

Cassius Dio and the “Age of *δυναστεία*”

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FOLLOWING THE NARRATIVE of the tumultuous events of the Late Republic and the battle of Actium, Cassius Dio’s Book 52 provides the transition to the Principate. At the start of this important book, Dio presents a periodization of Roman history: “Such were the achievements of the Romans and such their suffering under the kingship and under the Republic and its periods of irregular power, during a period of seven hundred and twenty-five years. After this they reverted to what was, strictly speaking, a monarchy” (ταῦτα μὲν ἔν τε τῇ βασιλείᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ δημοκρατίᾳ ταῖς τε δυναστείαις, πέντε τε καὶ εἴκοσι καὶ ἑπτακοσίοις ἔτεσι, καὶ ἔπραξαν οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ ἔπαθον· ἐκ δὲ τούτου μοναρχεῖσθαι αὐθις ἀκριβῶς ἤρξαντο).¹ The meaning of *δυναστείαις* in this periodization has long puzzled scholars and given rise to misunderstandings of Dio’s narrative.

Research on Dio has experienced quantum leaps in recent years as Dio has been transformed from a politically uninterested and incompetent historian into a complex political interpreter who is worth studying in his own right.² But despite lexical

¹ Cass. Dio 52.1.1; transl. adapted from E. Cary, who translates *δυναστείαις* as “the dominion of a few.” For other quoted authors I have likewise used the Loeb Classical Library unless otherwise noted.

² The earlier approach is exemplified in many works but most clearly in F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford 1964), and A. Lintott, “Cassius Dio and the History of the Late Roman Republic,” *ANRW* II 34.3 (1997) 2497–2523. The contrasting view is championed by W. Rees, *Cassius Dio, Human Nature and the Late Roman Republic* (diss. Oxford 2011); A. Kemezis, *Greek Narratives of the Roman Empire under the Severans* (Cambridge 2014); C. Burden-Stevens, *Cassius Dio’s Speeches and the Collapse of the Roman Republic* (diss. Glasgow 2015);

examinations,³ the role of *δυναστεία* in Dio’s larger political interpretations remains essentially unstudied and the start of Book 52 still lacks an in-depth examination in spite of its importance for interpretations of Dio’s work. *δυναστεία* is certainly most common in the Late Republic and Dio undoubtedly used the word to portray this period negatively.⁴ However, the numerous occurrences of *δυναστεία* in Dio’s Late Republic have led scholars to view the *δυναστεῖαι* of 52.1.1 as a discrete period in Dio’s perception of Roman history, covering most or all of the Late Republic.⁵ The *δυναστεῖαι* are thus seen as a historical

V. Fromentin et al. (eds.), *Cassius Dion: nouvelles lectures* (Bordeaux 2016); C. H. Lange and J. M. Madsen (eds.), *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual and Roman Politician* (Leiden 2016); M. Lindholmer, *Cassius Dio, Competition and the Decline of the Roman Republic* (thesis Glasgow 2016); “Breaking the Idealistic Paradigm: Competition in Dio’s Republic,” in C. Burden-Strevens and M. Lindholmer (eds.), *Cassius Dio’s Forgotten History of Early Rome* (Leiden forthcoming); “Dio the Deviant: Comparing Dio’s Late Republic and the Parallel Sources,” in C. Baron and J. Osgood (eds.), *Cassius Dio and the Late Roman Republic* (Leiden forthcoming); “Exploiting Conventions: Dio’s Late Republic and the Annalistic Tradition,” in C. H. Lange and J. M. Madsen (eds.), *Cassius Dio the Historian: Methods and Approaches* (Leiden forthcoming). See however also D. Fechner, *Untersuchungen zu Cassius Dios Sicht der Römischen Republik* (Hildesheim 1986).

³ M. Freyburger-Galland “ΔΥΝΑΣΤΕΙΑ chez Dion Cassius,” *Ktema* 21 (1996) 23–27, and *Aspects du vocabulaire politique et institutionnel de Dion Cassius* (Paris 1997).

⁴ *Contra* K. Sion-Jenkis, *Von der Republik zum Prinzipat: Ursachen für den Verfassungswandel in Rom im historischen Denken der Antike* (Stuttgart 2000) 49–50. That Dio used *δυναστεία* to characterize the Late Republic is clear even from the 14 highly fragmentary Late Republican books: it is here used 4 times (F 22.73.4, F 24.83.4, F 25.85.3, F 33.107.1), but only 3 times of the earlier Republic, although this period is covered in 19 far better preserved books.

⁵ P. Cordier, “Dion Cassius et la nature de la ‘monarchie’ césarienne,” in G. Lachenaud and D. Longrée (eds.), *Grecs et Romains aux prises avec l’histoire* (Rennes 2003) 233; V. Fromentin, “Zonaras abrégiateur de Dion Cassius: à la recherche de la préface perdue de *l’Histoire Romaine*,” *Erga-Logoi* 1 (2013) 23–39, esp. 38; Kemezis, *Greek Narratives* 95, 107, all see the *δυναστεῖαι* as a period, roughly equal to the Late Republic (“à commencer par Marius et Sylla,” Fromentin). Cf. Martin, in *Historische Semantik* 238: *δυναστεῖαι* is an

period comparable to the Regal Period or the Early and Mid-Republic. Furthermore, the *δυναστεῖαι* of 52.1.1 have frequently led scholars to view *δυναστεία* in Dio as an actual governmental form ruling the Late Republic, which had therefore ceased to be a *δημοκρατία*.⁶ Challenges to this view have been cursory and scarce⁷ and even the most recent research on Dio continues the view of the *δυναστεῖαι* as a discrete period and frequently describes *δυναστεία* as an actual governmental

“Epochenbegriff” referring to the Late Republic.

⁶ This perspective may have been influenced by the translation of Cary: “Such were the achievements of the Romans and such their suffering under the kingship, under the republic, and under the dominion of a few, during a period of seven hundred and twenty-five years.” Thus *δυναστεῖαις* signals a governmental form and a period in Roman history. The highly influential monograph of Millar (*A Study* 74) views the *δυναστεία* as a discrete period and as a quasi-governmental form. U. Ruiz, *Debate Agrippa-Mecenas en Dion Cassio. Respuesta Senatorial a la Crisis del Imperio Romano en Época Severiana* (Madrid 1982), follows Millar and views *δυναστεῖαι* as a “sistema de gobierno” (67) and an “etapa de la historia de Roma” (64). This position is also dominant in subsequent scholarship: Freyburger-Galland, *Kiema* 21 (1996) 23–27, and *Aspects* 46–47, 129, 131, asserts that the *δυναστεῖαι* at 52.1.1 is an “oligarchie” (117) and that this governmental form covers part or all of the Late Republic. So too C. Carsana, *La teoria della “costituzione mista” nell’età imperiale romana* (Como 1990) 84, and B. Kuhn-Chen, *Geschichtskonzeption griechischer Historiker in 2. und 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.: Untersuchungen zu den Werken von Appian, Cassius Dio und Herodian* (Frankfurt 2002) 182.

⁷ Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 139, was the first to partially challenge this view as he highlights that *δυναστεία* is not exclusive to the Late Republic. However, he also sees *δυναστεία* as a governmental form in Dio, namely as a degenerate form of the aristocratic *δημοκρατία*. He also argues that the Triumviral period was a *δυναστεία* and that it was this governmental form, rather than a *δημοκρατία*, that the Principate replaced (107, 156–157). Only Sion-Jenkis (*Von der Republik* 48–50) has more categorically, but briefly, rejected the previous view as she asserts that *δυναστεία* is not a governmental form and that the *δυναστεῖαι* of 52.1.1 do not refer exclusively to the Late Republic. However, her assertion that the fragmentary state of Books 1–35 precludes any conclusions on whether *δυναστεία* was more characteristic of Dio’s Late Republic than of earlier times is untenable. Dio undoubtedly did use *δυναστεία* more frequently for the Late Republic (n.4 above).

form ruling Rome during the Late Republic.⁸

This interpretation of the passage has contributed heavily to the scholarly division of Dio’s Republic into two neat periods, namely an idealized earlier Republic and a contrasting, malfunctioning Late Republic characterized, or even ruled, by *δυναστεία*. However, this obscures Dio’s distinctive rejection of the idealization of the earlier Republic and the fact that the Late Republic was still unequivocally a *δημοκρατία* for Dio. These two elements, in turn, are central to Dio’s sophisticated presentation of the Republic as a system of government that was inherently vulnerable and unworkable. A re-evaluation of 52.1.1 is therefore necessary and important. Furthermore, several aspects suggest that the common interpretation of this passage is problematic, especially the fact that Dio writes *δυναστείας* in the plural, whereas *βασιλεία* and *δημοκρατία* are singular. Why would he use the plural if he is referring to a single, well-defined period in the shape of the Late Republic? It is also suggestive that Dio does not keep the *ἐν* before *δυναστείας* and rather writes *ἐν τῇ δημοκρατίᾳ ταῖς τε δυναστείαις*. Consequently, *δυναστείας* is more closely connected to *δημοκρατία* and becomes conditional on this word.⁹ It should also be noted that the

⁸ See especially C. Carsana, “La teoria della forme di governo: il punto di vista di Cassio Dione sui poteri di Cesare,” in V. Fromentin et al. (eds.), *Cassius Dion: nouvelles lectures* (Bordeaux 2016) 546–548, who treats *δυναστεία* more in depth, but views the *δυναστεία* at 52.1.1 as both a historical period and a governmental form “con una sua dimensione istituzionale [...] che non è più la repubblica, ma non è ancora impero” (548). See also the brief mentions by M. Coudry, “Cassius Dio on Pompey’s Extraordinary Commands,” in *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual* 49; C. H. Lange “Mock the Triumph: Cassius Dio, Triumph and Triumph-like Celebrations,” in *Cassius Dio* 96 n.15, 114; J. M. Madsen, “Criticising the Benefactors: The Severans and the Return of Dynastic Rule,” in *Cassius Dio* 46; E. Bertrand “Point de vue de Cassius Dion sur l’imperialisme romain,” in *Cassius Dion* 683, 695–696, and “De Pompée à Auguste : les mutations de l’imperium militiae 2. Un traitement particulier dans l’Histoire romaine de Dion,” in *Cassius Dion* 596, 606. These works do not necessarily analyse 52.1.1 but still demonstrate how the problematic interpretation of this passage has permeated scholarship.

⁹ Only Sion-Jenkis, *Von der Republik* 49–50, has so far viewed the phrasing of the passage in this way.

fragmentary state of Dio's earlier Republic and the survival of a large part of his Late Republic may have had an impact on scholarly impressions of *δυναστεία* in Dio: if we had all of his earlier Republic, the contrast between this period and the Late Republic in terms of his use of *δυναστεία* may have appeared less striking.

In this article, I will argue that the central passage at 52.1.1 has been misinterpreted: *δυναστεία* should not be seen as a discrete period and especially not as a governmental form but rather refers to the numerous malfunctions of the *δημοκρατία* *throughout its history*, which also explains the plural and the missing *ἐν*. The Late Republic is thus not *δυναστεία* through and through but rather a *δημοκρατία*, albeit a poorly functioning one, which has been plagued by *δυναστεῖαι* from its inception as the proper workings of the state frequently break down. To support this reading, I will first show how commonly Dio uses *δημοκρατία* of the Late Republic at central turning points, demonstrating that the idea of *δυναστεία* as a governmental form is untenable. I will then examine Dio's use of *δυναστεία* in the earlier Republic, which undermines the assertion that the *δυναστεῖαι* of 52.1.1 refer only to the Late Republic. Furthermore, Dio's selective use of *δυναστεία* in the earlier Republic connects this element intrinsically to equality in government, exceptional commands, and the tribunate as an office. These three elements are of course not exclusively Late Republican and highlight the problematic way in which 52.1.1 has often been interpreted.

This re-evaluation of 52.1.1 and *δυναστεία* more broadly has wide ramifications for our understanding of Dio's work as a whole: the presence of *δυναστεία* in his earlier Republic shows that this was not a Late Republican problem, which in turn underlines that the Late Republic was a *δημοκρατία*. Furthermore, the inclusion of *δυναστεία* in Dio's Early and Mid-Republic also shows that this element was inherent in his conception of the *δημοκρατία* from the start. This amounts to a distinctive rejection of the common idealization of these periods and presents the *δημοκρατία* as inherently unworkable. This presentation is in turn used by Dio to argue that Augustus' creation of the

Principate was necessary, beneficial, and unavoidable. This, however, is only possible if we reject the idea that Augustus’ empire merely removed *δυναστεῖαι* and see the Late Republic as a *δημοκρατία*. If there had been a well-functioning *δημοκρατία* before the Late Republic and this latter period is seen as *δυναστεία*, it would still be possible to portray Augustus as the murderer of liberty seen in Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.1). *δυναστεία* is, then, not a closed period but a highly important concept for Dio to denote the malfunctioning of orderly government and is used consistently to communicate and strengthen political interpretations.

Context

First, I will briefly present Dio’s use of *δημοκρατία* and *δυναστεία* and offer a translation of 52.1.1. I will then set out how Dio’s predecessors used *δυναστεία*, in order to highlight his distinctive use of the word. Lastly, I will briefly present his non-Republican use of *δυναστεία*. While Appian and Polybius generally refrain from using *δημοκρατία* about the Roman Republic, often preferring *κοινόν* or *πολιτεία* instead,¹⁰ Dio consistently uses *δημοκρατία* to refer to the Republic.¹¹ Dio does at times use the adjective *δημοκρατικός* for positively described rulers who show respect for the Republic (59.3.1) but never uses the noun *δημοκρατία* in a similar way. Occasionally he uses *δημοκρατία* as a more general term: Agrippa for example talks about the character of *δημοκρατία* in his famous speech in Book 52 (52.6.1) and Dio also asserts that “if ever there has been a prosperous democracy (*δημοκρατία*), it has in any case been at its best for only a brief period” (44.2.3). Thus, *δημοκρατία* in Dio can be used as a general term for non-monarchical governments which include the Roman Republic. But, this is rare, and consistent with his general use of *δημοκρατία* for the Republic.

¹⁰ App. *BC* 2.111, 120; Polyb. 6.54.4, 6.57.10. The word *δημοκρατία* is, however, not completely ignored: e.g. App. 2.107.

¹¹ As asserted by e.g. Freyburger-Galland, *Aspects* 116; Sion-Jenkis, *Von der Republik* 43–45.

Dio's use of *δυναστεία*,¹² on the other hand, is more flexible, exactly because it does not refer to a governmental form. *δυναστεία* in Dio is generally personal or characteristic of a small group or dominant faction and is often an ill-defined object of longing rather than an actual possession (e.g. 36.18.1). Importantly, however, *δυναστεία* does consistently have a core meaning in Dio: the word does not necessarily refer to strictly illegal power.¹³ Rather, it refers to power that is irregular in the sense that it is untraditional or excessive and has generally been obtained by exploiting, forcing, or manipulating the system. Instances of *δυναστεία* in the Republic are therefore generally the mark of a malfunctioning governmental system. Ultimately, *δυναστεία* can come to completely dominate the normal functioning of government, which explains why for example Dio's Cicero in 44 B.C. can assert that he could not live under the *δυναστεία* of Caesar.¹⁴ This *δυναστεία* is not an actual governmental form. Rather, Caesar's excessive and irregular power is here dominating the *δημοκρατία*.

The use of *δυναστεία* outlined here may also support translating 52.1.1 as "Such were the achievements of the Romans and such their suffering under the kingship and under the Republic and its periods of irregular power..." This translation eliminates *δυναστεῖαι* as a period and connects it more closely to *δημοκρατία*, which fits better with Dio's Greek. The translation also incorporates the plural *δυναστεῖαις* and avoids any suggestion that *δυναστεία* might function as a governmental form. Furthermore, "periods" captures how *δυναστεία* in Dio was not a momentary problem but rather a persistent issue. Lastly, I have chosen to use the rather broad "irregular power" since this expression can encompass both the factional dominance that Dio

¹² See e.g. Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 154–163; Freyburger-Galland, *Ktema* 21 (1996) 23–27, *Aspects* 127–131; Kemezis, *Greek Narratives* 107–109.

¹³ The tribunate for example is connected to *δυναστεία*, see below.

¹⁴ Cass. Dio 45.18.2. This complete dominance of *δυναστεία* is, however, an extreme situation and Dio's use of the word in this way is therefore rare. The only parallels are 41.17.3, 45.11.2, 52.6.3.

connects to *δυναστεία* and also the excessive power of individuals which he likewise labels *δυναστεία*. As I argue below, the *δυναστεία* of 52.1.1 refers to the many different *δυναστεία* throughout the *δημοκρατία* and it is therefore important to use an English expression that can encompass all these different *δυναστεία*.

It is central to note that *δυναστεία* is a problem in the Principate as well and not just in the Republic. This underlines how the common view of 52.1.1 has obscured Dio’s continued use of *δυναστεία* in the imperial period: we should not view this problem as confined to the Late Republic. First, imperial underlings are at times presented as having obtained *δυναστεία* and Dio uses this as a means of criticizing the emperor.¹⁵ This shows an important difference between the *δημοκρατία* and the Principate: the former automatically bred *δυναστεία*, especially after the attainment of empire, while the latter could avoid *δυναστεία* through wise rulers. Second, Dio in fact several times connects the new Principate of Augustus to *δυναστεία* (53.17.3, 54.29.3). This could appear surprising as Dio’s preference for monarchy over *δημοκρατία* is difficult to doubt.¹⁶ However, this does not preclude a critical attitude towards certain aspects of the empire and an awareness that Augustus had essentially been the last standing dynast after the civil wars, with an indomitable *δυναστεία*. Dio’s presentation of Augustus’ power as connected to *δυναστεία* could also be an attempt to reveal the falsity of the emperor’s claims to Republican continuity. Any significant continuity between the Principate and *δημοκρατία* would have seriously undermined Dio’s assertion that the *δημοκρατία* as a governmental form was inherently unworkable.

¹⁵ This use has been briefly noted by Ruiz, *Debate* 66–67, and Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 154–156. See Cass. Dio 76.15.4, also 78.21.2 for the *δυναστεία* of Theocritus under Caracalla.

¹⁶ Only a few works assert that Dio was in fact a Republican. See e.g. R. Ferwer, *Die politischen Anschauungen des Cassius Dio* (Leipzig 1878); J. Berrigan, “Dio Cassius’ Defense of Democracy,” *Classical Bulletin* 44 (1968) 42–45; Fechner, *Untersuchungen*. Freyburger-Galland, *Ktema* 21 (1996) 23, 26–27, *Aspects* 221–225, briefly supports them.

δυναστεία is even portrayed as a problem during Dio's Regal Period. A passage of Dio with very little context could be from the speeches against the kings at the end of the Regal Period, since the fragment comes from Book 3 which marks the transition to δημοκρατία: "It is done not merely by the actual men who rule (βασιλευόντων) them, but also by those who share the power (παραδυναστευόντων) with those rulers" (F 12.11). Unless the speaker is referring to some foreign king with no connection to Rome, βασιλευόντων must refer to the Regal Period. The fragment demonstrates that δυναστεία did indeed exist as a problem during the Regal Period as well, and it is thus incorporated in every period of Dio's narrative.¹⁷ This shows that δυναστεία is a universal problem in Dio's conception of government, which provides important contextualization for the discussion of δυναστεία in Dio's Republic.

It is also important to contextualize his use of δυναστεία against the background of earlier writers.¹⁸ δυναστεία is negative in Dio and is central to his historical interpretations but he does not see it as a governmental form. His predecessors, however, generally used δυναστεία far less than Dio and did view it as a governmental form: Herodotus does not use δυναστεία, while Thucydides uses it only four times in his entire work, namely to describe the governmental systems of Thebes, Thessaly, Sparta, and Syracuse.¹⁹ Thebes, for example, "had neither an oligarchical constitution in which all the nobles enjoyed equal rights nor a democracy, but that which is most opposed to law and good government and nearest a tyranny—the rule of δυναστεία."²⁰ Thucydides' use is paralleled in Xenophon who uses the word only once, to describe a number of cities as ruled

¹⁷ *Contra* Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 155: "nur während der Königszeit läßt sich ein Beleg [der dynasteia] nicht finden."

¹⁸ On the varying use of δυναστεία by ancient writers see J. Martin, "Dynasteia. Eine begriffs-, verfassungs- und sozialgeschichtliche Skizze," in R. Koselleck and K. Stierle (eds.), *Historische Semantik und Begriffsgeschichte* (Stuttgart 1979).

¹⁹ Thuc. 3.62.3, 4.78.3, 4.126.2, 6.38.3.

²⁰ Thuc. 3.62.3; transl. Crawley (adapted).

by *δυναστεία* (*Hell.* 5.4.46). In the development of governments, Plato sees *δυναστεία* as the very first form of government (*Leg.* 680B), although he elsewhere takes precautions, and for example calls it an intermediate constitution, *πολιτεῖαι μεταξύ* (*Resp.* 544D). Aristotle likewise sees *δυναστεία* as a governmental form but as a special, degenerate form of oligarchy: “a fourth kind is when the hereditary system just mentioned exists and also the magistrates govern and not the law. This among oligarchies is the form corresponding to tyranny among monarchies [...] and indeed oligarchy of this sort has the special name of *δυναστεία*.”²¹ First, these writers use *δυναστεία* far less frequently than Dio. Second, it is generally portrayed negatively as a degenerate governmental form in opposition to equality and connected to tyranny. While we might question to what extent *δυναστεία* is an actual constitution in the technical sense of the word in these authors, it is certainly seen as a form of government through which a *polis* can be ruled. This is likewise evident in a number of other writers such as Andocides, Demosthenes, and Isocrates.²²

This usage changes with Polybius as *δυναστεία* becomes instead a generally neutral term. Polybius writes for example of the “great rule and *δυναστεία*” of the Persians and of the *δυναστεία* over Italy which the Romans regained in the Second Punic War.²³ *δυναστεία* is not included as a governmental form in Book 6 (6.3–4), and Polybius thus breaks with his Greek predecessors. Herodian, writing shortly after Dio, adopted Polybius’ more neutral approach in the five instances of *δυναστεία* in his

²¹ Arist. *Pol.* 1292b; transl. Rackham (adapted); see also e.g. 1293a, 1302b, 1303a.

²² Andoc. 2.27; Dem. 10.53; Isoc. *Paneg.* 39.

²³ Polyb. 1.2.2, 3.118.9. See especially A. Erskine, “Expressions of Power in Polybius’ Histories,” in M. Mari and J. Thornton (eds.), *Parole in movimento. Linguaggio politico e lessico storiografico nel mondo ellenistico* (Pisa 2013) 85–90, who notes that Polybius’ use of *δυναστεία* is not exclusively neutral. See also Freyburger-Galland, *Ktema* 21 (1996) 24; E. Levy, “La tyrannie et son vocabulaire chez Polybe,” *Ktema* 21 (1996) 43–54, esp. 53.

work; but he does use this term as a governmental form since he calls the Republic a *δυναστεία*.²⁴

Dio thus draws on the negative meaning of *δυναστεία*, as seen for example in Thucydides and Aristotle, and rejects the more neutral usage of Polybius and Dio's contemporary Herodian. Dio also rejects the widespread use of *δυναστεία* as a governmental form.²⁵ The importance of *δυναστεία* in his work is also distinctive: in the other writers, *δυναστεία* generally plays a minor role in their interpretations of politics or history, whereas Dio employs it in an instrumental fashion as it is fundamental to his narrative and political interpretations.²⁶ One natural explanation for Dio's departure from his Greek predecessors is that he is a Roman historian who has knowledge of the Late Republic and therefore merges *δυναστεία* with Roman layers of meaning. For example, he might have been influenced by Roman conceptions of *dominatio* as this word is often connected to negative, excessive personal power as is Dio's *δυναστεία*. In this connection, it is intriguing how the *dominatio* of Cinna and Sulla in Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.1.1) parallels the *δυναστεία* of leading Late Republican politicians in Dio. Likewise, Tacitus' description of the first reigns of the Principate as *dominationibus* (13.1.1) has similarities to Dio's connection between Augustus' Principate and *δυναστεία*. This potential merger of traditions merits further study.

²⁴ Herodian 1.1.4. Besides *δυναστεία* for the Republic, Herodian uses the word three times for the rule of emperors (1.1.5, 1.1.6, 2.12.5) and once for Zeus' power after driving out Cronos (1.16.1).

²⁵ Freyburger-Galland, *Klema* 21 (1996) 27, argues that Dio breaks with Polybius and inserts *δυναστεία* as a degenerate form of "oligarchie," by which she must mean Polybius' *ἀριστοκρατία* rather than its degenerate form *ὀλιγαρχία*.

²⁶ *Contra* Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 177–178, who argues that Dio follows his Greek predecessors in viewing *δυναστεία* as a degenerate form of aristocratic government. In this connection, Fechner asserts that the *δημοκρατία* in Dio is aristocratic.

δημοκρατία in the Late Republic

Historians have frequently given undue importance to the beginning of Book 52 and ignored other turning points where Dio in no uncertain terms describes the Late Republic as a δημοκρατία.²⁷ When we look at these turning points collectively, rather than focusing merely on the start of Book 52, it becomes clear that the Late Republic is undoubtedly still a δημοκρατία for Dio. After the death of Caesar, Dio in a rare authorial comment criticizes the self-styled liberators and then considers the advantages of democracy and monarchy (44.2.2): “Democracy, indeed, has a fair-appearing name [...] but its results are seen not to agree at all with its title. Monarchy, on the contrary, has an unpleasant sound, but is a most practical form of government to live under.” If the Late Republic had been a δυναστεία and distinct from δημοκρατία, it would make no sense for Dio to include these considerations. Furthermore, he could then have levelled a far more severe and powerful criticism at the assassins, namely that they were returning Rome to the regime of δυναστεία. Rather, by using the word δημοκρατία, Dio is criticizing the assassins for not perceiving the true and problematic nature of δημοκρατία which he has amply demonstrated in his Late Republican narrative.

Dio’s portrayal of the Late Republic as a δημοκρατία is continued immediately hereafter: “for a city, not only so large in itself, but also ruling the finest and the greatest part of the known world [...], to practise moderation under a democracy (ἐν δημοκρατία σωφρονῆσαι) is impossible” (44.2.3–4). This assertion would again appear out of place if all the problems of the Late Republic had happened under an unbroken regime of δυναστεία rather than a δημοκρατία. The only reasonable explanation for these two uses of δημοκρατία is that the Late Republic

²⁷ For recent works on Dio’s Late Republic see Rees, *Cassius Dio*; Burden-Stevens, *Cassius Dio’s Speeches*, and “Fictitious Speeches, Envy, and the Habituation to Authority: Writing the Collapse of the Roman Republic,” in *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual* 191–216; Coudry, in *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual* 33–50; Lindholmer, *Cassius Dio*, in *Cassius Dio the Historian*, and in *Cassius Dio and the Late Roman Republic*.

with all its flaws was ultimately a δημοκρατία, despite the power of the dynasts. This is further supported by two references to Rome as a δημοκρατία in Cicero's speech against Antony in 44 B.C. (45.31.2, 45.36.2). It should of course be noted that it is natural to have Cicero use an approximation for *res publica* in his speech. More importantly, the speech is instructively prefaced by the mention of oracles: "all sorts of oracles foreshadowing the downfall of the republic (δημοκρατίας) were recited" (45.17.6). Oracles and omens should not be discounted by readers of Dio; he frequently views these as significant and they also function as important narrative tools.²⁸ It is therefore instructive that these oracles evidently label Rome a δημοκρατία in 44 B.C. The battle of Actium, after which 52.1.1 is placed, was certainly an important turning point for Dio. However, so was Caesar's death, and the clear labelling of the Late Republic as δημοκρατία in Dio's connected excursus and the subsequent narrative should not be underestimated. Furthermore, Dio's prominent positioning of his excursus, at the beginning of Book 44 and immediately after the death of Caesar, is also significant for the coloring it gives the following narrative. Caesar's death was essentially the start of a renewed bout of civil wars, and by juxtaposing and comparing μοναρχία and δημοκρατία at this crucial juncture, Dio portrays the following conflict as one between these two governmental forms. This would of course have been pointless if the δημοκρατία of Rome had ended some time in the mid-second century.

Another vital turning point for Dio is the battle of Philippi in 42. In his authorial voice, he asserts that this was the hitherto greatest of all Rome's battles during civil wars since freedom and democracy (τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ τῆς δημοκρατίας) were on the line (47.39.1). This is mirrored by the description of the assassins

²⁸ J. Langford, *Maternal Megalomania: Julia Domna and the Imperial Politics of Motherhood* (Baltimore 2013) 57–63; Burden-Strevens, *Cassius Dio's Speeches* 208; Lindholmer, *Cassius Dio* 46–50, and in *Cassius Dio and the Late Roman Republic*. Contra Millar, *A Study* 77; G. Wirth, "Einleitung," in O. Voh (ed.), *Cassius Dio: Römische Geschichte I* (Zurich 1985) 27; A. Gowing, *The Triumviral Narratives of Appian and Cassius Dio* (Ann Arbor 1992) 120; Lintott, *ANRW II* 34.3 (1997) 2511.

in the build-up to the battle as “despairing of the Republic” (δημοκρατίας ἅμα ἀπογόντες, 47.20.4), and their officers are portrayed as setting “before their men the prizes of liberty and democracy” (τὴν τε ἐλευθερίαν καὶ τὴν δημοκρατίαν, 47.42.3). Embedded focalization, that is, narrating events from the perspective of the historical characters, might of course play a role. In other words, Dio might be using δημοκρατία here because that was what the assassins and their officers thought they were fighting for. However, Dio in his authorial voice had already described the Late Republic as a δημοκρατία and this is again made explicit immediately after the above passage: “And yet I do not say that it was not beneficial for the people to be defeated at that time [...] for they were no longer capable of maintaining harmony in the established form of government (πολιτείας). It is, of course, impossible for an unadulterated democracy (δημοκρατία ἄκρατος) that has grown to so proud an empire to exercise moderation; and so they would later on have undertaken many similar conflicts one after another, and someday would certainly have been either enslaved or ruined” (47.39.4–5). Dio thus underlines the adverse effects of empire on the Roman δημοκρατία. He is also clear and explicit in his vocabulary: the πολιτεία of the Romans before Philippi was δημοκρατία and he even underlines this with ἄκρατος. One should not forget how rarely Dio pauses his narrative to present personal opinions, and these instances are thus highly significant. He even again includes oracles “which pointed to the downfall of the republic” (δημοκρατίας, 47.40.7). This battle is thus an absolutely vital turning point, and Dio’s omission of any period of δυναστεῖαι and his assertion that the previous period had been a δημοκρατία are therefore important.

For Dio, the δημοκρατία appears to end during the Triumviral period, for, before the battle of Actium, he asserts that “the Roman people had been robbed of their democratic form of government (δημοκρατίας ἀφῆρητο), but had not become a monarchy in the strict sense of the term” (μοναρχίαν ἀκριβῆ, 50.1.1). This shows again that the Late Republic had been a δημοκρατία. However, one might be tempted to argue that the Triumviral period is the period of δυναστεῖαι or that Rome’s

government in this period was *δυναστεία*.²⁹ Dio does assert that the triumvirs aimed for *δυναστεία* (46.55.2), but this is no different from leading politicians of the Late Republic, or indeed of earlier periods, as I will show below. It should also be noted that the plural *δυναστεῖαι* in 52.1.1 does not fit with a discreet short period dominated by the *δυναστεία* of the Second Triumvirate. Most importantly, however, Dio calls the Second Triumvirate both a *τριαρχία* and an *ὀλιγαρχία*,³⁰ which shows that this period was not governed by *δυναστεία*. Yet, these terms are never used in any subsequent periodizations by Dio and it is never presented as an option that Rome should be governed by a *τριαρχία* or an *ὀλιγαρχία*. Rather, the *τριαρχία* or *ὀλιγαρχία* of the Second Triumvirate marks the complete malfunctioning and breakdown of the *δημοκρατία* which, after a short transition period, is replaced by *μοναρχία*.

Dio's consistent focus on *δημοκρατία* and *μοναρχία* as the two governmental options for Rome, rather than *ὀλιγαρχία*, *τριαρχία*, or *δυναστεία*, is evident in the two final turning points to be considered, namely the speeches of Agrippa and Maecenas connected to Augustus' decision to take power, and the death of Augustus. Augustus' creation of the Principate is undoubtedly one of the cornerstones of the entire *Historia Romana*. Dio signals this by devoting a whole book to debating the merits of the two governmental forms at stake, *δημοκρατία* and *μοναρχία*.³¹ He does mention *δυναστεία* a few times during the speeches but

²⁹ Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 107, 156–157, argues that the Triumviral period is ruled by *δυναστεία* but also notes that Dio calls this period *ὀλιγαρχία*. He also asserts (137) that 52.1.1 refers at least to the Triumviral period. This latter assertion is repeated by Freyburger-Galland, *Ktema* 21 (1996) 27.

³⁰ Cass. Dio 41.36.1, 48.34.1. Dio also posits that the later triumvirs were aiming for *ὀλιγαρχία*: 46.55.2

³¹ The debate of Agrippa and Maecenas is perhaps the most studied part of Dio's work. See e.g. Millar, *A Study* 102–118; Berrigan, *Classical Bulletin* 44 (1968) 42–45; Ruiz, *Debate*; Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 71–86; E. Adler, "Cassius Dio's Agrippa-Maecenas Debate: An Operational Code Analysis," *AJP* 133 (2012) 477–520; Burden-Stevens, *Cassius Dio's Speeches* 152–157, 167–174.

never as a *πολιτεία* or as characteristic of the whole Late Republic. Rather he includes it when talking about the personal power of ambitious individuals.³² Dio’s Agrippa asserts that “it is a difficult matter to induce this city, which has enjoyed a democratic government (*δεδημοκρατημένην*) for so many years and holds empire over so many people, to consent to become a slave to any one” (52.13.3). Agrippa here explicitly asserts that Rome, also during its Late Republican days of empire, was a *δημοκρατία*, and throughout his speech he focuses on the advantages of *δημοκρατία*.³³ Embedded focalization might again play a role but it seems hard to believe that Dio would devote a whole speech only to illustrating Agrippa’s point of view.

Maecenas, furthermore, seems to equate the Late Republican civil strife directly with *δημοκρατία*. He argues that in monarchies things are managed in an orderly fashion, and proceeds to enumerate all the problems of Rome’s *δημοκρατία* in a way that recalls Dio’s narrative of the Late Republic: there was envy (*φθόνος*), rivalry for office (*φιλοτιμία*), and the well-known problem of strong ambitious individuals striving for primacy (*δυνατώτεροι τῶν τε πρωτείων ὀρεγόμενοι*) and creating internal unrest (52.15.3–4). The reference made to Dio’s Late Republic via vocabulary is clear,³⁴ and Maecenas then asserts that “these are the evils found in every democracy [...] and there is no other way to put a stop to them than the way I propose” (52.15.5–6). There is again no mention of an age of *δυναστεία*, and Maecenas is rather connecting many of the problems supposedly associated with this alleged regime to *δημοκρατία*. Dio’s highly negative portrayal of the Late Republic is thus not the manifestation of a new governmental form or age of *δυναστεία* distinct

³² Cass. Dio 52.6.3, 52.13.2, 52.17.3, 52.21.7.

³³ He mentions *δημοκρατία* seven times in the twelve chapters of his speech that are preserved: 52.6.1, 52.6.5, 52.7.5, 52.9.1, 52.9.2, 52.9.5, 52.13.6.

³⁴ These elements are central to Dio’s Late Republic: *φθόνος*, Rees, *Cassius Dio* 30–33; Burden-Strevens, in *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual* 219–226; *φιλοτιμία*, Rees 15–18; Burden-Strevens, *Cassius Dio’s Speeches* 92–95. Strong individuals competing: M. Lindholmer, “The Fall of Cassius Dio’s Roman Republic,” in *Klio* (forthcoming).

from δημοκρατία but is rather due to the problems associated with any δημοκρατία that has grown as strong and wealthy as Rome. As Maecenas himself notes, this is a powerful reason for the necessity of Augustus' Principate and legitimizes this constitutional change far more than does a period of δυναστεία.

The last important turning point for our present purposes is the death of Augustus. Dio again mentions no period of δυναστεία which Augustus is supposed to have ended but rather focuses on how he, as Dio's Livia had said earlier, guided "so great a city from democracy to monarchy" (ἐκ δημοκρατίας πρὸς μοναρχίαν, 55.21.4). Tiberius in his speech of course praises Augustus but also plainly echoes Maecenas: "for you [the senators] knew well that a democracy could never accommodate itself to interests so vast, but that the leadership of one man (προστασία δὲ ἑνὸς ἀνδρὸς) would be most likely to conserve them, and so refused to return to what was nominally independence but really factional discord" (στασιασμοῦς, 56.39.5). δημοκρατία is again portrayed as the period immediately before Augustus seized power and, importantly, is also again depicted as equal to στάσις and internal conflict, due to the influx of wealth as a consequence of empire. This of course is typical thinking in Roman historiography, but it plays a central role in legitimizing Augustus' creation of the Principate. If he had merely ended the period of δυναστεία, the Republic could still be thought of as an ideal to which the Romans could return. Instead, Dio purposefully portrays the δημοκρατία as inherently unworkable. This is reemphasized by Dio shortly after Tiberius' speech when he writes of the "license of democracy" (56.43.4 δημοκρατικοῦ θράσους, adapted from Cary). Such authorial statements are rare and carry significant weight. Tiberius' funeral oration and Dio's own connected comments thus reinforce that there was no regime of δυναστεία and that it was the δημοκρατία itself that had degenerated.

The analysis of these turning points in Dio's history demonstrates that he never meant 52.1.1 to indicate that there was a governmental form in the shape of δυναστεία or that the δημοκρατία was removed by δυναστεία. Rather, δυναστεία and

its destructive aspects were a problem inherent in the δημοκρατία as a governmental form. This identification of the Late Republic with δημοκρατία also explains the plural at 52.1.1 and the missing ἐν before δυναστείας which have often been ignored: Dio’s Late Republic was a time of fundamental governmental challenges and periods where proper government essentially broke down. We can thus view these breakdowns and the other examples of problems where Dio uses the word δυναστεία as a long line of individual δυναστεῖαι that occur more and more frequently during the Late Republic.³⁵ Dio thus uses δυναστεῖαι at 52.1.1 not to denote a governmental form but to emphasize the repeated failures of the δημοκρατία which allowed the excessive personal power of certain individuals, their δυναστεία, to dominate the political landscape.

This interpretation of the δυναστεῖαι of 52.1.1 is supported by Dio’s use of δυναστεία in the Late Republic.³⁶ He connects a number of prominent individuals to δυναστεία or to striving for it. Metellus is said to “lust” for δυναστεία (δυναστείας τε ἐρῶν, 36.18.1) when campaigning in Crete, while Pompey earlier had collected soldiers to create a “personal δυναστεία” (δυναστείαν ἰδίαν, F 107). Caesar and Crassus are likewise connected to δυναστεία; out of all the leading politicians of Dio’s narrative, only Cato the Younger is not.³⁷ There were thus several δυναστεῖαι co-existing and struggling for domination during the Late Republic. This is further borne out by Dio’s comments on the illegal restoration of the Egyptian King Ptolemy, arranged by Pompey and Gabinius: “So much power had δυναστεῖαι and abundant wealth as against the decrees of both the people and the Senate (αἱ τε δυναστεῖαι καὶ αἱ τῶν χρημάτων περιουσίαι καὶ παρὰ τὰ ψηφίσματα τά τε τοῦ δήμου καὶ τὰ τῆς βουλῆς ἴσχυσαν).”³⁸ Dio here contrasts the collective, official, and constitutional power of the Roman δημοκρατία

³⁵ This is also the suggestion of Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 139.

³⁶ See also e.g. Freyburger-Galland, *Ktema* 21 (1996) 23–27, and *Aspects*.

³⁷ Caesar and Crassus: 37.56.5, 41.57.4; Dio’s view of Cato, e.g. 37.57.3.

³⁸ Cass. Dio 39.55.2 (adapted from Cary, who mistakenly, and surprisingly, translates δυναστεία as “official power”).

(represented by the Senate and the people) with the personal, unofficial, and unconstitutional *δυναστεῖαι* of selfishly ambitious individuals. Consequently, *δυναστεῖαι* in this passage are naturally in the plural, which in turn sheds light on Dio's formulation in 52.1.1: there he is referring to the breakdowns in Republican government caused by the *δυναστεῖαι* of ambitious individuals and attempts to underline their power and influence. This appears to be a rhetorical sleight of hand to further damn the *δημοκρατία* at that important juncture of the narrative and to stress its repeated malfunctions. This is not to portray Dio as a mere rhetorician attempting to entertain. Rather, the use of *δυναστεῖαι* in 52.1.1 is a powerful tool to advance a central interpretative point of Dio's, that the *δημοκρατία* of Rome was inherently unworkable. This untenability is not surprising as is clear from Dio's many assertions, both in speeches and in his authorial voice, that a *δημοκρατία* could never be harmonious in an empire the size of Rome's.

Analysis of these turning points demonstrates that the Late Republic was a *δημοκρατία* and undermines the theory that *δυναστεία* was the governmental form of the Late Republic. The analysis also serves to contextualize 52.1.1: the passage should not be viewed in isolation but as one turning point among many where Dio deliberates on the functioning of Rome, and in none of these others do *δυναστεῖαι* play a prominent role. Thus, the reference in 52.1.1 appears to be to the malfunctions of the *δημοκρατία* throughout its history. Furthermore, this presentation of an inherently troubled *δημοκρατία* is crucial for Dio's description of Augustus' Principate: instead of being Tacitus' tyrant who exploited the civil wars to impose a despotism on war-weary Rome, Augustus can now be presented as beneficially solving the problems of a *δημοκρατία* that is inherently undermined by empire.

δυναστεία in the Early and Mid-Republic

In his Early and Mid-Republic, Dio has included a number of

important instances of *δυναστεία*.³⁹ These could appear surprising since much recent scholarship has argued that Dio’s early Rome is an idealized contrast to the Late Republic.⁴⁰ This decline from Early to Late Republic is typical of ancient Roman historiography, and the two main sources for the earlier Republic, Dionysius and Livy, clearly idealize the period. However, Dio’s account of this period rejects the idealization and includes unique narrative material in order to create a distinctively negative portrait.⁴¹ Mentions of *δυναστεία* during this supposedly harmonious period are an important part of this rejection, as *δυναστεία* consequently permeates the *δημοκρατία* in its entirety.⁴² Furthermore, these mentions of *δυναστεία* are connected to highly significant elements: the first links *δυναστεία* to equality in government, the second to exceptional commands, and the last to the office of the tribunes. Through these inter-

³⁹ *Contra* Martin, in *Historische Semantik* 238, who argues that *δυναστεία* is not used for early Rome.

⁴⁰ Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 141–143; M. Schettino, “L’histoire archaïque de Rome dans les fragments de Dion Cassius,” in E. Caire and S. Pittia (eds.), *Guerre et diplomatie romaines* (Aix-en-Provence 2006) 66–68; B. Simons, *Cassius Dio und die Römische Republik* (Berlin 2009) 304–305; Rees, *Cassius Dio* 40–54; Kemezis, *Greek Narratives* 24, 102–106; Burden-Strevens, *Cassius Dio’s Speeches* 176–177. See however M. Hose, *Erneuerung der Vergangenheit: die Historiker im Imperium Romanum von Florus bis Cassius Dio* (Stuttgart 1994) 404–405, and Sion-Jenkis, *Von der Republik* 90–91, who briefly counter this view. See also J. Libourel, “An Unusual Annalistic Source Used by Dio Cassius,” *AJP* 95 (1974) 383–393, who notes Dio’s violent accounts of Early Republican episodes; however, Libourel attributes this to the use of an unknown source and does not explore the importance of these episodes for Dio’s interpretation. For the place of Dio’s earlier Republic in his overall work see Burden-Strevens and Lindholmer, *Cassius Dio’s Forgotten History*.

⁴¹ Libourel, *AJP* 95 (1974) 383–393; M. Lindholmer, “Breaking the Idealistic Paradigm: Competition in Dio’s Earlier Republic,” in *Cassius Dio’s Forgotten History*.

⁴² This break with the idealized tradition of the earlier Republic and the place of *δυναστεία* herein also nuance Kemezis’ (*Greek Narratives* 95–111) clear division of Dio’s history into different narrative modes.

relations, Dio demonstrates that *δυναστεία* was a general problem in the Republic.

The first instance is in relation to the so-called “second decemvirate” during the Struggle of the Orders. Dio asserts that the first decemvirate performed admirably as “these men held sway each for a day, assuming by turns the dignity of rulership.” However, “ten more chosen anew—for the overthrow of the state, as it almost seemed—came to grief. For they all held sway at once on equal terms” (πάντες γὰρ ἅμα ἀπὸ τῆς ἴσης ἦρχον, 5.18 (Zon.)). Strikingly, Dio has created a clear connection between the equality of the decemvirs and the misfortunes under their rule—a marked contrast to Livy and Dionysius who rather depict the equality as a measure to increase the number of lictors allowed for the decemvirs.⁴³ Then the decemvirs produced two law tables which created disputes and undermined *ὁμόνοια*, and ultimately the equal decemvirs refused to relinquish power as agreed and descended into *δυναστεία*: “For the men under arms, eagerly vying with one another (*φιλονεικία*) to prevent any success from attending those who held the power (*δυναστείαν*), voluntarily disregarded both the public and their own personal interests while those in the city [...] destroyed in some convenient manner many of the more active champions of the populace. As a result no small contention arose between the parties” (*στάσις οὐ μικρά*, F 23.3). Zonaras’ description preceding this fragment reveals that the men under arms are decemvirs on a military campaign, while “those in the city” are decemvirs left behind. Dio here uses *δυναστεία* for a completely malfunctioning government where the decemvirs ruled through their unconstitutional and personal power—a stark contrast to the rule of the first decemvirate which was described as *ἀρχή*. This inclusion of *δυναστεία*, in a fragment of Dio’s own text rather than the excerptor’s, clearly demonstrates that *δυναστεία* was not only a Late Republican phenomenon but was also part of the earlier Republic.

Furthermore, this *δυναστεία* becomes the direct consequence

⁴³ Dion. Hal. *Ant.Rom.* 10.59.3–5; Liv. 3.36.

of the equality of the decemvirs. This connection between equality and *δυναστεία* is significant, for Dio’s *δημοκρατία* was fundamentally based on equality: *ἰσομοιρία* and *ἰσονομία*.⁴⁴ Dio had previously underlined “the inherent disposition of men to quarrel with their equals” (F 7.3) and asserted that “no doubt, it is ordered by Nature that whatever is human shall not submit to be ruled by that which is like it and familiar to it, partly through jealousy, partly through contempt of it” (F 5.12). This inherent instability of equality is thus deep-rooted in Dio’s conception of government, and his narrative of the second decemvirate skillfully demonstrates this problem of equality-based governments: he shows that the *δυναστεία* here is not a singular, anomalous occurrence in the Early and Mid-Republic but is rather the unavoidable result of an equality-based rule. The likewise equality-based *δημοκρατία* was therefore bound to create *δυναστεῖαι* regardless of the period, which is demonstrated by the presence of this problem across the whole history of the *δημοκρατία*. This significantly weakens the argument that the Late Republic was the age of *δυναστεία*. Dio’s narrative rather suggests that this problem was an inherent part of the *δημοκρατία*.

Another important example of *δυναστεία* in Dio’s earlier Republic is his description of the young Scipio Africanus and his successes in Spain during the Second Punic War. After winning all the territories south of the Pyrenees, Scipio was preparing for a campaign in Africa which had been entrusted to him. Dio comments: “And he would certainly have accomplished something worthy of his aspirations [...] had not the Romans at home, through jealousy (*φθόνῳ*) and through fear of him, stood in his way. [...] ... to treat [him in such wise] as would conduce, not to his power and fame (*δυναστείαν καὶ δόξαν*), but to their own liberty and safety, they dismissed him.”⁴⁵ This is again from

⁴⁴ Burden-Strevens, “Introduction,” in *Cassius Dio’s Forgotten History*. See also Fechner, *Untersuchungen* 37–39.

⁴⁵ F 57.54–55 (adapted from Cary). There is a lacuna, indicated by the non-bracketed “...”, while the bracketed “him in such wise” is Cary’s suggestion.

Dio's work rather than an excerptor. It is central that Dio describes Scipio's personal power as *δυναστεία* and underlines the Senate's fear of it and their attempts to inhibit its growth. *δυναστεία* is thus a problem in connection to powerful individuals also in the normally idealized Mid-Republic.

It seems instructive that Scipio becomes a locus of *δυναστεία*: he is the only general in Dio's surviving Mid-Republic to receive a command that clearly violated *mos maiorum* as he is given a generalship at only twenty-three (16.9 (Zon.)). Scipio is not legally given the title, but Dio emphasizes that he was *de facto* the general (16 F 57.40). In the Late Republic, exceptional and extraordinary commands which also violate the *mos maiorum* become both the catalysts of *δυναστεία* for ambitious politicians, such as Pompey and Caesar, and the tools through which these generals augmented and maintained their *δυναστεία*.⁴⁶ The use of *δυναστεία* in connection with Scipio's exceptional command is thus a noteworthy parallel to the Late Republic and indicates that commands which are contrary to tradition, regardless of the period, were problematically connected to *δυναστεία*. The central difference between the two periods, rather than the absence or presence of *δυναστεία*, is the character of the generals involved: Scipio obeys the Senate and naturally returns, whereas Caesar, for example, refuses, which ultimately causes civil war. Despite the important differences, however, the *δυναστεία* of Scipio also significantly counters the common idealized account of the Middle Republic. This is further supported as the Senate is portrayed as acting "through jealousy" (*φθόνῳ*, 17 F 57.54) in their opposition to Scipio, an element which has been shown to be a central problem in the Late Republic.⁴⁷ Through his portrayal of the Senate as jealous and self-interested, Dio thus further rejects the idealization of the Mid-Republic and blurs the common distinction between this period and the Late Republic.

Dio's narrative significantly deviates from those of the parallel

⁴⁶ See e.g. Cass. Dio 36.30.3, 41.57.4, 43.25.3.

⁴⁷ Burden-Stevens, in *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual* 207–214.

sources, Livy and Polybius, as in both these accounts Scipio’s return is voluntary and natural as his mission in Spain had finished.⁴⁸ In Livy, Scipio is in fact portrayed negatively and the Senate is right to question him, which Livy incorporates in a speech by Fabius, termed “appropriate to the circumstances [...] and backed up by the weight of his character” (28.43). Both Livy and Polybius deflect the blame onto the individual, Scipio, whereas Dio through his use of *δυναστεία* for Scipio and *φθόνος* for the senators, portrays Rome negatively as a whole. Dio thus appears to have purposefully rejected the common idealization of the period, and the use of *δυναστεία* plays a central role in this rejection. It again underlines that Dio viewed *δυναστεία* as an issue throughout the Republic. *δυναστεῖαι* were certainly most numerous in the Late Republic but they were a problem in the Early and Mid-Republic as well. The *δυναστεῖαι* of 52.1.1 therefore rather evoke the numerous *δυναστεῖαι* throughout the history of the *δημοκρατία*, which in turn demonstrated the untenability of this governmental form in Dio’s eyes.

A last important example of *δυναστεία* to be considered is Dio’s description of the creation of the tribunate. After a lengthy narrative of this and a discussion of the problems that the tribunes caused through their excessive power, it is written that: “such was the organization of the *δυναστεία* of the tribunes” (*οὕτω μὲν οὖν ἢ τῶν δημάρχων δυναστεία συνέστη*, 4.15, adapted from Cary). In contrast to the previous examples, we are here reliant on Zonaras’ epitome. However, recent scholarship has demonstrated Zonaras to be generally faithful to Dio, often following the latter almost verbatim.⁴⁹ It thus seems

⁴⁸ Liv. 28.38; Polyb. 11.33.7–8. On jealousy in Dio’s Middle Republic see also Simons, *Cassius Dio* 222–240.

⁴⁹ J. Moscovich, “Historical Compression in Cassius Dio’s Account of the Second Century B.C.,” *AncW* 8 (1983) 137–143; Simons, *Cassius Dio* 29–32; Fromentin, *Erga-Logoi* 1 (2013) 23–26; C. Mallan, “The Rape of Lucretia in Cassius Dio’s Roman History,” *CQ* 64 (2014) 758–771, esp. 760–762. See also V. Fromentin, “La fiabilité de Zonaras dans les deux premières décades de l’*Histoire romaine* de Cassius Dion: le cas des discours,” in *Cassius Dio’s Forgotten History*. Support for the theory that Zonaras often followed Dio almost

reasonable that Zonaras' use of the very specific and loaded term *δυναστεία* in relation to the tribunes actually comes from Dio. This is further supported by the fact that Dio later in his narrative twice connects the tribunate to *δυναστεία* (see below).

The narrative of the problems caused by the tribunes is not explicitly tied to any specific period, and some of its elements, such as the abjuration of patrician rank through adoption, sound decidedly Late Republican. One could thus argue that the *δυναστεία* of the tribunes is connected only to the Late Republican excesses. However, some of the trouble caused by tribunes before the above quotation is undoubtedly located in the Early Republic: "For though they [the tribunes] did not immediately secure the title of magistrates, they gained power (*ἰσχὺν*) beyond all others, defending every one who begged protection and rescuing every one who called upon them not only from private individuals, but from the very magistrates, except the dictators. [...] And if ever they saw fit that anything should not be done, they prevented it, whether the person acting were a private citizen or a magistrate" (4.15 (Zon.)). The description of the tribunes as not having gained the title of magistrates excludes the possibility that this refers to the Late Republic, since the tribunes in this period of course were magistrates. But even though this description of the tribunes is evidently set in the Early Republic, they are still described as severely undermining the workings of the state and the power of the magistrates.

A further argument that the *δυναστεία* of the tribunes is not

verbatim can be found close to the first instance of *δυναστεία* in the earlier Republic analyzed here, where we have both Zonaras and a fragment of Dio's own text. Dio (F 23.3) writes *ὅτι καὶ τὰ ἐν τοῖς στρατοπέδοις καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ ἄστει ἐταράχθη* ("affairs of camp and state alike were thrown into confusion") and Zonaras (5.18) closely echoes him: *πάντα μέντοι ἀπλῶς καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ ἄστει καὶ τὰ ἐν τοῖς στρατοπέδοις τετάρακτο* ("absolutely all the affairs, however, of state and camp alike were thrown into confusion"). The parallels here are far too close to be incidental: apart from the reversal of the order of the places, Zonaras has copied *καὶ τὰ ἐν τοῖς στρατοπέδοις καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ ἄστει*, while *ἐταράχθη* and *τετάρακτο* come from the same verb. The only difference between the two passages is a few rhetorical touches by Zonaras.

confined to the Late Republic lies in the use of *συνέστη*. The verb generally means to “combine,” “put together,” or “organize,” and so one could translate the sentence, as I have above, “Such was the organization of the *δυναστεία* of the tribunes.”⁵⁰ This would indicate that the *δυναστεία* of the tribunes was not bound to a particular period but rather enshrined in the very creation of the office. This reading gains further strength from Dio’s description of the restoration of the power of the tribunes in 70 after Sulla had severely curtailed it: “For now that the power of the tribunes (*τῶν δημάρχων δυναστεία*) had been restored to its ancient status (*ἐς τὸ ἀρχαῖον*) [...], a great many factions and cliques (*συστάσεις*) were being formed aiming at all the offices” (36.38.2). Dio’s *ἀρχαῖον* suggests that the *δυναστεία* of the tribunes predates the Late Republic and is rather a quality inherent in the tribunate which Sulla had merely suspended for a few years.

A final example of the connection between the tribunate and *δυναστεία* is inserted after the death of Caesar. Here Octavian tries to use the office to acquire power: “he undertook to become tribune as a starting point for popular leadership (*δημαγωγίας*) and to secure the power (*δυναστείας*) that would result from it” (45.6.3). No temporal limits are set on this *δυναστεία* and Dio thereby portrays the *δυναστεία* of the tribunate as a general quality that could be exploited by dynasts, such as Octavian, for their own good. These two instances of Dio connecting *δυναστεία* to the tribunate as an office and the general meaning of *συνέστη* in the description of the tribunes show that Dio does not tie their *δυναστεία* to a single period: he is arguing that the tribunate, through its power to subvert the workings of the state and the magistrates, was inherently a source of *δυναστεία* throughout the Republic.

Dio’s depiction of the tribunate as destructive and connected to *δυναστεία* from the very beginning is in clear contrast to the

⁵⁰ Cary’s translation, “Such was the origin of the power (*δυναστεία*) of the tribunes,” seems to suggest that he saw the *δυναστεία* as connected to the Late Republic. However, “origin” seems a rather loose translation.

parallel sources. In his narrative of the creation of the office, Polybius never portrays the tribunate as overly destructive or linked to *δυναστεία* but rather depicts the tribunes as a check on the Senate (6.16.4–5). Livy and Dionysius, likewise, are neutral in their description of the creation of the tribunate.⁵¹ Dio's hostile description of the tribunate from its inception therefore cannot be explained away merely as a trope. Rather, it is a unique and abrupt rejection of the idealizing tradition. In Dio's eyes, the inherent *δυναστεία* of the tribunes represents a fundamental flaw in this governmental form. This connection between the tribunate and *δυναστεία* shows that the *δυναστεῖαι* of 52.1.1 do not refer only to the Late Republic. Dio thus rejects the idealization of the Early and Mid-Republic as these periods, like the Late Republic, were threatened by the *δυναστεία* of the tribunes.

In the earlier Republic, Dio skillfully connects *δυναστεία* to exceptional commands, equality in government, and the tribunate. None of these elements is exclusively bound to the Late Republic, and the latter two are fundamental parts of the *δημοκρατία* as a governmental form. This demonstrates that *δυναστεία* was an unavoidable part of the *δημοκρατία*. Strikingly, it is the people who ultimately resolve the problem of the decemvirs' *δυναστεία* as they depose the decemvirs and restore the proper functioning of the *δημοκρατία*. The central difference between the Early and the Late Republic is thus not that *δυναστεία* was confined to the latter period, while the earlier functioned in general harmony. Rather, the people in the Late Republic were controlled by the dynasts, whereas they act independently and as inhibitors of destructive *δυναστεία* in the Early Republic. *δυναστεία* is thus present throughout the Republic but the factors influencing its workings vary depending on the period.

δυναστεία is, then, not merely a Late Republican phenom-

⁵¹ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.89.3–6.90; Liv. 2.33. On the creation of the tribunate in Dio and the parallel sources see J. Libourel, *Dio Cassius on the Early Roman Republic* (diss. UCLA 1968) 90–96.

enon and the more constricted reading of *δυναστεία* in 52.1.1 as denoting the Late Republic is therefore untenable. Surely, *δυναστεία* are most common in this period but 52.1.1 refers to the repeated *δυναστεία* throughout the history of the *δημοκρατία*. Furthermore, confining *δυναστεία* to the Late Republic obscures two of Dio’s most central interpretative points. First, his narrative of the Early and Middle Republic and his repeated incorporation of *δυναστεία* amount to an important rejection of the established historiographical idealization. His frequent rejection of this idealizing tradition suggests that he was purposefully selective in his choice of sources in order to construct a distinctive narrative of the earlier Republic. Second, this negative narrative demonstrates to Dio’s readers that the Late Republic was not a momentary lapse caused by immoral individuals, such as Caesar and Pompey, in an otherwise well-functioning constitution. Rather, the *δημοκρατία* contained the seeds of its own destruction from the start, seeds which were nourished to destructive effect by the influx of wealth and power as a consequence of empire. This sets the stage for presenting Augustus, the foundation of Dio’s entire imperial narrative, as a savior figure who relieved the Romans of their inherently unworkable *δημοκρατία*.

Conclusion

Dio conceives of the Late Republic as a *δημοκρατία*, as is demonstrated by the numerous turning points where he uses this word for the period. The theory that 52.1.1 refers only to the Late Republic and that this period was even governed by *δυναστεία* is thus untenable. The atypical use of *δυναστεία* in 52.1.1 has perhaps made scholars focus too narrowly on this passage rather than the numerous other turning points in Dio’s work. *δυναστεία* is certainly important to Dio in the Late Republic.⁵² However, it is crucial that Dio also in the Early and Mid-Republic includes striking instances of *δυναστεία* which are connected to equality in government, the tribunate as an office, and exceptional commands. None of these elements is

⁵² *Contra* Sion-Jenkis, *Von der Republik* 49–50.

exclusively Late Republican and the former two are part of the foundation of the δημοκρατία itself. Consequently, δυναστεία was an inherent part of the δημοκρατία in Dio's eyes. This δυναστεία is never allowed to become fundamentally destructive in the Early and Mid-Republic but it is significant that it is present in these normally idealized periods as well. Through the consistent use of δυναστεία in all of his Republican narrative, Dio thus presents a highly distinctive and cohesive interpretation of the Republic that has gone largely unappreciated.

Dio's view of the Republic also explains the use of the plural δυναστεῖαι in 52.1.1: here he is not referring to the Late Republic as a period, as has so often been argued, but rather to the numerous instances of δυναστεῖαι that had occurred throughout the entirety of the δημοκρατία. This in turn explains the missing ἐν: its absence is meant to link δυναστεῖαις more closely to δημοκρατία since these δυναστεῖαι were part of the δημοκρατία. The use of δυναστεῖαι in 52.1.1 likewise serves to forcefully condemn the δημοκρατία at a central juncture of the narrative. Beyond its role in Dio's political interpretations, the passage of course also has significant rhetorical power, as is demonstrated even today by the many scholars who have overlooked how anomalous it is by focusing too narrowly on this one turning point.

Dio's use of δυναστεία not just in the Late Republic but throughout the Republic as a whole creates an impression of his δημοκρατία as inherently unstable and vulnerable. Recent scholarship on Dio's Late Republic has often concentrated on the leading individuals of his narrative,⁵³ and while these works have resulted in many important advances, it is important not to focus excessively on individuals in explaining the fall of Dio's Republic.⁵⁴ The continuous presence of δυναστεία throughout

⁵³ E.g. Rees, *Cassius Dio*, and Coudry, in *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual* 33–50.

⁵⁴ As I have argued elsewhere: in *Cassius Dio's Forgotten History; Cassius Dio and the Late Roman Republic*; "Reading Diachronically: A New Reading of Book 36 of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*," *Histos* 12 (forthcoming); "The Role of Caesar's Wars in Dio's Late Republic," in C. H. Lange and A. Scott (eds.), *Cassius Dio: The Impact of Violence, War, and Civil War* (forthcoming).

the δημοκρατία suggests that Dio’s Republic was not ended by a few ambitious individuals. Rather, Dio’s δημοκρατία was inherently unworkable and he structures his account of the Roman Republic to support this. This inherent unworkability in turn allows him to portray Augustus’ Principate as unavoidable and necessary since no ideal version of the δημοκρατία had ever existed to which the Romans might potentially return. Dio thus exhibits a highly distinctive interpretation of the Republic as a whole. He emerges as a sophisticated and complex historian who used δυναστεία as a cornerstone in the different political interpretations that permeate the often underestimated *Historia Romana*.⁵⁵

September, 2018

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⁵⁵ I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Christopher Burden-Strevens for helpful comments and suggestions and to Jesper Majbom Madsen for inviting me to a seminar at which I presented an earlier version of this paper. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their corrections and comments.