

The Legacy of Defeat:

The Representations of P. Cornelius Scipio, Cn. Cornelius Scipio, and C. Flaminius in the Works of Cicero

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Flaminius:

Dicitur etiam C. Flaminius, is qui tribunus plebis legem de agro Gallico et Piceno viritim dividendo tulerit, qui consul apud Trasumennum sit interfectus, ad populum valuisse dicendo.

C. Flaminius, is qui consul rem male gessit bello Punico secundo, cum tribunus plebis esset, invito senatu et omnino contra voluntatem omnium optimatum per seditionem ad populum legem agrariam ferebat.

C. Flaminius qui legem agrariam aliquot annis ante secundum Punicum bellum tribunus plebis tulerit invito senatu et postea bis consul factus sit.

Ausus est optimis auspiciis ea geri, quae pro rei publicae salute gererentur; quae contra rem publicam ferrentur, contra auspicia ferri.

C. Flaminius Caelius religione neglecta cecidisse apud Trasumenum scribit cum magno rei publicae vulnere.

Scipiones:

Non duo Scipiones oriens incendium belli Punico secundi sanguine suo restinxissent.

Duos Scipiones, qui iter Poenis vel corporibus suis obstruere.

Pro patria cadentes Scipiones.

Gaius Flaminius, the tribune of the plebs who carried through the law authorizing the distribution of the land of Hither Gaul and of Picenum to individual settlers, and who as consul lost his life at Trasumenus, was a valiant speaker before the people.¹

Gaius Flaminius—the one who as consul conducted an unsuccessful campaign in the Second Punic War—when tribune of the people seditiously proposed an agrarian law to the people against the wishes of the senate and in general contrary to the desires of all the upper classes.²

Gaius Flaminius who when tribune of the plebs some years before the Second Punic War carried an agrarian law against the will of the senate and afterwards twice became consul.³

And, although an augur, he dared to say that whatever was done for the safety of the Republic was done under the best auspices, and that whatever was inimical to the Republic was against the auspices.⁴

Caelius writes that Gaius Flaminius after ignoring the claims of religion fell at the battle of Trasimene, when a serious blow was inflicted on the state.⁵

The two Scipios could not have extinguished with their blood the rising flames of the Second Punic War.⁶

The two Scipios, who with their bodies sought to stay the Punic march.⁷

The Scipiones fell on behalf of their fatherland.⁸

¹ *Brutus*, 14. Translated by G. L. Hendrickson, H. M. Hubbell.

² *De Inventione*, 17. Translated by H. M. Hubbell.

³ *Academica*, 5. Translated by H. Rackham.

⁴ *De Senectute*, 4. Translated by W. A. Falconer.

⁵ *De Natura Deorum*, 2.3. Translated by H. Rackham.

⁶ *De Re Publica*, 1.1. Translated by Clinton W. Keyes.

⁷ *De Senectute*, 20. Translated by W. A. Falconer.

⁸ *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 1.37. Translated by J. E. King.

Nec vero, cum duo Decii aut duo Scipiones fortes viri commemorantur, aut cum Fabricius [aut Aristides] iustus nominatur, aut ab illis fortitudinis aut ab hoc iustitiae tamquam a sapiente petitur exemplum; nemo enim horum sic sapiens, ut sapientem volumus intellegi, nec ii, qui sapientes habiti et nominati, M. Cato et C. Laelius, sapientes fuerunt, ne illi quidem septem, sed ex mediorum officiorum frequentia similitudinem quandam gerebant speciemque sapientium.

And when the two Decii or the two Scipios are mentioned as “brave men” or Fabricius [or Aristides] is called “the just,” it is not at all that the former are quoted as perfect models of courage or the latter as a perfect model of justice, as if we had in one of them the ideal “wise man.” The sense in which we wish to have “wise” understood; neither were Marcus Cato and Gaius Laelius wise, though they were so considered and were surnamed “the wise.” Not even the famous Seven were “wise.” But because of their constant observance of “mean” duties they bore a certain semblance and likeness to wise men.⁹

An tu egressus porta Capena, cum Calatini, Scipionum, Serviliorum, Metellorum sepulcra vides, miseros putas illos?

When you come out of the Porta Capena and see the tombs of Calatinus, the Scipios, the Servilii, the Metelli, do you think them wretched?¹⁰

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⁹ *De Officiis*, 3.4. Translated by Walter Miller.

¹⁰ *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 1.7. Translated by J. E. King.