‘FATALIS DUX’: LIVY’S PORTRAYAL OF CAMILLUS

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M. Furius Camillus first appears in the pages of Livy in the opening chapter of Book V, where his name is given as one of eight military tribunes for 403 (to use Livy’s chronology). This is almost certainly an error: he was probably censor, with Postumius Albinius, in that year and consular tribune for the first time in 401, when he conducted a ravaging foray into the territory of the Falisci.

His death in 365BC is recorded in the opening chapter of Book VII. His active military and political career thus spanned thirty-eight years. During this time he was a consular tribune six times and dictator five times. He celebrated four triumphs, the last when he was nearly eighty years old. None of the ancient authorities disputes these facts, nor that he was the general who captured Veii and led successful campaigns against the Volscii and Aequi, against Capena, Falerii and other ancient enemies of Rome. Unshakable too is the tradition that he went into exile after the capture of Veii; he had made himself unpopular because of the division of the spoil (according to most authorities), or his opposition to the tribunician proposal to move the city to Veii (Plutarch and others), or his overweening conduct in the celebration of his triumph (most later authorities, including Plutarch and Livy). Of the major events in his career, only his intervention in the payment of ransom to the Gauls, when they agreed to leave Rome, is seriously in dispute.

While his magistracies and exploits are spread over both Books V and VI, Book V is unquestionably the book of Camillus. It carries us down to the capture of Rome by the Gauls in 390 and marks a turning-point in the Ab Urbe Condita, as Livy indicates in the preface he wrote to Book VI, for two reasons: first, whereas most of the early records had been destroyed in the burning of the city (VI.1.2), monumenta thereafter provided a more reliable source for the historian, and secondly, with the rebuilding of the city, Rome was to experience its second foundation. Accordingly, because it forms the

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1 Livy twice lists Camillus as tribune iterum (V.10.1 and V.14.5). Plutarch says that he was censor before he was tribune. This itself was unparalleled.
2 At this time it was common practice to replace the consuls with six tribuni militum consulari potestate. Plutarch opens his Life of Camillus by remarking that he was five times dictator without ever being consul, then goes on to explain.
3 VI.1.3: ab secunda origine velut ab stirpibus laetius feraciusque renatae urbis. Cf Plut. Cam. 1.1.
climax of Rome's early history. Book V is constructed with a rare attention to symmetry. The first part concerns the siege and capture of Veii, Rome's greatest victory to that time; the second describes the defeat at the Allia and the sack of Rome by the Gaurs, her greatest defeat. Camillus is made the hero of both episodes. Between them is a bridging digression on the origin and migrations of the Gaurs. The whole book opens with a speech by Appius Claudius urging the Romans to persevere in the siege of Veii; it ends with a speech of Camillus urging them not to remove to Veii, but to rebuild Rome.

The cognomen Camillus does not appear to have been applied earlier to a member of the gens Furia and one would like to think that it originated with the hero of Book V. It was a title applied to patrician youths employed in the sacrifices of the flamen Dialis and later, more generally, in other religious offices. If Camillus had indeed played such a role in his youth, it goes a long way to explaining whatever religious preoccupations he had in his later career; the name certainly supported the religious character given by Livy to the Camillus story.

We cannot be sure to what extent this representation derives from Livy's sources. He seems only to have used two sources for this period of his history, C. Licinius Macer and Valerius Antias, the one a Marian and the other a Sullan, and both writing about 80 BC. Their own political preoccupations may well have precluded them from viewing Camillus in any but a political light. But certainly in Book V the gods are everywhere that Camillus is, especially in connection with the capture of Veii and the redemption of Rome. One reason for this is frequently overlooked, unless it is taken for granted, and that is the nature of Livy's sources. Among the sparse records that survived the fires of Rome and could be consulted by the annalistic historians whom Livy followed (if we assume that he did not consult them himself) were the tabulae pontificum, which recorded events of religious significance. Other sources, such as the acta of the senate, frequently dealt with prodigia, supplicationes and other matters of public worship. In the archives also of distinguished families acts of devotion and piety were likely to be prominent, while oral tradition, a heavy subscriber to the early annalistic histories, dwells heavily upon the marvellous and the divine. Such parochial tales (often of an aetiological nature) were especially likely to attach to times of crisis and other significant points in history. It is hardly surprising then that those who sought to reconstruct Rome's early history invested it with such religious dress. Even the fabulae which Livy faithfully records but will neither 'confirm nor

5 See Ogilvie, op.cit. p. 631.
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refute' are better than nothing; in fact there are times when he seems glad to use them, for all his expressed disbelief, as a way of heightening atmosphere, as for example in V.22.5-6, where Juno's statue was said to have approved her removal from Veii to Rome. A fabula is similarly used in V.21.8 to mark the point at which the Romans break into Veii, while the omen of Camillus' stumbling as he turned after praying (V.21.16) helps to prepare the reader for the 'damnationem ipsius Camilli, captae deinde urbis Romanae...cladem'.

Apart from fabulae, how often is Camillus seen in a religious context? Immediately after his appointment as dictator he vows great games and the restoration of the temple of Matuta Mater (V.19.6). When the capture of Veii seems assured he attributes his success, in a despatch to the senate, partly to the goodwill of the gods (V.20.3), and shortly afterwards invites Juno as the tutelary goddess of Veii to resettle in Rome and offers Apollo a tithe of the spoil (V.21.2-3). Later in the same chapter, when he sees the magnitude of the spoil, he again prays to the gods, and here Livy introduces the theme of invidia which is to lead to Camillus' exile. The whole of the account of Veii's fall has a kind of divine resonance, even in its epitaph, which evokes memories of the fall of Troy and death of Priam in Virgil's Aeneid.

When Camillus reminds the people of their obligation to Apollo (V.23.10-11), Livy reintroduces invidia as a contributory cause of Camillus' subsequent exile. Indeed he does not deal with Camillus' trial before the people at any length and deliberately plays down the allegation of sacrilege in the conduct of his triumph (a later political colouring of the early tradition that the distribution of the spoil of Veii was the sole cause of his unpopularity). His exile is thus shown to be the outcome of petty spite on the part of his fellow-citizens and in contrast with his own noble treatment of the Faliscans (V.27), which is held up as an example of fides Romana.

This reluctance of the people to honour the state's obligation to Apollo already put them at risk, but when the senate ignored the warning given by the gods to M. Caedicius that the Gauls were on the warpath, and the Fabii as legati contravened ius gentium and were actually seen to be rewarded for their...
sacrilege by appointment to the military tribuneship, the Romans were so obviously in disregard of the gods that the disaster which ensued at the Allia was readily interpreted as a manifestation of divine displeasure. The link that Camillus had provided between the gods and Rome is pointedly remarked by Livy:

neque deorum modo monita ingruente fato sprept, sed humanam quoque opem, quae una erat, M. Furium ab urbe amovere. (V.32.7; cf.33.1)

So too at the end of the siege of the Capitol, when the Romans are paying the shameful ransom and Camillus returns and forbids it, Livy marks the peripeteia of the drama by saying: ‘sed dicte et homines prohibuere...nam forte quadam...dictator intervenit’ (V.49.1). The conjunction, and at times the separation, of the human and the divine are a strong recurrent theme in the book.10 In the aftermath of Camillus’ defeat of the Gauls it is his devotion to the gods that stands out (V.50.1ff.), and in his speech against the proposal to remove to Veii the main effect is created by his appeal to religious matters. Finally, when the decision on the proposal is hanging in the balance, it is decided by an omen, and the whole drama of Book V ends with a series of short paratactic sentences, giving an almost ritual conclusion to an almost religious experience.

But the representation of Camillus as preeminently pious does not derive only from the religious context of the book and the sacred records which furnished much of the framework of the history. To be taken into account also is Livy’s moral and dramatic purpose. To him the early history of Rome was a series of episodes embodying moral values, such as fides, pudicitia (e.g. Lucretia in Book I), disciplina. These exempla of noble Roman character are displayed for the enjoyment of his readers and for their edification. At the same time the plain figures of the official lists, in many cases already embellished by oral tradition, could be expanded into living personalities by the attribution of distinctive functions (as with the kings: Numa = religion, Servius = military organization, etc.) or of distinctive qualities. Long before Livy the patriotic story had been invented that Camillus had returned to Rome in time to frustrate the disgraceful payment of gold, had defeated the Gauls in battle and restored Roman pride. In the earliest form of the story the Gauls heard news of an invasion in their rear by the Veneti and returned home unharmed.11 The intermediate stage of the story provided by

10 Cf. 16.8; 21.15; 32.7; et alibi.
11 Polybius 2.18.2 and 2.22.
Timaeus\textsuperscript{12} held that the Gauls had been defeated by the Caeretans, who recovered the ransom.\textsuperscript{13} It was inevitable that Livy should follow the later, more glorious version and in so doing should invest his hero with virtues appropriate to a leader hailed as ‘Romulus ac pares patriae conditorque alter urbis’ (V.49.7). Significantly, Plutarch followed Livy’s version, with one interesting variation of detail: where Livy’s Camillus urges his fellow-countrymen to recover their country \textit{ferro non auro}, in Plutarch the phrase (which became a cliche) forms part of his address to the Gauls.\textsuperscript{14}

Altogether Plutarch’s version of Camillus’ career differs surprisingly little from Livy’s. One could comfortably believe that, in the tradition of Livy, he followed one source for the most part (in his case, Livy himself) and only occasionally referred to earlier sources, probably the same Licinius and Valerius on whom Livy himself so heavily relied. But his portrayal of Camillus lacks Livy’s rich tones. I see two reasons for this. In the first place, there is a difference of perspective which is relative to the nature of their work, a full-scale history on the one hand and an individual biography on the other; to Livy, the history of Rome was the field and Camillus the device, to Plutarch, Camillus was the field and single events of his time were the device. Secondly, Plutarch’s digressive style and side-interest in antiquarian lore precluded the dramatic presentation of significant events. One has only to compare the two treatments of the battle of the Allia or of Camillus’ attack with the men of Ardea on the sleeping Gauls to appreciate the difference.\textsuperscript{15}

In his portrayal of Camillus as an embodiment of Roman \textit{pietas} Livy had two models on whom he might draw.\textsuperscript{16} One thinks inevitably of Aeneas, \textit{insignem pietate virum} (Aen. I.10) and a \textit{pares patriae} in the sense that he was the progenitor of the Roman line.\textsuperscript{17} Like the siege of Troy, the siege of Veii lasted for ten years; both cities withstood capture by assault but fell to artifice, in the one case the wooden horse, in the other a tunnel. And both Aeneas and Camillus were exiles. The parallels were too obvious to ignore. The composition of the \textit{Aeneid} and of Livy’s first decade coincided; while they probably had no direct influence on one another, they tapped the same springs

\textsuperscript{12} Cf. Diodorus Siculus 14,117,7.
\textsuperscript{13} Livy himself, at IX.4.16; X.16.6 and XXII.59.7, implies that the ransom was actually paid.
\textsuperscript{14} Plut. Cam. 29.2
\textsuperscript{15} Cf. Livy V.38 with Plut. Cam. 18.6-7; Livy V.45.2-3 with Plut. Cam. 23.5-6 (a longer account, but less incisively sketched).
\textsuperscript{16} One is tempted to include Coriolanus, who also went into exile after clashing with the plebs and was influenced by \textit{pietas} to call off an attack on his native city, but the situation was not parallel and the essential element of \textit{fatum} was lacking (see below).
\textsuperscript{17} Note how often Virgil, especially in \textit{Aeneid} 5, refers to him as \textit{pater Aeneas}.
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of tradition and national sentiment and the concept of Rome as both the product and the agent of divine will was never stronger (cf Aen.1.278-9 and VI.851ff).

The other model was P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus, the man for whom Livy shows the greatest admiration and whom he represents as an exemplum of absolute probity. It is significant that when Camillus became dictator for the first time, to take command of the operations at Veii, he appointed P. Cornelius Scipio as his magister equitum. Now while Scipiones appear in the next generation, the fasti give the cognomen Maluginensis to Camillus’ Master of the Horse. Presumably the context led Livy (or his source) to transfer this role to a branch of the family with a more evocative name. The four-day supplicatio voted after the capture of Veii (V.23.3) anticipates the first attested four-day thanksgiving in 203BC after Scipio’s capture of Syphax (XXX.17.3), while the phrase maximum imperatorum recalls the practice whereby a victorious general was hailed imperator by his troops — a practice also first attested for Africanus in 209.18 These coincidences of detail are sufficient evidence that in writing of Camillus the person of Scipio was in Livy’s mind, but in conduct also Camillus looks ahead to Africanus. His display of fides in his dealings with Falerii (V.27) and of clementia towards Tusculum19 stand comparison with the regular exhibition of these qualities by Scipio.20

But the most important connection of Camillus with Aeneas on the one hand and Scipio Africanus on the other, and what sets Livy’s portrayal of Camillus apart from any other, is his role as an agent of destiny. The significance of fatum in the Aeneid hardly needs illustration: as early as the second line Aeneas is fato profugus and in 1.32 the Trojans errabant actis fatis. Similarly Livy in 1.1.4 refers to Aeneas as guided by destiny (ad maior rerum initia ducentibus fa tis). Throughout the Aeneid we are constantly reminded that Aeneas has a destiny to fulfil and Virgil’s hero, like Livy’s, is at all times attentive to the gods.

What the Romans understood by fatum was not always consistent. Sometimes they conceived of it as the predestined end to which Providence guides mankind. At other times it was more literally interpreted as something spoken, as divine communication made through oracles, prodigies and the like. Under the influence of neo-Stoicism these two concepts often met in the middle: ‘fate’ as the expression of the will of the gods provided boundaries

18 XXVII.19.4; see Ogilvie pp. 678-79.
19 VI.26. This became a family trait; cf. his son’s speech at VIII.13.15f.
20 E.g. XXVI.49 kindness to hostages; XXVII.19.8 kindness to Masinissa’s nephew; XXVIII.33.8 mercy to Spanish chiefs; XXXVII.34 cordial reception of Eastern legates.
within which human free-will could operate. To a Roman with Livy’s Stoic leanings one could live in harmony with Fate by respecting the rights of gods and men, that is by the practice of *pietas*. Throughout Livy’s history the necessity for the right relationship between men and gods is underlined and the major crises of Rome’s history are linked in his account with *fatum*, just as in Book V Rome’s highs and lows reflect her varying attention to the gods; so the fall of Veii, the sack of Rome, the disaster at Cannae are all depicted as predestined. To the Stoics *fortuna*, which commonly answers to the blind chance of the Hellenistic *tyche*, often appears as equivalent to *fatum*, and there is commonly the implication that a man’s conduct influences his *fortuna*; so in V.19.8 Livy writes

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omnia ibi summa ratione consilioque acta fortuna etiam, ut fit, secuta est, and in V.38.4
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adeo non fortuna modo sed ratio etiam cum barbaris stabat.
The link between *fortuna* and the will of the gods is shown in VI.9.3; when Camillus is urging the Romans to destroy Antium his speech is interrupted and Livy comments:
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credo rem Antiatem diuturniorem manere dis cordi fuisse ... eo vim Camilli ab Antio fortuna avertit.
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In many ways Camillus foreshadows Scipio Africanus. Between them they faced and overcame the two greatest threats to Rome, the Gauls in 390 and Hannibal. But in one important respect Scipio (in Livy) appears to have drawn on Camillus. When the youthful Scipio is introduced to us it is as *fatalis dux* (XXII.53.6) and he is so designated again in XXX.28.11, when the Carthaginians see him as ‘a man of destiny born to destroy them’. And in his speech to Scipio after the battle of Zama Hannibal himself harps upon the hand of fate in the outcome of the war (XXX.30.3-5):

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si hoc ita *fato* datum erat, ut...ultro ad pacem petendum venirem, laeter te mihi *sorte* potissimum datum a quo peterem. Tibi...in ultimis laudum hoc fuerit, Hannibalem, cui tot de Romanis ducibus victoriam di dedissent, tibi cessisse...Hoc quoque ludibrium *casus* ediderit *fortuna*...
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the idea of fate in Book V. It does not occur at all until chapter 15, when Camillus is about to take centre stage. Thereafter fatum is used seven times in the context of Veii or the Gauls, and the adjective fatalis four times. Fortuna appears altogether 22 times, often in the most bland senses, but frequently as a synonym for fatum. As grist to the mill, fors occurs five times, two of these as variants of fortuna, while such phrases as di...dederunt abound. The hands of the gods and of destiny are everywhere.

The importance of fatum in the capture of Veii and the siege and reprieve of Rome is shown by the entrance of Camillus. In V.14 the patricians attribute the previous year’s unseasonable weather and plague to divine displeasure. Prodigies follow, notably the rise of the Alban lake, and it is resolved to send a mission to Delphi; sed propior interpres fatis oblatus senior quidam Veiens (15.4). In this, its first use in the book, the word fatum is in its more literal sense of an expression of the gods’ will. It is immediately followed by two uses of fatalis: the first (15.9) describes the excidium patriae (i.e. Vetorun) as foretold by the Veientane seer referred to in 15.4 and the second is a reference to the Sibylline books as guides to fate. In 16.8 attention is brought back to the Romans, who, despising human aid, fata et deos spectabant, when the emissaries returned from Delphi with fata (i.e. oracular response). The mood has now been set for Camillus to take charge.

Chapter 19 begins with a succinct tricolon: the first two parts refer to propitiations and the third speaks of Veii’s fate as moving upon her. Fata here is at once picked up by fatalis dux and Camillus’ twofold destiny is carefully distinguished by syntactic variation, with ad excidium illius urbis referring to Veii and servandae patriae to Rome. With the appointment of Camillus as dictator, the city seemed to have alia fortuna (19.3) and good fortune attended omnia summa ratione consilioque acta (19.8). In 21, 15 he is concerned about nimia sua fortuna populaire Romani. When Veii at last succumbs it is fato quoque urgence. At 26.10 it is fortuna that provides Camillus with cognitae bellicis rebus virtutis specimen, an opportunity to display his acknowledged military qualities. When at the approach of the Gauls the Romans failed to take proper steps, Livy comments adeo occaecat animos fortuna (37.1) and a little later fortuna and ratio are together on the side of the Gauls (38.4). In 42.4 the Romans are on the citadel looking down on the sack of their city velut ad spectaculum a fortuna positi. In the next chapter (43.6) it was fortuna ipsa that brought the Gauls to Ardea where Camillus was in exile. Finally (49.5), when Camillus turns the tables on the Gauls, fate, gods and men come together:

iam verterat fortuna, iam deorum opes humanaque

E.g. 26.10; 37.1; 42.4; 43.6; 49.5.
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There is no doubt that, even without the trappings of later tradition, Camillus was an outstanding figure. To have become censor without having held any other high office he must have displayed considerable qualities, of initiative as well as courage. There is evidence that the army underwent some significant reforms during his censorship and certainly his conduct of the siege of Veii was marked by energy and determination. In developing his portrayal of the central figure of this dramatic period of Rome’s history, Livy was careful not to present us with a mere stereotype, a personification of an ideal Augustus, for example; Camillus had the pietas of an Aeneas, but was charged with sacrilege for equating himself with the gods in the conduct of his triumph; he had the clementia of an Africanus, but could recommend to the senate the total destruction of Antium. Yet in all that he did he had Rome and her gods in view. Structural and dramatic considerations to some extent dictated the characterization of Camillus, but Livy’s moral view of the purpose of history played a more important part. The close interconnection of gods, Rome and Camillus forms the main texture of Book V. In particular the frequent attachment of the motif of fatum to Camillus is without parallel in Livy. While this no doubt derives in part from Livy’s neo-Stoic leanings, it must also owe a good deal to the contemporary national consciousness and the expressed view that Rome ruled by divine plan. As Aeneas looked back to the destruction of Troy and forward to the foundation of his new city, Camillus looked back on the ruins of Rome and forward to its rebuilding. Augustus too could look behind him to the long years of civil unrest and forward to the new order of the Roman Empire. All three were fatales duces.

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