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Fulvia and Antony

Fulvia, the only daughter to Bambalio and Sempronia¹, married Antony in 46 BC², several years after the death of her previous husband, Gaius Scribonius Curio³, her first marriage having been to Publius Clodius Pulcher, the tribune of the plebs of 58 BC⁴. Of each her marriage, she had children: a daughter and a son with Clodius, a son with Curio, and two sons with Antony⁵. Scholars

¹ Fulvia was born in the 70s BC (for more on this, see, e.g., Weir 2008, 3) as a daughter of M. Fulvius Bambalio (see Münzer 1910; Cicero describes him as homo nullo numero in Phil. 3, 16) and Sempronia of the Sempronii Tuditani family (interestingly enough, Bambalio was his family's last male descendant, whereas Sempronia was Tuditanus' last daughter). For more on Fulvia's ancestors, see Babcock 1965, 3-5. Bauman 1992, 83, draws attention to Fulvia's great-grandfather Sempronius Tuditanus (who was also an uncle of the orator Hortensius), the consul of 129 BC, whose Libri magistratuum (at least 13 books in total) are among the key references on Roman law (for libri or commentarii magistratuum, see Gel., 13,15, 4; Macrob., 1,13,21). Babcock 1965, 6, quotes L. R. Taylor, who writes that Sempronia had at first married Pinarius (with whom she had had a son, L. Pinarius Natta), then married Bambalio (with whom she had Fulvia), finally to wed Murena. Thus, Fulvia and Natta were stepsiblings, and Murena was their stepfather. Virlouvet 2001, 66ff, rightly argues that under the circumstances, Fulvia had to share her inheritance with her stepbrother, but nonetheless did find her way into the circle of the political elite thanks to her status as a stepdaughter to the consul of 62. For Natta, see Cic., Att., 4, 8a, 3. Where Natta's sister is mentioned in Dom., 139, we may guess that Cicero refers to Fulvia. See Welch 1995, 197 n. 38; see also there for references to Sempronia.

² Babcock 1965, 7; Fischer 1999, 27. Welch 1995, 194, places this event in 47 BC.

³ Fulvia had been his wife in the years 51–49 BC. For their marriage, see Fischer 1999, 19–24; Weir 2008, 6ff. Babcock 1965, 30, argues that Fulvia might have been the driving force behind Curio's activities.

⁴ Clodius had probably been married to Fulvia from 62 BC (see Babcock 1965, 7–8) until his death in 52 BC. For more on their marriage, see Babcock 1965, 2ff; Fischer 1999, 12ff; Weir 2008, 3–5.

⁵ Clodius' son, P. Clodius Pulcher, probably became praetor after the battle of Actium; Clodia was married to Octavian in the years 43–41 BC. Curio's son was sentenced to death after the battle of Actium as one of Antony's supporters (see Fischer 1999, 21). Antony's son M. Antonius Antyllus was killed by Octavian, whereas Iullus Antonius was brought up by Octavia and for many years enjoyed the status of Octavian-Augustus' favorite. When his affair with the latter's daughter came to light, Augustus made him commit suicide. For more on this, see Hallet 2006, 149–164. For more details on Fulvia's and Antony's children, see Babcock 1965, 13, n. 25.

generally agree that with a good dowry⁶, no siblings and the status of a consul's daughter, Fulvia was a good match for all her husbands, young Roman nobiles⁷. Some also believe that she had a lot of charm⁸. Following Clodius' death, as emphasized by K. Welch, Fulvia became an attractive widow who could offer any new husband her money, her talents as a political organizer, and the clientela she had retained in the city. Moreover, her husband would also become the step-father of Clodius' children⁹. It is believed that Antony had seen the potential benefits of marrying Fulvia, and had divorced his previous (second) wife Antonia in order to do so (his first wife had been Fadia)¹⁰. The sources show that Fulvia's marriages had been happy ones, and herself a faithful and loyal wife¹¹. Hence, it is the more surprising that shoud have come to be known as a greedy, ruthless virago with nihil muliebre praeter corpus¹². This appears to be due to the fact that the ancient world's primary source on Fulvia were Cicero's invectives against Antony, who would in time become the former's mortal enemy¹³. While there is little doubt that Fulvia's reputation

⁶ This is mentioned by Cicero in *Phil.*, 3, 16: *bonae feminae, locupletis quidem certe*. The orator makes it sound sarcastic, implying that (perhaps) Antony married her for her money. See Weir 2008, 55f, who quotes other historians' views on Fulvia's riches.

⁷ Babcock 1965, 11.

⁸ Babcock 1965, 12, draws attention to the fact that little is known of her appearance from the sources. The contemporary scholars speculate on this aspect on the basis of coin portraits presumed be Fulvia's. Nevertheless, these too have been interpreted in various ways; while Babcock believes that she might have been an attractive woman, Cicotti says that she has a crooked nose, and her tightened lips stand in contrast with her fat countenance and the expression of insolence, of clear arrogance; her features were those of a bird of prey, a flamingo, so that all you could expect from her was a selfish pursuit of life with no obstacles. But with her personality in mind, ruthless, or even cruel, you could not but to see her as a freak, a mistake of nature (as quoted in Fischer 1999, 3; cf. Tausend 2010, 34. See Dziuba 2008, 99).

⁹ Welch 1995, 192.

¹⁰ Welch 1995, 192, believes that the Cicero's quotation (*Phil.*, 2, 99) should be regarded as true. The orator argued that *filiam eius sororem tuam eiecisti alia condicione quaesita et ante perspecta* (he referred to Fulvia). According to Welch, Antonia had been publically accused of adultery with Dolabella, which allowed Antony to get rid of his inconvenient spouse, retain some of her dowry and disgrace his rival Dolabella, all at one stroke. Fischer argues that Antony had known Fulvia for a dozen or so years, and following her husband's death, he might have at first simply taken care of his friend's widow.

The evidence of her marriage with Clodius having been a happy one can be found in Cicero, who, in his defense of Milo, *Mil.*, 28, 55, assures that Clodius never parted his wife, but also in Asconius' statements 32 and 40C. While Fulvia's marriage with Curio was brief, the transformation that occurred in the latter after they had married shows that his wife's influence on him was significant. For this, see Babcock 1965, 12f; for Fulvia's influence on Curio's activities, see p. 18ff. Cf. Fischer 1999, 23; 62; Dziuba 2008, 99.

¹² This is how Velleius Paterculus describes her in II, 74: *Ex altera parte uxor Antonii Fulvia nihil muliebre praeter corpus gerens*.

¹³ Little is known for certain why Cicero and Antony became enemies. Antony probably accused Cicero of murdering his stepfather Lentulus, one of the Catilinarians. See Manuwald 2007, 92. According to Lintott 2008, 295, their animosity started with Antony appearing at Milo's trial to oppose Cicero.

is still grimy from the mud thrown so effectively by Cicero¹⁴, a closer study of the sources shows it even more compromised by the Augustan propaganda. While she would be relatively seldom mentioned in contemporary research before 1975 with regard to Antony's activities, hardly any study on Antony has ever since been able to do without a reference to Fulvia as an important element of the discussion¹⁵. More and more often, it has been recognized that her negative image present in the ancient sources results from the fact that she dared enter an area of activities theretofore reserved for men¹⁶. Already in 1910, Münzer wrote: Sie war die erste Frau eines Herrschers, die sich als solche gefühlt und benommen hat; weil das für die damaligen Römer etwas Unerhörtes war, haben sie daran den schwersten Anstoss genommen, und die Neueren haben hier das Urteil nicht verbessert, sondern noch verschärft¹⁷. In the discussed case, Münzer referred mostly to Drumann and other contemporary historians. Nevertheless, one has to admit that in the 21st century, in turn, many articles have appeared where attempts have been made to cast a better light on Fulvia. With all the hostile sources, this has been far from easy. A significant contribution was made by C. Virlouvet, who wrote that she hoped to do for Fulvia what others had done for her husband: to capture the essence of her life concealed by the conflicting evidence¹⁸. The earliest reference to Fulvia concerns her behaviour after the death of her first husband and her testimony

¹⁴ Huzar 1986, 101. Cf. Dziuba 2008, 108: the credit for such reputation of Fulvia should be given to Cicero, whose *charakterystyka zaciążyła na opinii potomnych* [description impressed itself in the views of the posterity].

¹⁵ See Weir 2008, 13. She undertook a detailed survey of books and articles on Fulvia and concluded that sources mentioning Fulvia were treated by contemporary historians in a very selective manner. Weir 2008, 18, observes that the first reference to Fulvia as an important historic figure is made by Münzer in his article in RE (1910). While Syme 1939, in his *Roman Revolution* only mentions her in connection with her behaviour during the Perusine War, he also recognizes Fulvia's important role in the history. Inspired by F. Münzer's and R. Syme's views, Babcock 1965, recounts her political career in his article. Huzar 1986, 23, in turn, emphasizes in her works on Mark Antony that Fulvia was an emancipated woman, and that her role was more vital than suggested by the sources. Bauman 1992, in his publication on women and politics in ancient Rome, saw Fulvia as a precursor of Livia (Weir 2008, 24). Barrett 1996, regards Fulvia as a harbinger of an active women.

¹⁶ See Stegmann 2004, 577–8.

¹⁷ Münzer 1910, 284.

¹⁸ Virlouvet 2001, 66. Some contemporary scholars tend to choose only these sources whose depiction of Fulvia conforms to their own concept of her, and leave out these which do not fit. Welch 1995, 187, notes that Balsdon's description of Fulvia fails to make distinction between Fulvia as shown in many accounts and the grotesque caricature created by Octavian. Cf. Lacey 1964, 87–89, here 87: Fulvia, for example, was an Amazon, a good wife to Clodius, Curio, and Mark Antony in succession, infinitely loyal, a virago only in her last four years, yet these are the only years of which Balsdon tells us much [...].

given at Milo's trial¹⁹. What scholars generally focus on, however, is the period in which Fulvia played a historic role, so to speak. These were the years between Caesar's assassination in 44 BC and her own death in 40 BC²⁰. At that time, Fulvia had already been married to Antony. The first chronological mention shows her involved (at her husband's side) in dealings related to utilization (or forgery, as Cicero insisted) of acta Caesaris. 21 This particular case was related to king Deiotarus of Galatia, who had supported Pompey during the civil war and had lost a part of his kingdom to Caesar in consequence²². In April 44 BC. Antony presented a decree, purporting to have been found in Caesar's archives. by which the kingdom was restored to Deiotarus. Cicero recounts that when the promise to cover the restoration expenses was delivered by king's envoys, the arrangements took place in Antony's house: [...] mulier sibi felicior quam viris auctionem provinciarum regnorumque faciebat²³. For sealing of his ownership title, Deiotarus reportedly paid Fulvia the sum of 10 thousand sesterces. Cicero writes about it not only in his invective. Also in a letter to Atticus, he says, with hurt pride, that dignus ille quidem omni regno sed non per Fulviam²⁴. We know that the orator had successfully defended Deiotarus against Caesar (pro Rege Deiotaro of 47 BC) during a trial (held in absentia of the king) following an alleged attempt to take Caesar's life. Cicero therefore regarded himself as the king's friend, and wrote, embittered: Syngrapha sestertii centiens per legatos, viros bonos, sed timidos et imperitos, sine nostra, sine reliquorum hospitum

¹⁹ Such information is only provided by Asconius (32C: Augebat autem facti invidiam uxor Clodi Fulvia, quae cum effusa lamentatione vulnera eius ostendebat) 41C: ultimae testimonium dixerunt Sempronia [...] et uxor Fulvia [...]. No mention of Fulvia is provided in Appian's, BC, II, 21, account of these events. In his defense of Milo, Cicero, Mil., 28; 55, only refers to her as uxor Clodii, without mentioning her name.

²⁰ See, for instance, Fischer 1999, 29. He believes that by marrying Fulvia, Antony reconciled himself with Caesar, which led to his appointment to consulship. There is no agreement among historians on this, see *ibid.*, n. 115. Cf. Virlouvet 2001, 70: *Fulvia enters history as the wife of Mark Antony*.

²¹ According to Appian, BC, III, 5, 16: The memoranda of Caesar's intentions were in Antony's possession, and Caesar's secretary, Faberius, was obedient to him in every way since Caesar himself, on the point of his departure, had placed all petitions of this kind in Antony's discretion. Antony made many additions in order to secure the favour of many persons. He made gifts to cities, to princes, and to his own guards, and although all were advised that these were Caesar's memoranda, yet the recipients knew that the favour was due to Antony. Cf. Plut., Ant., 15 3–4; Vell., II, 60.

²² See Fischer 1999, 31.

²³ Phil., 5, 11. Cf. Bauman 1992, 84. For the gynaecium where Fulvia's deals were supposedly made, see Weir 2008, 43.

²⁴ Att., 14, 12, 1. It should be noted that while Fulvia's name is mentioned by Cicero in his letter, he only refers to her as *uxor Clodii, coniunx Antonii* in his other writings. Weir 2008, 34f, quotes Schaps, who argues that in Greek oratory, the name of a respectable woman was omitted on purpose. Hence, Cicero's reference to Fulvia as *uxor Antonii* is a token of respect.

regis sententia facta in gynaecio est, quo in loco plurimae res venierunt et veneunt²⁵. He was irked by the fact that the king of Galatia owed the return of his kingdom to Antony and Fulvia rather than to himself, although he was the one who should have been defending the king's interests in Rome²⁶.

Naturally, he need not have mentioned Antony's cooperation with Fulvia on this occasion, but he might have found a woman's interference with public affairs particularly irksome, and, at the same time, an assault on a wife so deeply involved in politics was a well-known topos in invectives²⁷. Indeed, a husband (in this case, Antony) unable to control his wife's doings is not worth much. Nevertheless, this particular piece of information suggests that Fulvia was a very loyal and helpful wife²⁸.

According to the orator (or rather, according to Antony's enemy), she is not only the greediest, but also the cruelest of women. We know that she accompanied her husband in the autumn of 44 BC on his trip to Brundusium where his legions had been stationed. Some of them had rebelled against Antony, who ordered the decimation procedure prescribed by the law. Fulvia is said to have witnessed the cruel events. It outraged Cicero, who wrote: *quippe qui in hospitis tectis Brundisi fortissimos viros optimosque civis iugulari iusserit; quorum ante pedes eius morientium sanguine os uxoris respersum esse constabat. Hac ille crudelitate imbutus, cum multo bonis omnibus veniret iratior, quam illis fuerat, quos trucidarat, cui tandem nostrum aut cui omnino bono pepercisset?²⁹. In Appian's account of the same events³⁰, no reference whatsoever is made to Fulvia's presence; Cassius Dio, in turn, insists (whereby he seems to agree with Cicero's version) that Antony ordered <i>centurions as well as others to be slain before the eves of himself and of his wife*³¹.

According to A. Weir, Fulvia's proximity to the executions is a stark contrast to her notable absence the night Clodius was murdered [...] Cicero claims, he wanted to spare his wife from such a scene. Now, however, Ful-

²⁵ Phil., 2, 95.

²⁶ Virlouvet 2001, 72, cf. Gotter 1996, 50. Gotter believes that from that moment on, his pride having been hurt so much, Cicero regarded Antonius as worse even than Caesar. NB the orator also wrote that: [...] *ecce autem Antonius accepta grandi pecunia fixit legem a dictatore comitiis latam qua Siculi cives Romani, Att.*, XIV, 12, which certainly must have hurt his pride even deeper. For this, see also Dziuba 2008, 103f.

²⁷ See Weir 2008, 40, n. 31. According to Weir, what Cicero complains about is that the role played by Fulvia in her house was that of a man rather than of a woman.

²⁸ According to Birt 2014, 111: Fulvia war wie Eisenrippen in dem wuchtigen, aber schwankenden Bau seiner Natur.

²⁹ Phil., III, 4. Cicero repeats this allegation on two other occasions: Phil., V, 22; XIII, 18.

³⁰ App., *BC*, III, 41ff.

³¹ Dio, 45, 13, 2–3, trans. by E. Carv.

via is portrayed as eager to witness death³². It is difficult to agree with Weir. It seems that Cicero's mentions may be interpreted as examples of Antony's own cruelty only (which also seems to have been Cicero's intention), given that he, unlike Clodius, shows no will to save his wife from seeing those acts of cruelty, but rather premeditation to expose her to such views. Nevertheless, we cannot say for sure that Fulvia was present during the execution. And if she was (which may be questioned), it is uncertain how she reacted to such extraordinary developments. A. Dziuba is right to argue that, since *Arpinata nie podaje żadnej informacji o reakcji kobiety na egzekucję* [no reference is provided by the Arpinate to how the woman reacted to the execution], the orator goes too far in describing her as unusually cruel³³. What we do observe, however, is another admirable example of loyalty³⁴ and courage which she showed by staying at her husband's side at such dire time of need. Similarly, it cannot be ruled out that she was simply afraid for him³⁵.

This concern and care for her husband is also clearly visible in Fulvia's behaviour at the time when, following Antony's defeat at Mutina, attempts are made to declare him an enemy. Accompanied by Antony's mother Julia, her little son Antyllus and other relatives, Fulvia reportedly spent all night canvassing the houses of influential senators and beseeching them not to apply a *hostis declaratio* against Antony. Appian's account shows that the senators were touched by such reaction from the relatives, and that even Cicero began to worry that his strategy to destroy Antony would fail³⁶. What ultimately prevented the *hostis declaratio* at that time was Piso's oration³⁷. It deserves special attention in this context that Fulvia used Antony's children to win the senators' sympathy. This was the first time that she had ever done that. It seems that the

³² Weir 2008, 52, n. 63.

³³ See Dziuba 2008, 105.

³⁴ According to Förtsch 1935, 110, Cicero's depiction is a rhetoric exaggeration, but the very fact that Fulvia was present at Brundusium suggested that she approved of her husband's behaviour.

³⁵ Bieżuńska-Małowist 1993, 199.

³⁶ App., *BC*, III, 50, 202ff. Bieżuńska-Małowist 1993, 200, believes that at that time, the senate considered *obecność rodziny Antoniusza w Rzymie* [...] *za pewną rękojmię jego dobrych zamiarów* [the presence of Antony's family in Rome [...] to be a reliable guarantee of his good intentions].

³⁷ See Appel 2013, 279. Cf. Weir 2008, 94. According to Bauman 1992, 85–86, Fulvia's strategy was brilliant: *Displays of mourning were normally paraded by the relatives of someone facing a criminal charge, in order to arouse sympathy for the accused. But there was a more subtle purpose. Senators were being reminded that a hostis declaration violated all law and custom, for the victim was outlawed in summary fashion, without being heard in his defence.* Bauman argues that Fulvia was canvassing a burning constitutional question that had been in contention, in one form or another, ever since the Gracchan period – which was, incidentally, the period in which her great-grandfather had written on public law.

purpose of their presence was to make the senators aware that the children might become fatherless.

After the battle of Mutina, Antony and his companions were finally declared public enemies. Back in Rome, Fulvia's position was not easy. Information provided by Nepos shows that at that time Fulvia had to struggle against her husband's enemies in Rome, who sought to deprive her of all property, or even attempted to kill her children. Interestingly, help came to her at that time from Atticus – Cicero's friend. Nepos, who probably supported Antony and knew Fulvia personally, refers to these events in his life of Atticus and is the only historian to do so. A politically neutral banker and publisher, Atticus provided Fulvia with an interest-free loan for an estate which she had purchased some time previously; he also supported her during lawsuits, although, as the historian writes, much to the displeasure of the optimates.³⁸ It is worth remembering that not all accounts on Fulvia are hostile to her. Information provided by Nepos suggests how serious adversities she had to cope with in Rome with her husband away.

In 43 BC, the second triumvirate was formed by young Caesar, Antony and Lepidus. While there is no mention of Fulvia's participation in this event, the fact that Octavian sealed the alliance by marrying Clodia, daughter of Clodius and Fulvia (at that time married to Antony), may suggest that she had played a major role in making of such a decision³⁹. Having sealed the arrangement, the triumvirs started purging. In his account of these events, Appian says that while the people of Rome found it impossible to understand how such misfortunes could have been caused by a concord (which usually suggested a rescue), the proscriptions launched by the triumviri became a terrifying reality⁴⁰. Fulvia's active participation in these is discussed by Cassius Dio and Appian. Dio is particularly hostile to her and Antony. His account suggests that *Fulvia also caused the death of many, both to satisfy her enmity and to gain their wealth, in some cases men with whom her husband was not even acquainted⁴¹.*

³⁸ Nepos, *Att.*, 9, 3; 4; 7. It is worth noting that upon his return, Antony remembered to remove Atticus' name from the proscription lists, and even sent him an escort (Nepos, *Att.*, 9.7, 10). See Syme 1939, 194. For Fulvia's troubles, see also Cic., *Phil.*, XII, 2; App., *BC*, III, 38, 242.

³⁹ See Virlouvet 2001, 74.

⁴⁰ App., BC, IV, 14, 56.

⁴¹ Dio, 47, 8, 2–4. For Fulvia's role in the proscriptions, see Fischer 1999, 37–39; Weir 2008, 99–106. According to Bauman 1992, 85, Dio's account cannot be simply dismissed. Indeed, there had been a tradition of revenge on the enemies. Fulvia finally had the chance to repay the orator for his verbal assaults on Antony. Bauman argues that no extenuating circumstances are adduced by the sources. Even Antony is credited one decent deed: he removed his uncle L. Julius Caesar from the proscription lists. No one has anything good to say about Fulvia,

Appian also says that both Antony and Fulvia saved the lives of those individuals who would possibly bring them more money alive than dead⁴². The morbid description of how murdered Cicero's head was defiled prior to being exposed on the rostra is only provided in Dio. While no mention of this is provided in Appian, he, too, makes Fulvia responsible for the death of one Rufus. It seems that Fulvia had wanted to buy a beautiful house from him (but had not succeeded). Then, the same house was given to her by Rufus, who probably hoped to ingratiate himself with the triumvirs, but nevertheless Fulvia had him proscribed, and after his death, [s]he ordered that [his head] be fastened to the front of his own house instead of the rostra. It is said that Antony had not even known that man⁴³.

Contemporary scholars agree that such a negative image of Fulvia results from sources which rely on Augustus' propagandist accounts where his role in the proscriptions is understated, and the blame is placed on Antony, Lepidus, or even Fulvia, so much hated by Octavian⁴⁴. R. Syme is probably right to doubt whether the contemporaries would agree with such distribution of guilt with regard to the roles played in the proscriptions⁴⁵.

Fulvia's name reappears in the context of another step made by the triumvirs. While it was obvious that the proscriptions had been a specific kind of a tax levied on affluent citizens' property⁴⁶, the amounts obtained in this way

though. According to Bauman, this was not caused by propaganda. Weir 2008, 106, in turn, does not rule out that the story might have been invented by Dio. While no reference is made to Fulvia's cruelty by Velleius Paterculus in II, 66, 3, he alleges that Antony paid a reward for Cicero's capture. Appian argues that *Antony sought for him most eagerly and the rest did so for Antony's sake* (*BC*, IV 19, 74, trans. by H. White), and that the latter paid 250,000 denarii to Laena, who had killed Cicero and brought Antony the orator's severed head and hand. Plutarch, *Ant.*, 20, 3, only mentions that Antony was glad to see Cicero slain. On the basis of Dio's account, some scholars perceive this as Fulvia's way to take vengeance on those who were hostile to her after Antony's defeat at Mutina, see Weir 2008, 101; Fischer 1999, 37.

⁴² Dio, 47, 8, 5.

⁴³ App., *BC*, IV, 29, 124. Val. Max., 9.5.4. According to Weir 2008, 103, Valerius Maximus shows Antony as an arrogant, conceited man who did not recognize a senator.

⁴⁴ Weir 2008, 99, 105; cf. Tausend 2010, 41, argues that even Octavia's behaviour under these critical circumstances was meant to unburden her brother and to cover up his role in the atrocities caused by the proscriptions. Octavia pled for the women of the proscribed and saved the life of Titus Vinius. Fischer 1999, 38, n. 170, names some of the contemporary historians who believe that Octavian was as guilty as the others.

⁴⁵ Syme 1939, 191. He argues that if they had the leisure and the taste to draw fine distinctions between the three terrorists, it was hardly for Octavianus that they invoked indulgence and made allowances. Regrets there may have been – to see a fine soldier and a Roman noble like Antonius reduced to such company and such expedients.

⁴⁶ Dio, 47, 6, 5: For since they stood in need of vast sums of money and had no other source from which to satisfy the desires of their soldiers, they affected a kind of common enmity against the rich. Cf. R. Syme 1939, 197.

failed to satisfy the triumvirs. Therefore, [t]he triumvirs addressed the people on this subject and published an edict requiring 1.400 of the richest women to make a valuation of their property, and to furnish for the service of the war such portion as triumvirs should require from each⁴⁷. The women, outraged by this, went to see the female relatives of the triumvirs. Though received politely by Octavian's sister, Octavia, and Antony's mother, Julia, they were repulsed from the doors by Fulvia. Even deeper outraged by her behaviour, they appeared at the forum, where Hortensia spoke on their behalf, explaining that they had been compelled to do so by Fulvia's insult⁴⁸. We do not know the exact context. All we know is that, in the aftermath of Hortensia's speech, [o]n the following day [the triumvirs] reduced the number of the women, who were to present a valuation of their property, from 1,400 to 400⁴⁹. What puzzles in the light of these circumstances is that Fulvia's refusal (as proved by Hortensia's oration) was more important than the support provided by Octavia and Julia. We do not know the exact source of this information. The possibility cannot be ruled out that it too resulted from Augustus' propaganda, and that it was another attempt to cast bad light on Antony's wife. On the other hand, the description may have been true, and Fulvia's opinion may have been the only one that mattered under the circumstances⁵⁰. Her behavior at that time receives very diverse interpretations: some scholars regard it as another example of her cruelty⁵¹, whereas others approve of her attitude and emphasize that she also might have been among the 1,400 women on whom the heavy tax was levied⁵². With her status as the wife to one of the triumvirs, this is hardly likely, though⁵³. Fischer draws attention to a clear difference of attitude between Fulvia, who placed the business of the state above her own, and the women who sought her support, with only their own interest in mind⁵⁴. It is hard to say whether this was the fact; what is certain,

⁴⁷ App., *BC*, IV, 32, 135. Cf. Dio, 47, 16, 4 (no details are provided by Dio).

⁴⁸ App., *BC*, IV, 32, 137. According to Schnegg 2010, 52, this situation should be viewed in the light of Appian's general approach to Fulvia. He believes that Antony's wife is a provocateur (see e.g. App., *BC*, V, 59, 250) also in this case, and that it is her attitude (refusal) that compels the women to act differently. Appian believes that wartime makes people act selfishly, in defiance of traditions, and out of their class. Through such depiction of Fulvia, there also appears a specific image of Antony. Indeed, since his wife had so much influence on him and his policies, it can be reasonably doubted whether he acted alone.

⁴⁹ App., BC, IV, 34, 146. See Syme 1939, 198.

⁵⁰ According to Birt 2014, 115, it was clear that Fulvia was a woman of power.

⁵¹ Bieżuńska-Małowist 1993, 201.

⁵² See Münzer 1910, 282. Christ 2009, 68: She also dared refuse to plead for the affluent Roman ladies. Dziuba 2008, 104; Fischer 1999, 39.

⁵³ See Weir 2008, 108.

⁵⁴ See Fischer 1999, 39. Bauman 1992, 86, says that Fulvia gave an example of how an empress could have been expected to act. Cf. Harders 2008.

however, is that Fulvia's behaviour once more turned out to be driven by loyalty to her husband.

Following the battle of Philippi, which had bathed Antony in glory for the next decade⁵⁵, the triumvirs agreed that Octavian would return to Italy and colonize veterans, while Antony was to put things in order in the east and collect funds⁵⁶. Dio argues that after Antony's departure to the east, to Bithynia, Fulvia's influence on the politics was so clear that even though the consulship of 41 BC belonged to P. Servilius and L. Antonius, the *de facto* incumbents were Fulvia and Lucius Antonius⁵⁷. He emphasizes that, being Antony's wife and Octavian's mother-in-law, Fulvia disregarded Lepidus for his slothfulness, and *neither the senate nor the people transacted any business contrary to her pleasure*⁵⁸.

When, upon his return to Italy, Octavian got down to his highly difficult task of allotting land to veterans, many outbreaks of unrest followed, both among the veterans and among the expropriated. A dispute also arose between Octavian on one side and Lucius Antonius and Fulvia on the other. Seeking to prevent a scenario where Octavian would enjoy exclusive gratitude of the veterans for the allotments, Fulvia resorted to artifices to delay the settlement of the colonies till Antony should return home⁵⁹. According to Suetonius, Octavian neque veteranorum neque possessorum gratiam tenuit, alteris pelli se, alteris non pro spe meritorum tractari querentibus⁶⁰. Young Caesar found himself in a difficult position, and perhaps this circumstance was used by Fulvia and Lucius to embark on a deceitful fight against him. It is hard to tell what their objectives were. Even if they did make references to Antony, he seems to have had nothing in common with this conflict⁶¹.

⁵⁵ Syme 1939, 209.

⁵⁶ Dio, 48, 2, 2–3.

⁵⁷ Dio, 48, 4, 1ff; Plut., Ant., 30,1; App., BC, V, 14. See Dettenhoffer 1992, 325.

⁵⁸ Dio, 48, 4, 1. He describes a certain situation which illustrates Fulvia's power. Namely, when Lucius demanded the right to celebrate a triumph following the victory over certain peoples living in the Alps, Fulvia denied it categorically, and the Senate refrained from putting his request to vote. Yet soon Fulvia changed her mind, whereupon the Senate granted the triumph to Lucius Antonius. Indeed, Lucius was the one who boasted about it and celebrated a triumph over the people whom he claimed to have vanquished (in reality he had done nothing deserving a triumph and had held no command at all in those regions), yet it was actually Fulvia, says Dio.

⁵⁹ App., *BC*, V, 14, 54.

⁶⁰ Suet., Aug., 13

⁶¹ According to Fischer 1999, 45, Fulvia was aware of the crucial role of the veterans in the general's policy. Hence, it was so important for her to prevail for Antony's sake. Had the victory been hers and Lucius', then Antony's road to power would have been open. Yet Antony's inertia brought defeat upon them and sealed Fulvia's fate. Fischer believes that Antony was a good general, but Fulvia was a better politician.

We know that, at some point in time, Fulvia and Lucius changed their tactic and gave up their initial support for the veterans' claims⁶². Ultimately, they turned their arms against Octavian, with the ensuing warfare later being referred to as the Perusine War⁶³. There was a conviction among those on whose behalf those two acted that Mark Antony had been behind these developments. According to Appian, Lucius sought to restore the republic⁶⁴, whereas Fulvia joined the war out of jealousy, talked into it by one Manius, who had convinced her that Antony would not leave Cleopatra unless a war broke out in Italy⁶⁵. Little is known of said Manius or his motivation⁶⁶. According to Pelling, blaming Fulvia for the war has already become a tradition⁶⁷. It is worth pointing out, however, that this tradition is not followed by all sources. For instance, Livy's epitomator does believe that Lucius was encouraged to start the war by Fulvia, but he does not mention Manius or jealousy as the *causa belli*. The preserved fragment suggests that Fulvia simply acted for her husband⁶⁸. Suetonius places the blame on Lucius, and Fulvia's name is only mentioned in reference to Claudia having been sent back, untouched by her husband, to his mother-in-law⁶⁹.

Thus a major role is ascribed to Fulvia at the early stages of the Perusine War by most sources. Yet her role in the further developments pertaining to this war is not that clear. R. Syme points out very aptly in this context: *It is impossible to discover the ultimate truth of these transactions. The propaganda of Octavianus, gross and mendacious, exaggerated the role of Fulvia both at the time and later, putting her person and her acts in a hateful light; and there was nobody afterwards, from piety or even from perversity, to redeem her memory.*

⁶² Dio, 48, 6, 4–7.1. Initially at the veterans' side, Lucius and Fulvia now redirected their attention to the landowners. Dio suggests that their change of plans was a pretext for pursuing their own interest. See Weir 2008, 115. Cf. App., *BC*, V, 19, 74. According to Bauman 1992, 88, this change was indicative of Fulvia's great foresight. For Lucius' policy, see Pelling 1988, 198.

⁶³ Interestingly enough, no mention of this war is provided by Augustus, even in *Res Gestae*.
64 App., *BC*, V, 19, 75. A contradictory account is provided by Dio 48, 5, 3–4, a clear sign

of his well-known support for Octavian.

65 See App., *BC*, V, 19, 75, and Plut. *Ant*. 30.4. Antony's lover at that time was Glaphyra. According to Pelling 1988, 199, the theme of Fulvia's jealousy is likely to have been propagandist

phantasy, an element of a generally hostile tradition.

66 Bühler 2009, 100, n. 176, considers whether Manius acted *against* Octavian or *for* Antony.

⁶⁷ This view is reflected in Peeling 1988, 199. See App., *BC*, V, 19, 59, 66; Dio, 48, 28, 3, cf. Liv., *Per.*, 127. Peeling draws attention to the fact that Antony met Cleopatra at Tarsus in late summer of 41 BC, which means that reports of the scandal could not have reached Rome by spring or early summer, when Fulvia and Antony took up arms. If, therefore, Fulvia had any reason to be jealous, it was Glaphyra rather than Cleopatra. For more on this, see Weir 2008, 112.

⁶⁸ Liv., Per., 125.

⁶⁹ Suet., Aug., 14. Suet., Aug., 62: Fulviae ex P. Clodio filiam, duxit uxorem vixdum nubilem ac simultate cum Fulvia socru orta dimisit intactam adhuc et virginem. Cf. also Dio, 48, 5, 3. According to Bauman 1992, 87, no grounds for the divorce were needed, and the statement of Clodia's intact condition was a gratuitous insult.

[...] Further, L. Antonius has been idealized in the account of Appian, where he appears as a champion of Libertas against the Triumvirate⁷⁰.

Fulvia's name was engraved on the so-called *glandes Perusinae*, phallus-shaped lead bullets bearing obscene inscriptions, discovered near Perusia⁷¹. According to scholars, this is a proof that the role played by Antony's wife at the time cannot be denied. It is highly likely, though, that Augustus' propaganda was behind all this, doing whatever it took to emphasize Fulvia's role in that war and indicating her jealousy of Antony as its cause⁷². This is clearly shown by the epigram preserved by Martial and ascribed to Octavian. It suggests that an *ultimatum* was given to the latter by Fulvia: to either go to bed or to war with her. Naturally, Octavian chose war⁷³. As with the *glandes Perusinae*, there is no doubt that the epigram is also the result of the propaganda which undermined a very serious problem of the clash between Antony's wife and brother on one side and Octavian on the other⁷⁴. The fact that Fulvia was the focus of the propaganda shows that she was the one whom Octavian feared.

It is also worth a mention that, next to the obscene inscriptions, Lucius' soldiers also engraved *M. Ant. Imp.* (Imperator Mark Antony) on their sling bullets thrown at Octavian's troops. It is not known, however, what Mark Antony himself thought about this war, and what his role was in the schemes plotted by Fulvia and Lucius. These two claimed to be acting against Octavian on behalf of Antony, and Lucius even took the *cognomen* of *Pietas* as a token of his respect and devotion to his brother⁷⁵. The sources show that both sides sent their deputies to him, which means that the triumvir knew exactly what was going on⁷⁶. Only one his reaction to these events is described by Appian. Reportedly,

⁷⁰ Syme 1939, 211, n. 28.

⁷¹ Williams 2009, 29: *glans (originaly meaning 'acorn'), has been used by medical writers both ancient and modern to describe the tip of the penis, the glandes Perusinae evoke the penis both visually and verbally* (NB these were not *tablets* as suggested by Bieżuńska-Małowist 1993, 203). For more on this, see Hallet 1977, 151–171. Interestingly enough, Fischer 1999, 46, n. 203, regards her article as unsavory. Cowan 2010, 212, writes that the army was upset by these sling projectiles, pelting them with a terrible whistling sound and causing severe injuries.

⁷² Dio refers to this war as a one between Octavian and his mother-in-law.

⁷³ Mart., 11, 20. For more on this, see Weir 2008, 67–71.

⁷⁴ Weir 2008, 76: [...] in contrast to Martial's epigram (11.20), the bullets do not seek to downgrade the severity of the war, but rather are a common method of ridiculing the enemy with insulting messages. The epigram plays down her importance, but nonetheless says that she was involved in causing it. The sling bullets, on the other hand, imply that she was a person of some importance and held in respect by Lucius' soldiers because the insults against her are intended to taunt them.

⁷⁵ App., BC, V, 56; Dio, 48, 5, 4–5.

⁷⁶ App., BC, V, 21, 83: Both of them wrote these things to Antony, and friends were sent to him with the letters, who were to give him particulars about each complaint. Although I have searched, I have not been able to find any clear account of what Antony wrote in reply.

Antony wrote a letter (although Appian doubts whether this was a genuine one) in which he said that war was to be waged in the event that his *dignitas* was assailed⁷⁷. When the deputies came to see him, he retained them for the winter of 41–40 BC; it was only when he learned of the fall of Perusia that he blamed his brother and Fulvia, and, most of all, Manius⁷⁸. One of the reasons of Lucius' defeat at Perusia was that no assistance had come from Mark's generals, who had had no intention to become involved in this war without his orders being known⁷⁹. According to E. Gabba. Antony's hands were tied by the situation which had evolved from Fulvia's and Lucius' doings. He would not share his brother's republican sentiments, and it seems that, being aware of how important loyalty to the veterans was, neither would he have approved of Lucius' alliance with the expropriated landowners. On the other hand, he could not renounce his brother as it would have strengthened Octavian's position. Antony had to act carefully, which was why had retained the deputies for the winter⁸⁰.

In 40 BC, besieged at Perusia, Lucius had to surrender to Octavian⁸¹. Fulvia sent Plancus and Ventidius to help him, but it was too late. While surrendering to Octavian, Lucius explained that he had undertaken the war himself in order to restore to the homeland the *patrician government*; he also emphasized that not my brother, nor Manius, nor Fulvia had influenced him to do so⁸². Octavian spared his life and made him governor of Spain⁸³.

Antony met Fulvia at Athens, whither she had fled from Brundusium. His mother, Julia, who had fled to Pompeius had been sent thither by him from Sicily with warships, and escorted by some of the optimates of his party [...]⁸⁴.

According to Appian, Fulvia was rebuked severely by her husband, who blamed her for the position he had found himself in. Then, he set off to confront Octavian⁸⁵ and left his wife ill at Sicyon, where she died. *She died at the proper* moment for Antony⁸⁶ – Münzer's very pertinent statement, often quoted by the

App., BC, V, 29, 112. Cf. Gabba 1971, 149f.
 App., BC, V, 52, 216.

⁷⁹ See Pelling 1988, 198. Syme 1939, 210: Antonius' generals in Italy and the western provinces, lacking instructions, doubted the veracity of his brother and his wife.

⁸⁰ See Gabba 1971, 150.

⁸¹ App., *BC*, V, 31–40. ⁸² App., *BC*, V, 43; Lucius also said later that he had been aware that *Fulvia was in favour of the* monarchy, but that he had been the one to use the troops to overthrow the triumvirs, BC, V, 54, 226.

⁸³ App. BC, V, 54, 229. The previous governors, Peducaeus and Lucius, were to become his lieutenants, but also Octavian's middlemen in supervising Lucius Antonius.

⁸⁴ App., BC, V, 52, 217.

⁸⁵ This version is provided by Appian, BC, V, 249; according to Plutarch, Ant., 30, Fulvia had fallen ill during her voyage and died without meeting Antony.

⁸⁶ Münzer 1910, 284. He adds that no one took the effort to preserve her good name, what with Antony's two sons having come to a bad end, too. Cf. Weir 2008, 132: Ironically, even in her

scholars, reflects what the ancient authors never wrote explicitly, but implied to have been the case⁸⁷.

In October 40 BC, Antony and Octavian concluded that the Perusine War had merely been a jealous woman's attempt to ensure her husband's return⁸⁸. In view of our knowledge of Fulvia's earlier life, this statement is hard to believe. Indeed, it is clear that Fulvia was made the scapegoat. Immediately after her death, both sides reconciled and blamed everything on her⁸⁹. Thus the dynasts renewed their alliance and Antony sealed it by marrying Octavia, Octavian's sister.

Fulvia's role in the Perusine War has received various evaluations from present-day scholars. According to Bauman, her heroism in this war had even deeper root than merely her loyalty to Antony. Fulvia preferred monarchy⁹⁰ and saw no point in attempts to save the republic. All she held against Octavian was that he had excluded her husband from a full share of power⁹¹. Virlouvet, in turn, argues that Fulvia realized that the triumvirate could not last forever, and that the time had come for power to be concentrated in the hands of only one of the triumvirs. And that she regarded Antony as the one who should rule on his own⁹².

With the propagandist bias of the sources, we are unable to evaluate clearly the extent of Fulvia's involvement in this war or her motives. It seems, however, that we may say with high probability that she acted, as always, with Antony's interest at heart.

Appian argues that *Antony was much saddened by this event because he considered himself in some sense the cause of it*, because of his affair with Cleopatra. Had Antony's remorse been honest, though, he would have never al-

death, Fulvia continued to aid her husband's reputation by becoming the scapegoat for the war, thus facilitating Antony's reconciliation with Octavian. Cf. Fischer 1999, 48.

⁸⁷ App., BC, V, 59, 250: The death of this turbulent woman, who had stirred up so disastrous a war on account of her jealousy of Cleopatra, seemed extremely fortunate to both of the parties who were rid of her. Dio, 48, 28, 3, in turn, considers whether the reconciliation between the dynasties took place immediately after Fulvia's death and because she had been the cause of their variance, or because they had used her death as an excuse *in view of the fear which each inspired in the other* [...]. According to Bauman 1992, 89, Appian was aware of Fulvia's organizing genius which could have been used to outmaneuver Octavian. With her dead, Octavian could feel safe.

⁸⁸ See C. Virlouvet 2001, 79.

⁸⁹ Cocceius, an adviser to Octavian, is believed to have authored the plan to blame everything on Fulvia and forget past offences (App., *BC*, V, 62, 266), cf. Welch 1995, 200 (n. 102). Welch also suggests that the idea to sacrifice Fulvia in order to ensure reconciliation of the triumvirs came from Antony's mother.

⁹⁰ App., BC, V, 54.

⁹¹ Bauman 1992, 89.

⁹² Virlouvet 2001, 80. Syme 1939, 211, rightly argues that Fulvia, if anybody, knew the character of her husband: he neither would nor could go back upon his pledges of alliance to Octavianus. She must force him – by discrediting, if not by destroying, the rival Caesarian leader, and thus win for her absent und unsuspecting consort the sole power which he scarcely seemed to desire.

lowed the entire blame to fall on Fulvia. Even if Appian assures us that Manius, who had excited Fulvia by his accusations against Cleopatra and had been the cause of so many evils⁹³, was put to death by Antony, there is still no explanation for the latter having no heart for his loyal and faithful wife.

This unwavering sense of loyalty to Antony was a thing rather unusual in Fulvia's circles. She looked after Antony's interests with steadfast courage and determination, and eventually faced criticism for this⁹⁴. Her intelligence and courage must have been noticed and admired by the ancients, and yet, because she had trespassed beyond the limits established by men to prevent women from participating in politics, she would be described in terms of moral condemnation of her audacity, jealousy and cruelty⁹⁵. A very apt reference to Antony and Fulvia is made by T. Birt: "Ich finde, Antonius hat etwas vom Germanen; er war so, wie man uns die wilden deutschen Kämpen und Herzöge des Mittelaters schildert: weinglühend, wüst und toll, und doch siegreich und ein ganzer Held; hell von Verstand, aber von bedeutenden Frauen wie ein Kind zu lenken. Zu seinem Glück fiel er jetzt in Fulvias Hände, zu seinem Unsegen beherrschte ihn später Kleopatra⁹⁶.

Streszczenie

Fulwia i Antoniusz

Fulwia, trzecia żona Antoniusza, była bez wątpienia kobietą niezwykłą. Zanim poślubiła Antoniusza, była najpierw żoną Klodiusza, osławionego wroga

⁹³ App., BC, V, 66, 278.

⁹⁴ See Bauman 1992, 85.

⁹⁵ See Virlouvet 2001, 80. She believes that this image has been very often passed on unquestioned by modern scholars as they share the ancients' prejudices concerning how much space a woman was allowed to occupy in public affairs. Freisenbruch 2011, 10: [...] women like Fulvia and Cleopatra, who meddled in the exclusive political and military territory of men, were categorized as harbingers of a world turned upside down. The dividing line between the female sphere of domestic life and the public world of men was fixed, and woe to any woman perceived to have overstepped it. One such straw woman of the Republican era was Clodia Metelli, cited during a law court speech delivered in 56 BC by Cicero [...]. The most damning word he used to describe her was 'notorious,' implying that Clodia had broken the unwritten rule of Roman society, which dictated that a woman's place was to be seen and not heard. The real target of such vilification, however, were usually the men who tolerated a woman's incursion into the public sphere in the first place, and who, according to Roman definitions of masculinity, were thus regarded as weak and feminine themselves, unable to keep their own houses in order. These at least were the sentiments behind Plutarch's description of Fulvia as 'a woman who cared nothing for spinning or housework'[...]. 96 Birt 2014, 110.

Cycerona, a po jego śmierci została małżonką Skryboniusza Kuriona, trybuna ludowego 58 roku. Ze źródeł wynika, że małżeństwa Fulwii były szcześliwe. a ona była wierna i lojalna żona. Mimo to przedstawiano ja jako niewiaste, która nie miała w sobie nic kobiecego oprócz ciała (Wellejusz Paterkulus). O takiej złej reputacji Fulwij u starożytnych autorów zadecydowały głównie wypowiedzi Cycerona (w Filipikach), ale także propaganda augustowska. Biorac zatem pod uwage tylko owe nieprzychylne jej źródła, trudno byłoby przedstawić jej postać w korzystniejszym świetle. A jednak w XX wieku, szczególnie zaś na poczatku wieku XXI, można odnotować wiele wypowiedzi współczesnych badaczy, którzy dostrzegli w Fulwii przede wszystkim taka kobiete, która w każdej sytuacji dbała o interesy męża. To ona miała pomagać Antoniuszowi w fałszowaniu tzw. acta Caesaris, i to jej miał Dejotar wreczyć 10 tysięcy sesterców za zatwierdzenie nowego stanu posiadania. Jej troskę o losy męża widać szczególnie wówczas, kiedy po pokonaniu Antoniusza pod Mutyna podjeto próby ogłoszenia go wrogiem. Wtedy to Fulwia z rodzina błagała senatorów, by tego nie czynili. Kiedy jednak ostatecznie Antoniusz i jego towarzysze stali się hostes populi Romani, sytuacja Fulwii w Rzymie stała się wyjątkowo trudna. Dzięki pomocy Attyka i własnej sile pokonała wszelkie trudności (Nepos). Niełatwo ocenić obiektywnie zarzucany Fulwii udział w proskrypcjach, ponieważ wydarzenia te (zwłaszcza one) zostały w przekazie zniekształcone przez augustowską propagandę, która pomniejszała udział Oktawiana w proskrypcjach, znaczniej obciążała zaś Lepidusa, Antoniusza, a nawet Fulwię. Współczesnym badaczom trudno jest również obiektywnie ocenić reakcję żony Antoniusza na prośbę majętnych matron rzymskich, które zwróciły się do niej o pomoc po tym, jak triumwirowie nałożyli na nie duży podatek. Fulwia odmówiła ich prośbie, być może w ten sposób po raz kolejny okazując lojalność wobec męża-triumwira.

Największe kontrowersje wzbudza ocena udziału Fulwii w tzw. wojnie peruzyńskiej. Większość źródeł przypisuje żonie Antoniusza ogromną rolę, jaką miała odegrać w początkowej fazie tej wojny. Natomiast nie jest jednak wcale taki oczywisty jej udział w dalszych wydarzeniach związanych z tym konfliktem zbrojnym. Sam Antoniusz nie tylko nie angażował się w wojenne działania, ale nawet zganił swą żonę za to, że stała się winna skomplikowanej sytuacji, w jakiej się znalazł. Zostawił wówczas chorą Fulwię w Sykionie, gdzie *umarła dla Antoniusza we właściwym momencie* (F. Münzer). Po jej śmierci obie strony natychmiast się pogodziły, obarczając ją winą za wszystko.

Mimo nieprzychylnych opinii źródeł można jednak domniemywać, że już starożytni musieli dostrzegać i podziwiać inteligencję Fulwii oraz jej odwagę, ale, ponieważ jej osobowość wykraczała poza granice nakreślone i zdominowane przez męski świat wartości, a one nie pozwalały na udział kobiet w polityce, cnoty Fulwii definiowano jako zuchwałość, zazdrość i okrucieństwo, ogólnie potępiając ją pod względem moralności. A jeśli chodzi o Antoniusza, tak podatnego na niewieście wpływy, to, biorąc pod uwagę jego losy, można o nim powiedzieć, że istotnie miał dużo szczęścia, kiedy wpadł w objęcia Fulwii, i niemałego pecha, gdy znalazł się w objęciach Kleopatry.