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CAESAR AS *SALIUS*:
A RECONSIDERATION OF THE *APEX* ON
CAESAR'S ELEPHANT *DENARIUS* (RRC 443/1)

MEGHAN J. DILUZIO



Abstract: This article reconsiders Caesar's so-called elephant *denarius* (RRC 443/1), struck in 49 B.C.E. at the beginning of the civil war. It argues that the *apex* featured on the obverse, which has long been understood as a reference to Caesar as *pontifex maximus*, is actually an allusion to his status as a *salius*. Through a consideration of the written and visual evidence, the article shows that the *apex* is not associated with the *pontifex maximus* on extant coins prior to the death of Caesar, when rival claimants to his power appropriated his iconography for themselves.

WHILE THE ICONOGRAPHY OF CAESAR'S SO-CALLED ELEPHANT *denarius* has been the subject of scholarly controversy for well over a century, the debate has been taken almost exclusively with the elephant on the reverse (RRC 443/1, Figure 1).¹ By contrast, something of a consensus has emerged concerning the ritual implements featured on the obverse: the *culullus* (cup), *aspergillum* (sprinkler), *sacena* (axe), and *apex* (cap with a spike) collectively refer, so it is believed, to Caesar's position as *pontifex maximus*.² But this traditional interpretation must be reconsidered.

¹For a recent overview of the various proposals that have been offered, see Amela Valverde 2013a. There has been debate about identifying the obverse and reverse of the coin. While most scholars describe the elephant face as the obverse (see, e.g., Babelon 1885–86, 2.10–11; Grueber 1910, 2.390–1; Sydenham 1952, 167, no. 1006; Sear 1998, 9; Woytek 2005, 644; Amela Valverde 2013a, 145, n. 2), Crawford 1974 (RRC 443/1) lists it as the reverse. On the whole, Crawford's arrangement seems more plausible. As Nousek (2008, 290–1, n. 3) points out, the presence of Caesar's *cognomen* in the exergue is “strong evidence” that the elephant face was intended as the reverse: “While a coin's legend may appear on the obverse in vertical, horizontal, or curving script, there is no example of a strict exergue, with the traditional horizontal line as divider, on the obverse of a republican coin. On this evidence, it would seem logical to count the coin face with a traditional exergue, i.e., the elephant face, as the reverse, no matter the iconography of the obverse.”

²This interpretation is adopted by Mommsen 1860, 631; Babelon 1885–6, 2.10; Grueber 1910, 2.384, 391, n. 1; Kirkpatrick 1969, 125; Crawford 1974, 735; Ritter 1988, 385; Perez 1989, 119; Linderski 1996, 173; Sear 1998, 9; Amela Valverde 2002, 26; Woytek 2003,



Figure 1. *Denarius* of C. Julius Caesar (cos. 59 B.C.E.) showing a *culullus*, *aspergillum*, *sacena*, and *apex* on the obverse and an elephant trampling a snake on the reverse, 49 B.C.E. (RRC 443/1). ANS 1957.172.105, American Numismatic Society.

No evidence associating the *apex* with the office of *pontifex maximus* exists prior to the minting of the elephant *denarius* in 49 B.C.E. Earlier issues associate the *apex* exclusively with the *flamines*, while earlier *pontifices* (or their descendants) employ a variety of ritual objects, but never the *apex*, to refer to their office. By drawing on literary and visual evidence concerning the *apex*, I shall argue in what follows that its connection with the *pontifex maximus* is a later development, an innovation by Caesar's successors, and that the appearance of the *apex* on the elephant *denarius* actually refers either to Caesar's status as *flamen Dialis* designate in the late eighties B.C.E., or, more likely, to the office of *salius*. Despite the silence of the written sources, Crawford and Rüpke have argued that Caesar was a *salius* on the basis of a *quinarius* struck in his name in 48/47 B.C.E. (RRC 452/3, Figure 13).³ The elephant *denarius* appears to confirm his membership in this ancient priesthood.

THE ELEPHANT DENARIUS

As the first irregular issue struck during the civil war, the elephant *denarius* allows us to analyze Caesar's self-presentation at a critical moment in his public career.⁴ Caesar had entered into open rebellion against the *res publica* when he crossed the Rubicon and invaded Italy on the night of January 11, 49 B.C.E. While the coin types issued by his opponents in this

119, 2005, 643; Nousek 2008, 291, 294; Wardle 2009, 103–4; Amela Valverde 2013a, 149. For a critique of the *communis opinio*, see Battenberg 1980, 57, discussed more fully below.

³Crawford 1974, 467; Rüpke 2008, 734, no. 2003.

⁴Crawford (1974, 89, 735) dates the issue to 49 B.C.E. on the basis of the hoard evidence.

year tend to emphasize the legitimacy of the republican cause and the strength of the senatorial legions,⁵ the elephant *denarius* emphasizes the *auctoritas* of the defiant proconsul whose name appears in the exergue.⁶ The obverse is particularly significant in this regard. Since the creation of the *denarius* coinage in 211 B.C.E.,⁷ Roman coins of every denomination had borne, with very few exceptions, the head of a deity on the obverse.⁸ The priestly implements on the obverse of the elephant *denarius*, by contrast, gesture toward a portrait of Caesar.⁹

Caesar had been co-opted as *pontifex* in about 73 B.C.E.¹⁰ and elected in 63 B.C.E. as *pontifex maximus*, although he ran in opposition to his older and far more distinguished colleagues Q. Lutatius Catulus

⁵The *denarius* of Q. Sicinius, one of the moneyers for 49 B.C.E., shows the head of Fortuna Populi Romani on the obverse and symbols of victory on the reverse (*RRC* 440/1). The *denarius* struck by Cn. Nerius, who was *quaestor urbanus* in 49 B.C.E., features the head of Saturn on the obverse, with the legionary eagle and the names of the consuls on the reverse (*RRC* 441/1). The consuls themselves also issued coins in 49 B.C.E., including a *denarius* showing Jupiter holding a thunderbolt and an eagle on the reverse and either a *triskeles* and the head of Medusa or the head of Apollo on the obverse (*RRC* 445/1a-2). See Nousek 2008, 304–5, for a more detailed discussion of these types.

⁶Wallace-Hadrill 1986, 75; Linderski 1996, 173. Compare *RRC* 452/1–5, 458/1 and 468/1–2, all likewise identifying the issuer simply as CAESAR.

⁷For the introduction of the *denarius* coinage, see Crawford 1974, 28–35.

⁸The obverse of the *denarius* initially carried a head of Roma, while the reverse showed the Dioscuri on horseback. Beginning in the 190s B.C.E., an alternative reverse type of Luna or another deity driving a *biga* appeared. Moneyers first began to experiment with designs of a more personal nature in 137 B.C.E. (*RRC* 234/1, 235/1). While Roma maintained her position on the obverse of most *denarius* issues until about 100 B.C.E., some mint magistrates chose instead deities with a connection to themselves or their families. Juno Sospita, for example, appears on several issues struck by magistrates from Lanuvium (*RRC* 231/1, 316/1, 379/1–2, 384/1, 412/1, 472/1, 3). Obverse types that deviate more dramatically from the traditional design tend to feature an ancestor (*RRC* 344/1–3, 346/1, 3–4, 404/1, 425/1, 433/2, 434/1–2, 439/1) or canting pun (*RRC* 293/1, 337/1a, 342/2). Admittedly, Caesar was not the first Roman to advertise his own achievements (rather than those of an ancestor) on both the obverse and the reverse. An issue struck in 71 B.C.E. to commemorate Pompey's second triumph features a personification of Africa wearing an elephant's skin on the obverse and an image of Pompey in a triumphal *quadriga* on the reverse (*RRC* 402/1a-b). The representation of Africa presumably alludes to his first triumph, awarded (reluctantly) by Sulla for his victory over King Iarbas of Numidia in 81 B.C.E. In 65 B.C.E., L. Manlius Torquatus (pr. 49 B.C.E.), struck an issue with the head of a Sibyl on the obverse and a tripod on the reverse, presumably referring to his status as a *XVvir sacris faciundis* (*RRC* 411/1).

⁹Caesar would later become the first living Roman to have his image placed on coins issued by the *res publica* following a decree of the senate in 45 B.C.E. (Dio Cass. 44.4.4; *RRC* 480/2a-20, with Ritter 1988; Suspène 2008, 2012).

¹⁰Vell. Pat. 2.43.1; Macrobian. *Sat.* 3.13.11; *RE* Iulius 131; *MRR* 2.113; Szemler 1972, 131–2, no. 50; *NP* Caesar; Rüpke 2008, 735, no. 2003.

(cos. 78 B.C.E.) and P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus (cos. 79 B.C.E.).¹¹ Given the prestige associated with this office, it is not surprising that three of the four implements on the obverse of the elephant *denarius*—the *culullus*, *aspergillum*, and *sacena*—refer to the ritual functions of the *pontifices*. Members of the college used the *culullus*, a small a clay cup, to pour libations at sacrifices.¹² They employed the *aspergillum*, a stick affixed with strands of horse-hair, to sprinkle water in rituals of consecration or lustration.¹³ The *sacena*, a type of sacrificial axe associated with the *pontifices*,¹⁴ was used to sever the spinal column of the sacrificial victim, killing it instantly before its throat was cut and the animal exsanguinated (Aldrete 2014, especially 40–45). While the *sacena* was typically wielded by a *popa*, one of the slave or freed *victimarii* responsible for the messy and often dangerous work of slaughtering and butchering the victim,¹⁵ it was an important symbol of the *pontifex*'s authority to preside over public sacrifices.

The fourth object on the obverse is the *apex*. This priestly cap was composed of two distinct elements.¹⁶ The first, the *pilleum*,¹⁷ was a close-fitting cap made from the hide of a sacrificial victim (Isid. *Orig.* 19.30.5). The second, the *apex*, was an olivewood spike (*virgula oleagina*, Festus

¹¹Sall. *Cat.* 49.2; Vell. Pat. 2.43.3; Suet. *Iul.* 13.1; Plut. *Caes.* 7.1; *RE* Iulius 131; *MRR* 2.171; Szemler 1972, 131–2, no. 50; *NP* Caesar; Rüpke 2008, 735, no. 2003.

¹²Porph. ad *Hor. C.* 1.31.10; Siebert 1999, 54, 132–3, 216–7. It should be noted that Siebert (1999, 321, Mü 13) describes the object as a *simpuvium*, a ladle used for dipping wine at sacrifices (Cic. *Rep.* 6.2; schol. ad *Juv.* 6.343).

¹³Siebert 1999, 110–5, 132–3, 260–1. The term *aspergillum*, which does not appear in the ancient literature, is borrowed from the terminology of the medieval church.

¹⁴Festus (Paulus) 423L, with von Schaewen 1940, 49–53; Siebert 1999, 70–73. While numismatists tend to label the axe on the elephant *denarius* a *securis*, this term should probably be reserved for the axe carried by the lictors of curule magistrates (as stressed by Siebert 1999, 72–73).

¹⁵For the *popae*, see Cic. *Mil.* 65; Pers. 6.73–74; Sen. *Ag.* 897–901; Suet. *Cal.* 32.3; *CIL* 6.9824, with Rüpke 2008, 649, no. 1419. For the *victimarii* more generally, see Wissowa 1912, 417–8; Fless 1995, especially 70–78; Prescendi 2007, 35–39; Lennon 2015.

¹⁶Important discussions of the *apex* include Helbig 1880; Marquardt 1885; Samter 1894; *RE* 1.2 s.v. *apex*, 6.2 s.v. *flamines*; Daremberg-Saglio, s.v. *flamen*; Esdaile 1911; Wissowa 1912, 499–500; von Schaewen 1940, 59–60; Ryberg 1955, 14–15, 44–45; Freier 1963, 39–53; Bonfante Warren 1973, 587–8, 605; Bonfante 2003, 126, n. 29, 134, n. 7; Schäfer 1980, especially 349–65; Vanggaard 1988, 40–42; Siebert 1999, 122–5, 127.

¹⁷Although modern scholars tend to describe the cap as a *galerus*, the ancient sources do not use this term, except in the case of the *albogalerus* of the *flamen Dialis* (see below). For the designation of the cap as a *pilleum*, see Festus (Paulus) 9L; Serv. Auct. *Aen.* 7.688; Isid. *Orig.* 7.12.18–9.

[Paulus] 9L) attached to the top of this cap.¹⁸ By synecdoche, the term *apex* came to designate the headgear as a whole.¹⁹ The leather *pilleum* was tied or buttoned under the chin with leather strings known as *offendices*.²⁰ The olivewood spike was fastened to the *pilleum* with a woolen thread (variously called the *apiculum* or the *filum*) spun from the fleece of a sacrificial victim.²¹ The *flamen Dialis* wore a special version of this cap, the *albogalerus*, made from the hide of a white animal that had been offered to Jupiter (Gell. *N.A.* 10.15.32 [= Varro *Div.* 2.51]; Festus [Paulus] 9L).

THE APEX AND THE PONTIFICES

Most have seen the *apex* on Caesar's elephant *denarius* as a symbol of the office of *pontifex maximus*, even though, as Wissowa noted over one hundred years ago, the *pontifices* did not wear the *apex* (Wissowa 1912, 499). Indeed, with the exception of the elephant *denarius*, the *apex* is absent from coins issued by *pontifices* (or their descendants) prior to Caesar's death. These show the *culullus* or related objects, such as the *simpulum*, a ladle used to dip wine at sacrifices (Festus [Paulus] 455L; Siebert 1999, 47–51, 236–9), the *patera*, a shallow dish employed to pour libations and to collect the blood of the sacrificial victim,²² as well as the *sacena* and the *culter*, the knife with which the *victimarius* cut the throat of the animal (Siebert 1999, 79–84).

Struck in 69 B.C.E., the *denarius* issue of P. Sulpicius Galba (pr. 66 B.C.E.) bears a *culter*, *culullus*, and *sacena* on the reverse (*RRC* 406/1, Figure 2). The type was presumably intended to commemorate his co-optation as *pontifex* in the same year.²³ In 61 B.C.E., M. Pupius Piso (pr. 44 B.C.E.) issued a *denarius* bearing a wreath and a two-handled dish on the obverse, and a *culter* and *patera* on the reverse (*RRC* 418/1–2b,

¹⁸For the designation of the spike as an *apex*, see Festus (Paulus) 9, 17, 21L; Isid. *Orig.* 19.30.5; Serv. Auct. ad *Aen.* 10.270. The term *virga* appears at Isid. *Orig.* 7.12.17; Serv. Auct. ad *Aen.* 8.664.

¹⁹See, for example, Livy 6.41.9; Ov. *Fast.* 3.397; Plin. *HN* 22.96; Luc. 1.604; Gell. *N.A.* 10.15.9, 17; Festus 222L; Aug. *Civ. Dei* 2.15; Festus (Paulus) 17, 21, 223, 439L; Serv. Auct. ad *Aen.* 1.305, 2.683.

²⁰Festus 222L; Festus (Paulus) 223L; Esdaile 1911, 213; Siebert 1999, 119–20.

²¹Isid. *Orig.* 19.30.5; Serv. Auct. ad *Aen.* 2.683, 10.270. Varro (*LL* 5.84) and Paul the Deacon (77L) record a belief that the *flamen Dialis* took his name from the fact that he was constantly covered by the *filum* (*filo assidue veletur*, Festus (Paulus) 77L).

²²Cic. *Brut.* 43; Varro *LL* 5.122; Val. Max. 5.6.3; Siebert 1999, 40–44.

²³Cic. *Har. resp.* 12; *RE* Sulpicius 55/48; *MRR* 2.134, 206, 3.201; Szemler 1972, 132, no. 52; *NP* Sulpicius I.6; Rüpke 2008, 909, no. 3186.

Figure 3). Crawford interprets these objects as a reference to the office of *pontifex*, “presumably held by an ancestor.” In the same year, M. Aemilius Lepidus (cos. 46, 42 B.C.E.) alluded to his recently acquired pontificate by including a *simpulum* or dish on the obverse of three types devoted to the career of M. Aemilius Lepidus (cos. 187, 175 B.C.E.), *pontifex maximus* from 180 B.C.E. and an ancestor of the future *triumvir* (RRC 419/1d–e, 3b, Figure 4).²⁴ It is perhaps significant, in this context, that the reverse of a *denarius* issue struck in Caesar’s name in 46 B.C.E. bearing the legend AVGUR PONT·MAX shows a *culullus* and an *aspergillum* (implements associated with the *pontifices*) as well as a jug and a *lituus* (objects used by the augurs), but no *apex* (RRC 467/1a–b, Figure 5). While allusions to the office of *pontifex* are rare on republican coins, the extant examples indicate that the *apex* was not associated with the priesthood during this period.²⁵



Figure 2. *Denarius* of P. Sulpicius Galba (pr. 66 B.C.E.) showing a veiled head of Vesta on the obverse and a *culter*, *culullus*, and *sacena* on the reverse, 69 B.C.E. (RRC 406/1). ANS 1947.2.125, American Numismatic Society.



Figure 3. *Denarius* of M. Pupius Piso (pr. 44 B.C.E.) showing a terminal statue of Mercury (?) with a wreath on the left and a two-handled dish on the right on the obverse and a *culter* and a *patera* surrounded by a laurel wreath on the reverse, 61 B.C.E. (RRC 418/1). ANS 1944.100.2508, American Numismatic Society.

²⁴Lepidus was chosen as *pontifex* shortly after 63 B.C.E. See *RE* Aemilius 73; *MRR* 2.186; Szemler 1972, 134, no. 63; *NP* Aemilius I.12; Rüpke 2008, 515, no. 508, with further bibliography.

²⁵Although not considered here, early anonymous issues bearing a knife or wreath may refer to a pontificate held by the moneyer or his ancestor (see, for example, RRC 109/1, 110/1a, 120/1–7).



Figure 4. *Denarius* of M. Aemilius Lepidus (cos. 46, 42 B.C.E.) showing a laureate and diademed female head on the obverse, with a wreath behind and a *culullus* before, and a mounted M. Aemilius Lepidus (cos. 187, 175 B.C.E.) carrying a trophy over his shoulder on the reverse, 61 B.C.E. (RRC 419/1d). ANS 1937.158.192, American Numismatic Society.



Figure 5. *Denarius* of C. Julius Caesar (cos. 59 B.C.E.) showing a head of Ceres on the obverse and a *culullus*, *aspergillum*, jug, and *lituus* on the reverse, 46 B.C.E. (RRC 467/1a). ANS 1970.156.31, American Numismatic Society.

Likewise, no clear relationship between the *apex* and the *pontifices* exists in the written sources.²⁶ Although modern scholars have tended to conflate this headgear with the *galerus* and the *tutulus*, two priestly caps associated with the *pontifices*,²⁷ a close reading of the ancient sources reveals that the three are in fact distinct. An entry from the mid-imperial

²⁶Esdaile 1911, 213, for instance, provides no direct evidence connecting the *apex* to the *pontifices*, contenting herself with a reference to Helbig 1880. One might assume that they are among the “other priests” mentioned by Appian (*B Civ.* 1.8.65) in a passage dealing with election of the *flamen Dialis* L. Cornelius Merula (cos. suff. 87 B.C.E.) as *consul suffectus* in place of the absent Cinna. It is unlikely, however, that Appian has the habits of the *pontifices* in mind, rather than those of the other *flamines*, who were permitted to appear without their *apices* when they were not performing their ritual obligations (Varro *LL* 5.84; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.64.2; Festus [Paulus] 77L; Serv. Auct. *Aen.* 8.664; Isid. *Orig.* 7.12.18–9).

²⁷To give just one fairly recent example, Linderski 1996, 83, writes, “Even more serious was the situation of all *flamines*, great and small, who wore a headdress comprising a leather helmet (*galerus*) topped by a spike (*apex*) that together were called the *tutulus*.”

lexicon of Sex. Pompeius Festus suggests that the *pontifices* and the *flamines* wore the *tutulus*, a woolen cap in the shape of a cone (*meta*, 484–6L):

tutulum vocari aiunt flaminicarum capitis ornamentum, quod fiat vitta purpurea innexa crinibus, et exstructum in altitudinem. quidam pilleum lanatum forma metali figuratum, quo flamines ac pontifices utantur eodem nomine vocari. Ennius: “libaque, fectores, Argaeos et [tutulatos].”

They say that the hairstyle of the *flamincae* is called the *tutulus*, because the hair is piled up high and fastened with a purple headband. Some say that the woolen cap shaped like a cone, which *flamines* and *pontifices* use, is called by the same name. Ennius: “cakes and bakers, Argei and [tutulati].”

The grammarian’s reference to the hairstyle of the *flaminicae* (which was probably similar to the “beehive” hairstyle of the 1960s)²⁸ and his use of *meta* (which typically refers to a conical object, especially the cone-shaped turning posts in the circus)²⁹ suggest that the cap known as the *tutulus* tapered upward from a wide base to a point. It is difficult to reconcile this description either with the object on the obverse of Caesar’s coin or with other ancient descriptions of the *apex*. In fact, Suetonius distinguishes the *tutulus* from the *apex* in a passage from his lost treatise on Roman dress, which is cited by the author of the Servius Auctus commentary on Vergil’s *Aeneid* 2.683:

Suetonius tria genera pilleorum dixit, quibus sacerdotes utuntur, apicem, tutulum, galerum: sed apicem pilleum sutile circa medium virga eminente, tutulum pilleum lanatum metae figura, galerum pilleum ex pelle hostiae caesae.

Suetonius has said that there are three types of caps (*pillea*) that the priests use: the *apex*, the *tutulus*, and the *galerus*. And moreover that the *apex* is

²⁸For the *tutulus*, see also Varro *LL* 7.43–44 (quoted below). For a discussion of the hairstyle and its history, see Bonfante Warren 1973, 596, 614; Sebesta 1994, 49; Siebert 1995; Bonfante 2003, 75–6; Olson 2008, 39–40; DiLuzio 2016, 38–39.

²⁹While the etymology of the term *meta* is uncertain (Nielsen 2006, 773), it is used in extant texts to describe a variety of cone-shaped objects, including the three conical *metae* that marked the turning points of the race track in the circus (Varro *LL* 5.153; Humphrey 1986, fig. 27). It is also used of the conical lower stone in ancient mills (*meta molandaria*), upon which the upper stone turned (*Dig.* 33.7.18.5). The Meta Sudans, a large fountain constructed under the Flavians near the recently completed Colosseum, took its name from its conical shape (Richardson 1992, 253; Panella 1996). The fountain is depicted on a well-known *sestertius* struck by Titus in about 80 C.E. (*RIC* 2.1.184).

a cap (*pilleum*) that is stitched together around the middle with a spike projecting from it; the *tutulus* a woolen cap (*pilleum*) with the shape of a cone, and the *galerus* a cap (*pilleum*) made from the hide of a slaughtered sacrificial victim.

Suetonius claims that the *apex*, *tutulus*, and *galerus* are three types (*tria genera*) of a more general category of headgear known as the *pilleum*. Like Festus, Suetonius describes the *tutulus* as a woolen cap in the shape of a cone (*lanatum metae figura*). He defines the *apex*, by contrast, as stitched around the middle (*sutile circa medium*) and adorned with a spike (*virga eminente*). The third cap, the *galerus*, is described simply as having been made from the hide of a sacrificial victim.³⁰

While Festus associates the *pontifices* with the *tutulus*, Apuleius instead links them to the third cap, the *galerus* (*Apol.* 22.7):

verum tamen hoc Diogeni et Antist<h>eni pera et baculum, quod regibus diadema, quod imperatoribus paludamentum, quod pontificibus galerum, quod lituus auguribus.

But nevertheless the satchel and the walking stick were to Diogenes and Antisthenes what the crown is to kings, the military cloak to generals, the *galerus* to the *pontifices*, the *lituus* to the augurs.

Unlike the *tutulus* with its conical shape and the *apex* with its olive-wood spike, the *galerus* seems to have resembled an *apex* without its spike. Indeed, Paul the Deacon tells us that the *flamen Dialis* wore a white *galerus*, the so-called *albogalerus*, “to which the *apex* with its olive-wood spike was affixed” (*cui adfigebatur apex virgula oleagina*, 9L).³¹ A cap matching this description of the *galerus* may be seen on a figure in a statue group in the Musei Vaticani.³² The figure appears to be performing an examination of a sacrificial victim (*probatio victimae*) and is likely a *pontifex minor*, a low-level priest who assisted the *pontifices* with their various ritual obligations.³³ No spike is visible on the top of his simple, tightly fitting cap.

³⁰See also Isid. *Orig.* 19.30.4, who likewise distinguishes between the *apex* with its spike (*virga*) and the unadorned *galerus*.

³¹See also Gell. *N.A.* 10.15.32 (= Varro *Div.* 2.51).

³²For a photograph of the statue group, see Moede 2007, 172, fig. 12.3. For the identification of the scene as a *probatio victimae*, see Goette 1986; Siebert 1999, 126; Moede 2007, 172–3.

³³For the *pontifices minores*, see Cic. *Har. resp.* 6; Livy 22.57.2; Festus 160L; Fless 1995, 70–72.

As we have seen, Suetonius describes the *tutulus* as a special type of *pilleum* and distinguishes it from the *apex* and the *galerus* on the basis of its shape and the material from which it was made. It remains to explain, however, the view recorded in the lexicon of Festus, namely that the *flamines* and the *pontifices* wore the same cap, and that this cap was known as the *tutulus*. The etymological speculations of Varro in *De Lingua Latina* suggest a possible solution (7.43–44):

apud Ennium . . . “libaque, fectores, Argeos et tutulatos.” . . . tutulati dicti hi, qui in sacris in capitibus habere solent ut metam; id tutulus appellatus ab eo quod matres familias crines convolutos ad verticem capitis quos habent vit[ta] velatos dicebantur tutuli, sive ab eo quod id tuendi causa capilli fiebat, sive ab eo quod altissimum in urbe quod est, Arcs, tutissimum vocatur.

In Ennius is this . . . “cakes and bakers, Argei, and *tutulati*.” . . . They are called *tutulati* who at the sacrifices are accustomed to wear on their heads something like a cone. This is called a *tutulus* from the fact that the twisted locks of hair that *matresfamilias* wear on the tops of their heads wrapped with a woolen headband used to be called *tutuli*, whether named from the fact that this was done for the purpose of protecting (*tueri*) the hair or because that which is the highest in the city, namely the citadel, is called the safest (*tutissimum*).

Varro derives *tutulus* either from the verb *tueor* (to protect) or from the superlative adjective *tutissimus* (safest) because the coiffure was designed to protect the hair of the woman who wore it. It is unlikely that the hairstyle (or the cap bearing the same name) served to protect the wearer from physical harm as much as it was intended to ward off evil influences. If the *apex* and the *galerus* performed a similar apotropaic function, perhaps by warning bystanders to avoid words or gestures that might vitiate the ritual, this could explain why certain authors (*quidam*, Festus 484L) describe these caps as *tutuli*: they are using the term in a generic sense. In any case, there is no indication that the cap associated with the *pontifices*, whether it was known as the *galerus* or the *tutulus*, was adorned with the kind of spike that sat atop the *apex*.

In contrast to the somewhat muddled evidence in the written sources, the visual evidence shows that it was customary for a *pontifex* to veil his head with a fold of his *toga*.³⁴ Caesar appears veiled on several obverse

³⁴A modicum of literary evidence supports this view. The *pontifex maximus* P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica (cos. 138 B.C.E.) seems to have arranged his *toga* in this way, reportedly veiling his head with its hem before leading a crowd of senators against Ti. Gracchus in 133 B.C.E. (App. *B Civ.* 1.68; Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 21.3, with Linderski 2007, 91–101).



Figure 6. *Denarius* of P. Sepullius Macer showing a wreathed head of Caesar wearing a veil on the obverse and Venus holding Victory and a scepter on the reverse, 44 B.C.E. (RRC 480/13). ANS 1896.7.109, American Numismatic Society.

types of a *denarius* issue struck in 44 B.C.E. by L. Aemilius Buca, M. Mettius, P. Sepullius Macer, and C. Cossutius Maridianus (RRC 480/12–16, 19–20, Figure 6), while Augustus is shown with a fold of his *toga* pulled over his head on the south frieze of the Ara Pacis Augustae. His appearance contrasts sharply with that of the four *flamines maiores* standing beside him in the procession. Subsequent emperors, who followed the first *princeps* in assuming the office of *pontifex maximus*, are likewise shown veiled. On a well-known relief set into the main staircase of the Palazzo dei Conservatori, Marcus Aurelius appears with veiled head as he offers a sacrifice to Jupiter alongside an *apex*-clad *flamen*.³⁵ Indeed, if the *apex* was part of the costume of the *pontifex maximus*, it is surprising, as Woytek has noted, that no emperor is ever depicted wearing it (2005, 119).³⁶ In sum, while there is not a tremendous amount of evidence for the dress of republican *pontifices*, it remains possible that they in fact wore the *apex*. At the same time, however, the available sources, both written and visual, strongly suggest that they did not.

THE APEX AND THE FLAMINES

While little connects the *apex* to the *pontifex maximus*, the evidence linking it to the *flamines* is overwhelming. The written sources suggest that the *apex* was regarded as the *insigne* (emblem) of the *flamen* throughout the historical period.³⁷ Livy, for instance, uses the bestowal of this headgear

³⁵The spike worn by this *flamen* is shorter than the spikes worn by the *flamines* on the Ara Pacis, which suggests that the appearance of the headgear changed over time.

³⁶For the costume of the emperor as *pontifex maximus*, see also Stepper 2003, 216–9.

³⁷As stressed by Vanggaard 1988, 41. The funerary inscription of P. Cornelius Scipio, who served as *flamen Dialis* from about 174 B.C.E. until his death in 170 B.C.E. (for the

as shorthand for the appointment of a *flamen Dialis*: “should we place the *apex* of the *flamen Dialis* on anyone’s head, provided only he be a man?” (*cuilibet apicem Dialem, dummodo homo sit imponamus*, 6.41). Republican coins likewise testify to a close association between the *apex* and the *flamen*.³⁸ Struck in 126 B.C.E., the *denarius* issue of N. Fabius Pictor features his grandfather, Q. Fabius Pictor (pr. 189 B.C.E.), on the reverse, holding a spear in his left hand and an *apex* in his right (*RRC* 268/1a–1b, Figure 7).³⁹ The legend QUIRIN on a shield in the foreground reminds the viewer that the elder Pictor had served as *flamen Quirinalis*.⁴⁰ An *apex* on the obverse of a *denarius* issued in 131 B.C.E. by L. Postumius Albinus is usually understood as an allusion to his father’s service as *flamen Martialis* (*RRC* 252/1, Figure 8).⁴¹ That the reverse depicts Mars in a four-horse chariot is cited to confirm this interpretation. The *apex* appearing next to Mars on the reverse of a *denarius* struck in 108 or 107 B.C.E. by L. Valerius Flaccus (cos. 100 B.C.E.) is interpreted similarly: the father of Flaccus had succeeded the elder Albinus as *flamen Martialis*

identification, see Sumner 1973, 36–37; Rüpke 2008, 642, no. 1371), provides our earliest evidence for the close association between a *flamen* and his headgear: “you who wore the distinctive *apex* of the *flamen Dialis*” (*qui apice insigne Dial[is] fl[aminis] gestei*, *ILLRP* 311 = *ILS* 4). Nearly a thousand years after this inscription was set up, the author of the Servius Auctus commentary on Vergil’s *Aeneid* called the *apex* the emblem (*insigne*) of the *flamines* (Serv. Auct. ad *Aen.* 1.305). According to Aulus Gellius, the *flamen Dialis* could not appear in public (*sub divo*) without it well into the second century C.E. (*N.A.* 10.15.17). He cites Masurius Sabinus, a jurist active during the principate of Tiberius, for the view that the *pontifices* had permitted him to lay it aside at home (*sub tecto*) only recently (see also Serv. Auct. ad *Aen.* 8.552).

³⁸Battenberg 1980, 57. Although not considered here, early anonymous issues bearing the *apex* presumably refer to a flaminiate held by the moneyer or his ancestor (see, e.g., *RRC* 52/1, 59/1a–7).

³⁹Although Wissowa 1912, 499, restricted use of the *apex* to the *flamen Dialis*, this view is certainly too limited. The numismatic evidence clearly demonstrates that the *flamen Martialis* and the *flamen Quirinalis* wore the *apex* during the republican period. It seems likely that the *flamines minores* also used this headgear, at least when they were performing their ritual obligations (as suggested by Siebert 1999, 127). During the imperial period, *flamines* of the *divi* adopted the *apex* as well, both in the city of Rome (see the *flamen Iulialis* on the Ara Pacis) and in the provinces (see the frieze on the temple of Augustus at Tarraco in Spain and *RPC* 1.109, 130, 136, 612, 771, 772; *CIL* 3.386, 12.1114, 5115; Weinstock 1971, 405; Fishwick 1991, II.1, 476; Siebert 1999, 124).

⁴⁰Livy 37.47.8, 37.51.1–7, 45.44.3; *RE* Fabius 127; *MRR* 1.359, 436; Szemler 1972, 168, no. 4; Rüpke 2008, 677, no. 1599.

⁴¹For the career of the elder L. Postumius Albinus (cos. 154 B.C.E.), see Livy 45.15.10; *RE* Postumius 42; *MRR* 1.432, 451, 3.174; Szemler 1972, 169, no. 7; *NP* Postumius I.7; Rüpke 2008, 856, no. 2820.



Figure 7. *Denarius* of N. Fabius Pictor showing a helmeted head of Roma on the obverse and Q. Fabius Pictor (pr. 189 B.C.E.) seated on a chair, wearing a helmet and a cuirass and holding an *apex* in his right hand a spear in his left with a shield inscribed “QVIRIN” on the reverse, 126 B.C.E. (*RRC* 268/1b). ANS 1944.100.534, American Numismatic Society.



Figure 8. *Denarius* of L. Postumius Albinus showing a helmeted head of Roma with an *apex* behind on the obverse and Mars in a quadriga on the reverse, 131 B.C.E. (*RRC* 252/1). ANS 1944.100.488, American Numismatic Society.

in the middle of the second century B.C.E. (*RRC* 306/1, Figure 9).⁴² The *apex* on a *denarius* minted in 126 B.C.E. by T. Quinctius Flamininus, on the other hand, appears to have functioned as a canting badge (*RRC* 267/1), which tends to confirm that the *apex* and the *flamen* who wore it were practically synonymous in the Roman mind.⁴³

Given the close association between the *apex* and the flamine, Battenberg has argued that its presence on the elephant *denarius* alludes

⁴²*RRC* 306/1. For the career of the elder L. Valerius Flaccus (cos. 131 B.C.E.), see Cic. *Phil.* 11.18; *RE* Valerius 175; *MRR* 1.451, 501; Szemler 1972, 169, no. 8; *NP* Valerius I.21; Rüpke 2008, 937, no. 3395.

⁴³Morawiecki 1996, 45. The pun is effective regardless of whether or not the first Quinctius to use the *cognomen* served as *flamen Dialis* in the third century B.C.E. (as suggested by Münzer 1999, 110–1; Rüpke 2008, 864, no. 2870). For a discussion of canting puns on Roman coins and monuments, see McCartney 1919.



Figure 9. *Denarius* of L. Valerius Flaccus (cos. 100 B.C.E.) showing a bust of Victory on the obverse and Mars holding a spear and a trophy with an *apex* before on the reverse, 108 or 107 B.C.E. (RRC 306/1). ANS 1947.2.30, American Numismatic Society.

to Caesar's brief tenure as *flamen Dialis* designate (Battenberg 1980, 57). Marius and Cinna had appointed Caesar to the flaminiate of Jupiter following the suicide of the previous incumbent, L. Cornelius Merula (cos. suff. 87 B.C.E.), in 87 B.C.E.⁴⁴ Velleius Paterculus and Suetonius tell us that Caesar was stripped of the priesthood when a triumphant Sulla returned to Rome in 82 B.C.E. (Vell. Pat. 2.43.1; Suet. *Iul.* 1.2), although scholars disagree about whether or not he had been inaugurated before this date.⁴⁵ Tacitus and Cassius Dio tell us that Ser. Cornelius Lentulus Maluginensis (cos. suff. 10 C.E.), whom Augustus inaugurated as *flamen Dialis* at about the time he became *pontifex maximus*, was the first to occupy the office since Merula,⁴⁶ which suggests that Caesar was merely the *flamen Dialis* designate when he was deprived of his office under Sulla. But the question of whether he had actually served as *flamen Dialis* is largely beside the point. By placing the *apex* on his coin in 49 B.C.E., Caesar might have sought to remind viewers of the disgrace he had suffered under Sulla at a time when he felt that his *dignitas* was under assault once again. As Woytek has stressed, however, it is more likely that the *apex* alludes to an office that Caesar held at the time the issue was struck (2003, 119–20).

⁴⁴For Merula's suicide, see Vell. Pat. 2.22.2; Val. Max. 9.12.5; App. *B Civ.* 1.8.74; Flor. 2.9.16; Aug. *Civ. Dei.* 3.27; *RE* Cornelius 272; *MRR* 2.52; Szemler 1972, 171, no. 10; *NP* Cornelius I.61; Rüpke 2008, 639, no. 1356. For Caesar's appointment as *flamen Dialis* designate, see Vell. Pat. 2.43.1; Suet. *Iul.* 1.1.

⁴⁵For arguments against Caesar's inauguration as *flamen Dialis*, see especially Taylor 1941; Leone 1976; Liou-Gille 1999. For arguments in favor, see Badian 1961, 1990, 2009; Sumner 1973; Rüpke 2008, 734–5, no. 2003.

⁴⁶*Tac. Ann.* 3.58; Dio Cass. 54.36.1; *RE* Cornelius 226; *NP* Cornelius II.30; Rüpke 2008, 638, no. 1349.

CAESAR AS SALIUS

Alternatively, the *apex* may indicate that Caesar was a *salius*, the only other republican priesthood with a clear connection to the *apex*.⁴⁷ The *salii*, Roman priests named for their leaping (*ab salitando*, Varro *LL* 5.85), wore the *apex* along with an embroidered tunic, a bronze breastplate, and the *trabea* (a robe associated with the kings of Rome) when they performed their ritual dances in March and October, striking the *ancilia* (sacred shields) with their lances and singing an archaic hymn.⁴⁸ The *ancilia* were counted among the *pignora imperii* (pledges of empire) thought to guarantee the continued prosperity of Rome and her empire (Serv. ad *Aen.* 7.188). The original reportedly fell from heaven during the reign of Numa Pompilius, who had eleven copies made in order to protect this sacred object from theft.⁴⁹ The *ancilia* and the *apex* feature prominently in Vergil's description of Roman ritual on the shield of Aeneas in book 8 of the *Aeneid* (663–6):

hic exsultantis salios nudosque lupercos
lanigerosque apices et lapsa ancilia caelo
extuderat, castae ducebant sacra per urbem
pilentis matres in mollibus . . .

Here he had hammered out dancing *salii*, and naked *luperci*, and the wool-bearing *apices*, and the *ancilia* fallen from heaven, and chaste mothers leading the sacred objects through the city in soft wagons . . .

The poet's description suggests that the *apex* was as much a symbol of the *salii* as the *ancilia*. While many translators take *lanigeros* to mean that the salian *pilleum* was made of wool or felt rather than leather, the adjective more likely refers to the woolen thread that the wearer wrapped around the spike sitting on top of his cap.⁵⁰ In either case, iconographic

⁴⁷Woytek 2003, 119–20, raises this possibility before rejecting it. While the enigmatic *saliae virgines* also wore the *apex* (Festus 439L), this office was open only to women.

⁴⁸For the costume and activities of the *salii*, see Verg. *Aen.* 8.663–5; Livy 1.20.4; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.70.2–3; Plut. *Num.* 13.7; Festus 439L. Schäfer 1980 discusses the visual evidence. For a more detailed discussion of the priesthood, see Wissowa 1912, 555–9; Cirilli 1913; Schäfer 1980; Rüpke 1990, 23–7; Estienne 2005; Habinek 2005, 6–37.

⁴⁹Livy 1.20.2; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.70.1; Ov. *Fast.* 3.365–92; Plut. *Num.* 13.1–7. Ennius (*Ann.* 114) merely says that Egeria gave the shield to Numa.

⁵⁰As suggested by Glinister 2011, 109, n. 8. In either case, Plutarch (*Num.* 13.4) is apparently mistaken in his claim that the *salii* wore bronze helmets.

evidence, including a *denarius* issued in 17 B.C.E. by P. Licinius Stolo (*RIC* 1.343, Figure 10), suggests that the headgear of the *salii* was identical to the flaminical *apex*.⁵¹

An *ancile* on the reverse of a *quinarius* struck by Caesar in 48/47 B.C.E. suggests that he held the office of *salius* (*RRC* 452/3, Figure 11).⁵² The fact that it occupies the same position as a *sacena* (axe) on a similar reverse type of the same issue tends to support the idea that it signifies one of his priestly offices (*RRC* 452/1, Figure 12).⁵³ If Caesar was indeed a *salius*, then he must have been co-opted before the death of his father in 85 B.C.E.⁵⁴ The priesthood was open only to patrician candidates with both parents living (Cic. *Dom.* 38; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.71.4). Unfortunately, the opening chapters of Suetonius' *vita* of Caesar, which would have contained information about its subject's ancestry, birth, and early life, including perhaps some mention of his co-optation as *salius*, are missing.⁵⁵ Instead, we are left with the numismatic evidence, which suggests an even more varied priestly career than the standard biographies allow.



Figure 10. *Denarius* of P. Licinius Stolo showing the head of Augustus on the obverse and an *apex* between two *ancilia* on the reverse, 17 B.C.E. (*RIC* 1.343). ANS 1944.100.38329, American Numismatic Society.

⁵¹ As stressed by Schäfer 1980, 361. Although Sydenham 1952 calls the cap on *RIC* 1.343 and 1.344 a “Flamen’s bonnet,” the *ancilia* indicate that it represents a salian *apex* (see Schäfer 1980, 372; Glinister 2011, 109). It is unclear why Licinius, a member of one of Rome’s most important plebeian families, chose to decorate his coins with the symbols of a priesthood from which he would have been excluded. Schäfer’s (1980, 372) suggestion that the *ancilia* refer to the celebration of the Ludi Saeculares in 17 B.C.E. is not implausible; like the games, the shields were thought to guarantee the continuity of Rome’s empire (see above).

⁵² Commenting on *RRC* 452/3, Crawford (1974, 2.735, n. 5) writes, “This is, as far as I know, the only evidence that Caesar was a *Salius*.” Schäfer (1980, 371, n. 115) and Woytek 2005, 199, reject his interpretation of the coin. More recently, Rüpke (2008, 734, no. 2003) has argued in favor of Crawford’s conclusion. Wardle 2009, 104, seems to accept it as well.

⁵³ As stressed by Rüpke 2008, 734, no. 2003.

⁵⁴ For the date of his father’s death, see Suet. *Iul.* 1.1.

⁵⁵ The traditional view is that an entire quortion was lost (Kaster 2016, 3, n. 1).



Figure 11. *Quinarius* of Julius Caesar showing a veiled female head with a *culullus* behind on the obverse and a trophy with a wreath on the left and an *ancile* on the right on the reverse, 48–47 B.C.E. (*RRC* 452/3). Inv. No. 2002,0102.4463, British Museum, London. Photo © The Trustees of the British Museum.



Figure 12. *Aureus* of Julius Caesar showing a female head wearing a wreath and a diadem on the obverse and a trophy with a *sacena* on the right on the reverse, 48–47 B.C.E. (*RRC* 452/1). Inv. No. 1867,0101.585, British Museum, London. Photo © The Trustees of the British Museum.

That this explanation for the *apex* on the elephant *denarius* has not gained widespread acceptance may be due in part to the longstanding belief that a *salius* was obligated to resign his office when he took up a curule magistracy or a major priesthood.⁵⁶ But Glinister has shown that this custom was not always followed. Ap. Claudius Pulcher (cos. 143 B.C.E.) held the augurate and the salian priesthood simultaneously.⁵⁷ L. Furius Bibaculus (pr. 219 B.C.E.) “bore the *ancilia*, preceded by his six lictors” (*sex lictoribus praecedentibus arma ancilia tulit*, Val. Max. 1.1.9) during

⁵⁶See, for example, Wissowa 1912, 493–4; Hahm 1963, 81, n. 27; Woytek 2003, 120. An inscription from 170 C.E. that records five members who departed the *salii Palatini* in order to become *flamines* and one who may have left to become a *pontifex* (*CIL* 6.1978 = *ILS* 5024, with Glinister 2011, 120) is cited as evidence.

⁵⁷For the priestly career of Appius Claudius, see Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 4.1; Macr. *Sat.* 3.14.14; *RE* Claudius 295; *MRR* 1.436; Szemler 1972, 177, no. 2; *NP* Claudius 1.22; Rüpke 2008, 619–20, no. 1225; Glinister 2011, 120–1.

his praetorship in about 219 B.C.E.⁵⁸ Valerius Maximus adds that he did so at the direction of his father, who was then head of the group (*a patre suo collegii Saliorum magistro iussus*, 1.1.9), even though his praetorship afforded him an exemption from his obligations (*quamvis vacationem huius officii honoris beneficio haberet*, 1.1.9).⁵⁹ Finally, Polybius reveals that P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus (cos. 205, 194 B.C.E.) was still a *salius* at age forty-six during the war against Antiochus III in 190 B.C.E., when he was unable to move his camp for thirty days during the celebration of the sacrifices.⁶⁰ These historical precedents suggest that little would have prevented Caesar from retaining the office of *salius* after he joined the pontifical college in about 73 B.C.E., or even after he was elected *pontifex maximus* in 63 B.C.E. Unlike Bibaculus and Africanus, Caesar may have invoked his right to a *vacatio* from his obligations (though not the priesthood itself), which would explain why we do not hear that he was detained by his duties as a *salius* during his proconsulship in Gaul.

Interpreting the *apex* as a symbol of the saliate may also explain its appearance on a *quinarius* struck by Q. Servilius Caepio Brutus (pr. 44 B.C.E.) with L. Sestius in 43/42 B.C.E. (*RRC* 502/4, Figure 13). Issued by a military mint moving with Brutus, the reverse shows a tripod with a *simpulum* on the left and an *apex* on the right, together with a legend identifying Brutus as proconsul. The implements have been interpreted as symbols of the office of *pontifex* (Crawford 1974, 741, n. 4), which Brutus had occupied since at least 46 B.C.E.⁶¹ But since, as I have argued, the *apex* does not appear as a symbol of the pontificate in this period, the *apex* on this *quinarius*, like the *apex* on the elephant *denarius*, more likely alludes to the issuer as a *salius*. Unless an exception was granted, Brutus could not have been co-opted as a child as the *gens Iunia* was plebeian. He did, however, receive patrician status when he was adopted by his

⁵⁸See also Lactant. *Div. inst.* 1.21.47; *RE* Furius 36; *MRR* 1.237; *NP* Furius I.8; Rüpke 2008, 701, no. 1782; Glinister 2011, 121.

⁵⁹*MRR* 1.237; Rüpke 2008, 701, no. 1781.

⁶⁰Polyb. 21.13.10. See also Livy 37.33.6–7; *RE* Cornelius 336; *MRR* 1.277, 360, 381; Szemler 1972, 176, no. 1; *NP* Cornelius I.71; Rüpke 2008, 642, no. 1372. Champion 2017, 197 suggests that Scipio was not eligible for a *vacatio* because he was serving as his brother's *legatus*. It is also possible that like Bibaculus, he chose not to use his exemption.

⁶¹According to the *Brutus*, he was already a *pontifex* when Cicero was composing the treatise in 46 B.C.E. His co-optation may have taken place as early as the middle of the fifties B.C.E., although it seems most likely that he succeeded Q. Caecilius Metellus Creticus (cos. 69 B.C.E.) in 51/50 B.C.E. (*RE* Iunius 53; *MRR* 2.254; Szemler 1972, 135–6, no. 67; *NP* Iunius I.10; Rüpke 2008, 890, No. 3058).



Figure 13. *Quinarius* of M. Junius Brutus and L. Sestius showing a *sella*, a staff, and a *modius* on the obverse and a tripod with a *simpulum* on the left and an *apex* on the right, 43/42 B.C.E. (RRC 502/4). ANS 1944.100.4549, American Numismatic Society.

maternal uncle Q. Servilius Caepio in or before 59 B.C.E.⁶² Although the written sources are silent, the *apex* on his *quinarius* from 44 B.C.E. suggests that he joined the *salii* after his adoption made him a patrician with two living parents (*patrimus et matrimus*).⁶³ Given Caesar's relationship with Servilia, it is even possible that he engineered the co-optation of his future murderer.⁶⁴

In sum, a careful analysis of the *apex* and its use in republican Rome not only bolsters the view that Caesar was a *salii*, it also sheds new light on the priestly career of his assassin Brutus. If it seems like special pleading to identify two well-known historical figures as *salii* on the basis of numismatic evidence alone, it is worth considering how little we know about the composition of the priesthood during this period. From the death of Ap. Claudius Pulcher in about 130 B.C.E. until the death of Augustus in 14 C.E., our literary and epigraphic sources reveal the names of only two *salii*: C. Claudius Pulcher (pr. 56 B.C.E.)⁶⁵ and Ti. Sempronius

⁶²Cic. *Att.* 2.24.2, with Geiger 1973, 148–50, 152; Lindsay 2009, 151–2. For the consequences of *adrogatio*, by which Clodius famously achieved his *transitio ad plebem*, see Cic. *Dom.* 34–38; Gell. *N.A.* 5.19.1–16; Gai. *Inst.* 2.98; Lindsay 2009, 174–81.

⁶³As Drogula 2013, 107, stresses, “In law, the *adrogatus* was in every way the son of the *adrogans*, and therefore he not only possessed full rights of inheritance, but also would carry on the name, legacy, and *sacra* of his adoptive father.”

⁶⁴For Caesar's relationship with Servilia, see Cic. *Att.* 2.24.2–4. Caesar was no doubt responsible for the nomination of his relative Sex. Julius Caesar as *flamen Quirinalis* in 58 B.C.E. (*RE* Iulius 152/153; *MRR* 2.199, 203; Szeimler 1972, 172, no. 12; *NP* Iulius I.10; Rüpke 2008, 737, no. 2009). He appears to have rewarded loyal allies with priestly offices during the civil war as well (see below for some examples).

⁶⁵Cic. *Scaur.* 34; *RE* Claudius 303; *MRR* 2.96; Rüpke 2008, 620, no. 1228. But see the doubts expressed by Szeimler 1972, 177.

Gracchus.⁶⁶ During the republican period, there were two *sodalitates* (brotherhoods) of twelve *salii* each: the *salii Palatini* and the *salii Collini*.⁶⁷ If we assume that each *sodalitas* maintained a full membership of twelve members throughout the republican period, then potentially hundreds of patricians would have held the office. Our lack of evidence must be due in part to the fact that the priesthood did not carry the same prestige associated with membership in the *amplissima collegia*. Even so, I have argued here that Caesar and Brutus valued their service as *salii* highly enough to include the *apex* in their visual program during the 40s B.C.E.

AFTER THE IDES OF MARCH

The obverse of the elephant *denarius* famously reappears as a reverse type from a joint issue struck by Antony and Lepidus in 43 B.C.E. (*RRC* 489/1–3, Figure 14).⁶⁸ The legend associates the implements with Lepidus, whose appointment as *pontifex maximus* Antony had guaranteed through an irregular election.⁶⁹ While the type has been taken as evidence of an already existing connection between the *apex* and the *pontifex maximus*, the evidence reviewed above suggests that this was not the case. After the Ides of March, Antony, Lepidus, and Octavian routinely appropriated Caesar's portrait and elements of his visual program as they sought to establish themselves as heirs to his power.⁷⁰ For example, Antony employed augural imagery to emphasize his imperatorial authority and to link his own augurate visually with Caesar's:⁷¹ the joint issue with Lepidus includes an obverse type showing a *lituus*, a *capis*, and a raven, together with Antony's name and titles (Figure 11). On the reverse of the same coin, Lepidus reproduced the obverse of the elephant *denarius*,

⁶⁶*CIL* 6.1515; *RE* Sempronius 58; Rüpke 2008, 883, no. 3010.

⁶⁷The *salii Palatini*, who claimed to have been founded by Numa, maintained a cult place on the Palatine (Cic. *Div.* 1.17), while the *salii Collini*, who traced their origins to Tullus Hostilius and were devoted to Quirinus (the deified Romulus), had a cult place on the Quirinal (Livy 1.27.14; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.70.1, 3.32.4).

⁶⁸See also *RRC* 489/3.

⁶⁹The titlature varies, with 489/1 identifying Lepidus as COS and IMP and 489/2–3 as IMP only. For the election of Lepidus as *pontifex maximus*, see Cic. *Att.* 16.5, 11; Aug. *Anc.* 10.2; Livy *Per.* 117; Vell. Pat. 2.63.1; App. *B Civ.* 2.132; Dio Cass. 44.53.6–7; *RE* Aemilius 73; Taylor 1942; *MRR* 2.333; Hayne 1971, 114–5; Scheid 1999, 3–5; *NP* Aemilius I.12; Rüpke 2008, 515, no. 508. For the traditional procedure, see Taylor 1942.

⁷⁰Crawford 1974, 739–41; Morawiecki 1983, 77–78; Newman 1990, 52–57; Morawiecki 1996, 50–56; Drummond 2008, 398.

⁷¹See, for example, *RRC* 488/1–2, 496/2–3, with Crawford 1974, 739; Newman 1990, 53, 55.



Figure 14. *Quinarius* of M. Antonius (cos. 44 B.C.E.) and M. Aemilius Lepidus (cos. 46, 42 B.C.E.) showing a *lituus*, *capis*, and raven on the obverse and a *simpulum*, *aspergillum*, *sacena*, and *apex* on the reverse, 43/42 B.C.E. (*RRC* 489/3). Inv. No. 2002,0102.4715, British Museum, London. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum.

adding his own name and titles as a way of presenting himself as Caesar's legitimate successor in the office of *pontifex maximus*. The type alludes to the slain dictator almost as clearly as an actual portrait.

A *denarius* struck by Cn. Domitius Calvinus (cos. 53 and 40 B.C.E.) in 39 B.C.E. may be interpreted similarly (*RRC* 532/1, Figure 15).⁷² Calvinus was a loyal ally of Caesar, commanding the center of his army at Pharsalus. According to Valerius Maximus, Caesar visited Calvinus on the morning of his murder (8.11.2). Although he failed in his efforts to bring reinforcements from Brundisium to Antony and Octavian in 42 B.C.E., he was nonetheless appointed governor of Hispania Citerior in 39 B.C.E., where he defeated the Pyrean tribes at Osca and was acclaimed as *imperator* by his legions.⁷³ His *denarius* commemorates this victory with a head of



Figure 15. *Denarius* of Cn. Domitius Calvinus (cos. 53, 40 B.C.E.) showing the head of Hercules on the obverse and a *simpulum*, *aspergillum*, *sacena*, and *apex* on the reverse, 39 B.C.E. (*RRC* 532/1). ANS 1944.100.5986, American Numismatic Society.

⁷²For a discussion of this coin with further bibliography, see Amela Valverde 2013.

⁷³Vell. Pat. 2.78.3; Dio Cass. 48.42.1–6; *RE* Domitius 43; *MRR* 2.388; *NP* Domitius I.10.

Hercules and the legend OSCA on the obverse, and on the reverse, a *culullus*, *aspergillum*, *sacena*, and *apex* together with a legend recording his second consulship and his imperial acclamation. Calvinus is presumed to have held the office of *pontifex*, perhaps obtaining admission to the college in about 45 B.C.E. as a reward for his service at Pharsalus.⁷⁴ But the reverse of his coin, which replicates the obverse of Caesar's elephant *denarius*, was presumably designed to signal his longstanding loyalty to the slain dictator (Morawiecki 1996, 50; Amela Valverde 2013b, 66), rather than his membership in the pontifical college. Indeed, it is quite surprising, as several scholars have noted, that Calvinus omits any reference to Octavian, who had appointed him to his position as governor (Crawford 1974, 534; Amela Valverde 2013b, 68). Instead, Calvinus advances his own claim to Caesar's legacy. Like the joint issue of Antony and Lepidus, the type indicates not an association between the *apex* and the *pontifices*, but the advertisement of a link between Caesar and the issuing authority, in this case Calvinus.

One final coin from this period provides an interesting comparandum. In 43 B.C.E., C. Antonius (pr. 44 B.C.E.) issued a *denarius* showing on the obverse a female bust, draped and wearing a *causia*, surrounded by a legend recording his proconsulate, and on the reverse, two *cululli* and a *sacena* above the legend PONTIFEX (RRC 484/1, Figure 16). Antonius was the brother of the *triumvir* Antony and an early supporter of Caesar.⁷⁵ Even though he had been forced to surrender to Pompey's forces in Illyricum as legate in 49 B.C.E.,⁷⁶ he was rewarded with the pontificate and the praetorship in 44 B.C.E.⁷⁷ He presumably struck his *denarius* issue while attempting to take up his appointment as proconsul of the province of Macedonia, an assignment which had been granted and then rescinded by the senate late in 44 B.C.E.⁷⁸ Unlike Antony, Lepidus, and Calvinus, Antonius sought legitimacy through his own honors, rather than through an appeal to Caesarian iconography. He thus omits the *apex* in favor of implements with a clear association with the *pontifices*.

⁷⁴Val. Max. 8.11.2; *RE* Domitius 43; *MRR* 2.314; Szemler 1972, 137, no. 72; *NP* Domitius I.10; Rüpke 2008, 660, no. 1482.

⁷⁵*RE* Antonius 20; *MRR* 2.314, 356, 368; Szemler 1972, 136, no. 71; *NP* Antonius I.3; Rüpke 2008, 537, no. 666.

⁷⁶Caes. *B Civ.* 3.4.2, 10.5, 67.5; Livy *Per.* 110; Suet. *Iul.* 36; App. *B Civ.* 2.41, 47; Flor. 2.13.31–33; Dio Cass. 41.40, 42.11.1, Oros. 6.15.8–9; *MRR* 2.266.

⁷⁷For the praetorship, see Plut. *Ant.* 15.3; App. *B Civ.* 3.14; Dio Cass. 45.9.2; Zonar. 10.13; *MRR* 2.319. For the date of his co-optation as *pontifex*, see *MRR* 2.314; Szemler 1972, 136, no. 71; Rüpke 2008, 537, no. 666.

⁷⁸For the initial assignment, see Cic. *Phil.* 3.26; for the rescindment, see 3.37–39, 5.3, 7.3, 10.10, 11.28.



Figure 16. *Denarius* of C. Antonius (pr. 44 B.C.E.) showing a draped female bust wearing a *causia* on the obverse and two *cululli* and a *sacena* on the reverse, 43 B.C.E. (RRC 484/1). ANS 1967.153.26, American Numismatic Society.

CONCLUSION

The obverse of a *denarius* struck by C. Cossutius Maridianus in 44 B.C.E. shows a veiled and wreathed head of Caesar with an *apex* behind and a *lituus* before (RRC 480/19, Figure 17).⁷⁹ The legend reads PARENS-PATRIAE, an honorific title granted to Caesar by senatorial decree after his victory at Munda in 45 B.C.E.⁸⁰ The *lituus* alludes to his augurate, an office he had assumed in 47 B.C.E. or the beginning of 46 B.C.E. at the latest.⁸¹ According to the arguments offered here, the *apex*



Figure 17. *Denarius* of C. Cossutius Maridianus showing a wreathed head of Caesar wearing a veil with a *lituus* before and an *apex* behind on the obverse and the names of the moneyer arranged in the form of a cross on the reverse, 44 B.C.E. (RRC 480/19). ANS 1944.100.3636, American Numismatic Society.

⁷⁹For a similar obverse, see RRC 480/20, struck by P. Sepullius Macer. The *apex* also appears on RRC 494/39a, struck by L. Mussidius Longus in 42 B.C.E.

⁸⁰App. *B Civ.* 2.106; Dio Cass. 44.4.4. The wreath on RRC 480/19 is thus presumably an oak wreath, granted together with the title *parens patriae* (see Weinstock 1971, 202–4, for the evidence).

⁸¹Cic. *Fam.* 13.68.2; Dio Cass. 42.51.3–4; *RE* Iulius 131; *MRR* 2.333; Szemler 1972, 156, no. 51; *NP* Caesar; Rüpke 2008, 735, no. 2003.

refers not to his position as *pontifex maximus*, but rather to his status as a *salius*, a “leaping” priest of Mars.⁸² While some have seen the veil as a sign of mourning and classified the coin as a posthumous issue, it is more likely that he appears veiled in his role as *pontifex maximus* (Alföldi 1953, 44; Morawiecki 1983, 23). Together, the *apex*, the *lituus*, and the veiled portrait refer to the three religious offices that Caesar had held in the course of his career: the saliate, the pontificate, and the augurate. In combination with the legend, the type offers, to borrow Weinstock’s phrase, “a reinterpretation of his unlimited political power” (Weinstock 1971, 204). Caesar was no tyrant, but rather the benevolent father of his country, who had spent his entire public career in the service of Rome and her gods. This issue develops more fully the representative strategy deployed on the elephant *denarius* five years earlier. Struck while Caesar was waging war against the legally constituted government of the *res publica*, the elephant *denarius* sought to establish his authority through an appeal to his legitimate priestly offices. The *pax deorum*, the message of the coin suggests, depended upon Caesar the *salius* and *pontifex maximus*.⁸³

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⁸²Although Woytek 2003, 120–1, has argued that *RRC* 480/19 proves that the *apex* on the elephant *denarius* does not allude to the saliate because on the later coin, it “clearly” refers to an honor held by Caesar even during his “monarchy” (Hier ist klärllich ein insigne dargestellt, das Caesar auch noch in seiner Monarchie zukam, 2005, 121), there is no reason to think that Caesar would have resigned as *salius* simply because he had been declared dictator for life.

⁸³I am grateful to Joseph DiLuzio and to the anonymous readers for their insightful comments and corrections.

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