

LOLLIA PAULINA, MEMMIUS REGULUS AND CALIGULA

(PLATE 43)

THESE reflections are respectfully offered to a scholar whose work has stimulated over the years an enormous interest among students of Attic epigraphy.

One of the most famous scenes of the *Annals* of Tacitus is that at the beginning of Book XII when after the death of Messalina the freedmen of Claudius selected a new wife for the emperor. The chief competition was between Lollia Paulina and Julia Agrippina, his own niece. The importance of Lollia Paulina appears later from the speech of Claudius summarized by Tacitus, *Annals*, XII, 22. Lollia, as Tacitus calls her, came from a great family and possessed immense wealth. Agrippina never forgave her rival and soon had her murdered.

Pliny the Elder remembered seeing Lollia, as he too calls her, at a dinner party where she wore forty million sesterces worth of emeralds and pearls,¹ which were not gifts but ancestral booty extorted from the provincials or received from kings by her grandfather, who drank poison to preserve the wealth for his granddaughter.

In the life of Caligula, 25, Suetonius deals with the rubric "marriages." *Matrimonia contraxerit turpius an dimiserit an tenuerit*, he begins earnestly, *non est facile discernere*. The first case sets the tone: Caligula was invited to C. Piso's wedding party, admired the bride, sent the groom a message *noli uxorem meam premere* and abducted her from the festivities to have her himself in matrimony.

The second case was actually worse because Caligula at first did not even see the bride. He merely heard that her grandmother had been a beauty. It concerns the bride of a consular, P. Memmius Regulus, who governed Moesia, Macedonia and Achaia as imperial legate from A.D. 35 to 44, a very able and popular man honored at Athens, Megara, Thespiae, Corinth, Olympia, Epidaurus, Argos, Delphi and many other places. Suetonius does not have the governor's name quite right and there may be other inaccuracies, but here is the anecdote: *Lolliam Paulinam, C. Memmio consulari exercitus regenti nuptam, facta mentione aviae eius ut quondam pulcherrimae, subito ex provincia evocavit ac perductam a marito coniunxit sibi, brevique missam fecit, interdicto cuiusquam in perpetuo coitu*.²

In the context it seems natural to interpret the term *nupta* as meaning *nova nupta*, and it is hard, for me impossible, to resist reading as $\mu\nu[\eta\sigma]\tau[\acute{\eta}\nu$ the letters MN. .I,

¹ Pliny, *N.H.*, IX, 117-118.

² Ed. Groag discusses the case, *R.E.*, XV, 1931, coll. 632 f., in his article on P. Memmius Regulus. See also M. P. Charlesworth, *C.A.H.*, X, 1934, p. 657, note; and Balsdon, *The Emperor Gaius*, Oxford, 1934, pp. 47 f.

which appear on the photograph³ of *I.G.*, II², 4176 (Pl. 43) for a relative of P. Memmius Regulus. The person honored was, as Raubitschek saw, a woman. Raubitschek was tempted to restore $\mu\eta[\tau\acute{\epsilon}]\rho[\alpha]$ "in violation of the attested reading," as he himself admitted, but though he went so far as to dot the clear nu and to read as a clear rho what is only a vertical hasta, he refrained from putting the impossible restoration into the text. But why would a consular appointed to a very important post comprising the governorship of three provinces and the command of an army take his old mother with him from Italy to the Balkans? It was not unusual for a governor to have his wife and children along,⁴ but the grandparents would have been out of place.

The *nova nupta* is a better candidate than the old mother of the mature consular. As Suetonius says, the *nupta* was Lollia Paulina, whose name in its ordinary abbreviation may be restored in the text of *I.G.*, II², 4176 (= III 616) from the Acropolis as follows:

[ῆ β]ο[υλῆ ἡ ἐξ Ἀρήου πάγον καὶ ἡ βουλῆ]
 [τ]ῶν Ἐ[ξακ]ο[σίων καὶ ὁ δῆμος Λολλί-]
 [αν] Ποπλίου Μεμ[μί]ο[υ Ῥήγλου τοῦ πρε-]
 σβευτοῦ τῶν [Σ]εβα[στών καὶ ἀντι-]
 5 στρατήγον μν[ησ]τ[ῆν στρατηγούν-]
 τος ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀπλίτας τ[ὸ ---]
 Διοκλέους τοῦ Θεμιστ[οκλέους]
 δαδούχου φιλοκαίσαρ[ος καὶ φιλο-]
 πάτριδος τοῦ καὶ εἰσηγη[τοῦ]
 10 ἐπὶ ἱερείας Ἰουνία[ς]
 Μεγίστης τῆς Ζή[νωνος]
 Σουνιέως θυγατ[ρός].

Because of syllabic division a lacuna of only two letters at the beginning of line 3 constitutes an important clue to the name.

³ A. E. Raubitschek, "Two Notes on the *Fasti* of Achaia," *Studies Presented to David Moore Robinson*, II, St. Louis, 1953, pp. 330-333, plate 70. We have republished the same photograph on Plate 43 *infra*. As J. and L. Robert point out (*Bull. ép.*, 1954, no. 98), Raubitschek's restoration of the end of line 5 introduces a grammatical error and cannot be right. It may be added that Raubitschek has dotted the wrong letter in line 5, where the nu is clear, and he has been too precise in assigning seven letters of line 2 to the name. If one measures by line 4, there were only five letters of the name in line 2.

⁴ In A.D. 21 Caecina Severus proposed that governors be forbidden to take along their wives to the provinces. The pros and cons were argued in the senate, and the proposal was defeated. Tacitus, *Annals*, III, 33-34 records the debate, and no hint of a charge occurs that a governor ever took more than one lady of his family with him. Caecina Severus, who denounced women for the trouble they caused, would hardly have passed up such an exaggeration of the abuse. On the contrary he says *duorum egressus coli, duo esse praetoria*, namely one for the governor, the other for his wife.

The crucial word of line 5 is explained by Pollux, *Onomasticon* (ed. Bethe), III, 34: καὶ μνηστὴ ἡ νύμφη [ὡς Ὅμηρος “ γῆμ’ ἄλοχον μνηστὴν ”]. τὴν δ’ αὐτὴν καὶ ἐγγυητὴν εἶποις.

The word *μνηστὴ* implies the ancient term for a legitimate wife, *μνηστὴ ἄλοχος*, called also *κουριδίη ἄλοχος* or *γυνή*.⁵ The word *μνηστὴ* implies that Lollia was married to Memmius Regulus in a Greek form of marriage based on *ἐγγύησις*. Her position was being differentiated, of course not from that of a concubine, but from that of the usual wife of a Roman. The Athenians took special pride in the form of the marriage. The Athenian inscription, accordingly, produces a remarkable confirmation of the interpretation advanced by Brassloff *apud* Groag, *R.-E.* XV, coll. 632 f., who on the basis of a passage in Cassius Dio recognized that a Greek or specifically Athenian form of marriage was somehow involved in the role of Regulus. After relating the extravagant honors which Caligula ordered for his deceased sister and wife Drusilla, Cassius Dio, LIX, 12 continues: διαλιπὼν δ’ οὖν ὀλίγας ἡμέρας ἔγημε Δολλίαν Παυλίαν, αὐτὸν τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς Μέμμιον Ῥήγουλον ἐγγυησαί οἱ τὴν γυναῖκα ἀναγκάσας, μὴ καὶ ἀνέγγυον αὐτὴν παρὰ τοὺς νόμους λάβῃ. καὶ εὐθύς γε καὶ ἐκείνην ἐξήλασεν.

If one asks why the consular governing Moesia, Macedonia and Achaia married Lollia under a Greek form of marriage, there is no certain answer, but a conjecture may be ventured. The writer proposes that the heiress Lollia had been promised to Memmius Regulus by Tiberius, perhaps even had been entrusted to him as his ward. In Athens *ἐγγύησις* is attested in the case of a girl only five years old.⁶ Hruza⁷ has shown that the *ἐγγύησις* was no engagement but a legitimate marriage with or without the *copula carnalis*.⁸ Since the bride was often a young child, the *copula carnalis* often did not follow the marriage for several years but the husband became the girl's *κύριος* and received the dowry. The cautious Memmius Regulus, being in his province, adopted this procedure in order to test the new emperor, whom he did not wish to displease. While the marriage merely carried out a plan of Tiberius, Lollia was still intact, and Memmius Regulus was legally her *κύριος*. He notified Caligula that he had been married before the archon. If the emperor congratulated him, his marriage was confirmed. It was too late to give her to anyone else.

On the other hand, Tiberius would have been expected to save Lollia for a prince of his own family, if anyone had wanted to marry her. Both the self-controlled

⁵ The terms were used by Homer and Herodotus to differentiate the legitimate wife from a concubine. See Walter Erdmann, *Die Ehe im alten Griechenland* (= Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte, XX, 1934), p. 103, note 3.

⁶ Demosthenes, XXVII 4, XXVIII 15, and XXIX 43.

⁷ E. Hruza, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des griechischen und römischen Familienrechts*, I, Erlangen and Berlin, 1892, pp. 8-89 and 174-186. See now H. J. Wolff, "Marriage Law and Family Organization in Ancient Athens," *Traditio*, II, 1944, pp. 43-95, republished by Wolff, *Beiträge zur Rechtsgeschichte Altgriechenlands und des hellenistisch-römischen Ägypten*, Weimar, 1961, pp. 155-242, "Eherecht und Familienverfassung in Athen."

⁸ Erdmann, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

Memmius Regulus and the impetuous Caligula with the professed aims of Tiberius for the girl in mind would have recognized that the claim of the *novus homo* to the immensely rich heiress was inferior to that of Caligula, if the latter wished to assert his claim. That is exactly what he did.

Memmius Regulus had no legitimate grievance, and Caligula, in retaining him as the commander of a powerful army, acted as if Regulus had no grievance at all. Her grandmother's beauty may have been mentioned because Lollia herself was still very young. In any case, Memmius Regulus was more like her father than an infatuated husband, and perhaps if we stop thinking of him as an outraged husband, we shall understand the feeling of Tacitus about him.

Syme⁹ was struck by the esteem which Tacitus had for Regulus, *auctoritate constantia fama, in quantum praeumbrante imperatoris fastigio datur, clarus*,¹⁰ but found the case of Lollia Paulina in disaccord with this tribute. The new evidence from Athens implies that a false interpretation had been placed upon the incident in order to condemn Caligula. The tribute may well have been deserved and is corroborated by the remarkable compliment paid by Nero when Nero was seriously ill, that the empire would be safe because it had a support in Memmius Regulus. Tacitus comments: *vixit tamen post haec Regulus quiete defensus et quia nova generis claritudine neque invidiosis opibus erat*.¹¹ Regulus was also a very cautious man and wise. And that Nero in A.D. 59 allowed the ashes of Lollia Paulina to be brought back and a tomb to be built over them¹² may have been due to his respect for P. Memmius Regulus, because in A.D. 51 Claudius had mentioned, among her menacingly powerful connections, that she had once been the *nupta* of Memmius Regulus.¹³

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⁹ R. Syme, *Tacitus*, Oxford, 1958, p. 787.

¹⁰ *Annals*, XIV, 47, 1.

¹¹ *Annals*, XIV, 47, 2.

¹² Tacitus, *Annals*, XIV, 12, 6.

¹³ Tacitus, *Annals*, XII, 22, 2. Lollia, divorced by Caligula who forbade her to marry again, returned into the tutelage of Regulus, which the Greek ceremony had created. Claudius implied that Regulus was *in loco parentis*.



d-e. Gamedes 2. London, British Museum.



a-c. Gamedes 1. Paris, Louvre.

ISABELLE K. RAUBITSCHKE: EARLY BOEOTIAN POTTERS