponderant presence in the text could be primarily a reflection of the stream of information collected by the reporter.⁷⁸

For two thirds of the extant work, no other report from any other location or contingent is recorded. In other words, the centre collects information from the surrounding battlefields. The reason might be rather obvious: no other Caesarian contingent is present in the province, therefore no other theatre of war is active place except in the proximity of the Caesarian camp. Intelligence proves effective as several times letters and supplies are intercepted, deserters are constantly counted, and day-to-day episodes relayed, even when irrelevant to the facts of war and not related to any previous or

the Caesarian cavalry captures soldiers pretending to be slaves; *idem temporis*, some couriers are captured; *vigilia secunda*, the usual hurling of missiles from the town; *praeterito noctis tempore*, a sally against Caesar's Sixth Legion.

⁷⁷ Way (1956), 306.

⁷⁸ More than his own selective choice on the part of the reporter as in Storch (1973), 381-383.

following event. Nevertheless, the proximity to the headquarters is combined with a lack of vision of the big picture of the war, which fails to emerge as the events are often listed (transcribed) rather than selected according to their relevance.

Lists of events suggest that the narrative at times adheres to a report. A sign of such adherence might be for instance the full transcription of a letter sent by Pompey to the citizens of Urso (*BHisp.* 26.3) and intercepted by the Caesarians. In the letter Pompey claims the Caesarians are unwilling to fight due to their inexperience and lack of courage; once he manages to cut the enemy supplies, they will be forced to fight (*BHisp.* 26.4). The letter is quoted with the header and almost in full.⁷⁹ It has not yet been noted that the inclusion of a letter with the headings is a *hapax* in the whole Corpus and a rare occurrence in the Latin prose of the Late Roman Republic.⁸⁰ In the *Commentarii* all the letters and dispatches are minuted, never fully or partly transcribed.⁸¹ Here, the letter appears to be an addendum to the text. Its interception takes place on the same day as the desertion of three Roman knights from the town of Asta, who report other desertions being discovered in Pompey's camp. Moreover, the letter is quoted before a fatal ambush suffered by Caesarian knights; thus, it has apparently no connection with any previous or following event, other than the temporal sequence. Surprisingly, the minute of the letter re-appears a few lines further on, some days after the interception: Pompey sets out his army in battle formation at Munda, the reason being the unwillingness of Caesar to fight due to the inexperience of his army, as in the dispatch previously sent to the citizens of Urso (*BHisp.* 28.2). More than merely an attempt to give a reason for Pompey's

⁷⁹ A rare "*Si valetis gaudeo, ego valeo*".

⁸⁰ Of course, this does not apply to epistolary collections, which by their very nature are composed of letters that include formulaic greetings; notoriously Cicero also includes other friends' letters, see for instance Pompey's letter in *Cic. Att.* 8.12.a, Balbus' in *Att.* 8.15.a, Caesar's in *Att.* 9.16. An interesting example is the inclusion in Sallust, *Hist.* 2, fr. 86 of Pompey's letter to the Senate, which does not, however, include headings.

⁸¹ See instances in ch. 2.3.3.2, 107, but especially 109.

battle formation, the passage appears to be an involuntary repetition or more likely an editorial error. The adverb *antea* does not point to the citation of the letter a few lines above (*BHisp.* 26.3), as a clause like “*ut ante dixi*” would, but sounds entirely temporal.⁸² Interestingly, as noted above, the narrative after Munda becomes instead more articulated and less monotonous: references to previous events are made (*BHisp.* 36.4, 39.1, 40.1 and 41.1), contemporary events are registered (the use of *dum* is more frequent), the numbers of the cavalry still in action almost disappears and the speech at Hispalis (the passage from *oratio obliqua* to *recta*) functions as a narrative climax.⁸³ Since the head of Pompey was brought to Hispalis, while Caesar was in Gades, it may be plausible to assume that Hispalis was the Caesarian headquarters. It was here that, while military operations were ongoing in Munda and Urso, Caesar held a *contio* on his return from Gades.

In the last section, a few reports are collected together and edited; no trace of a diary-like record remains. The narrative instead tends to give an account out of events, rather than merely listing them. Two thirds of the work appears to be a collection of rather dry facts, at times it is a simple bulletin in need of being worked upon. The last third stands out as a coherent account, adhering to the progressive narrative of the other Commentaries. The change of pace between the two parts of the *Bellum Hispaniense* suggests a process of editing. Whether the process is ongoing or completed, I shall discuss in the next chapter, but the difference is patent. In the last chapters, the information has a centre, most likely at Hispalis, where the headquarters are located, since Caesar returns to that town after being on the move, first to Asta (*BHisp.* 36.4), then to *reliqua oppida* (*BHisp.* 37.1) and finally to Gades. In Gades the Caesarian Didius is in command, and as soon as he receives the

⁸² Namely “according to a letter sent before” rather than “according to the letter mentioned before”.

⁸³ *BHisp.* 42, in his comprehensive review of civil and military *contiones* Pina Polo (1989) does not mention the *contio* at Hispalis; see also above ch. 2.3.3.4, 112.

news of Pompey's escape (*BHisp.* 37.2), he starts after him, while simultaneously the pursuit is taken up from Carteia. The events are not only recorded but managed according to and in spite of their simultaneous occurrence: any clause (such as *praeterito tempore*) recalling previously unreported facts is absent.⁸⁴ In the final third of the work the news is selected and elaborated. It may reasonably be supposed that the editing takes place not in the “newsroom”, but some time after the war. In two thirds of the work, by contrast, the “newsroom” seems to be mostly reporting *inter tela volantia*, namely in the course of the military campaign. No strict selection of relevant facts is in operation, as the focus seems to be prevalently on the skirmishes of the cavalry and on daily intelligence operations.

Although a surgical dissection of what is a “nude” report and what is an edited text remains impossible to perform, the *Bellum Hispaniense* displays both examples of reports and elaborated narrative. The juxtaposition of the two in the same account indicates a work currently underway but unfinished. The *Bellum Hispaniense* confirms the existence of a “newsroom” parallel to Caesar, which recorded the events live, as they happened, no matter how trivial. Why these documents have been included in the *Bellum Hispaniense* and not in others, is difficult to answer. Likely, they were the only ones available at the time the editor needed them.

3.2 The “newsroom” as archive

Not much is known about Caesar's archives. His habit of writing and taking notes is well attested.⁸⁵ Since he produced works while on campaign, Caesar must have had staff to rely on, able to copy, collect and store. Besides the daily practice of writing, also worth noting is the proximity Caesar has to his written material. The

⁸⁴ *BHisp.* 39.1 “*ut supra demonstravimus*” links to the account of Pompey's wounds, and differs from a “*praeterito tempore*” clause, which is rather a fact not reported contemporaneously but inserted later.

⁸⁵ See below notes 86-89 on the episode at Alexandria *BAlex.* 21, 2 as well as on the scribes he took with him and his habit of dictating simultaneously; note also the episode on the Ides of March, when Caesar hurts Casca's arm with his stylus (Suet. *Iul.* 82.2).

sources report the famous episode when, the target of attack by Egyptians in Alexandria, he threw himself into the waters, disrobing himself of his purple garments and reaching the safety of a skiff, while swimming with one hand, without wetting his papers held with the other.⁸⁶ Though purely anecdotal, the episode speaks volumes about Caesar's familiarity with both writing and written material. Even the new modality of writing to the Senate, which Caesar introduced, not only suggests writing as a permanent occupation, but also how constant his production was.⁸⁷ Archiving comes as a logical consequence. The accumulation of such a quantity of documents needs space and takes the form of archives.

A little more is known about the destiny of these archives: in the aftermath of Caesar's death, their political importance did not elude Antony. According to the sources, Calpurnia gave all Caesar's archives to the consul in office, Antony.⁸⁸ Τὰ βιβλία, τὰ ὑπομνήματα and τὰ γραμμάτα are the words used to describe the bundle of documents Caesar saved from the waves at Alexandria.⁸⁹ Cicero quotes those documents several times, in his invectives against Antony.⁹⁰ The orator accuses Antony of taking liberties with Caesar's written instructions and arrangements, and even of forging them to his own advantage. Although rather colourful, the orator's lines abound with synonyms: Caesar's documents are most often referred to as *Commentarii* (once *commentariolus*), but also as *chirographa* (and once as *libella*). That seems to refer to the status before becoming *acta* and *decreta*. Two relevant passages are worth quoting by way of example:

86 In Plut. *Caes.* 49,4. In Dio 42, 40, 4-5, detailed and more dramatic, whereas Suet. *Iul.* 64, speaks of Caesar's *constantia*. Interestingly enough, the restrained account in the *BAlex.* 21.2 (as in Appian, *B Civ.* 2.13.90 and Florus, 2.13.59), where *libelli* are not mentioned, the focus being on the action and the bravery of the long swim.

87 Suet. *Iul.* 56.6.

88 Plut. *Ant.* 15.2, Dio 45.53.2.

89 Plut. *Ant.* 15.2, where τὰ βιβλία is the container of the ὑπομνήματα, as Dio relates the same circumstances, without mentioning Calpurnia, and has τὰ γραμμάτα, (45. 53. 2). Suetonius has *libelli* (*Iul.* 56.6).

90 For instance, Cic. *Phil.* 1.16 (*commentariolum*); 1.2; 2.35; 2.43; 2.95; 2.97; 5.11; 8.26. On the use of the word *commentarii*, see ch. 1.1, 43.

“Will it be in scraps of memoranda and holographs and papers (*in commentariolis et chirographis et libellis*) produced on Antonius’ sole authority, or not so much as produced but merely alleged, that the acts of Caesar will be unshakable?”⁹¹

and

“He [Antony] sold false decrees (*decreta falsa*), caused kingdoms, grants of citizenship, exemptions from taxation to be inscribed on bronze tablets in return for bribes. These things he claimed to do in execution of Gaius Caesar’s memoranda, (*haec se ex commentariis C. Caesaris ... agere dicebat*) which were vouched for by himself.”⁹²

According to Cicero, the memoranda that fall into the hands of Antony were of an administrative and legislative nature: they contain instructions on how to govern the *res publica*. By controlling those archives, Antony was able to exercise his power. Presumably, Caesar left behind such a huge quantity of documents that forgery was possible, their sketchy state being prone to addenda and falsification.⁹³ Since their content might have appeared clearly political, none other than the consul in office, namely the executive power, was believed the natural recipient. Since these *commentarii* (and their derivatives), which reached Antony’s desk, seem to contain no written material from the military campaigns, it is possible that there was no narrative material was among that legacy, which was handed down to Antony. *Commentarii*, however, was the common name that designated both the administrative and the narrative material.⁹⁴ This is no coincidence, as the unfinished or unpolished status of the writings meant it was need of being edited (if narrative) and being put into practice (if administrative). What

91 Cic. *Phil.* 1.16, trans. Shackleton Bailey; the sequence returns in *Phil.* 5.12 with *commenticiis* instead of *libellis*.

92 Cic. *Phil.* 5.11, an echo of the forgeries workshop at Antony’s house in *Phil.* 2.35: “*falsorum commentariorum et chirographorum officina*.”

93 Explicitly Plut. *Ant.* 15.2 mentions Antony’s inserts into Caesar’s documents.

94 See Butler (2002), 103ff., on Caesar’s papers, and on Cicero’s writing after the Ides see ch. 1.1, 48.

happened to this material after Caesar's death is a matter of speculation, but worth exploring. However, it is a possibility that Antony might have discarded the narrative material as of no interest to the immediate exercise of power. To Antony, urgency meant dealing with the administration and the political measures to be taken after the Ides, in order to affirm his power and control Rome.⁹⁵

Most likely, the narrative material would soon be in the hands of those Caesarians familiar with Caesar's literary interests, if indeed it was not already. According to Cicero, Balbus and Oppius forwarded to Caesar and mediated his writings.⁹⁶ The invitation to continue the *Commentarii* that Balbus sent to Hirtius suggests, if not direct access to Caesar's notes, at least easy availability of such material. As biographers of Caesar, both Balbus and Oppius demonstrate that they have access to more sensitive material, derived not only from personal memories but also from their long familiarity with archived documents. Oppius' *libellus* on Caesarion, the alleged son of Caesar and Cleopatra, hints at a work of intelligence on the part of Oppius.⁹⁷ In the case of the Anti-Cato, the collaboration for which Caesar asked Hirtius to collect facts against the senator, this suggests written material shared between the two. Perhaps the supplement to the *Bellum Gallicum*, the eighth book, might have been an assignment that Caesar gave to Hirtius when he was still alive: writing the account of the civil war being more urgent than completing the record of the Gallic campaign. Whether they already possessed or acquired the written material after his death cannot be established; nevertheless, it seems obvious they were the

95 On Antony's writings (mainly letters, invectives to Octavian and the self-justificatory work on drunkenness, *De sua ebrietate*) see Charlesworth (1993), 172-177, and Marasco (1992), 538-548.

96 Emblematical are two episodes: the letter of advice Cicero sought to send to Caesar and passed first to Balbus and Oppius. The duo returned the letter to him with so many corrections that the orator abandoned the script: Cic. *Att.* 12.51.2 and *Att.* 13.27; the literary version of the *Pro Ligario* speech, forwarded to Caesar, after being approved by Balbus and Oppius during a reading at Atticus' house: Cic. *Att.*, 13.19.2. More explicit on Oppius arranging couriers: Cic. *QFr.* 3.1.10.

97 Was the Caesarian in charge of Cleopatra while the queen was in Rome and therefore well informed about that issue? According to Antony (in Suet. *Iul.* 52.2), not only Oppius but even Matius and other friends of the dictator knew of the alleged son of Caesar and Cleopatra.

natural holders and collectors. Largely ignored by the scholarship, the question of what happened to Caesar's archives after the Ides and what possible connection this material could have with Hirtius, if doubtless hard to answer, needs to be raised. Assuming that the recipient of that material was Hirtius, and given the role played by Balbus and Oppius as Caesar's friends, agents and biographers over several years, this material appears already to have been in possession of the dictator's innermost circle.

Before zooming in on Hirtius, Balbus and Oppius, I will first look more closely first at the personnel employed by Caesar, then at the officers involved in the military campaigns.

3.3 The “newsroom” as entourage: scribes, reporters and editors

3.3.1 Caesar's scribes

Caesar at ease with dictating and writing is a well-known portrait. According to Plutarch, on his travels, a slave boy sat close to him, taking dictation while an armed soldier stood guard.⁹⁸ During the Gallic campaign he developed the ability to dictate letters while riding, “keeping two scribes busy at once” - as many as seven letters simultaneously, as Pliny remarks.⁹⁹ While certainly a trait of his ability, multiple dictating is also a practice facilitated by personnel employed to that end: educated slaves *ad personam*, and *scribae*, δυσὶν γράφουσιν in Plutarch, *librarii* in Pliny. Remarkably, all the anecdotes are related to military campaigning, confirming the coexistence of the general with the man of letters. For instance, Fronto has acutely described the composition of the *De Analogia*, as taking place “*inter tela volantia*”.¹⁰⁰ On the same note, Suetonius: the

98 Plut. *Caes.* 17.4

99 Plut. *Caes.* 17.7; and Plin. *NH.* 7.91.

100 Fronto 216.9, a letter to Marcus Aurelius, in which the role of Caesar is possibly described by way of inspiration for the emperor, as Caesar wrote not only the *De Analogia* but also *alia multa militaria* (the *Commentarii*?).

treatise he wrote while crossing the Alps, was written “*in transitu Alpium*”, returning to his army from northern Italy, where he held the assizes; the pamphlet against Cato, about the time of Munda, “*sub tempus Mundensis proelii*”; the poem *Iter* in the 24 days he took to reach Further Spain.¹⁰¹ It is worth noting that the sources mention all his works but not when and how he wrote the *Commentarii*. Slightly after the list of his literary works, Suetonius records Caesar's innovation regarding the format of the documents: his dispatches to the Senate were in *paginae*, instead of written *transversa charta*, and were in the form of a *memorialis libellus*.¹⁰² In Suetonius only, the noun *libellus* is accompanied by the adjective *memorialis*: not merely a little book (*libellus*) then, but more precisely “a dispatch written in the form of a notebook” (*libellus memorialis*).¹⁰³ If so, since “*inter tela volantia*”, “*in transitu*” and “*sub tempus proelii*” were aspects of a permanent status for Caesar, reasonably the time and modality of composition of the *Commentarii* could not be different from the other writings (perhaps merely more pertinent to the duties of proconsul), in the same manner as the *libellus memorialis* might have been. Besides, the nature of the *Commentarii* is congenial to Caesar's habit. Made up of reports, the *Commentarii* appear to be the systematisation of written material (documents, letters, dispatches, etc.), that was already part of a magistrate's duties – in the performance of which Caesar's proclivity to “*scribere aut legere, simul dictare aut audire*” proved useful. Moreover, considering the duties of proconsul, staff were required to cope with the administration of the province. A number of *apparitores*, attendants, were appointed to serve magistrates, according to Sullan legislation.¹⁰⁴ Among the *apparitores* there were scribes, who were

¹⁰¹These are cited in Suet. *Iul.* 56.5.

¹⁰²Suet. *Iul.* 56.6.

¹⁰³Harnett (2017), 224-225. Harnett moves the argument even further. He claims that not only form but even content is addressed here as “*memorialis* ties the content to a more personal perspective, drawing on one's memory and subjective experience”. It follows that this notebook is the source text of the *Commentarii*. On some examples of such page divisions of this kind, after Caesar, see Moatti (1993), 54.

¹⁰⁴On the *apparitores* see Purcell (1983), 125-173, especially 154ff. on *scribae*. The article

free, yet not necessarily free born. It is reasonable to suppose that the *scribae librarii*, likely no more than two at a time, were appointed by Caesar according to their skills.¹⁰⁵ Two names can be traced as part of Caesar's entourage: Gnaeus Pompeius and Q. Cornelius. The former, the father of the historian Gnaeus Pompeius Trogus, acted explicitly as *ab epistulis*, responsible for Caesar's correspondence, and, due to his Gallic origin, even as interpreter, the two roles being complementary, when, for instance, minuting meetings.¹⁰⁶ The freedman Q. Cornelius was one of Sulla's scribes, to whom Caesar granted the quaestorship in 44 BC, not merely out of loyalty but also because of his distinction as a scribe.¹⁰⁷ The slave referred to above should be added not as an alternative to but alongside these skilled scribes. One of these scribes was probably among the three that L. Aurunculeius Cotta says Caesar took with him in his retinue on the expedition to Britannia.¹⁰⁸ Not only a sign of moderation, the small number of slaves also confirms the importance of dictating and writing among Caesar's personal activities.

Dictating and writing, however, were not only proconsular prerogatives; legates and lieutenants undertook the same tasks, especially when assigned to different locations, and also for personal reasons. Cicero's letters show how his brother Quintus,

hints at the "deliberate discouragement of close personal attachment [on the part of the *apparitores*] to a magistrate" n.11, 127, which perhaps leads to further discouragement regarding identification. On the *Lex Cornelia de viginti quaestoribus*, Gabba (1983), 487-493 and Crawford (1996), 293.

105As an attempt to combine Plutarch's with Pliny's statement (see above n. 99), we can argue that two *scribae* might have been able to write between four and up to seven letters simultaneously under Caesar's dictation.

106Justin 43.5.11 explicitly: "*sub C. Caesare militasse epistularumque legationum, simul et anuli curam habuisse*", not only responsible for his letters, but also for his diplomatic missions and his official seal. He was an interpreter during the whole war, not only under the legate Q. Titurius, in the disastrous episode at Atuatuca, *BGall.* 5.36.1. Perhaps the jurist Trebatius Testa should be added, recommended by Cicero as a legal adviser to Caesar (*Cic. Fam.* 7.5), however, there is no trace of his role in Gallia did leave no trace. A brief description of Testa and an up-to-date bibliography in Vesperini (2011), 155-173.

107See Badian (1989), 582-603. In view of his familiarity with Sulla's scribes, Tyrannius could have played a part: a librarian of Sulla, he worked with Caesar as well.

108Athenaeus, 6.273b, in Peter, *FrHR*, Cotta, 1; on the topic of the three slaves versus the lavish habits of Lucullus see Zecchini (1995), 592-607. On Aurunculeius Cotta, at that time Caesar's legate in Gaul and protagonist with Titurius of the defeat at *BGall.* 5. 26ff., see ch. 3.1.1, 121ff.

Caesar's legate in the Gallic war, is constantly in touch with his brother Marcus.¹⁰⁹ In Gaul, Quintus Cicero manages to communicate with Caesar's headquarters during one of the natives' revolts; his reports are behind the account of the fifth book.¹¹⁰ As seen above, all the *Commentarii* rely on written material, originating from several officers.¹¹¹ The *Bellum Gallicum*, for instance, relies on Labienus in particular.¹¹² All the legates and lieutenants contribute to the “newsroom”. The letters and orders that the legates do send or receive are registered in the “newsroom”, most likely before being archived.¹¹³ Moreover, the officers - the senders - are generally visible and known, whereas the “newsroom” staff - the recipients - are invisible and unknown. By contrast, the further from the “newsroom” the officer is, the more clearly his identity appears or is deducible. In the case of the three *Bella*, the proximity to Caesar does not allow any reporter to be identified: proximity confers anonymity. As we shall see below, officers also report from very close to Caesar.¹¹⁴ Since Caesar was where the “newsroom” stood, the officers close to him might have been in charge of reporting. Since they regularly attended the *praetorium*, more than reporting on behalf of Caesar, they record according to their duties as officers and most likely they have a say in war planning as well. This becomes evident especially with the three *Bella* where Caesar is no longer the final author. In these commentaries, the dictator is inevitably absent, as in the case of the events in Illyria and Pontus as well as in Africa and Further Spain. The “newsroom” is at work, but the narrative displays incongruities and repetitions: “at work”, as information is collected according to the same format and content,

¹⁰⁹On literary matters for instance, see Cic. *QFr.* 2.16.5; on several letters from Quintus received and commented see *QFr.* 3.1.8ff.

¹¹⁰Exchanges between the legates and the central “newsroom” are well documented throughout the whole Corpus: see for instance ch. 2.3.1.1, 92.

¹¹¹See ch. 2.5, 117ff.

¹¹²The reports of the legates in the *Bellum Gallicum* are listed rather mechanically by Rambaud (1953), 51-54. The reporters are in order of appearance: Servius Galba, Volusenus, Q. Atrius, Titurius Sabinus, Cotta, Roscius, M. Aristius, L. Caesar, Caninius, Fabius and Antonius. Recently on Labienus, see Meinhard Schulz (2010).

¹¹³See for instance ch. 2.3.3.3, 110ff.

¹¹⁴See below ch. 3.3.2, 165ff.

consistently throughout the whole Corpus; “incongruities and repetitions”, as the account is the result of gathering reports, which record the same events from different perspectives. Those difficulties, which the author Caesar himself at times experienced, are more patent in the case of the three *Bella*, as the reports were collected or found after Caesar's death, namely in his archive.¹¹⁵ The *Bellum Africum* offers an interesting insight into the role that the final compiler played in relation to the sources available. At least two reports intertwine and occasionally overlap in the African account. Two thirds of the *Bellum Hispaniense* are clearly a day-to-day journal. To this journal, likely the backbone of the whole work, other reports contributed to the present, yet not final, outcome: a “non finito”, a draft. The *Bellum Alexandrinum* gathers together different reports, as scattered as the theatres of war, which the narrative tethers together with binding clauses such as “*dum haec geruntur*”, “*sub idem tempus*” or “*eis autem temporibus*”.¹¹⁶ These facts alone show the inconsistency of any attribution: since the sources are multiple, more than one officer should be considered the author. Besides, the status of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, *Africum* and *Hispaniense* suggests that the final compiler might not have been present at the theatre of war but was indeed a mere editor of the gathered material. He/they had to rely on eyewitnesses. The officers, however, are identifiable with a good degree of approximation, as Rambaud did for the *Bellum Gallicum* and the *Civile*, rather mechanically. Asinius Pollio admitted their existence: they are the *alii* whose reports Caesar uncritically accepted.¹¹⁷ The final compiler is instead a mercurial entity: more an editor than an author, he is the real incognito, the one who performed the editing after Caesar's death. The written material was available, the editing had to be done. Thus, a distinction should be drawn between the

115See above ch 3.1.1, 121ff.

116Respectively *BAlex.* 34. 1; 42.1 and 48.1.

117Suet. *Iul.* 56.8.

reporters, who are the sources of each military campaign, and the editor(s), who compile each *commentarius*. Since the officer/reporter contributed for a part, not the whole, it is reasonable to suggest that the same reporter cannot be the final compiler, but only a contributor. The decisive factor might be the possession of the documents gathered by the “newsroom”; possession that allows the final compiler to edit the written material. Such possession must have been limited to a group of Caesarians, familiar with the general and used to dealing with his written material and literary projects. Before discussing the identities of the reporters and the compilers, a further, rather obvious, observation will be made: finding names where no clue are given is difficult.

Although the names of the reporters are often, but not consistently, deducible, mainly from the locations they report on, an implicit anonymity pervades the accounts.¹¹⁸ In addition, the final compiler has not emerged with a clear identity. On the other hand, presence in the theatre of war does not necessarily imply report writing on the part of the officer, but it may be a possible indicator. However, being absent from the theatre of war seems a characteristic feature of the compiler. As seen in the case of Caesar himself, when far from the events depicted, editorial errors and repetitions occur when the compiler has to assemble different reports.¹¹⁹ The distinction, therefore, between reporters and final compiler(s) has to be maintained. In the following section, a few names are discussed as possible reporters, with a particular scrutiny of the *Bellum Africum* text.

3.3.2 The reporters

Reporters sometimes resort to self-praise, as, for instance, in the case of Caius Vatinius and Lucius Vibius Paciaecus.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸See on anonymity Intro 0.2.3, 28 and especially ch. 4.2, 209ff.

¹¹⁹See above on the rather confusing account in *BAlex.* 59-60ff. concerning Longinus, Lepidus and Marcellus.

¹²⁰*BAlex.* 44.1 (but also in 47.1 and 5) and *BHisp.* 3.4 respectively

After doing well against Octavius in Illyria, Vatinius returns to Brundisium, undefeated. No one other than him can be the reporter, for the very simple reason that he is both the eyewitness and the protagonist of that battle. Also, his outpost at Brundisium functions as the communication hub for the Caesarians in the area. The same topical expressions occur in his letters to Cicero on the matter of his triumph, which proves his familiarity with the language: the Vatinius who seeks approval from the orator is the same man who boasts in the account of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*.¹²¹ Vatinius has been a trusty Caesarian since the times of the Gallic Wars, where he fought as a legate.¹²² However, he appears only once in the *Bellum Gallicum*, whereas he gains a more visible role in the *Civile* and more prominently in the *Alexandrinum*. In the *Bellum Civile*, Vatinius is in action no more than two times, as a peace-maker on behalf of Caesar at Dyrrhachium and as commander of the Caesarian contingent in Brundisium.¹²³ I suppose that Vatinius based himself at Brundisium for the whole summer and the following winter, when he intervenes in Illyria and successfully returns the province to its *quaestor propraetor* Q. Cornificius.

The comment on the good fortune (*BAlex.* 46.1) seems in striking contrast with Gabinius' conceit (*BAlex.* 43.1) and suggests a rivalry between the two and/or a re-appropriation of a quality, the *fortuna*, on the part of Vatinius. The former hypothesis is suggestive, especially if Gabinius has been preferred to Vatinius by Caesar and the latter states a claim in Caesar's wake: a true Caesarian would

¹²¹Expressions such as "*rebus gestis Dalmaticis*" and "*in Dalmatia res gesserim*" both in Cic. *Fam.* 5.10a.3 or "*vi oppugnando*" in Cic. *Fam.* 5.10.b, the whole letter being of interest for its report style. A proper sample of such language was certainly in the dispatch Vatinius sent to the Senate and attached to the letter, Cic. *Fam.* 5.9.1. On Vatinius see notes 35 and 40 above.

¹²²*BGall.* 8.46, but previously in Gaul before as deducible from Cic. *Vat.* 55 and Broughton (1952), 2.205.

¹²³As the two Roman armies camp one in front of the other, separated by the river Apsus, near Dirrhachium, Caesar sends Vatinius, who in a loud voice asks permission to hold talks (*BCiv.* 3.19.2, January 48 BC). Granted by the Pompeians, the day after a meeting takes place between the two camps; peace seems to be the prevalent mood, until Labienus comes out and quarrels with Vatinius (3.19.6). A volley of weapons from both sides follows, and several men are wounded, including Cornelius Balbus, Caesar's trusted advisor and agent (3.19.7, summer 48 BC).

be as fortunate as his general. It seems possible that Gabinius was based in Brundisium with his fleet before his ill-fated expedition to Illyria.¹²⁴ The cohabitation was brief and might have been difficult, perhaps due to a mutual long-term distrust. But again, as all the Caesarian qualities reside in Vatinius, not just *fortuna*, but *celeritas* and *virtus*, the contrast between the two emerges patently through the account. Moreover, by signalling Vatinius' health, the account might also respond to a contemporary topic: Vatinius' goitre and his unfortunate complexion, for which he was widely stigmatised.¹²⁵ Vatinius' consulship first (47 BC) and then the proconsulate (45 BC) to the very same province, Illyria, were the resulting reward. The epistolary exchange between Vatinius and Cicero dates back to the year 45 BC: the proconsul asks for the orator's help in obtaining a *supplicatio* (thanksgiving) from Caesar, who seems to ignore Vatinius' successes in the province. The language replicates the military reports in the formulaic expressions repeated a few times, some detailed annotations and the progressive narrative.¹²⁶ However, the similarities between the letters and the chapters above lie especially in the self-pitying attitude Vatinius displays: he needs an advocate to fight against his malevolent backbiters, and even Caesar is treating him badly, compared with the other generals.¹²⁷ What seems like sincerity in the letters appears more subdued in the account of his own *res gestae*. An additional intervention of the final author most likely adjusted Vatinius' written material. As mentioned above, a surgical distinction between the report and the final version is useless and rather irrelevant.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, the account is written mainly from Vatinius' point of view. Still active, Vatinius appears at the beginning of the African campaign by carrying out

¹²⁴Tentatively Loreto (1994), 35 and n. 231.

¹²⁵See above n. 40.

¹²⁶See, for instance, Cic. *Fam.* 5.10b, where parataxis and asyndeton recall a report-style progressive narrative.

¹²⁷In Cic. *Fam.* 5.9, Vatinius twice claims that his merits are not recognised as there are too many detractors attacking him. In the following letter, it is Caesar who impugns him badly: *Caesar adhuc mi iniuriam facit*, *Fam.* 5.10c.

¹²⁸See ch. 3.1.6, 151.

Caesar's orders among others such as Sallust, Rabirius Postumus and Munatius Plancus. Such cursory mention in the work does not per se exclude Vatinius' contribution to the African account but makes the possibility remote. As seen above, the whole Illyrian section of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* relies on his reports, where he formidably excels.

In the *Bellum Hispaniense*, L. Vibius Paciaecus, a Roman knight, is described as a well-known fellow and as having military expertise: perhaps part of the *Hispaniense* might be based on his accounts, as the cavalry plays a prominent role in the Spanish campaign, and the narrative consistently starts from and returns to the point of view of the cavalry.¹²⁹ In two of Cicero's letters, dated April 46 BC and February 45 BC, respectively, Paciaecus appears as a source of information: on the alleged presence of the young Pompey at the Balearic Islands, and on the number of Pompey's legions. As Pompey's presence at the Balearics is mentioned in the *Bellum Africum*, Pompey's movements were known to the Caesarians and perhaps Paciaecus himself was on the trail of Pompey since his escape from Ascurum in Mauritania.¹³⁰

Rabirius Postumus, a close friend of Caesar and a capable financier, appears in action only once (*BAfr.* 8.1), sent to Sicily to fetch a convoy; since Cicero complains, in a letter dated March 49, how much Rabirius talks about fleets and army, Rabirius might also have even written about himself commanding them.¹³¹ Similarly, a Caesarian like L. Munatius Plancus surfaces only three times in the whole Corpus: as one of the legates assigned with a legion to the Belgae in Gaul (54 BC), as commander of the legions near Ilerda, in a

¹²⁹As the dictator puts him in command of a squadron to attack Ullia (*BHisp.* 3.4), a connection between Caesar and Paciaecus might date back a long time and Paciaecus was already a source of information. On the *Vibii* and on Paciaecus, Hernández Fernández (1998), 1163-176.

¹³⁰If not physically, perhaps through intelligence: one of the extensors of the *Bellum Hispaniense* seems to know the geography of Africa, as due to the frequent sallies of the barbarians, Spain shares with Africa the presence of hidden towers and fortifications on the ground (*BHisp.* 8.3). On Pompey's escaping to the Balearics see *BAfr.* 23.3.

¹³¹Twice in a merely informative citation at *BAfr.* 26.3; *Cic. Att.* 12.49.2. Likely the same Postum[i]us quoted in *Cic. Fam.* 6.12.2. On Rabirius Postumus, see Vodner Muehl (1914), 25-28.

joint operation with the other Caesarian C. Fabius (49 BC), and as a legate, writing a letter to the Pompeian Considius at Hadrumetum in Africa in an attempted act of diplomacy (46 BC).¹³² Events at Ilerda might be reported by Plancus himself, but most likely C. Fabius' reports substantiate the whole account, Caesar being still in Marseille and on his way to Ilerda. In Africa, the episode of the letter, Plancus' idea of making an amicable approach, has probably been recorded merely to expose the stupidity and cruelty of Considius and Scipio.¹³³ Nevertheless, Plancus has been considered the possible author of the *Africum*.¹³⁴ The main reasons for such an attribution are the command of the *legio V Alaudae*, which has a prominent role throughout the whole *commentarius*, and the favourable portrait of Cato, which he adapted from a eulogy written by a kinsman, Munatius Rufus. The arguments against the hypothesis are several, and well supported.¹³⁵ The legion V seems not to be the *Alaudae* as such an epithet does not occur in the work, but is likely made up of new recruits, enlisted in Spain in 48 BC. Concerning Cato, of Munatius Rufus' eulogy nothing survives to reveal any influence between the two kinsmen, and, more importantly, as argued below, isolating Cato's portrait from the rest of the work does not answer to the complexity of the whole *commentarius*. Plancus' alleged involvement in writing the *Africum* does not consider his relationship with other Caesarians such as Hirtius and Oppius in charge of the *Commentarii* after Caesar's death. Moreover, the description of the battle at Thapsus comes from inside Caesar's headquarters, Munatius Plancus being likely a member, but not the sole one.

¹³²*B Gall.* 5.24ff.; *BCiv.* 1.40.4; *BAfr.* 4.1 respectively. The most recent monograph on Plancus is Watkins (1997).

¹³³*BAfr.* 5.1-4.

¹³⁴Koestermann (1973), 48-63. Though incorrect concerning Plancus, the article recognises the political value of the text, despite addressing only a section of the whole work, namely chapters 22 and 88 on Cato.

¹³⁵See Watkins (1997), 39-40: the alleged authorship of the *Bellum Africum* is described as "incapable of proof", the command of the *Alaudae* as improbable, Plancus being in Africa before his legion, and the insertion on Cato "indemonstrable". Loreto (2001), 30-31, convincingly argues that the legion is not the *Alaudae* as it is only named as Fifth with no appellative, moreover Plancus is too cursorily mentioned in the account. Interestingly, while rejecting Koestermann's hypothesis, Loreto (2001), does not make any comment on chapters 22 and 88.

Zooming in further seems hazardous, as other candidates will be added. However, the attribution is fundamentally wrong since the *Bellum Africum* is the edited version of at least two reports, integrated with sources from other theatres of war.¹³⁶ Plancus might be the author of one of these reports, as his proximity to Caesar and within the headquarters can be reasonably postulated. However, from the appearances he is granted in the whole Corpus, he seems mentioned occasionally rather than actively reporting his or others' *res gestae*. In the sequence at Ilerda, C. Fabius is the source, as he was in the Gallic war.¹³⁷ Plancus, by contrast, has never been a source of information; perhaps no relevant events worthy of inclusion in the account ever happened under Plancus' command. Absent in the post-Pharsalus theatres of war, he is with Caesar in Africa, but presumably not in Spain. At the time of the Ides of March he is proconsul in Gaul, and he is appointed consul for the year 42 BC.

The occasional credit granted to Plancus compares with complete silence in the case of Asinius Pollio: the *Commentarii* ignore him blatantly concerning Curio's actions in Sicily first and his defeat in Africa later. Plutarch and Appian break the silence, likely drawing on Pollio himself. His *Historiae* start from 60 BC and cover the Gallic and the Civil wars, giving him the chance to provide his own version of the events, and they are believed to be sources for Plutarch's and Appian's accounts.¹³⁸ Likely not in Gaul, but certainly at the Rubicon with Caesar and then at Pharsalus, Pollio was tribune in 47 BC and praetor in 45 BC.¹³⁹ Not yet in his thirties, his loyalty to Caesar was, nevertheless, already rewarded. He fights

¹³⁶ See ch. 3.1.5, 143ff.

¹³⁷C. Fabius: *BGall.* 7.41.2-4 and 8.26-37, a passage in which Rambaud (1953), 59 adds Caninius as source; Ilerda: *BCiv.* 1.37.3-4.

¹³⁸On the *status quaestionis* concerning Pollio's *Historiae*, *FRHist*, vol. I, 56, pp. 435-444; on Pollio as a source of Plutarch's Life of Caesar see Pelling (2011), 44-47 and as a source of Appian see, still valuable, Gabba (1956), 79-88; recently, although limited to the battle of Pharsalus, Stevenson (2015), 269-271.

¹³⁹On Pollio's career, see Zecchini (1982), 1265-1296, on his relationship with Caesar, Zecchini (2001), 105-116.

with Caesar again in Africa and most likely in Spain.¹⁴⁰ Since it cannot be explained by hostility on Caesar's part, there must be other reasons for his absence from the *Commentarii*. It is a double absence, in fact: in Caesar's *Bellum Civile* and in the anonymous works. Perhaps, Asinius Pollio's proximity to Caesar at Pharsalus did not add anything to the account of the *Bellum Civile*: why use Pollio's reports, if any, when the dictator is fully witnessing the events and he is able to choose what to say and what to omit?

In the case of Curio's expedition and defeat, in the genuinely Caesarian *Bellum Civile*, Caesar's narrative focuses on the unfortunate officer: Curio dominates the account entirely, his *contio* is the longest of the whole Corpus.¹⁴¹ In the account of the Africa expedition, Curio's failure is completely the result of his own decisions; almost no other officer is mentioned. However, Caesar knows the facts concerning Curio's *res gestae* (such as the departure from Sicily, the situation on his arrival, other marginal episodes) thanks to dispatches from either Curio himself or his entourage.¹⁴² As a member of that entourage, Pollio could have been a possible source for Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. However, in this regard, Pollio's judgement on Caesar's *Commentarii* comes to mind: the incorrect and partial use of his officers' reports made his account worth being rewriting.¹⁴³ The alleged misuse Caesar made of sources cannot concern Pollio's own written material. It is unlikely that someone with such a critical view of the genuinely Caesarian works would be willing to be involved in compiling and editing their continuation. Timing might be especially crucial: at the time of Caesar's death Pollio was in Spain as governor, and there he remained for the whole of 44 BC and afterwards. Nevertheless,

140Among rumours from Further Spain (about the battle of Munda?), Cicero reports that Asinius has been rescued by his soldiers, (Cic. *Att.* 12.2.1 =SB 238).

141On Scribonius Curio as portrayed in the *Bellum Civile*, see Batston/Damon (2006), 98-101; concerning the account of Curio and his death at Bagradas located at the end of Book 2 of the *Bellum Civile*, see interpretation and narratological devices in Grillo (2012), 164-167, and Peer (2016), 84-96.

142See Westall (2017), 160ff.

143Suet. *Iul.* 56.4, see ch 2.1, 70ff.

Pollio has been counted among the possible authors of the *Bellum Africum*.¹⁴⁴ However, if involved in the editing, as the final compiler, Pollio would hardly not have included himself in the narration. One of the inclusions might have been, for instance, the prompt intervention Caesar and Asinius Pollio made to help the cavalry somewhere during the African campaign, an episode Plutarch describes “doubtless drawn from his history”.¹⁴⁵ If Pollio can be considered Plutarch's source for the chapters concerning Thapsus, the account of the battle should differ from that in the *Bellum Africum*; rather than diverging, however, the two accounts integrate with each other.¹⁴⁶ Paradoxically, concerning the battle it is the *Bellum Africum* that incorporates, rather briefly, a critical remark towards Caesar: his indecision on giving the signal.¹⁴⁷ The *legati evocatique*, legates and reservists, by contrast, are eager to fight. Such an unprecedented remark in the *Commentarii* comes from inside the headquarters, from one of the same legates.¹⁴⁸ Whether Pollio might be one of them is speculative but tempting. Plutarch's account omits Caesar's indecisiveness in starting the battle, but his source is fully aware of the difficulties the campaign was facing, the shortage of food (resulting in a diet of seaweed diet for the horses) for instance, the great number of Numidians and their speed over the ground, and the small contingent of his own forces.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, before sailing off to Africa, the willingness of Caesar's officers to delay the combat seems to hint at dissent among the Caesarians, which echoes the critical remarks from within, as the one mention above on the verge of battle, the *Bellum Africum* records. Perhaps

144Wöefflin/Miodonski (1889), but also of the Spanish section (ch. 48-64) of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, as argued by Landgraf (1890). Recently on this attribution, Gaertner/Hausburg (2013), 41 n. 25.

145Plut. *Caes.* 52.8, quotation from Pelling (2011), 402.

146Densely described by Loreto (2001), 453, who omits, for instance, to mention Caesar's attack of “his usual sickness” (Plut. *Caes.* 53.3), quoted in Plutarch as drawn from another source, the one which prevented him from fighting at Thapsus.

147*BAfr.* 82.3.

148Unprecedented as Caesar is here superseded not only by his entourage, but also by his reservists, apparently all against him, and successfully as the staff were proved to be right, *BAfr.* 82.2.

149Plut. *Caes.* 52.4 and 5.

echo is not a strong enough word. However, being Caesarian and at the same time critical towards Caesar seems to be a trait/quality of Pollio's. His assessment of the *Commentarii* is the most evident reminder of such criticism.

Another omission that concerns Pollio, is in the *Bellum Civile* (1.30): Caesar describes Cato's activity in Sicily and his flight to Africa, as the Caesarian Curio was advancing on him. In Plutarch it is the arrival of Pollio to Sicily, to Messina precisely, that forces Cato out, but not before an exchange between the two has taken place. Pollio's historical work is again the source.¹⁵⁰ Cato demands to know the reason for Asinius' presence on the island; Pollio replies by asking Cato the reason for the convulsion of the state. Cato responds that Pompey, once invincible, "when he wished to save his country and was fighting in defence of liberty, had been deserted by his good fortune."¹⁵¹ Cato then flees to Africa as he wants to avoid transforming Sicily into a battlefield, "since another and a larger force was coming to his aid".¹⁵² Cato's judgment on Pompey returns in the *Bellum Civile* as a stinging broadside on the logistics of the war: Cato feels betrayed by Pompey as "he undertook a war unnecessary and without any preparation at all."¹⁵³ That is very much Caesar's version, whereas in Plutarch, Pollio not only is in touch with Cato, he also portrays the senator as acting on moral grounds: Cato reasons on Pompey's destiny and does not wish "to ruin the island by involving it in war ... advising the Syracusans to seek safety by joining the victorious party."¹⁵⁴ Not a negative portrait, but rather the portrait of a wise man, a man of duty. The Cato Pollio gives us in Plutarch's account is not that far removed from the Cato the *Bellum Africum* delivers to the reader

¹⁵⁰Plut. *Cat. Min.*, 53.1.

¹⁵¹Plut. *Cat. Min.*, 53.3 and what follows.

¹⁵²An echo in Dio 41.41, who states that the retreat is due to Curio's superior forces, but also to Cato's wish not to cause danger to the Sicilians.

¹⁵³*BCiv.* 1.30.5 (Damon's translation), Cato argues in a *contio* that Pompey "*omnia sibi esse ad bellum apta ac parata confirmavisset*".

¹⁵⁴Plut. *Cat. Min.* 53.3, the similitude with Utica highlights Cato's policy towards the occupied towns.

and listener. In Plutarch and in the *commentarius* Cato is both a strategist and a cautious officer: both in Sicily towards the Syracusans and in Africa towards the inhabitants of Utica, common sense prevails over recurrence of violence.¹⁵⁵ He is a strategist as he sends the young Pompey to Spain to implement further resistance to Caesar, a cautious officer as Cato avoids the massacre of the civilians. Whether the reporter casts a benign light on Cato in the *Bellum Africum* is Pollio, remains rather disputable. Nevertheless, the *singularis integritas*, mentioned in the *Bellum Africum*, seems to be a quality a Caesarian like Pollio recognised in Cato. Such recognition might have been something the Caesarians were prepared to grant, despite the long-lasting enmity between Cato and Caesar.

Another Caesarian, actively involved in the African campaign, acknowledged Cato's quality: Sallust. Sallust joined Caesar in 49 BC and gained the praetorship in 47 BC. As praetor, he appears in the *Africum*, in charge of securing supplies for Caesar's troops from the isle of Cercina (*BAfr.* 8.3; 34. 1-3). At the end of the campaign, he is rewarded with the governorship of the new province, Africa Nova.¹⁵⁶ Although accused of extortion, when back in Rome in 45 BC he manages to maintain his rank as senator.¹⁵⁷ After Caesar's death he retires from active politics, unscathed by the proscriptions of the second triumvirate. Years later, as a historian, he reflects on the character of Cato and Caesar in his own *Bellum Catilinae*. The comparison is a match between two giants, “*ingenti virtute, divorsis moribus ... viri*” (men of towering merit, though of opposite character).¹⁵⁸ Cato's *integritas - singularis* in the *Bellum Africum* - returns once in the *Bellum Catilinae*, as the uprightness of his life, opposed to Caesar's greatness, due to his benefactions and lavish

¹⁵⁵*BAfr.* 87.3-7.

¹⁵⁶*BAfr.* 97.1.

¹⁵⁷*Dio.*43.47.4.

¹⁵⁸*Sall. Cat.* 53.6 as translated by Rolfe (2013), 131.

generosity.¹⁵⁹ The coincidence to highlight here is not merely one of words, as the character description encompasses more than a few paragraphs and details the two personalities much further. Nevertheless, the Cato of the *Bellum Africum* can only be a Caesarian creation, namely from a Caesarian source, the officer mentioned above. The observation that Cato *dissimillimus reliquorum ducum fuerat* highlights the distinction the senator deserves even among the enemies.¹⁶⁰ As mentioned above, complementary to the portrait of Cato, mild criticism towards Caesar emerges, which can be seen in the account's description of Caesar's handling of the campaign.¹⁶¹ This tone suggest that officers like Sallust and Pollio have probably shared their views, and such views were deemed worth of inclusion in the final account. Whereas the names behind that can only be guessed, the reason why this feature appears in the *Bellum Africum* is of most interest.

As the account shows benignity towards Cato and registers criticism towards Caesar, I shall extend this benignity to the final compiler/editor of the *Bellum Africum*, who includes the source within the account. Moreover, and most importantly, a contradiction must be resolved among the Caesarians: the variance concerning Cato. To be precise, the contradiction between the Anti-Cato that Caesar and Hirtius wrote about and the Cato depicted in the *Africum*. Composed after Cato's death at Utica, Caesar's writing responds to Cicero's Cato, an eulogy the orator likely published in 45 BC.¹⁶² Surely inspired by Caesar, Hirtius as well authored a rather harsh tirade against Cato, so harsh that Cicero wanted to publish it as soon as possible.¹⁶³ Even Brutus, Cato's nephew,

159Sall. *Cat.* 54.2.

160*BAfr.* 88.5. As for *dissimillimus*, the superlative also occurs in 88.3 "*omnibus rebus diligentissime constitutis*" before the suicide and in 23.1 as Cato is defined *homo gravissimus*, opposed to the weakness of the young Pompey whom Cato reproved. Of Cato's distinction Caesar was well aware; learning of the senator's death, he emphatically begrudges Cato's death as it prevented Caesar from pardoning him, (*Plut. Cat. Min.*, 72.2).

161See for instance the complaining of the soldiers in *BAfr.* 82.2.

162Tschiedel (1981); Goar (1987), 13-18.

163Perhaps Hirtius composed a mere draft for Caesar's benefit. On Cicero urging Atticus to make copies of Hirtius' pamphlet see *Cic. Att.* 12.44.1.

contends with them all, proving perhaps that writing on Cato was a matter of controversy and a popular subject.¹⁶⁴ The *Bellum Africum*, however, was published later than the pamphlets on Cato, after Caesar's death, edited most likely by Hirtius, who was surely not benevolent towards Cato. The favourable tone towards Cato might cast doubt on any possible involvement on the part of Hirtius in editing the *Bellum Africum*. What is certain is that Pollio and particularly Sallust, two critical Caesarians, portray Cato favourably. This attitude was shared by at least one of the sources of the *Bellum Africum*, an officer member of the headquarters. However, what to us might sound unidentifiable and anonymous, the contemporary audience might instead recognise; he or they might have been the same Caesarians, who were inevitably very active after Caesar's death. As the three *Bella* undoubtedly assemble reports from different reporters, the inclusion of such reports in the final version might be a message from the compiler to the Caesarians.¹⁶⁵

The completion of the Corpus cannot be regarded exclusively as a literary accomplishment, but it is also a political act. The urgency of its completion perhaps suggests a necessity: uniting the Caesarian front after the Ides. Caution is needed, as again very little is known to us about the immediate recipients of the account. However, it is reasonable to postulate that the more recent accounts were addressed directly to the protagonists of the civil wars. The *Bellum Africum* especially includes sources cautiously critical towards Caesar. Besides proving that dissension was possible among Caesarians, the divergence on Cato might cast new light not only on the timing of the *commentarius* but also, most importantly, on its political impact. By acknowledging such criticism, the account seems edging towards appeasement. In other words, if criticising Caesar is possible even at his peak of successful campaigns and

¹⁶⁴Cic. *Att.* 13.46.2.

¹⁶⁵See more extensively ch. 5, 233ff.

from his own editors, then the completion of the *Corpus* might reunite the Caesarian front or legitimise a compromise between the Caesarians after the Ides of March.

Between the Ides of March and the battle of Mutina (43 BC), the Caesarians were split into opposing factions. I do believe that during those months between Caesar's assassination and the first triumvirate, Caesarians such as Hirtius, Balbus and Oppius brought the *Corpus Caesarianum* to completion or, rather, they tried to finish the work. As for the reporters, more than who they are, the following section explores under which circumstances and where they deal with the *Commentarii*.

3.3.3 The editors

The written material of the civil war needed trustworthy compilers who collected and edited it. Likely contained in Caesar's own archive, this material was used by those Caesarians who were already aware of its existence and familiar with it. They are the collaborators, who were in constant epistolary exchange with Caesar using secret codes and who shared Caesar's interest in literary works.¹⁶⁶ These collaborators are known to us as they were already in charge of spreading the news of Caesar's *res gestae* while he was still alive and represented his interests, actuating his policies, especially when Caesar was not in Rome. There are several epithets appropriate to his close collaborators: Caesar's *secrétariat*, publicity officers, *éminences grises* or agents.¹⁶⁷ They are the *Caesaris familiares*. Very informative on their subtleties during Caesar's lifetime and after his death, Cicero's letters are of invaluable help. Their presence in the orator's collections of letters casts light on their activities "behind the throne": skilful diplomacy

¹⁶⁶Suet. *Iul.* 56.6 and just above at p. 175, concerning Hirtius and the *Anti-Cato*.

¹⁶⁷Agents is an appellative common in scholarship, whereas "secrétariat" or "Sekretariat" appear in Rambaud (1953), 56 and Malitz (1987), respectively; Wiseman (1998), 4 defines Balbus as Caesar's "publicity officer"; Loreto (2001), 19 prefers "l'homme de l'ombre" and "power behind the throne".

and intelligence at Caesar's service.

In a letter to T. Ampius Balbus, dated to the beginning of October 46 BC, Cicero maintains that he is on very good terms with Caesar's *familiares*, and those friends are: "*Pansa, Hirtius, Balbus, Oppius, Matus, Postum[i]us*".¹⁶⁸ Perhaps not coincidentally the sequence seems to pair the six in three couples: Pansa and Hirtius, the men in office, Balbus and Oppius, the two Caesarian agents, Matus and Postumus, the two close friends. Cicero's letters suggest such grouping in pairs and division by roles, chronologically starting with Balbus and Oppius,¹⁶⁹ and with an emphasis on the duo of *consules designati* Pansa and Hirtius.¹⁷⁰ As for Matus and Postumus, the first was likely the most devoted friend, the second's identity remaining uncertain, probably being the loquacious Rabirius, mentioned above.¹⁷¹ However, neither of the two seems to have ever been involved in Caesar's literary works.

More is known about Pansa.¹⁷² Likely already in Gaul with Caesar, although in which capacity is not known, Pansa became tribune in 51 BC. After an office in Rome, Caesar assigned him to Bithynia for the years 47-46 BC, then to Gallia Cisalpina in 45 BC and appointed him consul in the coming year 43 BC. Pansa, therefore, was not with Caesar in any theatre of war, after 47 BC and on the Ides he was outside Rome, namely in Campania, where he took lessons in oratory from Cicero. Besides this late interest in oratory, due perhaps to the imminence of the consulship, Pansa appears to have had no manifest interest in any literary work.¹⁷³

Hirtius, according to Cicero, *studiis deditus* and was eager to practise oratory under Cicero's teaching, taking advantage of his

168Cic. *Fam.* 6.12.2. According to Shackleton Bailey (1977), vol. II, 392, "Postumius is clearly an error" of the manuscript tradition; *ibidem* 450, the identification with Rabirius Postumus.

169Cic. *Att.* 9.7 at Formiae, 13 March 49, Cic. *Fam.* 6.8.1.

170Topically, Cic. *Att.* 15.22: "*Pansam semper bene coniunctum esse cum Hirtio scio*": were they already *designati*?

171See p.165, on Matus see ch. 5.1, 236, n. 16.

172As can be inferred from Cicero's epistolary as in Cic. *Att.* 11.6.3 or the letter above *Fam.* 6.12.2, where Pansa appears several times.

173Together with Hirtius, however, he was staying with Cicero and being given exercises in rhetoric, Cic. *Att.* 14.11.2; *Att.* 14.12.2.

vicinity at Puteoli, where both Cicero and Hirtius had villas.¹⁷⁴ His dedication to *studia* could not have been occasional nor caused by disaffection with the political life. Caesarian throughout his whole adult life, Hirtius was with the proconsul in Gaul from at least 54 BC, and even militarily active, at least according to Quintus Cicero.¹⁷⁵ No mention of Hirtius occurs in the *Bellum Gallicum*, nor in the *Bellum Civile*, or in the other three *Commentarii*. Retrospectively considering his appointment as tribune in 48 BC (although without certainty), praetor in 47 BC, the proconsulate in *Gallia Comata* and *Narbonensis* in 45 BC, the augurate the same year and the consulship with Pansa as his colleague in 43 BC, Hirtius' role in Gallia must have been of crucial importance, worthy of rewards. As Caesar's envoy to Rome, Hirtius exercised some diplomacy: on the 6th of December 50 BC, Hirtius meets Balbus in Rome in a failed attempt to achieve a reconciliation between Caesar and Pompey.¹⁷⁶ Thanks to Hirtius' persuasion Cicero gains pardon from Caesar for his brother Quintus.¹⁷⁷ Cicero's brother was discussed by Hirtius and Caesar in Antiochia in the summer of 47 BC, Caesar being back from Alexandria and pursuing Pharnaces.¹⁷⁸ In that year, Hirtius is known to have been moving east, since he, by his own admission, is not taking part in the Alexandrian War, the Pontus expedition and the African War. In the years 47 and 46 BC he was mostly in Rome, surely in correspondence with the dictator, perhaps even occasionally going to and from Caesar's headquarters, as in the case of Antiochia in summer 47 BC.¹⁷⁹ Writing on Cato, who died at Utica in March 46 BC, makes the literary collaboration between

174On the villas that Balbus, Hirtius and Pansa had in Campania, see details in D'Arms (1970), catalogue 1, numbers 8, 16 and 44 respectively.

175Since at least 54 BC, according to Quintus' letter, which shows contempt towards Hirtius and Pansa, depicted as incapable soldiers in Gaul and effeminate at heart, Cic. *Fam.* 16.27.2.

176Cic. *Att.* 7.4.2, see Cristofoli (2010), 462-488, on this episode 464.

177Cic. *Att.* 11.20.1.

178Back from Alexandria, Caesar spent some time in Syria, where Antiochia was the most prominent city, (*BAlex.* 65.1 and 65.4).

179The news Caesar received from Rome, when he arrived in Syria, might have come from Hirtius at Antiochia, since not only the time, namely late spring/summer 47 BC, is coincident, but also the reference to the messengers in *BAlex.* 65.1. On the chronology, accepted with marginal adjustment by contemporary scholarship, see Judeich (1885).

Caesar and Hirtius fairly clear. In 45 BC, Hirtius sent a book to Cicero, in which he collects Cato's faults (*vitia Catonis*). According to Cicero, Hirtius' pamphlet might anticipate what Caesar's denunciation (*vituperatio*) on Cato could have looked like.¹⁸⁰ That Hirtius was gathering material on behalf of Caesar, before the dictator worked on his pamphlet, seems a logical conclusion: Cicero's eulogy on Cato was the first publication to come out, Hirtius make an initial response and Caesar's *Anticato* follows. If so, for Hirtius, being in Rome was a way of mediating with and responding to the propaganda in favour of Cato, fed so authoritatively by Cicero. Hirtius would hardly have acted in such a way entirely at his own initiative. Timing was also crucial: as Cicero's eulogy could not be left unanswered, Caesar could have responded immediately through Hirtius, who sent him Cicero's work. Relying on Hirtius on various matters might have been usual for Caesar: military life and literary interests went hand in hand in Caesar and Hirtius.¹⁸¹ After Caesar's death, this simultaneity is revealed in the completion of Caesar's *Commentarii*. Hirtius sounds like the ideal candidate, the only one available in the Caesarian circle of *familiares* to bring the work to an end, the end being the death of Caesar, not of the civil discord.¹⁸² Urged by Balbus more than once to undertake the task, Hirtius reluctantly and modestly agrees to write the rest of Caesar's *res gestae*.¹⁸³ The completion was possible, regardless of Hirtius' lack of direct participation in the wars. Gaps could be filled by the conversations held with Caesar, although this would have been only partly necessary, since written material would be available in Caesar's archive, as argued above.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, Caesar could have constantly updated his *res gestae* through the *libellus memorialis*, which he was accustomed to send to the Senate. Not merely words

¹⁸⁰Cic. *Att.* 13.40.1.

¹⁸¹Cristofoli (2010), 464.

¹⁸²Which is the intent Hirtius expressed in the prefatory letter: *BGall.* 8, *praef.* 2.

¹⁸³*BGall.* 8, *praef.* 1: Hirtius laments the constant reproaches from Balbus.

¹⁸⁴See above ch. 3.2, 156ff.

to be remembered by heart, *sermones Caesaris* might also have been minuted as well, since, again, Caesar's primary intention was to report in full on the civil wars, which intention his collaborators knew and shared with him. As Hirtius has fallen ill in the summer of 44 BC and had not fully recovered, the editing of the *Commentarii* might date back to those months. Like Caesar did, Hirtius could keep writing *inter tela volantia*, namely during the dramatic days of Mutina, when, as consul, he led his army against Antony. Hirtius' own death at Mutina would have prevented him from completing the Corpus. His death was perhaps a fatal blow to the work.

While a Caesarian like Hirtius took charge of the *Commentarii*, another, Balbus, stayed behind, acting as the commissioning agent for the completion of the Corpus. The vocative in Hirtius' letter, prefatory to the 8th book of the *Gallicum*, is the only reference that ties Balbus to the *Commentarii*. Moral suasion was customary for Balbus, who had already acted as Caesar's agent far beyond the circle of *familiares*.¹⁸⁵ Suetonius does not mention Balbus among the uncertain authors of the *Commentarii*, only Hirtius and Oppius, an omission that only indirectly confirms his role off-stage. Although not involved, Balbus seems to have superintended the completion of the work - a task he must have shared with the Caesarian entourage who survived the Ides of March, namely with Hirtius himself and certainly Oppius, with whom he was constantly paired.¹⁸⁶ Among the *familiares*, Balbus seems the most long-standing. Almost equal in age with Caesar, Balbus knew the future dictator during Caesar's quaestorship in Further Spain in 69 BC.¹⁸⁷ In that time Balbus obtained Roman citizenship, which Pompey granted him for his

¹⁸⁵The so-called first triumvirate between Caesar, Pompey and Crassus was the first diplomatic success of Balbus, as Taylor (1961), 132, notes. Indirectly Cicero acknowledges Balbus' role as mediator, see Cic. *Balb.* 1, and topically in *Att.* 2.3.3-4, dated Dec. 60 BC.

¹⁸⁶I will add Pansa, at least because he was in Campania, welcoming Octavianus on his arrival, and because he was paired with Hirtius as consuls designated for the year 43 BC.

¹⁸⁷On Balbus' whole career, rather cursory but useful, see Masciantonio (1967), 134-138; detailed and inevitably speculative, Rodriguez Neila (1992), 51-64, on Balbus' first encounters with Caesar in Gades.

services in the conflict with Sertorius in 72 BC.¹⁸⁸ Sent by the praetor Antistius Varus to administer justice, Caesar met Balbus in Gades, his birthplace, as a member of one of the most notable local families. Most likely, therefore, what Caesar sought from Balbus was advice on local affairs. As an acquaintance of both Pompey and Caesar, Balbus brought about the agreement known as the first triumvirate, and at that time, 60 BC, Balbus was adopted by Theophanes of Mitylene, a close friend and adviser of Pompey, and even his historian.¹⁸⁹ The most intensive collaboration, however, between Balbus and Caesar started with Balbus' appointment as *praefectus fabrum* at the time of the proconsulate in Gaul. Perhaps more honorific than technical, the office of *praefectus fabrum*, literally chief engineer, was directly bestowed by the general.¹⁹⁰ In this capacity, Balbus acted most likely as an aide-du-camp, as it represented an official role which allowed him to operate openly as Caesar's agent, a civil agent. Going to and from Rome, securing deals on behalf of Caesar and being in touch with senators and potential allies were among his tasks: under the official cover of *praefectus fabrum*, Balbus was *de facto* continuing the same activities which he performed during Caesar's consulate in the year 59 BC, as Cicero amply attests.¹⁹¹ There is a quality I shall observe here in Balbus, which consists in connecting people to make things possible. No more can be said about the Spaniard, however, since the activities of an agent, no matter under which official cover, are by definition far from public exposure. Perhaps intelligence might also be the term that best describes the handling of the *Commentarii* too.¹⁹² It is also possible that Hirtius was already assigned the task of gathering material, if not completing the writing,

188Rodriguez Neila (1992), 33-38, on Balbus' involvement in the war against Sertorius; on his citizenship see for instance: Cic. *Balb.* 6; 19 and 38; Plin. *NH* 5.36; Tac. *Ann.* 9.24.

189On Theophanes, see Anderson (1963), 29-30 and 35. Caesar mentions him as a close adviser to Pompey, (*BCiv.* 3.18.3).

190On Balbus acting as *praefectus fabrum*, besides Cic. *Balb.* 63, Welch (1990), 64 n. 72, see also Rodriguez Neila (1992), 61.

191Cic. *Balb.* 63 and 64 and *Att.* 2.3.3.

192See on the *Bellum Hispaniense* ch. 4.1.4, 207ff.

by Caesar, as in the case of Cato.¹⁹³ When combining the prefatory letter with the passage in Suetonius, it clearly emerges that the candidates to undertake the task are *in primis* Hirtius and then Oppius: Hirtius for the contiguity with Caesar, as seen above, and Oppius for his written works on Caesar, posterior to the *Commentarii*. There is more: Balbus and Oppius go on to write works that might have been part of the project of writing a narrative around Caesar, starting with the completion of the *Commentarii*.¹⁹⁴ Too little survives to fully understand the content of Balbus' and Oppius' works fully. Nevertheless, a pattern emerges, which can yet indirectly clarify their role in handling the *Commentarii*. Of Balbus' work only two *testimonia* and one fragment survives, concerning the discovery of an inscription at Capua that predicts Caesar's death. Clearly fabricated retrospectively, such an event echoes another prodigy *post eventum*: the dream Caesar had in Gades after seeing the statue of Alexander the Great in the temple of Hercules.¹⁹⁵ His assimilation of Alexander or, more precisely, the will to emulate him, was kindled in Gades, Balbus' homeland. Perhaps Balbus' career as publicity officer for Caesar might have started with this element of propaganda, referred to by Suetonius and Plutarch without indicating any source. It is admittedly simplistic to include the episode in Balbus' written work as well as to believe in a mere coincidence. Again too speculative, yet tempting, would be to extend this interest in prodigious events to the whole work of Balbus. A work that has been described as an historical memoir, the *Historia Augusta*, and Sidonius Appollinaris mention Balbus respectively as *scriptor historiae* and as author of an *ephemeris*, a daybook, perhaps the latter mistakingly referring to Caesar's *Commentarii*, the former to Balbus' adoptive father, the historian Theophanes.¹⁹⁶ In

193See above p. 175ff.

194Whether such writings are biographies or historical memoirs is not clear, so *FRHist.* vol. I, 40 (Oppius) and 41 (Balbus).

195Suet. *Jul.* 7.1, Plut. *Caes.* 11.3 without mentioning Gades, but only Spain, in Dio 37.52.2 in the dream Caesar had sexual intercourse with his mother.

196See n. 189.

Sidonius' passage, the work clearly concerns Caesar; as for the surviving fragment, quoted in Suetonius, regarding the prodigy in Capua, it is not a fabrication or a myth, since the account comes from "*Cornelius Balbus, familiarissimus Caesaris*".

Among such a scarcity of surviving fragments, whether the content of Balbus' and Oppius' works overlapped, appears a matter more of pure speculation; nor is the time of composition of their works known to us, besides the obvious *terminus post quem*: Caesar's death. In addition, Oppius, more than Balbus "remains a surprisingly obscure figure".¹⁹⁷ An eques from Spoleto, in central Italy, Oppius was a friend of Caesar, and, in Cicero's letters, an adviser often paired with Balbus. Caesar addresses his letters to both, and he has such trust in them that the dictator ratifies every decision the pair takes in his absence from Rome.¹⁹⁸ Oppius never held any public office and perhaps declined a magistracy once, which suggests understatement as if content with his unofficial but knowingly established role.¹⁹⁹ The anecdotes concerning the life of Caesar that Oppius eye-witnessed are only two. Plutarch draws them from Oppius' work on Caesar.²⁰⁰ Since Oppius wrote on Scipio Africanus and Marius on private matters, at least according to the extant fragments, his interests seem to concern the lives of illustrious men.²⁰¹ Combining his inclination towards anecdotes with his interest in biographies, an account of Caesar's private life would have been congenial to his long-lasting activity as an agent: he knows where and how to access material, which is out of reach to other historians. The pamphlet on Caesarion, the alleged son of Caesar and Cleopatra, proves his familiarity with extra-curricular facts, besides confirming his closeness to Caesar.²⁰² As the

197 *FRHist.* vol. I, 40, p. 380, see, rather ungenerously, Syme (1939), 72: "Oppius lacks colour besides the formidable Balbus".

198 *Cic. Fam.* 6.8.1.

199 Cicero hints at a magistracy for Oppius in *Fam.* 2.16.7, but Welch (1990), 62, imagines Oppius as *praefectus urbis* in 45, with the "formidable" Balbus.

200 Hazardous Townend (1987), 331 *passim*, more cautiously Pelling (2011), 49-50.

201 Men, it is worth noticing, who are related to Caesar.

202 Zecchini (2001), 84, more generally on Caesar and Cleopatra and specifically on the dating

Commentarii never linger on Caesar's personal life and habits, Oppius may have filled the gap: as if the portrait of Caesar needed to be completed, to make the man known beyond his *res gestae*. Offering an image of Caesar, not provided by the *Commentarii*, cannot be a mere coincidence on the part of Balbus and Oppius, but rather an organic project. Based on the fragments, identifying differences between the two historical memoirs of Oppius and Balbus is rather speculative. Oppius' account appears anecdotal, Balbus' one seems to focus on prodigies; the former might concern Caesar the man, the latter Caesar the deified (the supernatural).²⁰³ Their commitment to writing on Caesar could have started with the completion of the *Commentarii* as the receptacle of Caesar's actions, of the general at war. Hirtius, then, seems the only candidate for this task, not only for the reasons given above but even by a process of elimination. However, the timing of composition is important here: the *Commentarii* were the first to be addressed. Balbus and possibly Oppius would have had time to write the memoirs on Caesar: Balbus, who was still alive at the time of Atticus' death in 32 BC, while Oppius, who disappears from the record, at the end of 44 BC.²⁰⁴ Oppius' disappearance might have given the final blow to the *Commentarii*, already affected by Hirtius' death. It is also possible, if not probable, that Oppius recovered the work where Hirtius left it uncompleted and kept the material safe and archived. Such a hypothesis squares with the state of the Corpus, especially the last *commentarius*, the *Hispaniense*, and with the second alternative for authorship suggested by Suetonius, as I will discuss in the following chapter.²⁰⁵ Besides handling the *Commentarii*, the nature of Oppius' writings (a few biographies and a pamphlet) hints at his involvement in politics, as the controversy

of Oppius' pamphlet on Caesarion; see my interpretation at ch. 4.1.1, 191.

²⁰³The line between the two is too thin, as Oppius, in the case of Scipio, also records supernatural events as well, such as the snake in Scipio's wife's room, and the dogs at the Capitol, (*FRHist*, vol. II, 40 F1 and F2).

²⁰⁴Cic. *Att.* 16.15.3, more precisely Oppius disappears from Cicero's correspondence.

²⁰⁵The double option in Suet. *Iul.* 56.1, as discussed in ch. 4.1.1, 191.

regarding Caesarion proves.²⁰⁶

A man “behind the throne”, Oppius probably retained a degree of insight into Caesar's life not available to other members of the Caesarian circle. Balbus' consulate of 40 BC sounds like a recognition of his loyalty towards Caesar and the triumvirs. Once he reached this prestigious office, the first given to a non-citizen by birth, he might have dedicated himself to writing, as Oppius did. Although the sources are too sketchy even concerning his works, Balbus was undoubtedly a man of culture with literary interests. Ultimately, his well-known use of connections, his holding of public offices, and his diplomatic attitudes are consistent with the role of commissioning the *Commentarii* from Hirtius, the only Caesarian, to our knowledge, who shared literary works with Caesar. Moreover, since Balbus and Oppius knew a lot about Caesar's life and deeds, they were Caesar's living memories: they not only had access to, but in a broad sense they were his archive. Still powerful after Caesar's death, they were in a position to disclose material worth making public. And the most pressing of this material to be handled were the *Commentarii*, at least in the aftermath of the dictator's death. However, not only is the timing crucial in regard to the *Commentarii*: in my opinion, the main factor that excludes the involvement of Caesarians, such as Pollio and Plancus, from the composition of the Corpus is location. And it is also location that points to Caesar's *familiares*. If the written documents regarding the military campaign were in the possession of Caesar as part of his own archive at the time of his death, Rome is the place where the Caesarians would have taken delivery of these documents. It is also possible that, due to his imminent departure to Parthia, Caesar had already passed the material to Hirtius, among the *familiares* the closest to Caesar's literary interests. In other words, whereas the

²⁰⁶However, if Oppius died in the year 42 BC, as he is not mentioned in the record after November 44, he might have written during his un-official political activities. See Zecchini (2001), 84.

acta and *edicta*, the administrative documents, were examined with Antony, with whom Caesar shared the consulate, Caesar discussed and sketched the completion of the accounts of the civil wars with his friends. The former was material strictly related to the executive power, which Antony at that moment solely represents, the latter material for an ongoing literary plan, shared with collaborators who were already involved in it.

The *familiares* were all in Rome and they then moved to the Campanian coast, where they had villas, at or near Capua and Puteoli. A few weeks after the Ides, Hirtius, Pansa and Balbus for certain and possibly Oppius were in Campania.²⁰⁷ According to Cicero's correspondence, in the spring of 44 BC, Hirtius was staying now with Balbus, now with Cicero himself.²⁰⁸ The orator, who owned three villas in the area, writes to Atticus: "For my part I shall write as you ask of the Baiae characters and the 'circus' (*Baiana negotia chorumque illum*) on which you want information as soon as I see clear", *Baiana negotia* and *chorus* referring to Hirtius, Pansa and Balbus, in intensive talks with one another.²⁰⁹ The letter is dated the 16th of April; one week later, Pansa and Hirtius are being given lessons in rhetoric by Cicero. One month later, Cicero reports that Hirtius and Pansa have had a meeting at Neapolis. The main reason for their presence there was to meet Octavius, Caesar's heir. Octavius' stepfather, L. Marcius Philippus, had a vast estate at Puteoli. On the 18th of April, Octavius, now Octavianus, is at Naples with Balbus and later the same day at Cicero's house near Cumae. A few days later, Octavianus again visits Cicero, who already has with him Balbus, Hirtius and Pansa.²¹⁰ In those days and during these meetings, the Caesarians agree a common strategy with the

207Cicero has been in Puteoli since the 17th of April 44 BC, *Att.* 16.9, a letter, in which Cicero refers slightly sarcastically to Hirtius and Pansa, already in Campania, as "*duo quidem quasi designati consules*", and "*turba magna*" (the big crowd), whereas Balbus is already with Cicero: "*et Balbus hic est multumque mecum*".

208Cic. *Att.* 14.20.4, as the letter is dated 11th May 44 BC, the cohabitation might have started weeks earlier. Hirtius at Cicero's villa as in *Att.* 15.1a.2, D'Arms (1970), 176 and 180.

209Cic. *Att.* 14.8.1, the day after *Att.* 14.9.2.

210Respectively Cic. *Att.* 14 10.3 and *Att.* 14.11.2.

newcomer Octavianus, hailed as Caesar by the entire *chorus* of followers.²¹¹ Not necessarily all has been agreed by the Caesarians, who certainly meet several times. Cicero, eager to know the *negotia* of the Caesarian faction, could not relate much about their machinations. Certainly, Caesar's estate was the starting issue for Octavianus, but beyond that also the moves to be taken towards the consul Antony.²¹² Among the numerous issues to be discussed, Julius Caesar's literary legacy and its use as a tool of moral suasion and propaganda might have been one. Even without taking *assiduis vocis tuis* verbatim, the reproaches Hirtius received from Balbus likely date back to the conversations held in Campania, the two if not meeting *de visu*, at least being in constant touch.²¹³ The same Hirtius, *studiis deditus*, is the dedicatee of the *De Fato*, which Cicero writes and sets in his villa at Puteoli, a fictitious dialogue the orator has with Hirtius himself.²¹⁴ While Balbus, and Oppius as well, in full support of Octavianus, headed off to Rome, Hirtius, the consul designate, stayed behind in Campania in the weeks to come. He also happened to fall ill and then to recover, although not fully, before taking office.²¹⁵ Whether he took charge of the *Commentarii* during this period can only be a logical assumption, corroborated by the indirect clues given above.²¹⁶ Timing and locations are also clues; none other than Hirtius could have worked on the *Commentarii*. Physically close to the written material, and used to writing for Caesar, Hirtius had the time and the occasion, the motive being shared already with Balbus and Oppius, with Octavianus

211As Cicero calls them, *Att.* 14.12.2.

212A hint Cicero himself gives, reporting Atticus' similar thought, *Att.* 14.10.3 Shackleton Bailey translates "but as you say, he [Octavianus] fears (?) a mighty tussle with Antony" (*sed, ut scribis, ἤπιζοθεμινῆ magnam cum Antonio*), as "the context calls for a substantive meaning 'quarrel' or the like"; suggests *rixa*, possibly *rixa timet* or the like, see Shackleton Bailey (1965-1970), 223.

213*B Gall.* 8. *praef.* 1.

214Cic. *Fat.* 1.2, explicitly in Puteoli with Hirtius, still consul *designatus*, see Pimentel Alvarez (2005), x.

215Cic. *Phil.* 7.12 and 10.16, Hirtius' slow recovery in *Fam.* 12.22.1 dated end of September, and still unwell when taking office, *Phil.* 8.5. In *Phil.* 1.37 there is an interesting allusion to Hirtius' popularity, as his alleged recovery was welcomed by the *populus Romanus*. Some observations on Hirtius' illness in Daly (1951), 114.

216Such as his long-time literary collaboration with Caesar, see ch. 3.3.3, 177ff.

unlikely to have been kept out of the plan. The other Caesarians, either mentioned in or believed to be authors of the *Commentarii*, were far from Rome; they were not staying in Campania or going to and from Rome as the *familiares* did. Although frantically in touch with one another, they had no access to Caesar's archive and had hardly decided upon the completion of the *Commentarii*.²¹⁷ At the time of the Ides, Asinius Pollio was governor of Further Spain, unsuccessfully campaigning against Sextus Pompeius, at least until the spring/summer of 43 BC, when he reconciles Plancus with Antony, after joining them in Gaul.²¹⁸ Munatius Plancus was in *Gallia Comata*, named governor by Caesar, for a year and a half, from the spring of 44 BC to the autumn of 43 BC.²¹⁹ Sallust disappeared from the stage, after his return to Rome, certainly before March 44 BC, never to emerge again, at least in the political sphere.²²⁰ Vatinius remained in Illyria as proconsul until early 43 BC, when he was forced to surrender his contingent to Brutus.²²¹ The other lieutenants attributed with authorship in the scholarship, are too close to the events described in the account, so that participation in the composition of the *Commentarii* seems highly improbable.²²² Looking outside Rome and beyond the circle of Caesar's friends is a vain exercise: the involvement, if any, of other Caesarians in the composition of the *Commentarii* is "limited" to their own reports. As participants in the military campaigns, they contributed with their written materials, but they are hardly implicated in the completion of the Corpus.

In the crucial year between 44 BC and 43 BC only Caesar's

²¹⁷On the locations of the Caesarians in the provinces and in Italy and their contacts Grattarola (1990), 138-142; Watkins (1998), 52ff.

²¹⁸On Pollio's struggle against Sextus Pompeius, Vell. 2.73.2, App. *B Civ.* 4.84.352, whose accounts are more favourable than Dio's 45.10.3-6, see Lowe (2002), 79-86; his role of reconciling Plancus with Antony in App. *B Civ.* 3.97.399 and Vell. 2.63.3.

²¹⁹On Plancus' two years in Gaul, Watkins (1998), 52-91.

²²⁰He retires from public life from 45 BC (Dio 43.47.4), to re-emerge in November 38 BC as author of an oration in praise of Ventidius' triumph over the Parthians (Fronto 123 N = II 136 [Haines] = 122, 19 [van den Hout]).

²²¹Cic. *Phil.* 10.5.11 and 10.6.13.

²²²Men such as Q. Pedius and Q. Fabius Maximus, for instance, or Trogus; see Intro 0.2.3, 28.

familiares are in Rome or at their luxurious Campanian retreats, and they happen to meet rather often. The “newsroom”, in terms of archive and individuals, moved and coincided with them. Moreover, the three anonymous *Commentarii* continued the narrative of Caesar, and, in the months after the Ides, they became part of the legacy, which the dictator's adopted son, Octavianus, had to deal with. The *familiares* not only have the authority to decide on the *Commentarii*, but they also have a political motive for their completion, which the young Caesar likely shared. Before exploring the political implications of the last three *Commentarii*, the next chapter delves into the nature of editorship and anonymity that characterises the whole Corpus.

Chapter 4

Editorship and anonymity in the Commentarii

The “newsroom's” functioning and the report-based method behind the *Commentarii* are strictly related to the editors' task and each require editorial skills.¹ After briefly discussing Suetonius' passage (*Iul.* 56. 1) and the prefatory letter to Balbus,² the chapter reconsiders the role of Hirtius and Oppius as editors rather than authors. Some editorial interventions are then examined throughout the Corpus with a particular emphasis on the eighth book of the *Bellum Gallicum* and on the *Bellum Hispaniense*. The act of first gathering, and then editing, the written material of the civil wars prevails over authorship, and to this extent the role of editors prevails over the role of authors. The reason for this prevalence lies in the relevance of Caesar's *res gestae*, since giving the account of the general's *res gestae* is the prime aim of the editor(s) and is more important than the identity of its compiler(s). The completion of the *Commentarii* was also characterised by urgency, since the sudden death of the dictator was likely to have hastened the finalisation of the whole work. Therefore, among the Caesarians, the completion of Caesar's *res gestae* meant more than claiming any “intellectual property” over that written material.³ In a final step, the chapter engages with the nature of anonymity in the *Commentarii*.⁴

4.1 Editorship

4.1.1 Suetonius on the *Commentarii*

Evidence of the authorship of the five *Commentarii* comes in

1 On editorship and its meaning see Intro. 0.2.2, 26.

2 Which are the only two extant references to the authorship of the *Corpus Caesarianum* as a whole.

3 See Gaertner (2013), 28 n. 57, 160.

4 On anonymity and its meaning see Intro 0.2.3, 28.

Suetonius' following paragraph:

“He left memoirs too of his deeds in the Gallic war and in the civil strife with Pompey (*reliquit et rerum suarum commentarios Gallici ciuillisque belli Pompeiani*); for the author of the Alexandrian, African, and Spanish Wars is unknown (*incertus auctor est*); some think it was Oppius, others Hirtius, who also supplied the final book of the Gallic War, which Caesar left unwritten *alii Oppium putant, alii Hirtium, qui etiam Gallici belli nouissimum imperfectumque librum suppleuerit. (Iul. 56, 1).*”⁵

In the 2nd century AD, in the eyes of Suetonius the narrative of the Gallic and Civil wars (the Pompeian strife, the Alexandrian, African and Spanish wars) is perceived as a unitary work, worth quoting all together. However, Suetonius makes cursory mention of the authorship: in the case of the 8th book of the Gallic work Hirtius' “authorship” is asserted;⁶ regarding the three *Bella*, however, uncertainty is registered (*incertus auctor est*), as the sources (*alii*) credit Oppius and Hirtius as the sole possible options.⁷ This paragraph does not suggest autopsy on Suetonius' part: he seems to deal only with the sources, without examining the rolls; he only registers the uncertainty.⁸ Moreover, uncertainty refers to an open

5 As translated by Edwards (1917), whereas Canfora translates: “... Hirtius, who would supply...”, see following note.

6 Not with certainty as, according to Canfora (1993), 80-81, n. 2 and 96 *suppleverit* is a “congiuntivo obliquo”, and indicates that Suetonius does not fully believe Hirtius wrote the eighth book of the *Bellum Gallicum*; whereas for Gaertner/Hausburg (2013), 21 n. 26 and 177, n. 36 and 37, *suppleverit* is a subjunctive of argumentative force, it is basically *supplevit*, a perfect: Hirtius did not add but did supplement an unfinished literary work. Canfora's argument corroborates Suetonius' lack of autopsy as if authorship of the 8th book might have been under dispute. On the use of a subjunctive in a relative clause see Kühner/Stegman (1914), II, 199-200.

7 *Incertus* means “authorship of unclear attribution”, see instances in *TLL*. VII. 1, 877, a II. *Incertus* does not translate to anonymous, almost never used in Latin; uncertainty, however, can be a consequence of anonymity. *Anonymos* in Latin has only three occurrences (see *TLL*. II, 122), the closest to the time of the *Commentarii* is Plin. *NH* 27, 31 (*anonymos non inveniēdo nomen inuenit*): anonymous as the name of an herb, which, not having one, takes the name of anonymous! The pair *incertus* and *auctor* occurs another two times in Suetonius, with the meaning of doubtful, not trustworthy sources: *Calig.* 6.1 (*repente iam vesperi incertis auctoribus convaluisse*) and *Ner.* 34.4; in these passages, however, *incertus* seems related not to the authors' identities but to them as trustworthy sources. See also Tac. *Hist.* 2.73, and *Ann.* 6.12, whereas in *Ann.* 1.17 Tacitus refers to unknown authors, satirising Tiberius. On Suetonius' phraseology of ch. 56, see Baldwin (1993), 107.

8 Information (author, title, number of lines or verses, etc.) were contained in the label or tag, attached to the roll. Scrolls had an opening title section or a colophon at the end of the copy, as in the papyri found at Herculaneum. On titles tags, *syllaba* in Greek, as in Cic. *Att.* 4.4a, see Cairoli (2007), 29-60, with several illustrations; more succinctly in Johnson (2009), 264

question prior to Suetonius' time. The sources are not quoted by Suetonius and remain unknown; they might have been if not contemporary with, at least not too far removed from the publication of the *Commentarii*; they might also have been contemporary with Suetonius too.⁹ Either way, it seems likely that the *Commentarii* have been perceived as being of uncertain attribution almost since their circulation, certainly since Suetonius' times. Moreover, if the rolls (the *volumina*) were in a good enough condition to acknowledge their authors, it seems reasonable to argue that no author signed (and consequently no authorship was ascribed to) the Alexandrian, African and Spanish *Commentarii*. Nevertheless, speculation (*alii Oppium putant, alii Hirtium*) is limited to the two Caesarians, an unprecedented pairing, since usually Oppius is paired with Balbus and Hirtius with Pansa.¹⁰ The two alleged authorships might be the result of two (obvious) conclusions: either Hirtius completed the *Commentarii* as he did with the eighth book of the *Bellum Gallicum*, or, due to Hirtius' death at Mutina, Oppius undertook the task. Hirtius seems the most obvious (to contemporaries and to us) candidate, as he was already involved in the editing of the Gallic war by the 8th book; Oppius, by contrast, seems an option apparently evident and discernible only to Suetonius' sources.¹¹ Nevertheless, the latter possibility (Oppius) was apparently taken seriously by Suetonius: the Caesarian was

and on Herculaneum Greek and Latin books, Sider (2009), 303-319, with samples and figures.

- 9 Loreto (2001), 17 believes the sources are grammarians of the 1st century AD, without providing any further detail. If grammarians, they might have argued over some words or clauses of the anonymous *Bella*, or compared the Latin of each *commentarius* with the Latin of Oppius' and Hirtius' other writings, or be intrigued by the missing or confusing completion of the Corpus; Hirtius' letter might not have made it clear. *Alii* could also be historians who read documents or letters exchanged between Caesarians, or librarians who were disputing how to label the rolls. Whichever it might be, *alii* will unfortunately remain unknown. On the grammarians with a rich bibliography, De Nonno (1989), 597-646.
- 10 Almost exclusively in Cicero, see for instance Cic. *Fam.* 6.12.2, Balbus and Oppius especially at Cic. *Att.* 9.7 at Formiae, 13 March 49, Cic. *Fam.* 6.8.1, Hirtius and Pansa topically in Cic. *Att.* 15.22. Curiously few manuscripts have the concluding formula (*subscription*): *HirtiiPansae*, whether a mistake or a dedication, certainly suggests a topic pairing [the *subscription* in Seel (1961), cxix-cxxi, comments in Canfora (1993), 85; Pecere (2003), 183ff.
- 11 Obvious perhaps to Suetonius himself, as he seems to simply list what he finds in the sources; however, the mention of Hirtius' supplement (the 8th book of *BGall.*) in the very same chapter might be hypothetical (*suppleverit*).

certainly well informed about Caesar's life and archive.¹² As Oppius wrote a monograph in which he denied Caesar's paternity of Caesarion, he may have survived until 32 BC when the question of Caesarion, the alleged son of Caesar and Cleopatra, resurfaced at the time of the conflict between Octavian and Antony.¹³ However, he appears for the last time in a Ciceronian letter dated November 44 BC, while winning over Cicero to Octavian's cause.¹⁴ Moreover, as the author of a life of Cassius, Oppius could have survived the death of the conspirator at Philippi in 42 BC. If it sounds largely unlikely that a Caesarian such as Oppius would have written a life of Cassius, one of the main conspirators of the Ides of March, the *liber* on Caesarion's paternity could have been published as a prompt reaction to Antonius' public claim that the boy was Caesar's son.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the book could have been written at the time of or after the residence of Cleopatra in Rome, when the rumour first arose and the position of Octavian in Rome as Caesar's heir had to be secured.¹⁶ However, it is worth noticing is the promptness of Oppius' intervention, which seems to be part of an ambitious plan to defend Caesar's memory and legacy: a Caesarian who published a biography of Caesar, a book on his alleged son, likely took from Hirtius the task of finishing the account of Caesar' *res gestae*.¹⁷ If Oppius' death occurs in 44 BC or 43 BC, the Corpus, I have to assume, experienced its last traumatic events and was left editorially unfinished; if Oppius died after 32 BC, what we read today, although damaged by the manuscript transmission, is the final version of the

12 Suetonius quotes Oppius' biography of Caesar three times, and the Caesarian is certainly one of his sources, see Suet. *Iul.* 52. 2; 53.1; 72.1.

13 Exhaustively on Oppius *FRHist.* vol.1, 40, p. 381, supporting Münzer's argument (in *RE* 18, 734ff.) in favour of a late composition of the monograph; against Zecchini (2001).

14 Cic. *Att.* 16.15.3.

15 The grammarian Charisius, (*FHistR.* F4 = Charis. 186) mentions a "*de vita Cassii*", yet common to all the manuscripts; I am inclined to reject the *lectio* as highly unlikely, in favour of Peter F4 "*Caesaris*". Regarding the book on Caesarion see Suet. *Iul.* 52. 2, where the accusation cannot clearly be dated, due to the generic "*M. Antonius ... senatui adfirmavit*".

16 See Suet. *Iul.* 52.1: Caesar called Cleopatra to Rome in 46 BC (according to Dio 43.27.3, perhaps wrongly, since, three years later, she was still in Rome after Caesar's death, according to Cicero's ironic remark in *Att.* 15.15.2), certainly after his return from Thapsus, April 46 BC.

17 It is not the authorship which is at stake here, but the role played by Oppius as editor, after Hirtius' death. The most updated bibliography on Oppius is in *FRHist.* vol. I, p. 381, n. 9.

Corpus. In the former case, the editing was not fully completed but the work was published; in the latter, the editing was concluded, and the work published. Even if concluded, the editing does not look completed. Therefore, more precisely, the three *Bella*, if not distributed as they were immediately after Hirtius' death, were edited, perhaps hastily - or at least preserved - by Oppius.

In an entirely theoretical frame, one might further observe that the (Latin) language might also have been an element of the uncertainty disputed by the sources: the patent difference between the language of the eighth book of the *Bellum Gallicum* and that of the *Hispaniense* suggests a second author other than Hirtius, namely Oppius.¹⁸ Moreover, as author of a “historical memoir” of Caesar, surviving in very fragmentary form, Oppius might have been considered as an obvious candidate by the sources, since the style of Oppius' biographical work could have been compared to the newest *Commentarii*. However, less speculatively, the time of Hirtius' death is the most likely reason for considering Oppius a possible author, who might have simply collected the written material left behind by the consul. Unquestionably Hirtius' death was a critical moment for the last three *Commentarii*. It also seems certain that the eighth book of the *Bellum Gallicum* was completed by Hirtius. As Hirtius certainly composed at least part of the missing book of the Gallic War, he might have brought to completion the description of the remaining military campaigns.¹⁹ If the Suetonian sources believe the *auctor* is uncertain, and if they are close in time to the *Commentarii*, the dispute on authorship started with them. Therefore, it seems possible that the texts had no stated authorship. Although the rationale of the debate is hard to guess, it is

¹⁸ No comment on the Latin of the three *Bella* can be found in the extant literature from antiquity.

¹⁹ Scholarship not unanimously attributes the composition of the whole 8th book of the *Bellum Gallicum* to Hirtius. Recently Kestemont et al. (2016), 94, *contra* Canfora (1993), 81, who, starting from the hypothetical use of “*suppleverit*”, concludes: “Svetonio non ragiona affatto in termini di ottavo commentario tutto dovuto al continuatore di Cesare, ma solo completato dal continuatore di Cesare.”, where the continuator is not Hirtius, but anonymous.

reasonable to assume that the origin of this uncertainty lies in the absence of an author's name on the rolls. Otherwise, we are forced to infer that the rolls were in poor condition, which seems plausible more than one hundred years after their composition. More reasonably, the rolls were in the condition that Hirtius left them and Oppius happened to acquire. Nevertheless, the origin of this dual (Hirtius, Oppius) speculation might have been the absence of any authorship, perceived as uncertain by the unknown sources quoted by Suetonius (*alii putant*). This absence would explain the resulting confusion concerning the authorship of the Corpus after Suetonius' times.²⁰ Moreover, uncertainty seems the inevitable consequence of the way in which the *Commentarii* have been conceived and assembled once the deaths of firstly Caesar and then of Hirtius deprive the *Commentarii* of their genuine author and its original editor(s).

4.1.2 The prefatory letter to Balbus

As demonstrated by the prefatory letter to book 8 of the *Bellum Gallicum*, after the Ides the Caesarians shared the purpose of completing Caesar's *res gestae*. According to the letter, Hirtius took that responsibility, invited by another Caesarian, Balbus. The Caesarians shared the ambitious project of providing a full account of Caesar's military campaigns and also of Caesar's life.²¹ The prefatory letter also testifies to Hirtius' involvement in completing the *Commentarii*. A section of modern scholarship, however, doubts its authenticity.²² Nevertheless, I suggest that a close scrutiny of its

²⁰ The first author to quote the *Commentarii* after Suetonius was Orosius (6.7.1-2), who seems to consider Suetonius as the author of the Gallic war, with the same confusion in Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epist.* 9.14.7. On the "*De Titulo Commentariorum Testimonia*", no more than thirteen testimonies, see exhaustively Seel (1961), civ -cxv. See also Brown (1981), 321ff.

²¹ Oppius is not mentioned in the prefatory letter: no mention is needed - he certainly shared the project of completing Caesar's works and writing about his life. His role as agent of Caesar makes him disappear "behind the throne".

²² Mainly Canfora (1993), 79ff., reiterated in (1999), 389-399. But also Andrieu (1949), 138-149; with some caution Cugusi (1979), II, 1ff. Loreto (2001), 7-8 and 12-17, argues in favour of authenticity; however, he considers authenticity not relevant as the letter could acknowledge a fact (the status of the *Commentarii*) as real, and at the same time be a forgery as "non necessariamente l'autenticità di un dato di fatto cade con la dimostrazione della falsità formale del documento che la riferisce."

content once more reveals the editorial process behind the *Commentarii*: an argument, I believe, that makes irrelevant the dispute on the letter's authenticity.

Hirtius' prefatory letter to Balbus states not a clear authorship, which the reality of the Corpus undeniably contradicts, but an editorship. The relevant passage is:

"I continued (*contexui*) the accounts of our Caesar on his deeds in Gaul, since his earlier and later writing did not fit together (*non competentibus superioribus atque insequentibus eius scriptis*),²³ and I have also finished the most recent and incomplete account, extending it from the deeds in Alexandria (*novissimumque imperfectum ab rebus gestis Alexandriae confeci*) down to the end, not admittedly of the civil discord, of which we see no end, but of Caesar's life."²⁴

Hirtius affirms that he has - reluctantly - undertaken the task of compiling a continuation of the Gallic War and completed what Caesar left incomplete from or after the Alexandrian War until Caesar's death. Hirtius is doing so, despite the fact that he did not take part in the Alexandrian and African wars:

"I did not even happen to take part in the Alexandrian and African wars; although these wars are known to us partly by Caesar's own oral account (*quae bella quamquam ex parte nobis Caesaris sermone sunt nota*), we nevertheless perceive (*audimus*)²⁵ in one way the things that fascinate us

23 Passage from *BGall.* 8, *praef.* 2. *Competentibus* is Bernardy's conjecture. One manuscript has *conparentibus* and all the others have *comparantibus*, those *lectiones* present problems, whereas their meanings are similar. Either way, the passage remains tortured. All the options are presented in Cugusi (1979) II, 1, 283; on the issue exhaustively see Gaertner (2013) 23, 30; concerning the incorrect - as if perhaps supplied by memory - quotation of the prefatory letter in Suetonius' biography of Caesar, see Damon (2015), 11-12, and n. 31.

24 Translated after Gaertner (2013), 23. Damon (2015), 12 n. 32 argues *contra* Gaertner (2013) 23, n. 31, since she prefers *contexui* as "wove together", rather than "continued"; in between Cluett (2009), 193, with "I have compiled a continuation". For the verb *conficere* (=to finish) use and meaning are fully explained by Gaertner (2013), 29. Remarkably, the scholar argues that Hirtius uses the verb "in order to describe his double role as writer and compiler or editor."

25 *BGall.* 8, *praef.* 8. Interestingly, as noted by Canfora, the act of hearing the *res gestae* "*audimus*" can be interpreted in two ways: "what we capture as fascinating" and "what one day we will report": not fully clear, as well as *sermone Caesaris* cannot merely refer to Caesar's words.

because of the novelty of the events or our admiration, and in another way the things that we will one day have to say in testimony.”)²⁶

The content of the letter compared with the reality of the Corpus has fed the scholarly debate since the 19th century, whereas recently another scholarly dispute has arisen, started by Canfora, on whether the letter is a forgery or is authentic.²⁷ Without entering that controversy, as both hypotheses are well informed, the prefatory letter portrays a status quo of the *Commentarii* and its troubled editing.²⁸ Either the letter is a declaration of intent on Hirtius' part, or it describes what the forger finds at his present time. Either Hirtius' death interrupted his project (left behind unrefined and taken over by Oppius), or the forgery sought to respond to the disorderly conditions of the *Commentarii*.²⁹ Ultimately, modern scholarship witnesses the same situation the alleged forger aimed to resolve or Hirtius unintentionally left behind: the Corpus was not entirely and uniformly edited. The interruption of the editing process caused this lack of uniformity: the *Commentarii* have to be completed, but the death of the original author first and the editor later occur in the middle of its completion. The Corpus remains in an unfinished state, an editorial “non finito”. And on the editorial process and its consequences I shall now focus in order to unveil the peculiar nature of the Corpus and the involvement of the Caesarians.

4.1.3 Editorial intervention and editorial “non finito”: some examples

There are several passages, if not sections, of the Corpus that suggest an editorial intervention. At times the editing is performed in

²⁶ Translated by Gaertner/Hausburg (2013), 23.

²⁷ As the scholarship is massive, a detailed overview can be found in Gaertner (2013) 15-30, with footnotes; the recent, yet briefest and effectively summarised, *status quaestionis* in Damon (2015), 10-15. Canfora formulated a thesis merely hinted at by Andrieu (1954) and Cugusi (1979); *contra* Pecere (2003), 198, and Gaertner (2013), *passim* 15-30.

²⁸ Concerning the dating of the letter see above, p. 196.

²⁹ If our hypothesis of no original authorship is correct, the forger might have tried to interpret the status of the Corpus, by inventing and giving a name to the *éminence grise* behind its composition and redaction, perhaps in order to finally settle the dispute over authorship.

full, at times it is totally absent.³⁰ Although not unanimously, scholarship tends to explain this situation as a result of manuscript tradition or *fata libelli*, rarely by looking at the Corpus as whole. For instance, the *Bellum Hispaniense* especially is treated as an isolated (and awful) example of the Latin language.

Before examining the *Bellum Hispaniense*, Canfora's so called "breve praefatio del *suppletor*" at *Bellum Gallicum* 8.48.10-11 warrants attention, as it offers the clearest editorial intervention of the whole Corpus.³¹

"I know that Caesar compiled a separate *commentarius* for each year (*scio Caesarem singulorum annorum singulos commentarios confecisse*); but I have thought (*existimavi*) not to do this, because the following year ... contains no operations of major significance in Gaul. However, in order not to leave anyone unaware in which places Caesar and his army were at that time, I have decided that a few things have to be written and added to this *commentarius* (*pauca esse scribenda coniungendaque huic commentario statui*)."

The insertion refers to Caesar's habit of writing the *Commentarii* year by year, and aims to conjoin the events of the year 51 BC with the few (*pauca*) that happened in 50 BC.³² There are so few that the account focuses prevalently more on the climate in Rome, previous to the imminent end of Caesar's proconsulate in Gaul, than on the province itself. The paragraph is the only one in the entire Corpus where the narrator patently speaks in first person (*scio ... ego non existimavi ... statui*), and he does so in regard to a matter of composition, namely he has just taken an editorial decision

³⁰ See in the *Bellum Gallicum*, beside the 8th book (with its prefatory letter, editorial insertion at 48.10ff. the missing end), the very recapitulatory end of the 7th book (see Fraenkel (1956), 59ff.), in the *Civile* the beginning and especially the end in relation to the *Alexandrinum* (see in details Damon' edition (2015b), xiii). As the *Bellum Africum* seems less problematic, the *Hispaniense* is regarded as damaged, or as argued below, not fully edited.

³¹ As described by Canfora (1993), 82, in order to support his argument in favour of the forgery, the passage is the real "intervento del redattore". However, Hirtius could have inserted an annotation for the benefit of the reader/listener here, whereas the prefatory letter concerns a more articulated explanation of the whole editorial plan.

³² Arguably, the year-by-year account was Caesar's original contribution to the *Commentarii*, as the *suppletor* feels the need to specify his choice of combining two years in one.

on the completion (*scribenda coniungendaque huic commentario*) and on its nature (including two years in the same commentary instead of one). Although the omniscient narrator is certainly present throughout the Corpus in the use of *nostri* for instance or in clauses as *ut supra docuimus*, no other clear intervention is so remarkably in the first person singular as in the brief *praefatio*.

The passage in the 8th book is an editorial insertion from the *suppletor*, more than from the narrator, who instead works inside the text. It is the editor who gives an explanation to the reader/listener concerning the new modality of the account.³³ The following chapters (transmitted incompletely) are certainly written by the very same editor, namely by Hirtius. Interestingly, the use of *conficere* to describe how Caesar compiled his *Commentarii*, suggests a procedure in place which Caesar and his editor/s usually undertook: the same verb is used in the prefatory letter, referring to the editor (*novissimumque imperfectum commentarium ... confeci*). The letter's authenticity is still not important, as obviously either Hirtius completed and compiled (*conficere*) the existent material, or the forger explains the heterogeneity of the material by ascertaining the editorial task of putting the material together.³⁴ Moreover, the brief *praefatio* suggests that the editorial decision to supersede the *per annum* division might have been taken here not only for the eighth Gallic commentary but for the other four *Bella* too, as they are not edited year by year. Such modification might have been used by the editor/s to set a precedent. If so, since the *Bellum Civile* too is not a year-by-year account, it follows that the (material concerning the) *Bellum Civile* was subjected to editorial revision after Caesar's death and all the material has been reordered in anticipation of imminent

33 See clauses such as *ut supra docuimus* for instance in *BCiv.* 3.88.3, on similar expressions see ch. 3.1.2, 132 n. 25.

34 On the verb *conficere* and its meaning see Gaertner (2013), 28 and n. 57, who refers to the *conficere* of the prefatory letter only. In *BGall.* 8.48.10, *conficere* cannot mean "to finish", but instead "to compose *scribendo*", i.e. to write. A difference in meaning is tenable; however, it is hard not to hear an echo between the two *conficere*, a reciprocity that might signify both the completion and the putting together.

publication. At this very moment, the events in Egypt have been split between the last part of the third book of the *Bellum Civile* (3.102-112), which concerns Caesar's settling of a dynastic dispute in the Egyptian kingdom after the killing of Pompey, and the beginning of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, whose first 33 chapters are dedicated to the conflict with the Egyptians. The editors have found it appropriate to end the account of the “*civilisque belli Pompeiani*” with the death of Pompey and more cogent to insert in another *volumen* the events in Alexandria, Pontus, Illyria, Spain and Pontus, which happened simultaneously, whereas the departure from Alexandria to Pontus and the return to Italy (Rome) after the victory over Pharnaces marks the conclusion of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*.³⁵ Moreover, besides the existence of written reports, the declared absence of Hirtius from these regions also demonstrates the editorial intervention, aimed on the one hand at giving narrative unity to the *Bellum Civile* and on the other at providing a uniformed account of the years 48/47 BC.³⁶ In other words, after Caesar's death, the written material concerning the post-Pharsalus civil wars, though yet to be edited, was available, and it is highly likely that the decision on how to divide the material was taken when the year-by-year account had been abandoned, in favour of description by theatre of war, namely in favour of the (Caesar's and his lieutenants') report-based accounts.

More topically, the editorial process concerns the *Bellum Hispaniense*, a work generally undermined and precluded from any serious critical consideration due to its “non-redacted, unpolished” narrative. Recently, however, the *Bellum Hispaniense* has been reconsidered as a heterogeneous sample of literary Latin and not

³⁵ *BAlex*.78.5.

³⁶ Again, if the letter is a forgery, Hirtius' absence remains a fact. Concerning the editorial choice, narrating the military and political facts in Alexandria without making any reference to the Cleopatra affair, or the determination of the Caesarians, dispersed in different provinces, might attest to the sense of urgency behind the publication of this *Bellum* had. On the name *Bellum Alexandrinum* as a sign of editorial significance see Canfora (1999), 396. On the titles of the *Commentarii*, besides Brown, (1981), 319ff., see also Beeson (1940), 113-125, on the title *Bellum Alexandrinum* see J. Andrieu (1954), x.

merely as a “hastily written soldier's diary”.³⁷ While examining the style, and by comparing it with other authors, Gaertner argues that “the author does not share the late annalists' preference for *oratio obliqua* but uses speeches and letters to structure and dramatise his account.”³⁸ However, this scholar's statement is a clear admission of the use of different written material, which in the *Bellum Hispaniense* appears more patent and visible.³⁹ The style of the final *commentarius* is certainly original, a sample of non-standard Latin, otherwise lost.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, its non-homogeneity is most likely the result of its draft-like nature as well as of its different sources too.⁴¹ The reporter (not necessarily one) of these notes could have provided the editor with a version to be revised and edited.⁴² The unrefined language is more a consequence of an unrefined - but assembled - account of the Spanish campaign, than strictly a stylistic choice.⁴³ In other words, the editor of the *Bellum Hispaniense* has not finished his job. Paradoxically, the so-called unredacted and unpolished language, rather than pointing at a lack of editorial revision - implicitly admitted by many scholars - has been used almost exclusively to undermine the Latin of the *Hispaniense*.⁴⁴ This idea, according to Gaertner, “is based on a much too narrow concept of 'Literary Latin' at the end of the Roman Republic.”⁴⁵ More than colloquial, or non-literary, the Latin of the *Bellum Hispaniense* is heterogeneous: “a mix of ostentatious diary-like simplicity,

37 Gaertner (2010), 243.

38 Gaertner (2010), 253.

39 See, for instance, the mere listing of events such as in *BHisp.* 10 or the transcription of Pompeius' letter in *BHisp.* 26; the minute first and then the direct speech of Caesar's *contio* at Hispalis, *BHisp.* 42. On all these passages see chapter 3.1.6, 151ff.

40 The Latin is non-standard to our eyes, but most likely to Cicero as well, see Gaertner (2010), 254.

41 Interestingly, Gaertner confirms the different sources of the *Bellum Hispaniense* when he argues against its alleged unpolished Latin: “It is commonly agreed that the speeches in *BHisp.* 17, 1-3 and *BHisp.* 42, 4-7 and Gneus Pompeius' letter in *BHisp.* 26 are written in polished Latin and show no sign of negligence and incompetence.” In note 5, however, he quotes scholars such as Diouron (1999), lxxx, and Richter (1977), 223, who explicitly thought that the passages had been written by others, without providing any further comment.

42 See, for instance, Teuffel (1916), 452-53; cf. also Schanz Hosius (1927), 344-46.

43 An observation which does not diminish the importance of its Latin, which is still unique.

44 Richter (1977), 220–3; and Diouron (1999), lxxx, who both think that these passages were written by different authors. *Contra* Gaertner (2010), 244, n. 5, quoting linguistic similarities in phrasing.

45 Gaertner (2013), 27, n. 51.

occasional laxness and fondness for poetical expressions”, which to “refined readers” such as Cicero would have appeared immature. Nevertheless, it is still Latin, an invaluable and unique sample of Latin, unrefined not because it is colloquial, but because it is still in the form of a draft, perhaps an advanced one, just not yet revised by the editor, who was the recipient of this written material. Perhaps to Cicero it would have seemed like a draft more than a piece of immature Latin, not worth publishing, as an unadorned piece of writing. To the orator, and not only to him, it would have appeared as what it is: a *commentarius*, a draft to be refined and edited, something contemporaries were very familiar with.⁴⁶

In order to further explore the hypothesis of the *Bellum Hispaniense* as an un-refined draft, I will now look at a part of the text, in particular the first chapter and the final section of the *Hispaniense*, that might suggest editorial interventions. The first two ablative absolutes of the *Bellum Hispaniense* function as juncture clauses, which relate the text to the two previous narratives: *Pharnace superato, Africa recepta*. These initial insertions have been attributed to Hirtius in order to link the three accounts.⁴⁷ However, even without the attribution, the editorial purpose of the juncture marks a continuity with the previous two *Bella*, which are alluded to in the incipit when quoting a defeated enemy (Pharnace, the last part of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, the so-called *Bellum Ponticum*) and the final location of civil strife (Africa), respectively.⁴⁸ Moreover, the first chapter does not offer any account of the events in Spain after the departure of Cassius Longinus (as described in

46 *Contra* Gaertner, who states that the non-classical features of the *Bellum Hispaniense* Latin suggest that “the author never wanted to compose a *commentarius* in the Caesarian style but consciously placed himself in the tradition of mildly archaising and poeticising historiography.” Nevertheless, the language adopted and the recipient (the *commentarius*) are fully compatible; the style may be different, but the kind of information provided is the same.

47 In one of the usual paradoxes of Caesarian scholarship: by being in search of an author, scholarship cannot deny some sort of editorial role, a role entirely reduced to another piece of guesswork on identity, whereas the editorial process focuses more on the method behind the composition of the *Commentarii* and less on identity.

48 *Ponticum* as named by Landgraf (1888), *passim*.

the *Bellum Alexandrinum*),⁴⁹ such as the appointment of Trebonius as governor and the army mutiny of the 46 BC, but instead the account is chronologically sequential to the African one and takes the reader *in medias res*.⁵⁰ Interestingly, the only reference to events prior to Caesar's arrival is incorrect. While lacunose on the whole, the text locates the arrival in Spain of Gnaeus Pompeius and other fugitive Pompeians after the final battle of Thapsus, whereas the *Bellum Africum* (ch. 23) places Gnaeus Pompeius' escape from Africa before the decisive battle and states that his brother Sextus and other Pompeians reach the Western province after Thapsus. Klotz tried to amend the error by adding interpolations to the text, whereas other scholars prefer to leave the manuscript version, pointing to the ignorance of a very rushed author as the reason for the error.⁵¹ However, the presence of the error at the beginning of the account appears to be a sign of an incomplete revision. Given the recapitulatory and junctional function of the first paragraphs of the *Hispaniense*, it is presumably an error of a draft version, occurring in the first chapter of the book, likely either not revised or overlooked by the editor. Even if a low-ranking officer, a member of the cavalry, as scholarship insists the author was, could have been fully aware of the background events the first chapter depicts, and it is hardly likely that the editor/s would not have intervened to amend the inconsistency.⁵² If, instead, the editor was responsible for the inaccuracy regarding Gnaeus, the lack of revision is still the plausible cause, either because the editor was impeded by his death, or because the new editor hastily disregarded it, by preserving or simply publishing the *Bellum* as he found it. Often

49 The Longinus' affair in *BAlex.* 48-64, as described above in ch. 2.3.2.3, 102ff.

50 In the wake of the other *Bella* incipits: the *Bellum Alexandrinum* begins with a reference to the last chapters of the *Civile*; still *in medias res* the first lines of the *Africum*, with Caesar in immediate evidence and his topical *celeritas*; in the *Bellum Hispaniense* "*Pharnace superato, Africa recepta*" links the Spanish account to the final section of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, and to the African campaign. The incipit of the Civil War is missing, at the junction with the end of the *Gallicum*, also missing. See Gaertner (2010), 28, n. 55.

51 Klotz (1927), 136, *contra* Diuron (1999), 41-42, who prefers to leave the text as transmitted. Moreover, as all the manuscripts present the same version, Klotz' interpolations sound entirely speculative.

52 On the authorship of the *Bellum Hispaniense* see Intro. 0.2.3, 28.

patchy and at times inconsistent, it is the whole work on the Spanish campaign that suffers from an absence of editing till its abrupt end with a long lacuna. The *Bellum Hispaniense*, as Loreto correctly states, appears to be “una relazione di base su cui si innesta una serie di documenti ufficiali”, such as day-to-day reports, letters, dispatches.⁵³ As such, the work, therefore, is constructed according to the method all the five *Commentarii* shared; the *Hispaniense*, however, seems to be a draft more than a definitive version, less refined than completed: after the first junctional chapter, a day-to-day report - not particularly concern with military strategy, but meticulous in registering losses and skirmishes - follows; after the battle of Munda, the account makes use of at least one other source when recording the death of Gnaeus Pompeius, and ends abruptly by minuting Caesar's speech at Hispalis, a kind of manifesto of the dictator's thinking on the civil wars.

This final section of the *Bellum Hispaniense* deserves scrutiny as its lacunose state seems related to its draft-like nature (and incomplete editorial revision) more than to manuscript tradition. Scholars claim that *fata libelli* is the reason for the fragmentary status of the work, and partly for its linguistic peculiarities.⁵⁴ That is certainly the case for the *Hispaniense*, as the text suffered from imprecisions and inconclusiveness that are difficult to repair.⁵⁵ However, besides the historical error at the beginning, the double lacuna at the end of the account is the most significant, as it concerns Caesar's speech at Hispalis and the events afterwards and up to his return to Rome in the summer 45 BC.⁵⁶ Interestingly, the last section of the work (the events after Munda, at Hispalis, the death of Pompeius, and the *contio*) seems more controlled, as

53 Loreto (2001), 32ff.

54 Especially Gaertner (2010), 245, and n. 12, who argues against the author's incompetence.

55 See extensively on the *Bellum Hispaniense* and its transmission Damon (2015), 23ff.

56 See Loreto (1999), 31ff., who relates the final lacuna to the status of Hirtius' archive at the time of his death. Being a topic of another *explicit*, Caesar's to Italy and Rome (and his *celeritas*) was likely the most probable end for the *Hispaniense* too: see *BAlex.* 78 and *BAfr.* 98.

simultaneous facts are recorded in a more informed account. Moreover, the speech at Hispalis was a crucial moment in the whole campaign. In the *contio*, the rhetoric of Caesar's policy reaches a climax: by starting with Caesar's magistracies, described in *oratio obliqua*, the dictator recapitulates in *oratio recta* how the provincials behaved towards Roman magistrates and forcefully asserts the power of the army and the *populus Romanus*, which goes far beyond Caesar's authority.⁵⁷ The speech's content and its polished Latin suggest a revision if not a direct intervention (on the minutes?) by the editor, Hirtius, helped perhaps by his participation in the Spanish campaign.⁵⁸ The fact that in the prefatory letter Hirtius does not mention his absence from the Spanish province and claims to extend the account until the death of Caesar can be read as a sign of his particular attention to the last part of the *Bellum Hispaniense* material, and it can also explain the refined Latin of these final paragraphs.⁵⁹ However, most relevantly, as Hirtius did not complete the editorial revision of the whole text, it seems likewise reasonable to believe that the final lacuna has an origin "outside the text", in the aftermath of the battle of Mutina, at the time of Hirtius' death: the loss of the final rolls was due to material circumstances (the status of Hirtius' archive when recovered, or the different location of the revised rolls, never recovered). The *Bellum Hispaniense* as we read it today might be what was found in Hirtius' archives after his death. If so, the *fata libelli* dates back to Hirtius' papers, to the state in which those papers were found after (Hirtius' death at) Mutina. This hypothesis, Loreto hints, tallies well with the draft nature of the account of Spanish campaign, with the different sources assembled

⁵⁷ On the speech see Tschiedel (2012), 37-51, esp. 44, and Van Hoof (1974), 133, who believes the speech is a sign of embitterment against Caesar's behaviour. Line-by-line comment in Diouron (1999), 155-158, on deterrence and dissuasion in Caesar the general, Loreto (1993), 249-261; surprisingly not listed in Pina Polo (1989).

⁵⁸ Hirtius' presence in Spain seems at odds with a letter he sent to Cicero from Narbo on the 18th of April 45 BC (Cic. *Att.* 12.37a). Either on the minutes or by eye-witnessing, the passage from indirect to direct speech (absent in the rest of the *Hispaniense*) suggests an intervention on existing material.

⁵⁹ According to Pascucci (1965), 45, the speech is a sample of "virtuosismo retorico, di gran lunga superiore al livello linguistico e letterario dell'autore", but why so, the scholar fails to say.

(in this text more visibly than in the other *Bella*), with the peculiarity of its Latin (the best version the reporter can provide for the editor's use) and with the presence in Spain of Hirtius, who as editor might have found it congenial to intervene in this section.⁶⁰

4.1.4 Editorial intelligence: a hypothesis

At this stage, a crucial question is why a text imperfectly edited or *rectius*, still a draft, was published and whether the urgency of its publication might have justified its imperfection. Here Oppius might have played a part, and his involvement in the editing process can justify his alleged authorship, according to Suetonius' sources. The hypothesis that the text can be related (not attributed!) to Oppius is tenable, only by assuming his role as final editor and collector of the material. Oppius' absence from all the theatres of war (45 BC in Spain in the case of *Bellum Hispaniense*) is not an argument against (even Hirtius did not take part in the Alexandrian and African wars), but instead in favour. Certainly, the lack of samples of Oppius' style does not help. However, as stated above, style cannot be the decisive criterion in regard to attribution, as all the Caesarians involved in the Corpus are processing existing material - constitutively different in style - as editors.⁶¹ Oppius, notoriously a Caesarian agent, might have been the final editor, in the sense that he rescued the material or was the repository, the person entrusted with the *Commentarii*, ultimately the person who was physically the holder of the material. Moreover, an element of intelligence emerges concerning the *Commentarii*. After Hirtius' death, the *Commentarii* must have passed into the hands of Caesarians like Oppius, who

⁶⁰ Presence deducible by his admission of not having taken part in the African and Alexandrian wars (as in *B Gall.* 8, *praef.* 2). Moreover the draft status of the *Hispaniense* proves that Hirtius worked on reports even if he was present in the province; whereas the authenticity of the letter remains irrelevant since the forger records what appears to be a fact, namely that Hirtius is the main person responsible for the Corpus until the death of Caesar.

⁶¹ But it is not important if Oppius is an editor. Gaertner (2013), 22 n. 28, rejects Oppius as author on the basis that he did not take part in the military campaigns: an untenable argument as it would also apply to Hirtius as well. However, the scholar admits that his argument "cannot be corroborated by philological observations, for we hardly possess any samples of Oppius' style".

with Balbus was actively involved in writing about the life and the deeds of Caesar the man. In the 40s BC no one other than Oppius and Balbus could have been in charge of dealing with the written material and of completing the project. During Caesar's proconsulate in Gaul and the civil wars they operate as Caesar's agents, fully involved in every decision Caesar took and constantly in contact through letters and dispatches.⁶² Their secretive attitude and the fact of being Caesar's *longa manus* have also played a role concerning the *Commentarii*: Hirtius' death and the subsequent events required a rapid decision regarding the handling of the *Commentarii*. The *Bellum Hispaniense* in particular, left unfinished by Hirtius, has been transmitted as not fully edited and certainly in need of a final revision. Other parts of the *Commentarii*, too, appear unrefined.⁶³ The letter to Balbus, whether a forgery or not, is evidence of a process not fully completed - and as such, if a forgery, of a process to be explained. However, due to the status of the *Commentarii*, it is not too hazardous to conjecture an intermediate stage in which the *Commentarii* were gathered as found, preserved in an archive by the Caesarians (Oppius and Balbus) and then released as a unitary Corpus. That is perhaps how and why the dispute on authorship on the part of the sources known by Suetonius began.

The handling of the whole *Commentarii*, and the rescue of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, suggest an intelligence operation. The status of intelligence fits both with the personality and the role of Oppius and Balbus, and with the status of uncertainty (concerning its composition and transmission) which surrounds the Corpus. Besides

⁶² Oppius was a "close friend and adviser" of Caesar, managing his affairs in Rome while the general was absent. Similarly, Balbus worked as a "confidential agent and financial adviser". Most of the references concerning the two come from Cicero's epistolary. See their life and profile in *FRHist.* vol. I, 40 and 41 respectively.

⁶³ Such as the end of Book 7 of the *Bellum Gallicum*, not lacunose, but too recapitulatory (Fraenkel (1956) 189-194); the final chapters of the 8th book of the same *Bellum Gallicum* as well as the final chapters of *Bellum Civile*, where the Alexandrian war has already begun. See the list of the gaps and lacunae provided by Damon (2015), 14; physical damage is the primary reason; however, Damon in the text edition, (2015b), lxvii, mentions "the unfinished state of the text" among the reasons for problematic passages.

the numerous intelligence operations recorded in all the five *Commentarii*, Caesar's documents and writings (his archives), of tremendous interest after his death, were also the object of intelligence. Cicero abundantly refers to them as *commentarii*, while accusing Antony of falsifying their content and instructions. Certainly, the written material on the civil war was part of this documental archive, already in the hands of a Caesarian like Hirtius, as, I must assume, he was the natural recipient of that sensitive material. Considering the status of the Corpus and in particular the draft nature of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, these documents would have been part of Hirtius' archive as he was working on them. Due to Hirtius' sudden death and the peculiarity of its circumstances, his archive might also have been rescued and transferred to the Caesarian entourage, who were already involved in Caesar's literary legacy: Oppius and Balbus, both the two *éminences grises* of the group, both biographers of Caesar in the years to come.

In conclusion, the fate of the *Commentarii* is intertwined with the events of the 40s and the deaths of Caesar and Hirtius, events “outside the text” that inflict a lack of unity on the work. Partly due, I have argued, to the handling of Caesar's and Hirtius' archives, such a lack of unity is also a consequence of the unfinished editorial process from which the *Commentarii* suffer.

4.2 Anonymity

4.2.1 Anonymity: inside the text

The habit of relying on written material (reports, dispatches, letters) is a consolidated practice going back to the Gaul campaign. This was a deliberate choice on the part of Caesar, which, on the one hand, helped him and his army “to facilitate the Roman conquest of the Gallic people” and, on the other, allowed him to record and to relate - almost simultaneously - the narrative of the

military campaign.⁶⁴ This practice is shared by all of Caesar's lieutenants, as a result of a well-oiled military procedure. Asinius Pollio, a soldier during the civil strife and later a historian, explicitly refers to other people's accounts when he argues how carelessly Caesar wrote his *Commentarii*.⁶⁵ Hirtius knew how to continue the account as he shared the method with (and had learned it from) Caesar. Despite being absent from Egypt, Illyria and Pontus and Africa, Hirtius gathered written material and claims to complete (*confeci*) the account of the war until the death of Caesar. As argued in the previous chapter, elements such as the ablative absolute and the *oratio obliqua* are not entirely Caesar's creation and they likely belong to documentary and governmental language. Such language is, on the one hand, adopted by officers in the army when they report to senior officers or to the authorities; on the other, it is also recognised and acknowledged by the wider audience, as Plautus' comedies suggest. As the way generals speak is mocked by the playwright, and the format consistently occurs in Cicero's letters when referring to military expeditions, one can infer that the authorities used the very same language not only amongst them, but also to address their audience.⁶⁶ These stylistic tools are abundantly present in the *Corpus Caesarianum*. In the *Commentarii* they are employed to describe the facts of the war and to keep minutes of meetings and documents of the military campaign, useful to track its progress.

Among his duties, the officer had the task of keeping the general constantly informed and updated about the section of the army and the location that the same officer was in responsible for. The officer's task of reporting to the headquarters hints at an intrinsic multi-authorship. Caesar worked both on his own material and elaborated the reports sent by his officers.⁶⁷ In other words, the

64 Osgood (2009), 329. Kestemont et al. (2016), 86–96, see Intro. 0.2.3, 28.

65 Suet. *Jul.* 56.4. On the report-based method and Pollio's passage see ch. 2.1, 70ff.

66 See ch. 2.2.1, 77.

67 A logical deduction not only from Pollio's statement, but also considering the composition of

available written material has an authorial provenance in the sense that every report had someone behind it who compiled it.⁶⁸ However, such authorial provenance does not amount to intellectual property as the authorship operates as a source of information more than a sign of identity. As part of an officer's duty, the content of the writing prevails over its author, since the information included in the written material, and its provenance, count more than its compiler. No matter how skilled, the compiler was already aware of the format of this material: it is written according to stylistic conventions (such as the ablative absolute and the *oratio obliqua*), it concerns timing, names and locations, and it reports minutes and military data.⁶⁹ Therefore, the writing of the *Commentarii* concerns the content, “*what is written*”, namely the *res gestae*. Writing is more than an *authorial act*. Nevertheless, authors exist in each *commentarius* as reporters, their texts being revised and edited by the final compiler. Not only the two possibilities mentioned by Suetonius (Hirtius and Oppius), but also the method behind the *Commentarii* hints at multi-authorship, namely at the presence not only of different authors as sources, but also of editors who finalise the work.⁷⁰ From their inception, the *Commentarii*, were of a multi-authorial nature. Moreover, such a multi-authorial nature emerges as a trait of anonymity: the identity of each author is taken for granted (if a report comes from Quintus Cicero's camp, Quintus Cicero is the author of that report),⁷¹ and it is unimportant to the purpose of reporting, as each report received joins the others to build the complete picture and inform the strategies for expediting the military campaign.

By writing their reports, the multiple authors share the same format and content. The format, as argued above, was not entirely invented by Caesar, but was part of a documental language that the

the *Commentarii*. See Kestemont et al. (2016), 94, and Canfora (1993), 83.

68 On the reporters see ch. 2.3.1.1, 92ff. and ch. 3.3.2, 165ff.

69 On Hirtius as “perhaps somewhat unskilled” Meyer (2011), 211.

70 Suet. *Iul.* 56.1.

71 *B Gall.* 5. 24.

officers in the army were accustomed to using. Caesar's *Commentarii* not only incorporate that language, they are an example of that language. That being the case, I can reasonably infer that the use of the third person might also be part of this language. However, such a statement is entirely theoretical, as there is no extant evidence of (or document written in) the third person to support it. Nevertheless, almost unanimously, scholarship tends to discuss the third person merely as a matter of narratology, respectively as a stylistic tool, that pertains the relationship between the narrator and the text, and as a historiographical choice, whose model is primarily Xenophon.⁷² In other words, scholarship more attentively explores how and not why the third person was used. Moreover, the third person cannot be solely examined per se as a detached device imposed by the omniscient author. Interestingly, the contemporaries seem to pay no attention to the third person. Cicero in particular takes for granted or totally ignores Caesar's alleged stylistic choice (the third person), as he prefers to comment on Caesar's *elegantia* and *brevitas*.⁷³ According to the orator, Caesar's *Commentarii* are *nudi*, *recti* and *venusti*, but they also avoid (herein lies the implicit recognition) the *vitia* of writing about one's own deeds, a preoccupation Cicero writes to his friend Lucceius about, as seen above.⁷⁴ The issues (*vitia*) Cicero wishes to avoid in writing about his own *res gestae*⁷⁵ Caesar perhaps manages to overcome by obscuring himself behind the third person, without affecting his *auctoritas*.⁷⁶ Moreover, Xenophon as a model does not seem important for contemporaries, whereas modern scholarship considers the Greek historian's *Anabasis* “the most obvious antecedent” to the *Commentarii*.⁷⁷ While there is no doubt

72 Pelling, (2013), 39ff.

73 Respectively Cic. *Brut.* 252 and *Brut.* 262.

74 See on the passage in Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.8 ch. 1.1, 43.

75 Ultimately, Lucceius did not write on Cicero's consulate, but the orator himself opted to compose a poem in hexameters (*De consolatu suo*, dated 60 BC). On Cicero's Greek Memoir see *FRHist.* vol. I, 370ff.

76 On this passage see chapter 1.5, 65ff.

77 See Pelling (2013), 39ff., and Riggsby (2006), 150-155 and 193-194. On Thucydides' use of

that Caesar knew Xenophon,⁷⁸ the only extant reference to Xenophon's style belongs to Cicero's works: in the *Brutus*, while commenting on Quintus Catulus, Cicero says that Catulus' book on his own consulate and deeds was written “*molli et Xenophontio genere sermonis*”.⁷⁹ As it remains difficult to establish whether Cicero is referring to the third person with his allusion to “Xenophonteian style”, nevertheless, that style should not be compared with that of the *Commentarii*, as defined again by Cicero as *nudi, recti* and *venusti*. In other words, the third person of the *Commentarii* appears taken for granted by the contemporaries, it is not a matter of contention or surprise, nor, perhaps, an original contribution on the part of Caesar. However, in his extensive analysis on the use of the third person by the ancient historians, concerning the *Commentarii* (the Gallic wars) Marincola argues that “there is no example before Caesar in which the writer of a *commentarius* uses the third person”.⁸⁰ According to the scholar, Caesar invented its usage as likely “the original dispatches sent from Gaul to the Senate were in the first person”: Caesar simply reworked on these dispatches - by changing the first to the third person.⁸¹ Dispatches, in which first person was used, survived as letters addressed to the Senate and magistrates.⁸² Wiseman argues that Caesar opted for “an historical narrative rather than an ordinary proconsul's dispatch.”⁸³ If Wiseman is right, the third person would

the third person, see Intro 0.2.1, 19.

78 Suet. *Iul.* 87.1.

79 Cic. *Brut.* 132. But the expression *molli genere sermonis* appears to contrast strongly with the *nudi ... omni ornatu orationis*, referring to Caesar's *Commentarii* in the same *Brutus*. On the passage on Catulus, see *FRHist.* vol.1, p. 271ff.

80 This and the citation to follow from Marincola (1997), 196-8.

81 Marincola's thesis on the uniqueness of the third person might be supported by the fact that there is no comparable writer of a *commentarius* before Caesar. Nevertheless, the *commentarius* as a draft used in support of a final written version certainly existed. Therefore, I will more appropriately argue that a *commentarius* never reached the status of a literary work before Caesar, rather than saying that no *commentarius* in the third person has ever been written.

82 For instance, Cic. *Fam.* 15,1-2; reporting from Cilicia, addressed to the magistrates and the Senate; *Fam.* 10.35: Lepidus' letter on the mutiny of his army, addressed to Senate, Magistrates and *populo plebique Romanae*; or Livy 27.2.1: Marcellus writing to the Senate on the army's defeat at Herdonea, but Livy reports it in *oratio obliqua*. Caesar's letters to the Senate, sent in a new format and, I deduce, in the first person: Suet. *Iul.* 56.6.

83 Wiseman (2015), 101, and related endnotes.

be solely a feature of the *Commentarii* and, therefore, be an original contribution by Caesar. Yet the reason for such a change of view remains unclear.

As seen above, Caesar's *Commentarii* are written according to a format, the report format. Therefore, one can reasonably assume that, together with the ablative absolute and the *oratio obliqua*, the very same format includes the use of the third person. Thus, the crucial question becomes whether such a stylistic tool is part of the official language - as the ablative absolute, for instance, is – which the authorities use when they make an official and formal statement to the public. That is the missing piece of evidence, which no source can provide us with. If already included in the format, the third person would enforce the *auctoritas* of the message, as it would have been recognised as part of the language used by the magistrate in office. Thanks to the third person, the account would have sounded authoritative. Such authoritativeness derives from the fact that the magistrates in office are already used to writing in a format recognised by the audience. Contrary to what Marincola states, Caesar's use of the third person might have been a characteristic peculiar to the official language of magisterial authorities.⁸⁴ The fact that, despite using the third person, “no aural recipient of the story would have any doubt about its ultimate author” seems entirely irrelevant, the problem being not the authorship but the effectiveness of the message; that is how the facts of the military campaign reach the ultimate recipient and who that final recipient, the audience, is.⁸⁵ The effectiveness of the message is attested by the fact that this account becomes the official version of the war, as written in the language of the authorities, specifically Caesar, the general and magistrate in office. Wiseman argues, rather brilliantly,

⁸⁴ Marincola (1997), 197: “Caesar's use of the third person was atypical and meant to be”, however, atypical means “used for the first time” in literary prose. Moreover, if already used by Xenophon, the third person would have been anything but atypical to the eyes of the aristocratic reader.

⁸⁵ Pelling (2013), 48, perhaps too focused on narratological identity.

that the third person not only gives “the illusion of objectivity, but also, perhaps, avoids placing the burden of impersonating him [Caesar] on whoever had the task of reading his narrative to the People”.⁸⁶ Certainly, public reading was a common practice in ancient Rome, and the audience was trained to listen, whereas reading was a privilege of the few. However, rather than to avoid impersonation, Caesar might have chosen the third person because the audience was already used to hearing statements and announcements from the authorities in that way.⁸⁷ Such hypothesis implies firstly that Caesar did not invent the third person, and secondly that he intended to reach a wider audience, to whom his account was read aloud. As mentioned above, the third person is absent as an issue among ancient sources, an element of the narrative that is taken for granted, a more common and typical element - as I argued - of the language of the authorities.

Whether the third person is a feature of the *commentarius* form or a new contribution on the part of Caesar remains an open question, neither being proved by the evidence. However, the answer hinges not only on the manner of narrating, that is the voice the narrator speaks through, as has too often been the focus of contemporary scholarship, but also on the manner of delivery, and ultimately the audience. If the *Commentarii* are written to be heard by a wide audience, the third person might indicate to the public what the *Commentarii* should be understood to be: the official version of Caesar's *res gestae*.⁸⁸ By diverting attention from the narrator to the narrative, the third person enforces the anonymity of the text; interestingly, the narrator always emerges as a “we”, when

⁸⁶ Wiseman (2015), 111, developing an idea footnoted in Wiseman (1998), 8 n. 27.

⁸⁷ Something the “first” Wiseman (1998), 5 hints at and later (2015), 101-102, robustly reaffirms, since if the *Commentarii* are written to be delivered, then the audience must be bigger. Interestingly, Marincola (1997), 206, notes that “ancient audiences listened differently when a man recorded his own achievement and when another did it for him”, if so, then it is hard to argue in favour of the third person as being Caesar's original contribution.

⁸⁸ Paraphrasing Riggsby (2006), 155, who adds “the dominant third person of the narrative is one of the features that tells the reader what the *De Bello Gallico* is supposed to be about”, a statement that can be extended to the other four *Commentarii*.

he is one of the Romans, what has been called ethnocentric Latin writing.⁸⁹ As such, the narrator hides his own identity in the background; more precisely he mingles with his audience. He, the narrator, is intentionally anonymous, and when he occasionally emerges, he appears as a facilitator, a companion of the audience.⁹⁰

As for the multi-authorship mentioned above, the very use of the third person contributes to the anonymity of the text and implicitly recognises the method behind the *Commentarii*: a gathering of report-based information in need of editing. Moreover and most likely, the third person allows also the final author to intervene and make the account progress; congenial to reporting the events of the war from the individual locations, the third person might have been a pattern already in use and simply adopted by Caesar, his lieutenants and collaborators.⁹¹ The latter, acting as compilers and editors rather than strictly as continuators of the narrative, perpetuated a practice already in use: they gather and edit the material after Caesar's death, not because of Caesar's death. As the shared practice of writing reports was part of their duty as officers, they write anonymously both to give prominence to the account, and thanks to stylistic tools, such as the third person, to favour the narrative above the narrators.⁹²

4.2.2 Anonymity: outside the text

Although authorship has been under dispute since before Suetonius, I have postulated that the status of the rolls (*volumina*) provided no certainty regarding the authorship and no author was ascribed to the three non-Caesarian *Commentarii*. Therefore, the absence of authorship was already a fact at the time the rolls were

89 So Riggsby (2006), 150.

90 And when he has an identity, if any, he is an editor, namely he intervenes when explaining an anomaly, see *B Gall.* 8.48, and on editorship above.

91 Explicitly Canfora (1999), 396: "la narrazione in terza persona era predisposta per incrementi e aggiunte di altra provenienza: Cesare ha previsto di assorbire nel corpo dei *Commentarii* integrazioni dovute ai collaboratori."

92 As Brown (1981), 381ff. suggests, see below.

consulted: the anonymity of the last *Commentarii* was a fact. That absence is the source of the anonymity as perceived by Suetonius and his contemporary sources (the unspecified *alii*).⁹³ The misinterpretation of the anonymity originated there: the absence of authors ascribed to the text was perceived as accidental. This is where the guesswork began. As the process of editing, described above, presumes a certain level of writing on the part of the editors, the personalities in charge of the editing (Hirtius mainly and Oppius) were considered authors by sources unprepared to accept (and ready to argue over) uncertainty.⁹⁴ Hirtius especially works on written material, obtained from different theatres of war, available to be used and assembled. Both the report-based method and the fact of multi-authorship imply the central role of editing undertaken by that Hirtius (and Oppius) while looking after the *Commentarii*, after Caesar's death. However, editing was already a task performed by Caesar himself and his lieutenants carried out every time he/they assembled the up-to-date reports from the staff. As seen above, Hirtius and Oppius intervene precisely at the time of editing, and they are ultimately editors. Most likely, however, the troubled handling of the *Commentarii* after Caesar's and Hirtius' deaths contributed to the confusion concerning the authorship.

As with modern scholarship, the contemporary sources, the Suetonian *alii*, probably struggled to understand what had happened to the *Commentarii*. Most importantly, the sources might have debated on the *auctor* of the final version, the person(s) who gathered the material or authorised its publication.⁹⁵ The handling of the last three *Bella* (what I referred to as the editorial intelligence) may have contributed to the misinterpretation of anonymity. However, within the blurred zone between editorship and authorship

⁹³ *Alii* are the sources Suet. *Iul.*, 56.1 quotes in relation to the alleged authors of the *Bella*. See above ch. 4.1.1, 191ff.

⁹⁴ See ch. 4.1.3, 198ff.

⁹⁵ Loreto (2001), 17-18. See "*auctore Augusto*", who gives the imperial fiat to the publication of the *Aeneid*, Donat. *Vit. Verg.* 41.

no *auctor* was found with certainty. Moreover, as argued in the previous section, the deaths of Caesar and Hirtius (and perhaps of Oppius) jeopardised the editorial plans for the whole work. Arguably, Hirtius' death was the most critical for the completion of the project, as it happened in the middle of the editorial revision, whereas to the eyes of the Caesarians, Caesar's death impacted more on the urgency of the project, the necessity of bringing it to an end. With the dictator at the apex of his power, the *Commentarii* were only one of the projects still to be completed at the time of his death, if perhaps less hastily.

To summarise, already urgent after Caesar's death, the completion became critical after Hirtius' death. Those deaths hampered the contemporary sources in reconstructing the handling of the work and in discerning an authorship. Uncertainty and anonymity follow down to modern scholarship, prompting an identity hunt, which so far has been inevitably fruitless.⁹⁶ Interestingly, regarding the confusion over the authorship in the manuscripts, Virginia Brown argues that such “incipient uncertainty” was precipitated by two facts: on the one hand, “the adoption in Caesar's narrative of the third person tended to obscure the fact he was also the author”; on the other the Suetonian biography “helped to foster the medieval legend of Caesar as the first Roman emperor to the exclusion of his literary attainments”.⁹⁷ The scholar continues by providing instances of the misconception regarding the authorship down to the early Renaissance period, when the *Commentarii* were even attributed to an otherwise unknown Julius Celsus Constantinus, likely the corrector of the manuscripts.⁹⁸ Moreover, manuscripts mirror the same misconception regarding the authorship: the *subscriptiones* (i.e. para-textual notes at the top and

96 On attributions see Intro 0.2.3, 28.

97 Brown, (1981), 321ff. On the confusion of the 5th century sources see Oros. 6.7.1-2, and Sidonius, *Epist.* 4.18.5. Suetonius is also one of the authors according, for instance, to the manuscript, dated to the ninth century, known to Brown as A (Amsterdam, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, 73).

98 On Constantinus' role and the *Commentarii* transmission, see Pecere (2003), 183-227.

bottom of each book written by the copyist or the corrector of the text) are various and denote uncertainty also with regard to the titles.⁹⁹ For instance, the manuscript known to C. Damon as M (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. Lat. 68.8) has the following *subscriptio* to the *Bellum Gallicum*, 8th book:

IULIUS CELSVS CONSTANTINVS U(IR)C(LARISSIMUS).
 LEGITANTVM FELICITER. G. CAESARIS. PONT(IFICIS).
 MAX(IMI). EPHIMERIS RERVM. GESTARVM BELLI
 GALLICI. LIBER VIII. EXPLICIT. FELICITER.¹⁰⁰

Besides the titles (*ephemeris* and *res gestae*), Caesar is considered to be the author of the 8th Book, whereas Hirtius is completely ignored as a possible author. Instead Celsus Constantinus, who is here linked to the 8th book, appears in other manuscripts as the author of part of or the whole Corpus.¹⁰¹ In the same manuscript, moreover, the transition between the end of the *Bellum Africum* and the beginning of the *Hispaniense* is as follows: C. CAESARIS BELLV(M) AFFRICANU(M) EXPLICIT. INCIP(IT) *Hispaniense*. The genitive C. CAESARIS could mean “African war fought by”, rather than “written by Caesar”. Regarding another ancient manuscript known to Damon as T (Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, lat. 5764), the scholar argues that “Caesar's authorship seems to be stated for the non-Caesarian *Bella*”.¹⁰² However, as in the *subscriptio* EXPL(ICIT) LIB(ER) C CAESAR(IS) BELLI AFRICAE... the genitive *C. Caesaris* “could be taken not with *liber* but with *Bellum* or *belli*.”¹⁰³ If so, the

99 The following *subscriptio*es are taken from the latest edition of the *Bellum Civile*, prefaced and edited by Damon (2015), xxxiv.

100The wording of the *subscriptio* reflects what is in the manuscript (the presence of both the uncial “Us” and the capital “Vs”).

101Besides Brown (1981), 322ff., see Damon (2015), xlix: dated to the middle of the tenth century, the manuscript known to Damon as S. (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ashburnhamensis 33) has a second *subscriptio* at the end of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, where the book is attributed to Celsus Constantinus.

102Damon (2015), lv. T is dated to the second half of the eleventh century.

103Both the citations from Damon (2015), lv, as she refers to the *subscriptio* to *BGall.* 8 in the same manuscript T: A HIRTII RERVM GESTARVM C CAESARIS LIB(ER) VIII EXPLICIT... where, still convolutedly, HIRTII is genitive of LIBER and CAESARIS of RERVM GESTARVM.

author is implicitly considered anonymous, or the account makes irrelevant the issue of authorship.

In the late eleventh or early twelfth manuscript known to Damon as U (Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vaticanus lat. 3324), the transition from the *Bellum Gallicum*, eighth book, to the *Civile* is as follows:

HIRCII PANSAE RERV(M) GESTARV(M) BELI (sic) GALLICI
GAI IVLII CAESARIS PONT(IFICIS) MAX(IMI) LIB(ER)
EXPL(I)C(IT) FELITER (sic).

The attribution to “Hirtius Pansa” is unique and likely a misunderstanding on the part of the copyist, unless, it has been suggested, Pansa is a dative: “here ends the book, written by Hirtius dedicated to Pansa ...”.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, it is worth noticing that Hirtius is considered the author, Caesar the agent of his *res gestae*.

Several are the examples of *subscriptions* that register different authorship, whereas, almost unanimously, the simple content of the book (the *Bellum*, the *res gestae*) is stated with certainty. Although equivocal, the genitive *C. Caesaris*, which occurs quite frequently, exemplifies and reveals the contradiction between content (*res gestae*) and authorship: the former being pretty obvious, the latter unclear. Thus, in the most ancient manuscripts quoted above, authorship emerges as being unclear to the copyists as something inherited from the archetypical example (the copy from which the extant manuscripts derive), dated to the eighth century. Therefore, manuscripts seem to share with the early fifth-century sources, quoted above, the confusion resulting from the second century, at the time of Suetonius' biography. Such confusion would hardly have been originated if the names of the authors had appeared in the *volumina* from the beginning. However, in addition

¹⁰⁴Both Caesarians, both consuls in 43 BC and long-time friends, Pansa seems here a dedicatee, see Canfora (1993), 85, accepting Cugusi's conjecture.

to that noted by Virginia Brown, the third person and the enduring Suetonian influence, another factor has to be highlighted: the content itself of the books, the *res gestae*. The narrative of the *Commentarii* may have been considered self-explanatory as it concerned actions of the military campaigns undertaken by Caesar the *res gestae* of a well-known general, the *Caesaris Bellum*. Nevertheless, the hypotheses follow, and with them the errors and misinterpretations they contain. Whether the copyist was an attentive reader or not, the *quaestio* of authorship remained open, since no clue was available, to the point that even the *corrector Constantinus* becomes the author. Even the absence of a preface in each of the *Bella* has been put forward as evidence against authorship, or, *rectius*, in favour of anonymity: the account opens *in medias res* as it reports actions, never the reason why or by whom that book was written. For instance, the transitional paragraphs at the beginning of the Alexandrian, African and Spanish military campaigns briefly connect the events together and move the account forward, and Caesar appears almost immediately as the main protagonist, the general in action.¹⁰⁵ However, the work does not offer any immediate or visible clue of authorship, with the sole exception of Hirtius' prefatory letter.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, as seen above, the prefatory letter does not offer a solid answer on authorship. In addition, copyists seem to ignore it or generate additional confusion. Alternatively, perhaps the letter was never decisive on the matter of authorship, and never considered a clear explanation of the authorship by the copyist reader. Certainly, the content of the letter does not help the reader. Hirtius, beyond the *topos* of the reluctant author, suggests his own authorial neutrality: he did not take part in the Alexandrian and African war.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, he is keen to

105On the *incipit* see ch. 4.1.3, 204, n. 50.

106Which is at the beginning of the 8th book of the *Bellum Gallicum*, spatially far from the eyes of the copyists.

107The *excusatio* is a well-known rhetorical device: despite confessing of his own difficulty in completing the task, Hirtius does not abandon it. See Canfora (1993), 97-103, recently Cluett, (2009) 192-194.

report the events as narrated by Caesar himself (*quae bella ... nobis Caesaris sermone sunt nota*) and as heard from others. The emphasis is again on the deeds, the *res gestae Caesaris*: the alleged completion of the *Commentarii* covers the events up to the death of Caesar. Hirtius refers to himself as the unwillingly intrusive writer (*quam invitus susceperim scribendos*), as an occasional author (*qui me mediis interposuerim Caesaris scriptis*), invited by Balbus to complete the task. Hirtius does not offer any authorship, and it is quite revelatory that the ancient sources and the copyists do not find the letter conclusive.¹⁰⁸ They both struggled with the authorship, as the greater part of modern scholarship does. The reason for that struggle begins with a misconception of the *Commentarii*. Their anonymity lies both “inside” and “outside” the work; it concerns an authorial absence that is firstly inherent to the method behind the work, and also a consequence of external factors, such as the death of the author(s)/editor(s) and the handling of the whole Corpus. Therefore, scholarship's efforts to confer an authorship on the *Bella* risk being pointless,¹⁰⁹ as anonymity appears to be the logical frame within which the account of the civil wars develops. Authorship was never an issue: the authors of the *Commentarii* were “content with anonymity”.¹¹⁰

Always related to a single or a group of writers behind a text, “anonymity may mean many things, but one thing which it cannot mean is that no one did it”.¹¹¹ Indeed so. In our case, the “ones who did it” are Caesar, the “multi-authors” (the reporters) and the authors/editors. Caesar is undeniably the author of the *Commentarii*. However, anonymity - I argue - stems from the *Commentarii* as an intrinsic quality and a deliberate choice. This last statement sounds rather speculative, Caesar being the author of (at least) the seven

108An argument in favour of the forgery, to the benefit of Canfora's thesis, *contra* Pecere (2003), 200ff.

109See Canfora (1999), 395-396.

110Incidentally, yet acutely E. Rawson (1985), 110.

111Gass (1986), 270.

books of the *Bellum Gallicum* and the three of the *Civile*: the ancient sources do not concede any room for speculation on this point. Moreover, in a culture of strong individuality the concept of anonymity seems to be a remarkable contradiction, a *hapax* in a period of very prolific literary production, as the late Roman Republic was. It seems rather contradictory that Caesarians, such as Oppius, authored works on Caesar's life yet, while dealing with the *Commentarii*, are happy with their anonymity. Nevertheless, the authors/editors operate with the aim of bringing to a conclusion to the account of Caesar's *res gestae*. They are working in Caesar's wake, and they follow a well-established pattern: the report-based narrative, of which the *Commentarii* are constituted. As Hirtius and Oppius collect and work on pre-existing material, they are more editors than authors; moreover, only occasionally were they present in the different theatres of war.¹¹² *In primis* Hirtius and then Oppius, as suggested above, handled and edited the written material. As editors Hirtius and Oppius intervened (*confeci - contexui*) on the material as Caesar did, *but they were not Caesar*, the original author of the *Commentarii*.¹¹³ Nevertheless, the material was there, ready to be gathered and to be used: completing the work seemed to the Caesarian entourage an urgent issue and a duty. Hirtius', Oppius' and Balbus' proximity to Caesar and their role as trusted collaborators have certainly played a part. Balbus and Oppius especially were Caesar's *longa manus* in Rome: discreet and secretive, they had ready access to Caesar's papers and they were familiar with well his plans, the completion of the *Commentarii* arguably being one of them.¹¹⁴ The historical memoir Oppius wrote

¹¹²Hirtius speaks of his presence in the prefatory letter, whereas his participation in the Spanish campaign is more probable (see above ch. 4.1.3, 212 n. 61). From Cicero's epistolary, one can reasonably infer that Balbus and Oppius were regularly in Rome during the campaigns in Egypt, Africa and Spain as in Cic. *Fam.* 6.8.1 (Caesar approves of what the duo has done in Rome in his absence) and *Att.* 11.18.1 or 12.13.2.

¹¹³On the meaning and use of the verbs *conficere* and *contexere* see ch. 4.1.2, 197 n. 24 and 200 n. 34.

¹¹⁴On Caesar's *familiares*, see ch. 3.3.3, 177ff., see also Malitz (1987), 51-72, on Oppius and Balbus as Caesar's agents, see Tac. *Ann.* 12.60.6, and the role both had in the political landscape from the 50s onwards, see Alföldi (1976), 31-54.

on Caesar is another matter: based on personal recollection, it was not about Caesar's *res gestae*, but concerned anecdotes and episodes of his life that Oppius personally eye-witnessed and remembered.¹¹⁵ This work was written not only to celebrate but also to defend Caesar's memory.¹¹⁶ Oppius had no need to claim the authorship of the *Commentarii*: they are Caesar's creation and, due to their peculiar format, predisposed to anonymity.

4.2.3 Anonymity and the audience

The report-based method, the multi-authorship and the third person imply an intentional choice on the part of Caesar. Those elements create both the unity and the originality of the whole work: unity because they are consistent throughout the whole Corpus, and they establish a pattern; originality, as their output represents an unprecedented piece of literary work, the *Commentarii*, hardly comparable with anything else that Roman written culture managed to produce at that time. The so-called anonymous *Bella* are anonymous not entirely as a consequence of Caesar's death or the manuscripts' misconception (external factors), but mostly because they adhere to an established pattern, already present in the genuinely Caesarian books. Such a pattern allows the account to give predominance to the *res gestae* over the authorship. It is this pattern or model that I refer to as anonymity.¹¹⁷ The intrinsic anonymity casts emphasis on the content and provides the audience with *the version* of the military campaigns. It is the content, I would add, that forms the real identity of the *Commentarii*. The third-person voice is a stylistic tool that favours the content to the detriment of authorship. In such a context, the authorship might be perceived as futile or merely accidental: whichever theatre of war is described (Gallia, Britannia, Egypt, Illyria, Pontus, Spain or Africa), only

¹¹⁵On Balbus' and Oppius' historical memoir on Caesar see ch. 3.3.3, 179ff.

¹¹⁶As the other book on *Caesarion*, see above ch. 3.3.3, 186.

¹¹⁷See the double definition provided by Geue (2017), 17-19; see also Griffin (1999), 877-895, and Intro. 0.2.3, 28.

Caesar and his actions matter. The author was actually the agent of those actions.

The question of which audience the *Commentarii* was addressing and who the readers and listeners of the *Commentarii* were becomes crucial at this stage. It is crucial because it will establish whether the work was an effective instrument for supporting Caesar's political agenda in the eyes and ears of his audience. The *Commentarii* do not have (and are not intended to have) authors in a strict sense, but rather reporters and editors. They are organised according to a well-informed and detailed sequence of events, with the general Caesar as the main protagonist. By choosing the format and style (the third person) of his *Commentarii*, Caesar, on the one hand, deliberately removes himself as an author; on the other, he embraces the more practical function of editing, as the habit of reporting to the headquarters has been consolidated since the campaign in Gaul.¹¹⁸ Both the *removal of the author* and *the function of editing* cannot be other than intentional choices made by Caesar to convey the account of his deeds. The question of whether the format and the stylistic tools of the *Commentarii* were an original contribution on the part of Caesar is one I discussed in the section above. What counts most is how many recipients the work could reach, thanks to that very format and stylistic tools. In other words, what was the work's potential audience? This audience could not have been (or at least not exclusively) the intellectuals, the nobles and the members of the Senate, but must have been much bigger, extending not only to Rome, but perhaps to the *civitates* and provinces as well.¹¹⁹ If each *commentarius* merely copies the manner of reporting to magistrates in office, to the general in his headquarters, and to the authorities,

¹¹⁸The literary value of the Caesarian *Commentarii* might be diminished by the multi-authorial nature. However, the quality of the editorial intervention is undeniably visible, given that the act of writing surpasses the mere recording of facts and numbers, and is characterised by recurrence of themes and narrative devices, as well as uniformity in style and tone.

¹¹⁹On provincials who struggle to speak formal Latin see ch 1.5, 63ff.

namely the Senate, why then make it circulate, why publish it? The only possible answer must be that the work had a more ambitious target: a vast audience, whose support Caesar needed for his own political agenda.¹²⁰

On two occasions, Cicero hints at the popularity Caesar enjoys regarding his achievements. In the *De provinciis consularibus*, a speech dated 56 BC, concerning the renewal of Caesar's proconsulate in Gaul, the orator praises Caesar,¹²¹ and then he emphatically observes:

“And so he has, with brilliant success, crushed in battle the fiercest and greatest tribes of Germania and Helvetia; the rest he has terrified, checked and subdued, and taught them to submit to the rule of the Roman People (*imperio populi Romani parere adsuefecit*). Over these regions and races, which no writings, no spoken word, no report had before made known to us (*quas regiones quasque gentes nullae nobis antea litterae, nulla vox, nulla fama notas fecerat*), over them have our general, our soldiers, and the arms of the Roman People made their way.”¹²²

Besides the adulatory context - Cicero was seeking to re-establish his prestige in the Senate following his exile - the above paragraph places emphasis on the *populus Romanus* (twice directly and also in the repetition of *nostrī*) and draws attention to the newly-acquired knowledge of the Gallic people and regions through *litterae*, *vox* and *fama*. This triplet introduced Gaul to the Romans: certainly rhetorical, the reference to *litterae* indicates an allusion to written material that would have been read out and heard by an audience (*vox* and *fama*) larger than the Senate. The will of the people, advocated throughout the speech, enforces Cicero's argument in favour of the extension of Caesar's magistracy: his *res gestae* were

¹²⁰See Sinclair (1994), 93.

¹²¹Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 32 and 19.8.

¹²²Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 33, translation after R. Barney (1958). However, Grillo (2015), 234ff., suggests that Cicero's passage calls to mind *BGall.* 1.54.2. See also Krebs (2006), 115-116.

already well known, and they had an audience. An audience was a good vehicle for exerting political pressure.

Ten years later, while seeking clemency for his friend Marcellus, Cicero again alludes to the public:

(Doubtless generations (*obstupescant posteri*) yet to come will be struck dumb when they hear and read (*audientes et legentes*) of the commands you have held and the provinces you have won - the Rhine, the Ocean, the Nile - your countless battles, your amazing victories, your memorials, your largesses, and your triumphs).¹²³

Again the passage is rhetorical, but not entirely so: the pair *legentes* and *audientes*, which echoes *litterae - vox - fama* in the passage above, suggests a large audience, not only a potential one of future generations (*posterii*), but perhaps an audience already present and used to reading and hearing about his deeds. It is possible that the paragraph refers once again to the *Commentarii*. More likely, however, it reveals a channel of communication with the public that goes far beyond the Senate.¹²⁴ Here Cicero hints at an ongoing and up-to-date machinery of propaganda (the insertion of *Nilum* being the most striking novelty in the list of provinces), at a policy already in place, as with certainty (*certe*) the future generations will read and hear of Caesar. The dictator was popular: thanks to the *populus Romanus*, he had received his command in Gaul, and throughout his career he gained popular support.¹²⁵ By using rhetorical devices, Cicero amplifies an assertion obvious to contemporaries (that Caesar was popular), but at the same time he reveals himself to be at odds with Caesar's popularity and with his appeal to the masses.¹²⁶

¹²³Cic. *Marcell.* 28-29, translated by Watts (1931).

¹²⁴On the difference between the speech delivered in the Forum and the text published see Pecere (2010), 125-132. As discussed at length in chapter 1.1, 43ff., in oratory *commentarii* are the notes the orator has in his hands while delivering the speech (see, for instance, on Cicero's habits Quint. 10.7.30ff.).

¹²⁵With the *Lex Vatinia* 59 BC, as the command for the Gaul was conferred by the *comitia tributa* through the *tribunus* Vatinus. See Williamson (2005), 378ff. and Gelzer (1928), 113ff.

¹²⁶On Cicero's language of snobbery towards crowds see Horsfall, (2003), 83-94. On the

The two passages from Cicero's works do not perhaps offer more than overly speculative proofs. However, through indirect evidence I might glimpse an element, likely taken for granted, such as the existence of an audience unlike the standard one and consequently a different level of popularity which both Caesar and the *Commentarii* might have enjoyed: an audience beyond the Senate and the Forum, beyond the circle of aristocrats and intellectuals that Cicero was always eager to please.¹²⁷In addition, the orator always found it difficult to deal not only with Caesar the politician but also with his peculiarity as a writer.¹²⁸ In his recent study on the Roman audience, Wiseman points to the proconsuls' dispatches from the province as a type of narrative familiar to the Senate and the *populus Romanus*: just as Pompeius received his commands by order of the People, so he intends to respond to that very same audience.¹²⁹ Most likely Caesar followed this pattern: the *populus Romanus* having given him the Gallic command, he regularly updated the public on his achievements as commander. No matter how representative the *comitia tributa* were, Caesar's political legitimisation, as commander, came from this assembly, which spoke for the *populus Romanus*. Wiseman concludes that Caesar's "conquests were at the People's order and People's benefit (...), the *Commentarii* were reporting to them, not just to the Senate".¹³⁰ The audience might have been eager to listen to history, or more precisely perhaps, to the "official" version of the conquest without any mediation by the Senate. These public readings in Rome might have been held not only in the Forum but at celebratory events such as the *ludi scaenici*, in public places with a large capacity.¹³¹ By keeping the audience informed, Caesar not only

relation with the crowd that Caesar had, see Bell (2004), 24-51.

127On audience see above ch. 4.2.3, 224ff.

128On Cicero's and Caesar's epigrams on Menander and their competitiveness see ch. 1.4, 60 n. 114.

129Wiseman (2015), 101, quoting Pompey's letter to the Senate in App. *B Civ.* 2.28.107.

130Wiseman (2015), 101. See also Suet. *Iul.* 56.6.

131For discussion on the existence of public spaces in Republican Rome see Amy Russel (2016), especially 43ff. See also Wiseman (2015), 101-102, who hypothesises, rather

acknowledged its past support, but also guaranteed for himself the renewal of that support, whenever the occasion arose. The novelty of the *Commentarii* seems patent: it is about (consolidating the practice of) making the account of the war available to an audience beyond the Senate. As stated above, since it was written and read out in a language that was simple and recognisable, such an account likely appealed to a wider audience.¹³²

According to Loreto, not only the *populus Romanus* in Rome and the provincials, but soldiers too appear to be among the audience of the *Commentarii*.¹³³ The Italian scholar argues that the *Commentarii* are very detailed in terms of enemy combat tactics and the military topography; the work also seems at times gnomonic and didactic when describing certain tactical and strategical actions as schematic 'wargames': "tipic[o] delle ricostruzioni militari finalizzate ad un pubblico tanto interessato quanto in grado di comprendere la struttura dei piani e la loro formazione."¹³⁴ Not only the content but again the language, plain and unadorned, "uniform at most to the point of monotony", suggests a military audience as the *Commentarii* are ultimately "a narration of military events militarily viewed by a military man". Adcock's rather logical statement stems from the assumption that Caesar's grammatical work "showed a scholarly interest in linguistic forms which diversified his application to the business of a general and a governor", as years later Sinclair demonstrated in greater detail.¹³⁵ Perhaps, since Caesar was giving to new readers and listeners access to the political narrative of the late Roman Republic, he was seeking to democratise not only the

plausibly, the *Ludi scaenici*, the games of the Great Mother, beginning on 4th of April each year, as "the earliest opportunity to get the Roman People all together" and to read out the *Commentarii*. The Great Mother was the goddess of Mount Ida, where Caesar's ancestors were believed to come from.

¹³²See ch. 1.4, 56 and ch. 4.2.3, 224.

¹³³Loreto (1993), 239-343, an article which is comprehensive on Caesar's military education, his concept of strategy, and his eclecticism in tactical and strategical interventions. On soldiers as audience, see Adcock (1956), 50-51; Meier (1982), 310-311.

¹³⁴On Caesar's military tactics and the existence of an audience receptive of military conventions, see Loreto (1993), 334, notes 588-592, and Zecchini (2001), 148-158.

¹³⁵Adcock (1956), 63 and 50 respectively, his deduction not being taken directly from the text, like Loreto did, but by considering the language as theorised in the *De Analogia*.

language, but even the audience.¹³⁶ The dictator intuited that there was a market for his Caesarian Latin, the *facilis et cotidianus sermo*, has a market. By using that language, the *Commentarii* reached that market: a wide, non-senatorial audience.¹³⁷

4.2.4 Persuasive anonymity: a conclusion

The *Commentarii* were intended to reach a wider audience, which seems to have included the people of Rome, the provincials and the soldiers. As argued in chapter one, the language may have found its natural output in the *Commentarii* not only as a proof of Caesar's theories on language, but also as a tool that was both highly readable and made available to a wide audience.¹³⁸ According to Gurd, there is an interesting consequence to Caesar's linguistic choices. Through a comparison between Cicero and Caesar, the scholar ascertains Cicero's habit of editorial revision and notes that the orator liked sharing his work with his friends.¹³⁹ Caesar instead delivers "pristine examples of a perfected prose style". That is evident in Cicero's *Brutus*, when Cicero comments on the style of the *Commentarii*: its perfection, stripped of any ornamentation, deters other historians from working on the *Commentarii* as draft material.¹⁴⁰ Gurd believes that Cicero's praise contains a profound criticism, as "the perfection of [Caesar's] style kills communal interest in it, and he can only dominate, not involve, his readers." The scholar suggests "a fundamental deceitfulness in Caesar's writings" as "his *Commentarii*, whose very title suggests that they are drafts available to others to rewrite and ornament, are perfected *decreta*, final statements that rule out collaboration."¹⁴¹ Indeed so;

¹³⁶Sinclair (1994), 96, referred to Caesar's "manifestly populist, 'democratising' grammatical agenda". If he had survived the Ides, he would have opened a public library, certainly increasing the availability of culture to a wider audience, (Suet. *Iul.* 44.2).

¹³⁷On the concept of language and market, see Bourdieu (1991).

¹³⁸On the importance of a "*sermo facilis et cotidianus*" stressed by Caesar's *De Analogia*, see ch 1.4, 56.

¹³⁹Gurd (2007), 49-80, an important article that insists on mutual reading and correction as a social function. Cicero's written works maintain social ties, whereas Caesar's style is antisocial and autocratic.

¹⁴⁰Cic. *Brut.* 262, extensively discussed in ch 1.3, 51ff.

¹⁴¹Gurd (2007), all the quotations from p. 60.

despite being drafts, the *Commentarii* convey the official and up-to-date version of the military campaign, they establish a communication from the authority to the public, a one-way communication. The choice of an approachable language, as theorised in his treatise *De Analogia*, likely helped to target the general public. Caesar specifically wanted to report to his wide audience, both in order to respond to their previous support and arguably also to consolidate it for the imminent future.¹⁴² Together with the Caesarian Latin, the *Commentarii*'s format and stylistic tools were adopted to gain consensus and support for the Caesarian cause. If my hypothesis on the types and extent of the public is correct, an account like the *Commentarii*, of that length, is "intended to be heard (...) by an audience of citizens [for instance] seated in a theatre".¹⁴³

As Caesar consciously opted for the format of *Commentarii*, one must infer that he believed they were a persuasive tool of propaganda to convey his version of the military campaigns, precisely because they could potentially reach a wide public. I also hint at the possibility that the *Commentarii* were written in a pattern and in a style that recall the way in which authorities spoke to the public. They are factual, straightforward and what they narrate can be taken at face value by the audience, as they provide the version of the military campaign, with no mediation. Ultimately, the intrinsic anonymity of the *Commentarii* was also an effective device, since the account gives prominence to Caesar's *res gestae* and to the achievements of his army. Not much is known about the impact the *Commentarii* had on the public, since references are scattered and rather speculative. Nevertheless, the uniqueness of the *Commentarii* lies perhaps not only in their conception but also in the way in which the work was delivered and presented to the public; Caesar's ultimate aim was to convey his political agenda to the

¹⁴²On Caesar's popularity, see Collins (1952), Yavetz (1969), 132ff., and Sumi (2005), 47ff.

¹⁴³Wiseman (2015), 102, the insertion is mine.

largest possible audience of supporters.

After examining the work of editing and the anonymity of the Corpus, a final question now remains to be explored: the political implications of the last three *Commentarii*. As hinted at the end of the previous chapter, while completing the Corpus, the *familiares* were actively operating within the tumultuous political scene after the Ides of March. In the next chapter the *Commentarii* are (re)considered as texts acting precisely in the political context of the time.

Chapter 5

The last three *Commentarii*: a tool of political interpretation

These pages aim to demonstrate the political relevance of the last three *Commentarii* by establishing a parallelism between the events depicted in the accounts and the political situation that followed Caesar's assassination. It starts from the assumption that these works were not only literary texts, but also a political means to intervene in the political context of the time. As seen in the previous chapters, the last three *Commentarii* reveal the report-based nature of the whole Corpus and show how the “newsroom” works. Due to their unfinished status, the work of editing is evident and ongoing. Such an unfinished status is also a sign of the troubled times in which the attempted completion took place. Between late spring 44 BC (Caesar's assassination) and April 43 BC (the battle of Mutina), the editors, the so-called *familiares*, and in particular Hirtius, try to complete the *Commentarii*. Under Hirtius' editorship, the works seem both to be influenced by, and to hint at, contemporary people and facts.

Direct allusions to the political situation in Rome are present in the Corpus and originate from Hirtius himself. For instance, in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* references to the situation in Rome under Antony's administration appear to negatively depict the future triumvir and they may also allude to Antony's behaviour and political actions of the years 44-43 BC, which were vehemently targeted by Cicero. The homage to the republican Cato and his speech to the young Pompey, as reported in the *Bellum Africum*, seems to legitimise the alliance between the Senate and the Caesarians against Antony and endorse the arrival on the political scene of Octavian. Likewise, the praise of Lepidus' attitude and the reticence towards Sextus Pompey appear to align the *Commentarii* with

Cicero's contemporary policies of acknowledging the role of Lepidus and rehabilitating the surviving son of Pompey the Great.

By presenting the historical context, I confirm my conclusions on the role played by the Caesarians, i.e. the *familiares*, and in particular by Hirtius, in the completion and handling of the Corpus. I believe that their involvement was not the result of a purely intellectual interest or literary endeavour. They were not detached from contemporary reality, but personalities operating within the current political situation, and the *Commentarii* were their written tool, through which they intervened in the ongoing civil strife.

5.1 The political background

In the hours after the Ides of March, the situation in Rome was inevitably chaotic. In the turmoil, the so-called Liberators as well as Antony sought shelter, with Lepidus' legion poised to act. Equally disoriented, Hirtius, Balbus and Oppius were - most likely - in Rome.¹ However, although not immediately, Antony managed to take control, perhaps even for the simple reason that he was the extant consul in office. The Caesarians held a long meeting on the 16th of March, at which a policy of compromise and moderation towards the Liberators prevailed.² Hirtius *in primis* advocated such a policy, and Antony sided with him; by contrast, Lepidus, at that time *magister equitum*, favoured more drastic action.³ Once the Caesarians had agreed, Antony formally granted a pardon to the Liberators, but charged the Senate with the enactment of all the *acta Caesaris*. In doing so, "both the acts and the party of Caesar survive his removal."⁴ Once the compromise had been formalised, however, two facts destabilised the situation in Rome and the conciliatory policy Antony had managed to secure: the publishing of

1 On the Caesarians after the Ides, see Grattarola (1990); Dettenhofer (1992).

2 Nic. Dam., *FGH II*, 90, fr. 130, XXVII, 106 and the following on Lepidus.

3 The drastic option gained support from another Caesarian, not explicitly named by Nicolaus of Damascus, Balbus perhaps, only after emending *ἄλλος* in *Βάλβος*, see Malitz (2003) 176 n. 353.

4 Syme (1939), 99.

Caesar's will and the funeral oration (*laudatio funebris*). As a result, the power in Antony's hands increased, counterbalanced by the arrival on the scene of Octavian, Caesar's main heir and adopted son.⁵ He made an abrupt entrance, perhaps not fully unexpected by the Caesarian *familiares*, who were in Campania to welcome Octavian from the beginning of April.⁶ There, Caesar's heir met with Cicero, whom Balbus had already taken step to win over by preparing the meeting. The circle of Caesarians such as Balbus, Oppius, Hirtius and Pansa may have forged the policy that Octavian adopted in the months to come. In the meantime, Antony made Lepidus *pontifex maximus* and allowed him to negotiate peace with Sextus Pompey, who not only survived after Munda, but managed to control Further Spain at the expense of the legitimate governor, Asinius Pollio.⁷ However, the risk of the consul veering towards autocracy was palpable among the senators and even the Caesarians. Sensed perhaps since his first moves, that tendency became evident with the assignment to himself of the two Gallic provinces for five years in place of Macedonia, while retaining the command of the legions stationed there.⁸ The senatorial meeting on the first of June 44 BC approved all the measures proposed by Antony, his power being ratified and, overwhelmingly, increased. At that meeting Hirtius, "whose distress at Antony's behaviour that spring is significant", did not take part, urging Cicero not to attend either.⁹ When Cicero, already not well disposed towards the consul, again attended the Senate meetings he delivered the first of his

5 Dio 44.50.4, the opening of the will and Antony's words were a blow to the Liberators, who were forced to leave the capital.

6 Cic. *Att.* 14.10.3 and *Att.* 14.11. 2, see ch. 3.3.3, 187-189.

7 On Lepidus' appointment Dio 44.53.6-7; on Sextus and the negotiation, see Cic. *Att.* 15.29 and 16.1.4 and Dio 45.9.5, 45.10.6 and App. *B Civ.* 3.4, 4.94; see also below.

8 On the second of June, the assembly approved measures such as the "*lex de permutatione provinciarum*", exchanging his province of Macedonia for Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, the "*lex de actis Caesaris confermandis*" and an agrarian law in favour of veterans and *plebs*; on dates and sources see Grattarola (1990), 41 and related notes. The exchange of provinces was at the expense of Decimus Brutus, whose appointment had already been decided by Caesar and was ratified by the Senate after his death.

9 Rawson (1994), IX, 474.

vehement speeches against Antony, known as the *Philippics*.¹⁰ These invectives, along with Cicero's correspondence, are the most important sources on these months. The *Philippics* show Cicero's aim as being to unite the *res publica* against Antony, depicting the consul as a *hostis* and his acts as being against the *res publica*.¹¹ More precisely Cicero wanted to bring together moderate Caesarians such as the two designated consuls with the republican faction and the Liberators, by carving out a role of *rector rei publicae*, the guardian of the republic, for himself.¹² Cicero did more, he acted as a mentor for the young Caesar, paving the way for his full admittance into the Senate. Octavian obtained praetorian *imperium* and the full right to stand for the consulship ten years before the legal age. These measures were taken at the first meeting of the year 43 BC, when Hirtius and Pansa began their consulship. After several dramatic sessions of the Senate, war was declared by the anomalous alliance between Octavian Caesar, the Caesarian consuls and the senators against the Caesarian Antony, the former consul. However, the moves to legitimise Octavian were agreed in advance among the Caesarians.¹³ The *familiares* were working together, yet on different fronts. Hirtius and Pansa were together in Campania under Cicero's rhetorical training, then as consuls in office¹⁴. Although absent from our sources since the Campanian meetings with Octavian, Balbus reappears as consul in the year 42, whereas Oppius appears only once, when confirming to Cicero Octavian's favourable disposition towards the Liberators.¹⁵

10 It was the senator L. Piso, Caesar's father-in-law, who first criticised Antony; Piso openly on August the 1st, see Cic. *Att.* 16.7.1, and *Phil.* 1.8; the first Philippic was delivered on the 2nd of September 44 BC.

11 On Antony's actions see Cic. *Phil.* 1.13; Rawson (1994) IX, 477; Syme (1939), 140-141, 162ff.

12 The term "*rector rei publicae*" appears only 9 times in the entire Ciceronian corpus and mainly in the *De Re Publica* and has been adopted extensively by scholarship in relation to Cicero's role in the last years of the Republic, see Zarecki (2014).

13 An aspect not fully examined by scholarship, mainly focused on Octavian's own initiative, but counsellors such as Balbus, Oppius and Hirtius were with Octavian since his arrival in Italy; on Matius see below n. 15 and my observation on the gathering of Caesarians in Campania, ch. 3.3.3, 187ff.

14 Ch. 3.3.3, 187ff.

15 Cic. *Att.* 16.15.3, Cicero under pressure by Oppius. Matius as well was flanking Octavian, as the Caesarian financed with Rabirius Postumus and Saserna the *Ludi Victoriae Caesaris*,

The proximity of the *familiares* to the young Caesar seems not merely tactical. Cemented by loyalty towards his adoptive father, the relationship between the *familiares* and Octavian was consistent throughout the years 44 and 43 BC. Of a different character were the terms of the friendship between Cicero and the young Caesar, since their first meeting in the orator's villa in Campania. Cicero rather consistently displays a lack of complete trust not only in Octavian, but also in the *familiares*, Pansa and Hirtius especially, but also Balbus and Oppius.¹⁶

Pansa and Hirtius did not like Antony's ambition, nor the actions the consul took; however, neither they were ever openly hostile.¹⁷ The coolness towards Antony may have been immediate, spurred by the impression that Antony on his own, without Caesar, appeared out of control. It perhaps even dates back to the years 47/46 BC, when Antony struggled to keep charge of Rome as *magister equitum*, Caesar being in the east to pursue Pompey. However, the *familiares* find in Caesar's heir their natural chief. Moreover, the *familiares* had a predisposition to compromise, matured under the aegis of Caesar, and to diplomacy as displayed for instance in their pardoning of fellow citizens such as Cicero. Although confirmed by the Senate under the new consuls' mandate, any hostility towards Antony was in line with the moves taken by and agreed with Octavian more than motivated by Cicero's hatred.¹⁸ The orator's contempt towards Antony was not shared openly by the *familiares*. Nevertheless, from the beginning of 43 BC, Hirtius and Pansa as consuls and Octavian as pro-praetor led the legions against Antony, their ultimate aim being different from Cicero's. The

the games celebrating in July 44 BC the victory of Pharsalus (Cic. *Att.* 15.2.3, *Fam.* 11.28.6); on the man see Combes (1958).

16 On Octavian see Cic. *Att.* 16.9.1, see also 16.8.1 and 16.14.2 9, well guessing the lack of authority. On Balbus and Hirtius respectively see Cic. *Att.* 14.21.2 and 4, on Pansa Cic. *Att.* 16.1.4, extended to the other Caesarians.

17 On Hirtius see Cristofoli (2010), 462; on Pansa see Syme (1939) 133, quoting Cic. *Att.* 15.22.1.

18 A logical deduction not really discussed by scholarship, rather implicit in Syme (1939), 131, when discussing the involvement of Caesarians such as Balbus in supporting Octavian against Antony; a hint in Rawson (1994), IX, 471-472, and Osgood (2009), 40-41.

latter wanted a fully restored *res publica* and the annihilation of Antony and his autocratic ambitions, Octavian a legitimate recognition of his role.

5.2 Hirtius' prefatory letter and Antony

This was the climate in which the completion of the *Commentarii* was attempted. In those months, Hirtius was both an active politician and the main editor of the *Commentarii*, until his death at Mutina. A few days after the meeting of the 16th of March 44 BC, Hirtius first moves to Campania between April and May, then to Tusculum. In Campania, around Puteoli, he meets Octavian: as seen above, this is not a chance encounter, but rather a planned meeting.¹⁹ The consul designate also cements his friendship with Cicero, with whom he is in constant dialogue. Due also to a prolonged illness, Hirtius, as well as his colleague-to-be Pansa, remained not overly exposed in the political arena, but was certainly well informed of the ongoing situation.²⁰

Hirtius makes two explicit incursions into the contemporary political situation: his letter to Cicero dated June 44 BC and the prefatory letter to Balbus. In the letter to Cicero, while urging Brutus and Cassius to be prudent, Hirtius adds: “the present situation, being of its nature transitory (*haec enim, quae fluunt per se*), will not last long; but in the event of a conflict (*in contentione praesentis*) it has potential for immediate harm.”²¹ The present situation (*haec*) can only refer to Antony and his regime.²² In Cicero's letter, to which Hirtius' missive is attached, the consul designate is described as “somewhat out of temper (*fortasse iratior*) with Antony, but a firm friend to the cause (*causae vero amicissimus*)”. In June, the *contentio* seems to be a matter between the Liberators and Antony,

19 See ch 3.3.3, 187ff.

20 Hirtius fell ill for the second half of the year 44 BC and never fully recovered when in office, see ch. 3.3.3, 188 n. 215.

21 Cic. *Att.* 15.6.3. Hirtius' letter is quoted in a letter Cicero sent to Atticus, dated June 44 BC, in which the orator does not believe Hirtius could be won over to the liberators' cause, as evidence, he attaches Hirtius' letter.

22 Shackleton Bailey (1967), vol. 6, 255.

but Hirtius appears to be at the very least disappointed in Antony. Although potentially explosive, the situation seems under control.

In the prefatory letter to Balbus, when referring to the completion of the *Commentarii*, Hirtius seems to depict a different situation: “I have completed his last commentary as far as the conclusion not of the civil strife (*ad exitum non quidem civilis dissensionis*), whose end we cannot see, but of Caesar's life”. The “*civilis dissensio* is still here, as we speak”, Hirtius seems to argue. The *contentio* of the letter to Cicero becomes the *dissensio* of the prefatory letter, and the statement registers a different climate: from uncertainty at least to open conflict. More appropriately, besides suggesting that the final episode of the Corpus would have been Caesar's death, Hirtius' statement appears to acknowledge the conflict (*dissensio*) as ongoing, not potential as in Hirtius' letter to Cicero. Probably evident since the autumn of 44 BC, the conflict became imminent during his own consulate, especially in the weeks preceding the battle at Mutina.²³ However, by mentioning the present struggle, and, simultaneously, by fixing the end of the account at the death of Caesar, Hirtius admits the present-day significance of the work. The completion was not only about giving a full account of the recent past but also about leaving a door open to the present. Thus, as the completion took place between late spring/summer 44 BC and spring 43 BC, assembling and editing was an ongoing task, undertaken in an ongoing situation. To what stage of the *dissensio* Hirtius refers is hard to prove, certainly after June 44 BC, and likely not before September 44 BC, when the hostility between Antony and the Senate increases, acrimoniously sponsored by Cicero. Likewise, whether Hirtius was still consul designate or already in office is difficult to ascertain. However, as the term *dissensio* is generally used by Caesar when the conflict has already erupted, Hirtius' and Pansa's consulate might already have

²³ Cic. *Ad Brut.* 1.3.4, finally, after several attempts by Cicero in the previous weeks, Antony is declared *hostis publicus*, after Pansa's defeat at Forum Gallorum on April the 14th.

started and the consuls already been in the midst of events.²⁴

5.3 The *Bellum Alexandrinum*: Hirtius, Mark Antony and the *contentiones* in Rome

Indirect references to Antony return in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, when the account moves from Spain to the East, more precisely to Syria.²⁵ Once there, most likely in Antiochia, Caesar learns from unspecified messengers (*ab eis qui Roma venerant*) and from dispatches regularly received (*litteris urbanis*) that the situation in Rome is critical. Indeed, many things have been handled badly and unprofitably (*male et inutiliter*), and no body of the republic is being efficiently managed (*neque ullam partem rei publicae satis commode gerit*). Moreover, the crisis is of a dual nature: civil, as the rivalries between the tribunes are inciting public disorder (*contentionibus tribuniciis perniciosae seditiones oriantur*), and military, as the ambition and the laziness of the tribunes in the legions (*ambitione atque indulgentia tribunorum militum...*) was giving rise to lack of discipline and corruption among the troops. After affirming the necessity of Caesar's presence back in Rome, through the use of an adversative conjunction *tamen*, the text goes on to describe the policy the dictator adopts towards the provinces in Asia and the local allies. As a reaction to the content of dispatches and personal talks with envoys, those lines come, most likely, from “un comunicato ufficiale di Cesare”, namely from official documents, as Loreto points out.²⁶ Among the envoys might have been Hirtius himself, who certainly went to Antiochia to update Caesar and to be briefed by him.²⁷ The gravity of the situation in Rome is exemplified by Hirtius' journey in person, despite the constant receipt of *litterae*

²⁴ The use of *dissensio* in Caesar's *Commentarii* refers to an ongoing or recently passed period of strife as in *BCiv.* 3.1.3 (cancellation of debts apt to follow civil strifes), *BCiv.* 3.88.1 and 1.67.3 (soldiers' behaviour in civil strife); see also verbal quarrels and discussions among the same groups in *BGall.* 5.31.1, 6.22.3 and 7.34.1; commotions in Rome at *BGall.* 7.1.2.

²⁵ All the following Latin quotations are from *BAlex.* 65.1.

²⁶ Loreto (2001), 389. See also *BAlex.* 78.1-4, on the decisions taken after the victory over Pharnaces concerning the local kingdoms.

²⁷ *Cic. Att.* 11.20.1, see ch. 3.3.2, 179.

urbanae.²⁸ Undoubtedly, Caesar's resolve to go back to Rome may have contributed to the quick and brilliantly executed campaign against Pharnaces; however, Caesar was already planning to head to Rome. Nevertheless, the account reports how crucial and publicly known Caesar's return to Rome was considered to be.²⁹ No name is provided, but only the offices, *seditiones* and *contentiones* being the nouns that best describe the situation in Rome.³⁰ The tumultuous days Rome had experienced in 47 BC were well known to the audience: contemporary readers and listeners would have likely recognised the circumstances and the officers involved. If on the one hand Caesar's return is emphatically considered to be the resolution, on the other the problems are clearly listed and the officers responsible are held to account, even though not explicitly named.

After the battle of Pharsalus, Antony was sent to Rome as *magister equitum*, an old-fashioned magistracy, which Caesar revived for the purpose. As lieutenant of the dictator and regent on his behalf, Antonius had a difficult year ahead and several issues to deal with, such as the debt crisis in Rome and the conflict with the tribune Dolabella and the mutinous attitude of the veteran legions in Campania. Antony was unsuccessful in his handling of both the political and the military contentions. The conflict with the tribunes caused turmoil in Rome, and the *magister equitum* restored order with loss of life and at the expense of his own popularity. Interestingly, malcontent towards Antony among the *plebs* was still present in Rome during the year 44/43 BC, which suggests that a reference to those tumultuous days would have been well remembered and recognised by the contemporary audience.³¹ The neutrality of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* passage is perhaps only

²⁸ See also *BAfr.* 19.3, 64.2, and 98.2.

²⁹ As reiterated twice in *BAlex.* 71.1 and 78.4.

³⁰ See the anonymous officers whom Caesar has in mind for their plundering (*BAfr.* 54.1), and whom even King Juba knows, (*BAfr.* 19.3).

³¹ Dio 45.6.2.

apparent: the fact that Antony was in charge, *absente Caesare*, was well known.

Though not explicitly unfavourable towards Antony, those lines in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* might represent the first germs of hostility towards Antony that would become so common in the historiography to come.³² Fomenting the hostility towards Antony were Cicero's *Philippics*, with which the *Bellum Alexandrinum* was contemporary. Hirtius' coldness towards Antony may have grown through the familiarity with Cicero, but it may also have been a tactical posture adopted in parallel with the young Caesar and sponsored by Caesar's other *familiares*. And it has likely developed in tandem with the ongoing and hard-to-predict events.

Contemporary with the *Philippics*, but, one might be inclined to say, parallel to Cicero's speeches, the *Commentarii* might have offered a different and more moderate consideration of the present conflict. In the same period Hirtius was not only the main editor of the last three *Commentarii*, but he was also close enough to Cicero to know the direction of the orator's policy.³³ Before entering into his consular year, he may well have been a close observer of the events; the recipient of dispatches, active in mediating between the parts, but an invalid because of his illness. Trained by Cicero in rhetoric, a dedicatee of the *De Fato*, Hirtius was constantly in touch with Cicero: the corpus of their letters has unfortunately been lost, with a few exceptions.³⁴ Nevertheless, exchanges between the two were common and perhaps even more frequent in the first and last months of Hirtius' consulate. In March 43 BC, Cicero literally dissects a letter from Antony to Hirtius and Octavian, which the consul claims to have obtained directly from Hirtius.³⁵ If an

32 Likely mainly influenced by Augustus' propaganda and writings, see Marasco (1992), 538-548, including footnotes.

33 On the relationship between Cicero and Hirtius, see Cristofoli (2010), 462-488.

34 Nonius Marcellus, a grammarian of the 4th century AD, 450.3, testifies to the existence of a correspondence between Cicero and Hirtius running to nine volumes; see also 313.14ff. Cugusi (1979), II.1.CVI, 276ff. lists nine letters to Cicero.

35 The letter is quoted in Cic. *Phil.* 13.22-26 *passim*. Shakleton Bailey (2009), 224, claims that the speech dates from no later than the 20th of March, suggesting that likely Antony probably

agreement was possible, it would have had the ideal guarantor in Hirtius, consul in office and a loyal Caesarian. The situation, however, drifted dramatically into open conflict at Mutina.

5.4 The *Bellum Alexandrinum*: Q. Cassius Longinus and Antony, the *hostis*

What surprises most in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* is its description of a Caesarian infighting, with the controversial figure of Cassius Longinus at its heart.³⁶ This narrative describes not merely an argument among the Caesarians, but an actual conflict takes place in Further Spain. Cassius Longinus' abrasive character and his controversial handling of the province provoke a plot against the governor, causes army mutiny, and civil unrest among the population. The intervention of Marcus Lepidus proves decisive and order is finally restored among the Caesarians. By admitting the existence of a potential *hostis*, as Longinus appears to be to the Caesarians, the *Bellum Alexandrinum* might hint at the present struggle the Caesarians are experiencing with another Caesarian, Antony. These hints might have worked acted as reminders to the audience.

Cassius Longinus was a devoted Caesarian, and an efficient one, as he succeeded in recruiting new troops and collecting money, the two things Caesar needed most to subsidise his campaigns.³⁷ As such, Caesar would hardly have reprimanded him for his behaviour; indeed, he rewarded him with the governorship of Further Spain.³⁸ However, the account depicts him as unpopular and hostile by his own disposition (*BAlex.* 48.1). Despite his efforts to win over the army with the promise of large rewards, his army lacked military

wanted the letter to be of public knowledge.

³⁶ *BAlex.* 48-64.

³⁷ On Longinus' affair see Holmes (1923), 293, Gabba (1973), 495ff., Gonzalez-Roman (1978), 136ff. and recently Loreto (2001), 380-381.

³⁸ *BAlex.* 56.2. As soon as Longinus receives the order from Caesar about new recruitment and supplies, the governor acts swiftly. The account itself recognises, almost unequivocally, his promptness, see *BAlex.* 51.3.

discipline (*BAlex.* 48.2-3). Bribery and lack of even-handedness in administering justice were added to the very heavy taxation imposed on the province (*BAlex.* 49). The prospect of leading an army to Africa, as commanded by Caesar in another dispatch, further inflames his greed (*BAlex.* 51.2). The hatred towards him becomes manifest in the attempted assassination plotted by a group of provincials in full daylight at Corduba (*BAlex.* 52).³⁹ However, Longinus not only survives the conspiracy, he also reacts swiftly by ordering the execution of all the conspirators, except for those who buy him off (*BAlex.* 55). There is no sign of change in Longinus' attitude occurs, when he learns from Caesar, of Pompey's defeat: he displays a mixture of disappointment and pleasure, as "the completion of the war put an end to [his] present licence".⁴⁰ The hostility directed at Longinus is clearly evidenced in the episode of the army mutiny at Corduba, since what unifies soldiers and citizens is their hatred towards Longinus (*BAlex.* 59.1).⁴¹ The account mentions only cursorily the Pompeian partisanship of the army and of some cities. The pro-praetor, meanwhile, behaves *hostili modo*, when laying waste to the territory around Corduba (*BAlex.* 59.2). The account focuses on the *negotium Cassianum*,⁴² namely on Longinus' corruption, and it testifies to the diplomatic intervention on the part of Lepidus. Despite obeying Caesar's orders and acting accordingly, the pro-praetor, nevertheless, generates conflict inside the Caesarian faction: he is perceived as hostile, *de facto* as an enemy, whose actions are heinous and outrageous (*BAlex.* 60.1). On the other hand, Lepidus is portrayed as intervening effectively and diplomatically. Explicitly called on by Longinus to support Caesar's cause (*Caesaris causa*), Lepidus does not unconditionally support Longinus' claims, but instead seeks to mediate and

39 The soldiers of the second legion hated Longinus, (*BAlex.* 53.5).

40 *BAlex.* 56.2, *voluptas* reaffirmed here after 51.2.

41 A passage that suggests the presence of the Pompeians in the area, a fact the compiler seems to deliberately ignore. On the existence of a well-organised Pompeian faction see Gabba (1973), 499, *contra* Loreto (2001), 386.

42 As Cicero calls it, *Cic. Att.* 11.16.1.

reconcile the governor with Marcellus. The latter immediately places himself at Lepidus' mercy, the former ultimately accepts the truce Lepidus brokers, but not without a skirmish provoked by Cassius Longinus' ally, the Mauritanian King Bogud, which Lepidus soon manages to quell (*celeriter indignatione et auxilio*). Interestingly, Lepidus treats Cassius Longinus as a colleague and seeks immediately an agreement, his army also being a powerful deterrent to a resumption of hostilities.⁴³

Although Welch characterises these chapters as disguising the “fact that Spain was a Pompeian stronghold”, they seem rather to emphasise, almost shamelessly, the struggle among the Caesarians.⁴⁴ This internal conflict was certainly registered in the reports, upon which this section relies, Cassius Longinus being one of the sources included. The final compiler combines the reports and, as seen above, succumbs to repetition. However, Longinus' “abrasive character” (as Welch aptly describes it) is responsible for the great dissatisfaction and the internal conflict among the Caesarians.⁴⁵ Moreover, the account displays indulgence even towards the conspirators, and candidly admits the mutinous Marcellus' change of mind. Longinus ignominiously runs away, avoiding, so his own friends were asserting, handing over his powers to the new proconsul, Trebonius.⁴⁶ Reference to Further Spain as a Pompeian stronghold returns clearly in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, whereas in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* the province is described rather as being the scene of infighting amongst Caesarians, or, more precisely, as subject to the malign influence of

⁴³ See *invitat* at *BAlex.* 63.3, which suggests that Longinus' authority was recognised by Lepidus, who had clearly been charged with a diplomatic rapprochement by Caesar.

⁴⁴ Welch (1995), 450.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ The mutineer's full name is M. Claudius Marcellus Aeserninus, who was Asinius Pollio's father-in-law. His behaviour, while not censured, appears ambivalent: disloyal towards Cassius Longinus, who sends him to placate the legions, he ends up heading the rebellion against the governor, but eventually decides to remain Caesarian, once Lepidus takes charge. Marcellus apparently survives this episode with this reputation intact, given the achievement of the consulate in 22 BC. See Groag, *RE* III, 2, (1899), 2770-2771 and Loreto (2001), 385.

Longinus, depicted as *hostis*.⁴⁷ It is worth noticing that Cassius Longinus was Antony's colleague in the tribunate of the year 49 BC: once the “*senatus consultum ultimum*” was decreed, they both fled to Ravenna, where Caesar was encamped.⁴⁸ Moreover, King Bogus would fight at Antony's side at Actium in the year 31 BC, dying at Methone. Little can be said regarding how Bogus came to be Antony's ally in that crucial battle, but Bogus' partisanship was long-standing, as were their contacts.⁴⁹ That Q. Cassius Longinus was a member of Antony's retinue seems possible but is difficult to establish beyond doubt. If so, the audience would have known of their acquaintance and would have even more strongly made a connection between Longinus' behaviour at that time and Antony's at the present. The latter can only be a rather speculative assumption; however, Antony as a *hostis* is a Ciceronian image.⁵⁰ In the *Philippics* the term *hostis* returns frequently as “a political and official catchword”, until the Senate finally declares Antony to be public enemy, inspired by Ciceronian bile.⁵¹ Where it concedes the existence of a potential enemy among the Caesarian faction, the *Bellum Alexandrinum* may be described as echoing Cicero's bile. Nevertheless, such an admission might have worked as a reminder to the audience of a contemporary Caesarian, Antony, whose behaviour is dangerously hostile.

5.5 The *Bellum Africum*: Cato and his speech to the young Pompey

Together with the references to Antony, and to the Caesarian infighting in Spain, Cato's portrait in the *Bellum Africum* deserves

47 Cic. *Fam.* 15.21.2. On Trebonius' troubled handling of the province, see *BHisp.* 7.4 and 12.2. 48 Broughton (1952), 2.258-259. On Antonius and Longinus paired together *BCiv.* 1.2.8, and without being named, *BCiv.* 1.5.5.

49 Bogus was twice in Spain (*BAlex.* 59.2 and 62.1), with Caesar in Africa (*BAfr.* 23.1) and at Munda (Dio 43.38.2); also acting on instructions from Antony since 38 BC, (Dio 48.45.1), eventually dying at Methone, (Dio 50.11.3).

50 Manuwald (2007), 92 with occurrences of *hostis* noted and commented. The term *hostis* becomes central, the scholar argues, from the *Third Philippic* onward, whereas the first two *Philippics* “talk more generally about Antonius' position and conduct as *hostis rei publicae*, *hostis patriae* or *dis hominibusque hostis* (cfr Cic. *Phil.* 2.1; 2.2; 2.51; 2.64; 2.89)”.

51 Manuwald (2007), 79. On the term *hostis* in Cicero, see also Cornwell (2017), 67-69.

scrutiny. His speech to the young Pompey in particular suggests that Cato's figure is under political reconsideration on the part of the compiler of the *Bellum Africum*. More importantly, Cato's words to Gnaeus Pompeius seem to speak directly to a contemporary audience and endorse the arrival of the young Octavian in Rome, at the head of a private army.

As seen in the previous chapter, in the *Bellum Africum* Cato is portrayed as a wise man, of *singularis integritas*.⁵² The same qualities return, as noted above, in Asinius Pollio's and Sallust's description of Cato.⁵³ Sallust depicts Cato in his monograph on Catilina; Pollio's account appears in Plutarch's biography of Cato and reports the senator's retreat from Sicily. As Pollio and Sallust were both high-ranking officers during the African campaign, they might have been behind the portrait of Cato in the *Africum*. More precisely, Pollio and Sallust might have shared with other Caesarian officers the same opinions of Cato. Certainly, the final compiler opted to include this favourable description of Cato in the African *commentarius*. However, such description sounds contradictory to both Caesar's and Hirtius' stances on Cato. As amply discussed above, both the dictator and his *familiaris* wrote two pamphlets against Cato, in which the senator was not only highly criticised but also roundly mocked.⁵⁴ Therefore, a few scholars consider the inclusion of those paragraphs - namely the episode of Cato addressing the young Pompey (Gnaeus Pompeius), and the account of his death - a later supplement, "ein empfindlich störender Fremdkörper".⁵⁵ Theoretically, as they are made up of reports, the *Commentarii* would appear susceptible to insertions. Camouflaging such insertions would have been easy: *interim* introduces both chapters 22 and 88 as well as many others throughout the *Africum*.

52 On the eulogies to and the pamphlet against Cato, see ch. 3.3.3, 180ff.

53 See ch. 3.1.5, 143ff.

54 See above n. 52.

55 On *BAfr.* 22 and 88 respectively Koestermann (1973), 57, whose article recognised the political value of the text, despite addressing only a section of the whole work. On the attribution to Plancus of these insertions, see also Watkins (1997), 39-40.

Nevertheless, the likelihood of such passages being supplementary to the original text is very low, since, most relevantly, such a hypothesis does not take into account the context at the points where Cato's speech is allegedly inserted. Cato and his command in Utica are mentioned for the first time in *BAfr.* 22.1 and with the same wording in *BAfr.* 36.1 (*qui Uticae praeerat*). While Caesar builds up defences in Ruspina, Cato advises Pompey's son to emulate his late father and invites him to set out in quest of his allies, among them the Mauritians. Incited by the words of such a wise man (*verbis hominis gravissimi incitatus*, *BAfr.* 23.1), he heads off to Ascurum with a fleet, de facto invading Mauritania and the kingdom of Bogud. However, Gnaeus Pompeius' move proves to be rather fruitless as he suffers a severe defeat and heads off to the Balearic Islands, off the coast of Spain. Although ineffective in Mauritania, Cato's advice is still valuable for Pompey: by gathering together the Pompeians in Spain, he can organise the resistance to Caesar there. The account shows on the one hand, the ineptitude of the young Pompeius, on the other Cato's strategic plan: expanding the conflict by engaging Pompey's clients and demanding their assistance. As mentioned above, of interest is the content of Cato's reprimand to the young Pompeius. The senator reminds Gnaeus that at his age, his father Pompey perceived that the *res publica* was oppressed by a group of wicked and vicious citizens (*cum ... animadvertisset rem publicam ab nefariis sceleratisque civibus oppressam ... BAfr.* 22.2). However, despite being a private citizen and still too young (*privatus atque adolescentulus ...*), Pompey the Great put together an army and liberated Italy and Rome from oppression (*... paene oppressam funditus et deletam Italiam urbemque Romam in libertatem vindicavit*, *BAfr.* 22.2). Therefore, endowed with his own father's fame and prestige, he himself should make the same effort and demand assistance from his clients for the state and for each citizen (*BAfr.* 22.5). The similarity between Cato's speech and two

passages, one in the *Bellum Civile*, the other in Augustus' *res gestae*, is worth further exploration.⁵⁶ Replying to Lentulus Spinther, who surrendered to him at Corfinum, Caesar justifies his involvement in the civil strife as being designed to defend himself, to restore the authority of the tribune and “to liberate myself and the Roman people from oppression by a small faction” (... *se et populum Romanum factione paucorum oppressum in libertatem vindicare*, *BCiv.* 1.22.5). Cato's passage in the *Bellum Africum* is almost aligned with Caesar's statement in the *Civile*, except for the *factio paucorum*, which becomes a generic group of people of dubious morality (*nefariis sceleratisque civibus*) in Cato's speech. The oppression that the whole of Italy and the city of Rome suffer is extended in the *Bellum Civile* to the *populus Romanus* and Caesar. Pompeius does not vindicate himself but he describes himself as acting on behalf of the oppressed: in his act of liberation, the personal element is absent. Caesar, by contrast, has to defend himself against the insults of his enemies.⁵⁷ The first paragraph of Augustus' *res gestae* seems to echo both the texts above. Made public after his death in AD 14, the *res gestae* is a record of Augustus' accomplishments and also a testament, copied and disseminated throughout the whole empire. The incipit is a bold statement:

“At the age of nineteen, on my own initiative and at my own expense (*privato consilio et privata impensa*), I raised an army by means of which I liberated the republic, oppressed by a faction (*rem publicam dominatione factionis oppressam in libertatem vindicavi*).”⁵⁸

The protagonist's age and the fact of private initiative are features he has in common with Pompeius, as described by Cato,

⁵⁶ And again, the hypothesis of an insertion has been restated by Pallavisini (1974), 107-114, who comments on these three passages.

⁵⁷ Raaflaub (1974), 125ff. and on this passage in the *Bellum Africum* 257-262.

⁵⁸ Aug. *Res gestae*, 1.1.

the *factio* is a shared element with Caesar's version. Starting in late spring of 44 BC, raising a private army was Octavian's first step into the Roman political arena, acting as Caesar's heir before being officially recognised as such and before being appointed pro-praetor at the beginning of the following year. It seems not coincidental that the *Bellum Africum* reports a similar occasion concerning Pompey the Great, in a Caesarian *commentarius*, in which Pompey is cast as an enemy.

A subtle equivalence emerges here between the figures of Caesar, Pompey (via Cato) and Octavian. The appropriation of the phrasing like "*in libertatem vindicare*" was likely crucial: both a way of justifying one's own actions and of having a clear purpose to claim at any time.⁵⁹ Moreover, the circumstances of being young and responsible for recruiting of a private army make the comparison between Pompey and Octavian almost inevitable. Since in the months after the Ides Octavian was a young commander of a private army, Cato's speech seems to function as an authoritative legitimisation of those circumstances, contemporary to the editing of the *Africum*. The senator claims that no matter the age and the nature of the army, action must be taken when the *res publica* is oppressed by a vicious and wicked group of citizens. The reference to the present situation seems clear: just like Pompey the Great, Octavian is young and leading a private army to defend the *res publica*. In Rome between the autumn of 44 BC and winter 43 BC, a compromise was being forged between the Caesarians and the Senate was taking place. In the spring of the same year, two of Caesar's *familiares*, now consuls, along with Caesar's heir, were marching against Antony, declared by the Senate *hostis publicus*, to defend the *res publica*. The *nefari sceleratique cives* are citizens who oppress the *res publica*, rebels who place themselves outside

⁵⁹ Whereas the expression *in libertatem vindicare* - common in Roman political vocabulary - returns in each of the passages, the most evident shift is the object of the oppression: the *populus Romanus* in Caesar, geographical in the *Bellum Africum* (Italy and Rome), the *res publica* in Augustus. On the phrasing, see Hellegouarc'h (1963), 555.

the law. Cato is here referring to the anti-Sullan citizens Pompey fought with his private army in the year 83 BC. Whether to the contemporary readers and listeners the appellatives *nefari* and *scelerati* might have struck a chord seems very much a speculative statement, but it is possible.⁶⁰ However, if the comparison between Pompey and Octavian, both young and leading a private army, may have been unavoidable, the text might contain other hints at the current situation, which are too hard to detect. Nevertheless, the phrasing “*rem publicam oppressam ... in libertatem vindicare*” returns in Caesarians like Plancus and Asinius Pollio, as high-sounding words that belonged to the propaganda of late Roman Republic.⁶¹ There is no need to justify Cato's speech as an insertion, posterior to the first version of the *Bellum Africum*, namely later than the year 43 BC.

This section is, I argue, the result of a deliberate choice on the part of the compiler, who is here addressing to a contemporary audience. Rather than being a supplement, this section of the *Bellum Africum* might be mirroring the contemporary scene in Rome. The reconsideration of Cato as a wise figure might have been used to legitimise the pattern of alliances that emerged after the Ides. Likewise, his speech has been constructed to respond to the needs of the moment, namely to endorse the arrival of the young Octavian in the Roman political arena.

5.6 The *Bellum Alexandrinum*: M. Aemilius Lepidus

M. Lepidus plays a part in the Longinus' affair as he intervenes to resolve the situation. The Caesarian comes to Further Spain to deal with the dispute between Longinus and Marcellus impartially

⁶⁰ Cicero often refers to Antonius as *nefarius* or *sceleratus* or capable of criminal actions: Cic. *Phil.* 4.12 (*cum scelerato homine ac nefario*) and 9.15 (*M. Antoni nefarium bellum gerentis scelerata audacia*); also *Phil.* 5.6; 2.85; 3.33. See also *Phil.* 4.15, where Antonius' villainous band is compared with Catilina's acolytes, a similar phrasing in Cic. *Cat.* 3.27 and in Sallust *Cat.* 52.36 (*nefario consilio sceleratorum civium res publica in maxuma pericula venerit*).

⁶¹ Pollio to Cicero on March the 16th, 43 BC, Cic. *Fam.* 10.31.5; Plancus to Cicero on May the 13th, 43 BC, thus after Mutina and Hirtius' death, Cic. *Fam.* 10.21.6; see Barja de Quiroga (forthcoming).

(*sine ullo studio contentiones componeret*, *BAlex.* 63.1), and does not allow any fighting, enforced by his personal guarantee (*fidemque suam in re omni interponuit*, *BAlex.* 63.3). When he intervenes to stop an attack, he does so with righteous anger and promptly (*nisi celeriter indignatione et auxilio Lepidi*, *BAlex.* 63.5). To reward him for his valuable service in Spain, Caesar granted Lepidus the offices of consul and *magister equitum* for the year 46 BC, because the dictator was heading to Africa to fight the remnants of Pompey's army.⁶² After the upheavals of the year 47 BC, and Antony's troubled handling of Rome as *magister equitum* for that year, Caesar entrusted Lepidus with the administration of the capital. The Caesarian proved to be a competent and effective administrator.⁶³ The reference to Lepidus as a Caesarian able to resolve disputes (*contentiones componere*) might have been calculated to appeal to an audience witnessing the precarious situation of the years 44/43 BC.⁶⁴ Perhaps it might also have been also a reminder of his role as *magister equitum*, in which he was rather successful, when compared with Antony's tenure in the office.⁶⁵

In the months after the Ides, Lepidus was a key figure: as governor of Gallia Narbonensis and Nearer Spain he also induced Sextus Pompeius to accept peace; as army commander, his intervention may have been decisive either in favour of or against Antony.⁶⁶ Significantly, Cicero argues that Lepidus achieved peace with Sextus without a minimum of commotion (*quod silentio bellum civile confecerat*).⁶⁷ As seen above, Lepidus intervenes with similar

62 On the role of Lepidus both in the Longinus affaire and as *magister equitum*, see Weigel (1992), 28-29 and 30ff.; Welch (1995); Allely (2004), 49-51, who explicitly argues for Lepidus' "rôle d'un médiateur" and "talent de négociateur" in Spain.

63 Welch (1995), 453.

64 The word "*contentiones*" returns twice in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*: pacified by Lepidus at 63.1; still ongoing in Rome under Antony's administration at 65.1.

65 Allely (2004), 55-71.

66 On the Senate dealing with Sextus Pompeius: Dio 45.9.4; App. *B Civ.* 3.4; 4.94. On Lepidus dealing with Sextus Pompeius, see Allely (2004), 89-92.

67 Cic. *Phil.* 13.9; on the meaning of *pax* related to Sextus, Cicero and Antony see Cornwell (2017), 70-72.

effectiveness in the Longinus' affair.⁶⁸ Moreover, until the battle at Mutina, his position appears neutral, calling for a general peace between the Senate and Antony.⁶⁹ However, Cicero tries to win him over to the side of the republic, by proposing certain honours.⁷⁰ By highlighting the abilities of a Caesarian like Lepidus, the compiler of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* might have wanted to align himself with Cicero's policy and to acknowledge Lepidus' role in the present struggle between the Senate and Antony.

5.7 The *Bellum Hispaniense*: Sextus Pompeius

The references to Sextus Pompeius in the *Bellum Hispaniense* appear rather reticent. The second son of Pompey the Great, he appears for the first time in southern Spain, as subaltern to his brother Gnaeus in Caesar's Spanish campaign.⁷¹ However, the role Sextus played in Further Spain is unclear, especially in relation to his older brother Gnaeus. Gnaeus Pompeius is the chief enemy in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, whereas Sextus is quoted just a few times.⁷² Sources such as Dio and Appian offer more details; Cicero sounds dismissive in a letter dated May 45, therefore written after Munda: "Hirtius wrote to me that Sex. Pompeius has left Corduba and fled into Hither Spain and that Gnaeus has fled I don't know where; for that matter I don't care".⁷³ Hirtius is the informant here: Caesar's collaborator and *familiaris* was in Spain or at least for a short time. Noteworthy is Sextus' destination, which is better known to Hirtius than that of Gnaeus. Whereas the latter simply runs away, the former knows where to go. Nevertheless, Caesar is unwilling to pursue Sextus because he is too young and inexperienced, and

68 *BAlex.* 63.1; on Lepidus' intervention in Spain see above p. 246ff.

69 On Lepidus' attitude in the weeks before and after Mutina, see Weigel (1992), 54-55.

70 Cic. *Phil.* 5. 38-41, delivered on January the 1st, 43 BC, praises Lepidus, *vir clarissimus*, for his *moderatio*, *sapientia* and *humanitas*. Beyond the *supplicatio* already voted by the Senate at the end of December 44 BC (Cic. *Phil.* 3.20-24), Cicero wants a statue on the Rostra erected in Lepidus' honour.

71 On Sextus Pompeius see Welch (2012).

72 *BHisp.* 3.1; 4.3; 32.4; 34.2.

73 Cic. *Att.* 12.37a. On Dio's and Appian's accounts, but not exclusively, see Welch (2012), 99-115 and related notes.

regards him as a matter issue for the local authorities.⁷⁴

As for “Quellenkritik”, Appian's and Dio's accounts derive from sources other than the *Bellum Hispaniense*. Florus', Velleius' and even Livy's accounts, although too concise, again indicate sources not aligned with the Caesarian *commentarius*.⁷⁵ Possibly, the final compiler might not have written any material concerning Sextus' deeds. However, only one year after the defeat of the Pompeians at Munda, Sextus was again able to exert full control over the province of Baetica: Asinius Pollio, the new governor, was soundly defeated in Baetica in summer 44 BC.⁷⁶ Sextus' role may have been overshadowed by his brother Gnaeus, who had been militarily active since the African campaign, inevitably so as the war was conducted by him. Nevertheless, Sextus' role was certainly of relevance, as he presided over Corduba, the chief town of the province, and swiftly moved north to the safe territory of the Lacetani, in the Ebro valley.⁷⁷ The account manages to divert attention from the setback suffered by Caesar's army around Corduba to the subsequent siege of Ategua. Sextus resists Caesar's attacks, thanks to the arrival of his brother Gnaeus, whom he calls for help *timore adductus* (*BHisp.* 4.3), from the siege of Ullia, a town nearby. Left in Corduba, where he remains for the entire campaign, Sextus reappears in the *Bellum Hispaniense* just after the defeat of his brother's defeat at Munda. On learning of the events at Munda through a young survivor, Sextus divides the money among his cavalry (*BHisp.* 32.5) and tells the inhabitants that he is setting out for peace talks with Caesar (*BHisp.* 32.5), then he departs from the town. Peace talks were an expedient to keep the town safe and to keep the Caesarian faction calm, revitalised as they were by their victory, while the money was used to placate the *equites* (*BHisp.* 34.2).⁷⁸ Without further

74 App. *B Civ.* 4.11.83; Dio 45.10.1.

75 Dio 43.28-42, App. *B Civ.* 2.104-105, Vell. 2.55, Florus 2.13.78-87, Plut. *Caes.* 56. 2-3. On all these sources, see Strocchi (1994).

76 Dio 45.10.6.

77 Dio 45.10.1.

78 *BAfr.* 87.7: an expedient that works, as Cato *docet* at Utica still concerning the cavalry.

comment, Sextus vanishes from the account.

Whether Sextus' absence in the *Bellum Hispaniense* account was accidental or intentional is difficult to establish.⁷⁹ The reference to peace talks might also be a subtle hint at Sextus' inclination to reach an agreement with the Senate, as it happened only one year later. Meanwhile, the indifference shown by Cicero in the letter quoted above became an open endorsement of Sextus' rehabilitation in Rome.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, as Welch demonstrates, Cicero's eulogy to Sextus occurs in March 43 BC, only when Cicero "run(s) out of alternatives" to oppose to Antony.⁸¹ That is to say that how to deal with Sextus was a matter to be discussed and addressed among the Senate and the Caesarians. Moreover, Antony had authorised Lepidus to come to terms with Sextus at the time of his consulate.⁸² Considering the grip Sextus had on Spain in the years following Munda, the compiler of the *Bellum Hispaniense* might have prudently avoided any reference to Sextus' actions at the time of Caesar's campaign. Silence would have been a sign of that political tactic, known as "attentisme". On this note of reticence it is worth adding that Sextus became the unnamed opponent in Octavian's *res gestae* and in the Augustan poets, Vergil and Horace.⁸³ The narrative adopted by the most eminent authors of the Principate on Sextus displays a continuity with the *Bellum Hispaniense* and the dismissive attitude Caesar shows towards him. Whereas in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, the judgment seems to be suspended, in the Augustan works it is fully revealed. Hindsight is in operation as the political choice Augustus takes is to ignore Sextus, by relegating him to the status of a pirate. In both cases

79 However, on Sextus' attitude at Corduba the account seems well informed. In fact, pro-Caesarian intelligence is operating in the town, see *BHisp.* 32.4.

80 Cic. *Phil.* 5.39; 13.11-12. See Welch (2002), 10ff., who, quoting Cic. *Att.* 16.4.1, argues that Cicero's "less-than-wholehearted" sympathy for Sextus was obstructed by the rhetoric of Antony, who "aimed ... at persuading Caesarian veterans and civilians that to oppose Antony was in effect to be Pompeian".

81 Welch (2002), 21.

82 Cic. *Phil.* 5.14.

83 With certainty the reference to pirates and slaves in Aug. *Res gestae* 25.1, as for Hor. *Epist.* 4.17-20, less explicitly in Verg. *Aen.* 6.612-613.

however, Sextus is either barely quoted or merely hinted at.

5.8 Conclusion

The interruption of the Corpus, as seen above, is likely due to Hirtius' death.⁸⁴ However, the texts might have lost their importance, as they were overtaken by the events of the years to come and ultimately by the conflict between Antony and Octavian, which perpetuated the civil war until 32 BC. When the conflict between the two was over, the wounds were perhaps still too fresh, and allowing the accounts to circulate might have seemed ill-advised. Ultimately, Caesar's writings, like his whole image, was in the hand of his adopted son.⁸⁵ Suetonius documents, not cursorily, Augustus' censorship of Caesar's works, quoting the dictator's juvenile tragedies and also the case of speeches wrongly attributed to him.⁸⁶ The not fully edited state of the three last books of the Corpus might have been an excuse, a pretext to confine them to the shelves, as mere written material available for use by historians.⁸⁷ More likely, as stated above, the death of Hirtius might have been the final blow to their completion.⁸⁸ More urgent might have been Oppius' pamphlet on Caesarion, the alleged son of Caesar and Cleopatra, and more useful in terms of propaganda Balbus' and Oppius' historical memoirs on Caesar, which probably avoided explicit references to the civil wars.⁸⁹ Augustus' official versions of those times have circulated, his biography and his *res gestae*, which only briefly touch upon that period of Caesar's campaigns. Free to circulate, yet perhaps critical, were Livy's and Pollio's accounts of those years, which, unfortunately, have been lost. The last three

84 See ch. 4.1.2, 196ff and especially 4.1.4, 207ff.

85 As argued in ch. 3.3.3, 187, the issue of the *Commentarii* might have been among the items to discuss.

86 On Augustus' censorship on Caesar's writings see Suet. *Iul.* 56.7, but also 55.3-4, Zecchini (1993), 191-205.

87 In so doing, the *Commentarii* might have returned to be draft-versions in use for the historians to come, as perhaps Pollio's judgment hints at, (Suet. *Iul.* 56.4).

88 On editorship see ch. 4.1.4, 217.

89 Extensively on Balbus' and Oppius' writings see ch. 3.3.3, 181 and 184 respectively.

books of the *Corpus* are part of the political narrative after the Ides of March. They concern a narrative still to be perfected, still ongoing, without hindsight, from which the accounts to come benefit.

The three *Bella* are not only about “soldiering on”, that is, not only a matter of continuing what has been dramatically interrupted. Completing a literary project was certainly one of the aims, as the words are there to testify, but the main reason was eminently political. The version of the events is intended for a contemporary audience: figures such as Lepidus and Sextus Pompeius are still alive, Cato is already a symbol, who represents the whole *res publica* and its traditional values, Antony, although only briefly mentioned and possibly alluded to, is at the centre of a political crisis in which Caesarians form a coalition with the Liberators and end up fighting among themselves. Moreover, Octavian enters the political scene, rather well-prepared and supported by Caesar's *familiares*, from his arrival on the Campanian coast in the spring of 44 BC. The last three *Commentarii* deal with the current political situation supposedly created by Caesar, but “without Caesar”. His absence is also political: still there in the text as main protagonist of the campaigns, Caesar is absent from the political arena. Nevertheless, the texts have to address the new political scenario as their editors are still alive and active. They seem to reconsider Caesar's political position on Cato, for instance, and adapt themselves to the current situation in Rome. By evoking Pompey's qualities and *res gestae*, Cato's speech legitimises Octavian's ambitions to enter the political arena in Rome. The symmetry that at times emerges with Cicero's contemporary statements denotes the present alliance between the *familiares* and Octavian on one hand, and the Senate on the other. Whereas Cicero is explicitly against Antony, the editor of the *Corpus* seems to play an opportunist waiting game.

By recording episodes of the very recent civil strife, the last three works respond to the contemporary political arena and speak

to the protagonists of that arena. The three *Bella* add to the narrative the present struggle. Traces of such a present struggle are perhaps more subtle than explicit. What to us might appear as understatement might have been perceived differently by contemporary readers and listeners; the account was not only reporting the recent past, it was also describing or alluding to protagonists or themes related to the situation at the time of the Corpus' completion. The texts hint at the Caesarians who were repositioning themselves after the Ides. Ultimately, the last three *Bella* of the Corpus are contemporary not only to the events they depict but even to the time in which they were composed. Addressed to readers and listeners living in the tumultuous years 44 and 43 BC, they are designed to gather support for the Caesarian cause at the time of its re-modelling.

Conclusions

My thesis focuses on the method of composition and the structure of all five *Commentarii* of the *Corpus Caesarianum*. I argue that the basic structural unit of the *Commentarii* is the report, and I postulate the existence of a “newsroom”, the narrative hub that records the written material of the military campaigns. According to my reading, the act of organising and editing the written material of the *Commentarii* is more appropriately expressed by the concept of editorship rather than by the concept of authorship. The account of Caesar's *res gestae* is much more important than the identity of its compiler(s). As identity becomes less relevant, I suggest that anonymity, far from being accidental, is instead a characteristic, that is inherent to the completion of the *Commentarii* and is also deliberately retained in their editing process. Building on this insight, my interpretation of anonymity allows me to consider the three anonymous *Commentarii* not as merely continuations of Caesar's account, but instead as tools that were actively operating within the contemporary political landscape.

The *commentarius* is a draft report, a document that records information, and an aide-mémoire in one. According to Cicero, a *commentarius* is a document written in an unrefined style, in need of *ornatus* (embellishment) and not for publication. In [chapter 1](#), through a synchronic analysis of the term *commentarius*, I explored the meaning and the use of this word at the time of Caesar and Cicero. Cicero's well-known lines in the *Brutus*, a work written in 46 BC and dedicated to oratory and orators, link together the style of the *Commentarii* and the genre of history. In Cicero's view, history requires rhetorical skills and can be regarded as the most adorned form of oratory. Due to their unadorned style, Cicero, therefore, does

not consider Caesar's *Commentarii* to belong to the *genus historicum*. It is with regard to the *ornatus* (the embellishment) that the difference between Caesar and Cicero becomes more noticeable. Caesar, in his treatise *De Analogia*, written at the time of the Gallic campaigns, seems to emphasise the importance of a more accessible Latin. His agenda of linguistic systematisation in this work is directly linked to the social context in which Caesar was operating as proconsul and in which the provincials living in Cisalpine Gaul struggled to communicate effectively with the Roman authorities. I consider the *De Analogia* to be a work that is proemial to the *Commentarii*, which are the practical output of Caesar's linguistic theories, a highly readable tool made available to a wide audience. As for the *commentarius*, it was not only a format that propagated simple and unadorned language. Caesar's choice was also motivated by the fact that the *commentarius* was a means already employed by officials and lieutenants to communicate information to the headquarters. As a commonly used medium, I claim that the *commentarius* has a uniform internal structure, which is based on reports.

By studying the main features (format and content) of the report, my research shows how the *Commentarii* gather and select information and how their narrative progresses alongside the military campaign ([chapter 2](#)). The *Commentarii* represent the result of available information that was useful to both the general and the narrator, and functional to both the military campaign and the account of the *res gestae*. What differentiates the *Commentarii* are both the style and the level of editing which each text underwent. It is the method of composition behind the *Commentarii* that makes the whole Corpus a uniformly conceived work. The fact of having been continued by others, far from proving the Corpus' lack of homogeneity, is evidence of its uniformity and adherence to a unified compositional method.

The act of gathering documentation throughout the whole campaign suggests the existence of a “newsroom” (chapter 3). The “newsroom” is primarily a location where the information is collected. Secondly, as the documents are kept and probably classified, the “newsroom” is also an archive, centred on Caesar in his peripatetic headquarters. Finally, such a well-oiled machine needs an entire “entourage” (scribes, reporters and editors) who were dedicated to maintaining it. The “newsroom” is at work in the genuinely Caesarian *Bella*, and its functioning can be more clearly discerned in the anonymous *Commentarii* and in particular in the *Bellum Hispaniense*. This chapter goes on to demonstrate how Caesar deals with, controls and selects the information provided by the “newsroom”. By the term “entourage” I mean not only the *scribae*, but also the reporters (officers, lieutenants) who shared the practice of reporting and collecting information, and the editors who completed the Corpus. These reporters are generally known from the account: the further from the “newsroom” the officer is, the more clearly his identity appears or can be deduced. Whereas the officer is identifiable, the final compiler(s) - the editor(s) - of the anonymous works remains a mercurial entity. Thus, my study draws a distinction between the reporters, who are the sources for each military campaign and the editor(s), who compile each *commentarius*. Among the reporters, for instance, are Vatinius, Vibius Pacciaecus, Publius Sittius and possibly Asinius Pollio and Sallust. Among the editors, the persons best placed to handle Caesar's written material and archive were Caesar's *familiares*: Hirtius, Balbus and Oppius. Due to his previous collaboration with Caesar, Hirtius can be considered the main editor of the *Commentarii*, whereas Oppius might have intervened in handling the Corpus after Hirtius' death.

The editors (Hirtius and Oppius) do not claim any authorship of the *Commentarii* as they first gather and then edit the written material (chapter 4). Most importantly, they do not claim authorship

because presenting the account of Caesar's deeds is the prime aim of the editor(s). Therefore, the completion of the general's *res gestae* was more important than claiming any authorship over the works. The repetitions, incongruities and incompleteness of the texts are due mainly to unfinished editing. The editorial “non finito” is most evident in the case of the *Bellum Hispaniense*. This unfinished state of editing might be due to an intelligence operation that Oppius and Balbus put in place to rescue and preserve the texts after Hirtius' death.

Since questions of authorship and authorial identity are overshadowed by the accounts of the *res gestae*, I propose a new interpretation of anonymity, which has until now been considered a characteristic proper of the last three *Commentarii* only, since their authors are unknown. My study here starts with a distinction between elements which define the anonymity of the *Commentarii* as internal (the report-based method of composition, the multi-authorship comprising the different reporters who contributed to the works, and the use of the third person) and factors external to the text (the death of Caesar and Hirtius, the fragmentary status of the manuscript tradition), which enforce anonymity. Elements such as the use of the third person have the effect of making the narrative of the *res gestae* prevail over the narrators' identity. The anonymity of the work appears to be a natural consequence of such a narrative, and a deliberate choice on the part of Caesar and his editors. The death of Caesar, first, and Hirtius, slightly later, were both external factors that contributed to making the completion of the work arduous and problematic. Such factors might have given rise to the *vexata quaestio* of the authorship, an issue that was, however, of no interest to the Caesarians who dealt with the *Commentarii*. From its earliest survivals in the fifth century AD, the manuscript tradition reflects long-standing misconceptions over authorship. In my research, anonymity, so understood, fulfils an essential function as

an effective device for persuading for the public targeted by the *Commentarii*. This public comprised soldiers, provincials and Roman citizens in general, who were considered the potential readers and listeners. The work would have had the potential to reach a very large audience due especially to the accessibility of the language. Thanks to the anonymity of the work, the audience might have found the account of Caesar's *res gestae* persuasive and believable.

The three anonymous *Bella* do not merely reflect the political struggle that followed Caesar's death, they also act as a political agent at a very confused and challenging time for the Caesarians (chapter 5). The editors of the *Commentarii* were themselves protagonists of that very same struggle. My research considers references not exclusively to the protagonists and the events narrated in the accounts, but also references to the figures and events contemporary with their composition. By examining the last three *Commentarii* prevalently, albeit not exclusively, in terms of authorship, modern scholars have to date ignored the political implications that the accounts might have had at the time in which they were written and edited. Such political implications concern the issues of how the Caesarians tried to reposition themselves after the Ides and how they responded to the ongoing, dynamic situation of the years 44/43 BC, a period which Hirtius describes as one of *civilis dissensio*. No other extant account was as close to recent events as the *Commentarii*, at a time when the same protagonists of those events were still alive. The praise heaped on the republican Cato and his speech to the young Pompey, as reported in the *Bellum Africum*, respond to the need of the moment: namely legitimising the alliance between the Senate and the group of Caesarians including Hirtius and Pansa against Antony and endorsing the arrival of Octavian into the political arena. Reconsidering those texts from a contemporary perspective shows how the main editors, Hirtius, Oppius and Balbus, were actively

operating in the contemporary political scene by endorsing Cicero's policy of uniting the *res publica* against Antonius.

To conclude, the *Commentarii* function as a cultural and political tool that had a direct impact on the political scene of the late Roman Republic. By adopting the draft-report-like *commentarius* form, Caesar produced an account in which both style and content, language and narrative all conveyed his political message to a contemporary audience. Through the choice of language that was both *facilis* and *cotidianus*, in accordance with the theory of Caesar's *De Analogia*, the *Commentarii* rejected the *ornatus* and aimed to establish a direct form of communication between Caesar the general and the people (the army and the wider civic community at large). The dictator is shown ultimately to be successful in legitimising the *Commentarii* as a tool for communicating his policy to a large audience. After Caesar's death the *Commentarii* underwent a process of editing: his inner circle of friends - especially Hirtius, Oppius and Balbus - intervened in the written material to continue the narrative of the civil wars. Composed during the troubled period of the Late Roman Republic, the *Commentarii* not only narrate Caesar's *res gestae*, but also, and more importantly, actively operate within the dramatic situation following the Ides of March. While narrating Caesar's actions and remaining anonymous, even the so-called Continuator select and edit information that was to have an immediate impact on the political and military events of the Late Roman Republic.

The choice of the *commentarius* form, the structure and content of the *Commentarii*, and their inherent anonymity, along with the personalities involved in their composition, editing and handling, all contribute to making the *Corpus Caesarianum* a unique literary and historical event.

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