The Delayed Career of the 'Delayer': The Early Years of Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus, the 'Cunctator'*

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Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus, the *Cunctator*, had a magnificent career. A well-known *elogium*[1] attests that he was twice dictator, five times consul, censor, twice interrex, curule aedile, twice quaestor, twice tribune of the soldiers, *pontifex* and *augur*. He celebrated two triumphs and was nominated *princeps senatus* at two *lustra*.[2] Verrucosus was doubtless a worthy heir to his illustrious patrician forefathers whose achievements were renowned and highly venerated.[3] Yet, despite this memorable career and noble descent, it seems highly probable, as I hope to show, that when Verrucosus was first elected consul in 233 he was about sixty years old, far older than the average age of consuls in that period.

Why was the career of a scion to one of Rome's noblest families, a man who would become known as the 'delayer', delayed for so long? Was this the common office-holding pattern in the second half of the third century BCE, before the increase in the number of praetors, the introduction of a stricter *cursus honorum* and the requirement of a minimum age for consuls as stipulated by the *lex Villia Annalis* in 180?[4] Is it possible to establish the precise dates for the junior magistracies which Verrucosus held, that are recorded in the *elogium* but are otherwise unattested, and determine the reasons why he held — as no one else did before or after him — the quaestorship twice?[5]

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1 *CIL* I^2 1.139 = *Ins. Ital.* 3.3.80. On the inscription see Chioffi (1996), 29-32.

2 It is unlikely that *elogia* in general and this one in particular would contain false information, as there were many who could refute it (Brunt and Moore [1967], 2-3). Accounts of achievements might be indeed selective (*ibid*), but in this case, nothing seems to have been omitted. Fabius Maximus was dictator for the second time in 217; dictator, probably for holding the elections, sometime between 222 and 219; consul in 233, 228, 215, 214, 209; censor in 230. The *elogium* is the only source recording both his *interregna* and the lower magistracies. He was *pontifex* from 216 and *augur* from 265. He was chosen *princeps senatus* in 209 and 204; for sources see *MRR* 1 under the relevant years.

3 The status of the family at that period is reflected in the triumphal fresco of the Esquiline. See Coarelli (1973), 207-209; Holliday (1980); La Rocca (1984).

4 On the *lex Villia Annalis*, see Astin (1958). On office holding patterns before the *lex Villia Annalis*, see Develin (1979).

5 There are no other known cases of a second quaestorship. Others (in a few known instances) served twice or even three times as military tribunes. Appius Claudius Caecus was thrice a military tribune, twice aedile curule and twice praetor (*CIL* I^2 1.192 = *ILS* 54), but it seems that the iterative magistracies (both praetorships and the minor offices) were held after his first consulate. On iterative aedilates see Feig Vishnia (1996a). Most cases involving a

In view of the scarce evidence relating to the first half of the third century BCE, these questions cannot be answered unequivocally, and clearly any reconstruction will be highly controversial. Yet, some of the problems are of considerable significance and it is well worth putting them forward for further investigation as they could shed light not only on Verrucosus' somewhat peculiar career, but also on other issues pertaining to this otherwise obscure period.

I

Although the sparse and circumstantial evidence makes it difficult to determine Fabius Maximus' exact age in 233, it does nonetheless provide clues which allow us to establish a fairly plausible year of birth. For example, numerous testimonies point to Verrucosus' advanced age during the Second Punic War.[6] His longevity is further accentuated by Livy (30.26.7) and Valerius Maximus (8.13.3), who relate that when Verrucosus died in 203, he had been augur for sixty-two years.[7] This makes it likely that he was co-opted into the prestigious religious college in 265, to replace his father - or as some would have it, his grandfather, the acclaimed Gurges (see below) - who was consul when he died in battle at Volsinii in that very year.[8] The key question is, however, whether it is possible to estimate how old he was in 265, a question that is intimately connected to that of his father's identity.

Livy recounts that Verrucosus was the grandson of Q. Fabius Maximus Rullianus (consul 322, 310, 308, 297, 295), and son of Q. Fabius Maximus Gurges (consul 292, 276, 265).[9] Plutarch's narrative (*Fab.* 1.3; 24.5), on the other hand, indicates that Rullianus was his great-grandfather. Plutarch's evidence and the almost sixty years that elapsed between Gurges' first consulship (292) and that of Verrucosus (233), led Münzer initially to doubt Verrucosus' protracted augurate and his rather advanced age in 233.[10] However, he subsequently changed his mind (at least about Fabius' protracted augurate) and declared that 'there is not the slightest reason to doubt the traditional dates as I myself have done.'[11] He did not believe that Gurges was Verrucosus' father and solved the problem by presupposing the existence of another, otherwise unknown, Q. Fabius Maximus, supposedly the son of Gurges and the father of Verrucosus. Münzer brushed aside

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second or a third military tribunate are from the second century BCE onwards and they concern either prorogations or ex-consuls who were appointed military tribunes by acting consuls. Cf. Suolahti (1956), 307-320.

6 Liv. 30.26.7 writes that Fabius *moritur exactae aetatis* (died at a very advanced age). See also Liv. 22.29.10; 22.30.3; 27.6.10; 28.40.10. See also Cic. *Sen.* 10 where Fabius is described as *admodum senex* (far advanced in age) in 204 and Plut. *Fab* 3.6; 4.2; 10.1; 11.1; 12.4; 13.3; 24.1; 25.2; 26.4.

7 It is obvious that there were several different sources telling of Verrucosus' prolonged augurate. Plin. *NH* 156 relates that he was augur for 63 years, which suggests that he, for one, relied on a different source. Livy himself seems surprised by the length of Fabius' augurate, but he sees no reason to doubt his various sources (30.26.7: *...quidam auctores sunt).*

8 *MRR* 1.201.

9 See *MRR* 1 under the relevant years.

10 *RE* 6.1815-6.

11 Münzer (1999), 56.

the question as to why this otherwise unattested Fabius left no mark on history, postulating that this mysterious figure died young and consequently did not proceed beyond the initial stages of a political career. He then deduced that Verrucosus, who according to this hypothesis succeeded his grandfather, and not his father, in the augurate in 265, was between sixteen and eighteen years of age at that time. Hence Verrucosus was supposedly born between 283 and 281 BCE, which meant that he was consul for the first time between the age of forty-eight and fifty-one.[12] However, Münzer's explanation of the reason why Verrucosus' career was delayed — '...[Verrucosus] had been delayed by military service during the long years of the Sicilian War, and perhaps by his father's misfortune or other adverse circumstances even in addition to this...'[13] — is elusive and uncorroborated. Sumner, who is evidently not aware that Münzer changed his assessment, questions the testimonies that Verrucosus was augur for 62 years. If this indeed were the case, Sumner argues, then Verrucosus must have been only fourteen or fifteen years old when appointed augur (he does not explain this assumption), and accordingly was born in 280/279. This, in his view, is inconceivable: 'It would make Verrucosus at least 46 when he first entered on the consulship (233), and that seems too late for a member of a great patrician house in this period'.[14] Sumner, too, believes that Gurges was Verrucosus' grandfather, yet unlike Münzer, he rejects the evidence testifying to Verrucosus' protracted augurate: 'the 62 or 63 years for which Verrucosus is supposed to have held the augurate may represent the tenure of two successive Q. Fabii, possibly the overlooked father first, and then Verrucosus himself.' Dismissing outright the well-documented evidence that Verrucosus was extremely old when he died, Sumner juggles with the various testimonies to conclude, on a basis that is far from clear, that Verrucosus was born in 265 or a few years earlier. Consequently, Verrucosus was between thirty-two and thirty-five years of age when he was first elected consul, an age that more or less accorded with the average age for a first consulship in that period.[15]

Develin does not deny Verrucosus' lengthy augurate, but he too rejects the evidence pointing to Verrucosus' great age at the time of his death in 203. He sees no reason why Verrucosus could not have been ten years old when appointed augur in 265 (an option dismissed by Sumner), which would mean that he was born in 275 and 'over the age of 40' when consul for the first time.[16] This calculation, however, not only challenges Develin's own conclusions on the average age for a first consulship before the enactment of the *lex Villia Annalis* (which he established as thirty-five for patricians),[17] but also fails to accord with what is known about the age at which priests were co-opted to the religious colleges in that period. It was not unusual to co-opt very young men into the three major priesthoods, especially the augurate, to replace, whenever possible, a deceased member of their *gens*, but not, it is plausible to argue, before they donned their

12 *Ibid.*, 54-5, where he changes his previous opinion (n. 10 above) according to which Verrucosus was the son of the mysterious Q. Fabius, the ex-aedile in 266. On this Q. Fabius see below.

13 *Ibid.*, 55.

14 Sumner (1973), 30.

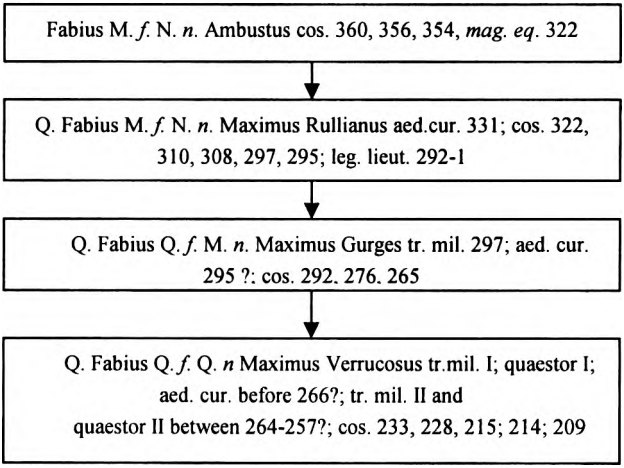
15 *Ibid.*, 31-2.

16 Develin (1979), 64.

17 *Ibid.*

toga virilis. In fact, as Hahn had shown, the few existing examples show that the youngest member to be co-opted into the augurate was sixteen years old, probably nearing seventeen.[18]

Indeed, there is really no good reason to doubt either Livy's authority or Gurges' paternity.[19] In 292, when Gurges was consul for the first time, he suffered such a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Samnites in Campania that the senate considered recalling him and abrogating his *imperium*. His father, the great Rullianus, who had been consul for the fifth time only three years earlier,[20] intervened and begged the Senate to save his son from ignominy. He blamed Gurges' failure on *his youth* and asked to be sent out as his son's legate.[21] Together, father and son overcame the Samnites and Gurges eventually celebrated a triumph as proconsul in 291.[22] It is quite evident that Gurges was exceptionally young when elected consul for the first time in 292.[23] By contrast, Verrucosus, as I hope to show, was of quite an advanced age in 233. Consequently, the gap of fifty-nine years between the respective first consulships of father and son is not as implausible as might seem at first sight.[24]



The fact that Fabius Maximus Verrucosus, a member of a distinguished patrician family that produced successive generations of consuls, failed to reach the consulate at an age deemed appropriate by modern scholars should not be marred by prejudice or explained away by manipulating the evidence. A balanced reconsideration of the information

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18 Hahn (1963).

19 Thus Münzer (1999), 55; Sumner (1973), 30-1; *MRR* 1.202 (n. 1).

20 *MRR* 1.177.

21 Dio frg. 36.30-31; Zon. 8.1; see also Liv. *Per.* 11.

22 *MRR* 1.182-83.

23 He was military tribune in 297 and curule aedile in 292. Develin (1979), 62, conjectures that in 292 Gurges was 28 years old.

24 In addition to the consulates, only the earliest and latest known offices were cited. For full careers see *MRR* (Vol. 3) *Index of Careers* and *MRR* 1 under the relevant years.

provided by the ancient sources is therefore amply justified and might yield evidence indicating how old Fabius actually was in 233.

The indication that Verrucosus was an old man already during the first stages of the Second Punic War cannot be merely dismissed. Furthermore, Verrucosus would not have been included in the lists of very old men and women compiled by both Valerius Maximus (8.18.3) and Pliny the Elder (*NH* 7.156)[25] had he been a mere 'youngster' of 78 or 80 in 203 (if indeed he was born in 283 or 281 as suggested by Münzer). The conspicuous absence of the elder Cato, who died at 86, from these lists suggests that he did not live long enough to merit entry. In fact, both registers list well known individuals who neared or even exceeded their centenary. Moreover, it is rather odd that modern scholars fail to pay due attention to Valerius Maximus' full testimony (8.13.3) according to which:

> *'Q. autem Fabius Maximus duabus et sexaginta annis auguratus sacerdotium sustinuit, robusta iam aetate id adeptus. Quae utraque tempora si in unum conferantur, facile saeculi modum expleverint'.*
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> 'Q. Fabius Maximus maintained his priestly office of Augur for sixty-two years, having acquired it when already of *mature age*.[26] If the two periods were added together, they would easily *complete the measure of a century*'.

It is also worth noting in this context that longevity and physical fitness at an advanced age seem to have run in the Fabian family. M. Fabius Ambustus, Verrucosus' great-grandfather, was consul for the first time in 360, and thirty-eight years and two consulates later he was still fit enough to be appointed *magister equitum* (322). Q. Fabius Maximus Rullianus, who was curule aedile in 331 and consul for the first time in 322, was still able in 292-1 to serve as a legate in battle under his son Gurges, who was then consul for the first time. Gurges himself started his career as a military tribune in 297 and was consul for the third time in 265 when he died in battle at Volsinii.[27] This, of course, is circumstantial evidence, but such genetic traits could explain the *Cunctator*'s physical fitness and ability to command armies during the Hannibalic war, despite his chronological age.

On the basis of all these considerations, I suggest that it is likely that Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus was at least ninety years old when he died, which means that he was born *circa* the year of his father's first consulship (292) and perhaps even earlier, and was therefore about sixty years old when he became consul for the first time in 233.[28]

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25 There is no good reason to doubt that some people lived to a very old age in Rome. On the veracity of the lists and their comparison to modern demographic studies on life expectancy, see Fontanille (2004), 27; Parkin (2004), 107.

26 There is no room for doubt that *robusta aetas* means 'mature age,' as indeed translated by D.R. Shackleton Bailey (Loeb). See e.g. Cic. *Cat.* 2.20; *Sul.* 47; *Phil.* 5.43; Ov. *Met.* 15.206.

27 For sources see *MRR* 1 under the relevant years

28 It was not an 'accident heureux ou chance redoubtable' to reach old age, *pace* Fontanille (2004), 27, and in view of the abundant evidence there is no good reason to rule out longevity in ancient Rome (*ibid.*, 75). See also Parkin (2004), 107: '... some people could live and indeed lived well beyond the life span of the average individual...'; cf. also *ibid.*, 11, 44, 273.

II

During the greater part of the third century BCE, before the gradual increase in the number of praetors and the introduction of an orderly, hierarchical *cursus honorum* that established minimum ages for office holding, the average age of consuls was probably 35-38.[29] Even after the number of praetors rose to four in 227, and holding the praetorship became a customary, if not yet a compulsory preliminary step to the consulship, the average age of consuls rose only slightly higher. It rose again after the number of praetors was increased to six in 196, a development which came in close chronological proximity to the minimum age of forty-two required by the *lex Villia Annalis* enacted in 180. Two comparatively well-documented careers from the latter part of the third century and the beginning of the second can illustrate the emerging pattern. Gaius Flaminius was tribune of the plebs in 232, praetor in 227 and consul for the first time in 223.[30] It is very likely that he was in his late thirties when elected consul for the first time. The elder Cato's career can be followed with greater accuracy. He was born in 235/4,[31] meaning that he was 35/36 when praetor in 198 and 38/39 when consul in 195. As both Flaminius and Cato were rising *novi homines,* the age at which they were first elected consuls is probably indicative of career patterns during the period as a whole. It is evident, then, that Verrucosus was, on any account, well above the conventional age when first elected consul.

Verrucosus was not the only member of a noble family to reach a first consulship at an advanced age during the second half of the third century BCE. We are told that L. Caecilius Metellus, who was consul for the first time in 251, was a hundred years old when he died in 221.[32] If we are to believe this information, and there seems to be no real reason to doubt it, then we must concede that Caecilius was already 70 years old when he served as consul in Sicily in 251 during the First Punic War. The elderly, but exceptionally vigorous consul tricked the Carthaginian commander, won a decisive victory over a superior army and even captured over a hundred elephants, which he later paraded in his triumph.[33] Caecilius Metellus was elected consul for the second time four years later and served again in Sicily, presumably when he was 74 years of age.[34] Even if the ancient sources exaggerated his age to a certain extent, there is no good reason to deduct a decade or more from his alleged age.[35] Another case in point, although obviously not completely identical, is that of Claudius Marcellus. Both Livy (27.27.11) and Plutarch (*Marc.* 28.6) state that Marcellus was over sixty when killed in an ambush in 208. We do not know what 'over sixty' means, nor can we gauge his exact age, but it can be plausibly argued that he was born around 270 or even a few years earlier. This calculation seems in line with the evidence testifying that Marcellus held a junior command during the First Punic War, most probably in 246, when his stepfather, M. Otacilius

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29 See Develin's calculations (1979), 76-80.
30 *MRR* 1 under the relevant years
31 Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 1.5.
32 Pliny, *NH* 7.157; Val. Max. 8.13.2.
33 *MRR* 1.213 for sources.
34 *Ibid.*, 216.
35 See Develin (1979), 63.

Crassus, was consul for the second time.[36] Consequently, we can deduce that Marcellus was at least 48 when first elected consul in 222 — young in comparison with Metellus and Verrucosus, but not in comparison with what seems to have been the average age of other consuls in that period.

It is not possible to determine here why scions of noble plebeian families such as L. Caecilius Metellus and M. Claudius Marcellus reached their first consulship at variance with common practices. As to Verrucosus, the story may well be different.

III

We have seen that we have no information about Verrucosus' early career, other than the list of his magistracies preserved in the *elogium*.[37] One would have expected to find more details about his early years in Plutarch's biography, the most extensive document on the *Cunctator's* life, but these details are lacking.[38] In his first chapter, Plutarch relates the story of the family, elucidates the origin of its name, and explains why Fabius was called Verrucosus (because of a small wart, *verruca,* above his lip).[39] He goes on to describe a docile, quiet and slow child who was accordingly nicknamed *ovicula* (lambkin) and who gave the impression of being somewhat retarded. After this none too flattering description, Plutarch states that in this case appearances were indeed deceiving: when the lambkin entered politics, his alleged shortcomings proved to be extremely valuable and advantageous qualities. Plutarch ends the first chapter with a description of Verrucosus' abilities as an orator, on the basis of a single speech that was still extant in his days, a speech in which Fabius eulogized his son.[40] In the opening sentences of chapter two, Plutarch relates that Verrucosus held five consulships, but he dedicates only one sentence (2.1) to his first consulship — there is not a word about his censorship (230) nor about his second consulship (228).[41] In the rest of the biography, excluding the very last chapter which deals with Fabius' funeral *(Fab.* 27), we hear only about the *Cunctator*'s deeds during the Second Punic War (217-203), as if his whole career had been encapsulated in the last fifteen years of his life.

Plutarch was most interested in the boyhood, education and early career of his heroes,[42] but when he did not find any relevant material, he avoided fabrication.[43] Consequently, the fact that Plutarch knows so little about Fabius's life before 233, or more precisely, before 217 when he emerges full-blown as a central and decisive figure in Roman politics, suggests that he did not find any relevant data.[44] Plutarch, who was a meticulous researcher, had access to the works of Republican annalists now lost, including that of the very first historian, Fabius Pictor, on whom all the others relied, especially

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36 On his military activity in Sicily see Plut. *Marc.* 2.1-2. Cf. Münzer (1999), 72.

37 On *elogia* in general see Brunt and Moore (1967), 2-3.

38 See Pelling (2002a), 14.

39 Pelling (2002d), 313 on the uneven treatment of the family history of Plutarch's heroes.

40 Cf. also Cic. *Sen.* 12.

41 For sources on his censorship and second consulate see *MRR* 1.227; 228.

42 See Pelling (2002d), 302.

43 See Pelling (2002b). Cf. Jones (1971), 89.

44 Pelling (2002c), 153.

for the domestic affairs of the third century.[45] The first Roman historian was both a relative and contemporary of Verrucosus and probably responsible for shaping his image as a dauntless politician and valiant war hero, an image that was handed down to posterity.[46] Had Pictor inserted relevant data on Verrucosus' early career, information that was obviously available and used by the anonymous author of the *elogium*, it would in all probability have found its way into Plutarch's biography.

Did Pictor intentionally contrive this omission? Did he try to obscure the fact that Verrucosus, unlike his father, grandfather and great-grandfather, reached his first consulship at a very advanced age? Could it be that Plutarch's assessment - '... the calmness and silence of his demeanour, the great caution with which he indulged in childish pleasures, the slowness and difficulty with which he learned his lessons, and his contented submissiveness in dealing with his comrades, led those who knew him superficially to suspect him of something like foolishness and stupidity. Only a few discerned the inexorable firmness in the depth of his soul, and the magnanimous and leonine qualities of his nature' (*Fab.* 1.3) — echoes Pictor's subtle handling of Verrucosus' late success? Is it possible that there were incidents that Pictor thought best ignored, incidents which might have blemished Verrucosus' reputation and ill befitted his later glory? A puzzling scandal that occurred on the eve of the outbreak of the First Punic War may well provide the answer.

IV

Some time around 266, an embassy from Apollonia, the Greek city on the Illyrian coast, arrived in Rome. Nothing is known about the purpose of this visit, but the Apollonian delegates were apparently severely mistreated. The epitomator of Livy's fifteenth book succinctly relates that the delegates were attacked by certain young men and that the perpetrators were turned over to the Apollonians.[47] Valerius Maximus (6.6.5) provides a much fuller report and conveys that: 'Q. Fabius and Cn. Apronius, former aediles, struck some envoys sent to Rome from the city of Apollonia in a quarrel. When the senate learned of this, it immediately surrendered them through *fetiales* to the envoys and ordered a quaestor to accompany the latter to Brundisium, so that no harm should come to

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45 On Plutarch's use of Pictor see Peter (1965), 51-7; 146-62; Gelzer (1933), 152-99; Klotz (1935). These studies may be old, but they are, in my opinion, still the best. See also Livy's own statement (22.7.4 I) according to which 'I myself ...have taken Fabius [Pictor] who lived at the time of this war [Second Punic War], as my authority in preference to any other (*huiusce belli potissimum auctorem habui*)'.

46 Notably in Ennius' immortal lines (*Ann.* 9.310-312 = Cic. *Sen.* 10): '*Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem/Non enim rumores ponebat ante salutem/Ergo postque magisque viri nunc gloria claret*'. See also Erdkamp (1992) who stresses Livy's partiality towards Fabius during the first years of the war and shows how Livy (probably following Pictor) distorted the evidence in favor of Fabius' strategy. See also Ridley (2000), 29-32.

47 *Cum legatos Apolloniantium ad senatum missos quidam iuvenes pulsassent dediti sunt Apolloniantibus.*

them on the way from the relatives of the persons surrendered'.[48] Dio (frg. 42)[49] — followed by Zonaras (8.7.3)[50] — also states that the delegates were ill-treated, but knows of only one assailant: a senator by the name of Quintus Fabius. Both authors corroborate the fact that the offender was surrendered to the Apollonians, but add a hitherto unknown fact — the people of Apollonia did not seek revenge and sent the wrongdoer back home unharmed. Nothing is known about the reason for the quarrel or the exact nature of the offence. We do not know whether the hostile encounter involved the exchange of harsh words or blows or perhaps both. The Latin and Greek verbs used by the ancient authors respectively, *pulsare* and ὑβρίζειν,[51] can mean to insult, mistreat and also to strike. Whatever the nature of the affront, it was clear that the senate believed that the young senators had put the whole community in danger since they had abused foreign ambassadors whose status was protected by the *ius gentium*[52] and who were considered sacred, thus committing an act of sacrilege which polluted the state.[53] As apparently was the custom, the Roman offenders were extradited by the *fetiales* to the affronted party, the Apollonians, for punishment.[54]

Although we know practically nothing about the relations between the Greek coastal settlements, which lay at a strategic point on the border line of Illyria and Epirus, it can

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48 *Legatos ab urbe Apollonia Romam missos Q. Fabius Cn. Apronius aedilicii orta contentione pulsaverunt, quod ubi comperit, continuo eos per fetiales legatis dedidit, quaestoremque cum his Brundisium ire iussit, ne quam in itinere a cognatis deditorum iniuriam acciperent.*

49 ... ἀλλὰ Κύιντον Φάβιον βουλευτὴν Ἀπολλωνιάταις τοῖς ἐν τῷ Ἰονίῳ κόλπῳ ὑπὸ Κορινθίων ἀποικισθεῖσιν ἐξέδωκαν ὅτι τινὰς πρέσβεις ὕβρισεν. οὐ μέντοι καὶ ἐκεῖνόν τι ἔδρασαν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔπεμψαν οἴκαδε.

50 ... ἀλλὰ Κύιντον Φάβιον βουλευτὴν Ἀπολλωνιάταις τοῖς ἐν τῷ Ἰονίῳ κόλπῳ ἐξέδωκαν, ὅτι πρέσβεις αὐτῶν ὕβρισεν. οἱ δὲ λαβόντες αὐτὸν ἀπέπεμψαν οἴκαδε ἀπαθῆ.

51 Livy's epitomator (*Per.*12) uses the verb *pulsare* to depict the nature of the insult inflicted on the Roman delegates sent to Tarentum in 282: *legati ad eos a senato ... pulsati sunt.* When the Tarentines, headed by an anti-Roman faction, gathered in the theater to hear the Roman envoys, they ridiculed their togas, and jeered at them whenever they made a mistake in Greek. To make matters worse, a local fool, encouraged by the crowd's shouts and hand-clapping, defecated on L. Postumius Megellus, who was the head of the delegation and thrice consul-toga. Dio (fr. 39.7) also uses ὑβρίζειν to describe the same affair: 'Bands of revellers accordingly jeered at them — they were then celebrating a festival, which, though they were at no time noted for temperate behaviour, rendered them still more wanton' (... καὶ μᾶλλον ὕβριζον). On the affair, see also Dion. Hal. 19.5; App. *Samn.*7.2; Dio fr. 39.6-8; Zon. 8.2

52 On these issues and on the role of the *fetiales* in such cases, see Broughton (1987), 50-3, whose views I follow.

53 Dig. 50.7.18. (17): *Si quis legatum hostium pulsasset, contra ius gentium id commissum esse existimatur, quia sancti habentur legati.* See also Cic. *Pro Caec.* 98.

54 This is the first known case involving the abuse of foreign legates by Romans. Broughton, *ibid.*, found only two other similar instances: in 188 two Roman legates who had mistreated Carthaginian legates (Liv. 38.42.7...*dicebantur legatos ...pulsasse*) were extradited to Carthage, cf. also Val. Max. 6.6.3. In 102 or 101 Saturninus insulted an embassy sent by Mithridates, but was judged by senators, whom Broughton (54-60) believes to have been *fetiales*, and acquitted.

be surmised with a reasonable degree of certainty that, at least during Pyrrhus' reign, Apollonia fell under the king's hegemony.[55] Apollonia had a good natural harbor which was much more suitable than Ambracia, Epirus' main port, for the crossing of the Adriatic. That Pyrrhus did indeed sail or planned to sail to Tarentum from Apollonia is implied in a story told by Pliny the Elder (*NH* 3.100): 'according to which the king planned to carry a causeway over the "arm of sea not more than 50 miles wide" between the two cities, by throwing bridges over this gap which was the shortest crossing from Greece to Italy'. The idea was not realized, Pliny explains, because of other commitments. Apollonia probably also had close commercial ties with Tarentum. It is not unreasonable to assume that Apollonia — which, like Epidamnos, traded metals mined in the territory of the Pirustae or the Dyestes which were conveyed by Illyrian tribes via land routes,[56] — furnished Tarentum with the gold and silver that was used by its prosperous and famous mints. In short, in or about 266, Apollonia, whose economy was heavily dependent on the commercial ties with the Greek towns of southern Italy, decided to send a good-will delegation to the rising power in the west, in view of Rome's impressive achievements, her systematic southward advance and the subjection of Brundisium.[57]

Apollonia's motives for dispatching an embassy to Rome seem, on the face of it, clear enough;[58] the unfriendly reception accorded them by certain Romans, however, is puzzling. Why would upper-class Romans severely mistreat a foreign delegation that had been courteously received by the senate? To the best of my knowledge, no one has attempted to fathom the reason for the clash and only a few have endeavored to identify the perpetrators. These questions, which are directly and intimately connected with the issues under discussion here, need to be further explored.

V

Who then, were the young Romans who caused such an upheaval in their state's foreign affairs? Gaius Apronius cannot be identified. He may be a descendant of his homonym who was a tribune of the plebs in 449, the only other republican Apronius about whom we have any evidence.[59] The other assailant, however, Q. Fabius, bears the name of an illustrious patrician *gens*. Those who have paused to inquire about the identity of this mysterious Q. Fabius have rejected the idea that he was in fact the future *Cunctator* mainly because he was believed to have been quite young at that time.[60] But if, as argued above, he was indeed born around 292, then he would have been at least 25 years old in 266 (as implied, in fact, by Valerius Maximus). This means that he was old enough — in

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55 See Lévêque (1957), 133-4, 280-5, who claims that Apollonia was not conquered by Pyrrhus; *contra*, Cabanes (1976), 83-5.

56 Casson (1968), 322-3.

57 De Sanctis (1960), 407; Holleaux (1935), 1-5; Cabanes (1976), 83-5; Gruen (1984), 64, 362.

58 Arist. *Pol.* 4.5.1290b underlines the oligarchic nature of Apollonia's constitution. This was perhaps used by the Apollonian delegation as their entrée into Rome.

59 *MRR* 1.48. All other known Apronii are from the Empire.

60 Mommsen *ad CIL* 1^2 1.139; Münzer *RE* 6.1814-6 (Fabius n. 116); Sumner (1973), 31-2. See also *MRR*, 1.201 (n. 1).

view of his family's status and the pattern set by his father, grandfather and great-grandfather — to have already held the offices of military tribune, quaestor and curule aedile, and to be a senator at the time of the incident. I would suggest, therefore, that the young senator, Q. Fabius, who insulted the Apollonian delegates was none other than Verrucosus. Given the almost complete lack of evidence, the reasons for his behavior can only be surmised.

In this context, it will not be out of place to revive the assumption put forward by Staveley almost half a century ago, according to which the Roman elite was split as to the direction of future territorial expansion during the first half of the third century BCE. Appius Claudius Pulcher (Caecus) stood at the head of a group who favoured southward expansion, as can be gleaned from his speech against peace with King Pyrrhus, a speech delivered when he was already an old man. Fabius Maximus Rullianus, on the other hand, who was Caecus' greatest opponent and then at the height of his career, called for northward expansion.[61] 'His [i.e. Caecus'] celebrated speech [*scil.* against peace with Pyrrhus] in 279 was no doubt partly inspired by patriotic zeal, but it is significant that we find him striving fervently to safeguard Rome's interest in the South against those who, whether through defeatism or indifference, were evidently prepared to abandon it in favour of northward expansion'.[62] Although Staveley's account — commercial and maritime interests in the south versus acquisition of land in the north — can be disputed,[63] the viable but scanty evidence for this period, consisting mainly of a slim list of campaigns, implies that there were disagreements as to the course of Roman expansion.

Around 285, after several years of internal problems,[64] Rome set out to deal with the results of the Third Samnite War that had ended in 290. The most urgent task seemed to be the elimination of the constant threat posed by the Cisalpine Gallic tribes who repeatedly joined forces with her Italian enemies, mainly Etruscans and Samnites. Yet the Samnite wars also brought Rome into closer contact with the Italiote Greeks of Magna Graecia and with their problems.[65] In 285, when the senate was probably contemplating war on the Cisalpine Gauls,[66] Thurii, the Greek city on the Tarentine coast, asked for Rome's help against the Lucanians. The meager evidence indicates that the senators were divided on the desired policy towards the Italiote Greeks. The greater part of the senate seems to have been against involvement in what appeared to be a remote and irrelevant conflict and it was a tribune of the plebs, C. Aelius, who took action against an

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61 Staveley (1959).

62 *Ibid.*, 431.

63 Càssola (1962), *passim* also examines Roman political groups during the third century BCE from the same standpoint, chiefly from the First Punic War onwards. His terminology, however, is slightly different. He speaks of a rural nobility whose interests were agricultural opposing other groups whose interests were mercantilist; the latter favoured contacts with the Greek world.

64 We know practically nothing about the events of the years 289-284. A serious problem of debts caused protracted trouble which eventually led to the third secession of the plebs. They were brought back by the dictator Q. Hortensius, the author of the *lex Hortensia*. For sources see *MRR* 1.185; cf. also Maddox (1983).

65 Lomas (1993), 39-58.

66 In 286/5 Rome was campaigning against Volsinii and legates were sent to the Senones; cf. Liv. *Per.* 11; 12.

anonymous Lucanian leader and was honored with a statue in Rome by the grateful Thurians.[67] Concurrently, or a short while later, Rome dispatched a garrison to Thurii (perhaps following Aelius' action). Its size, however — which was probably merely symbolic to judge by the ease with which it was overrun by the Tarentines in 282[68] — may reflect a senatorial compromise. The Senate had obviously decided to direct its attention to the north.

In 284/3 both consuls campaigned against the Senones and their Etruscan allies. The Senones were defeated and exiled; their land was annexed and became the first Roman acquisition in Cisalpine Gaul.[69] The Boii were the next target. In 282 they were defeated, but not crushed at Lake Vadimon and they were granted peace in the following year[70] because of the crisis that was building up in the Tarentine Gulf, where the meddling in Thurii had escalated into a major war with Tarentum and Pyrrhus. Clearly, not all senators had a favorable view of the decision that had brought the Epirote king within a short distance of Rome. These conflicting views, as Staveley notes, surfaced in 280/79, during the negotiations held with Pyrrhus, when the greater part of the senate was willing to confer with the king's envoy and to cease hostilities while Pyrrhus was still in Italy. However, in this well-known episode, the senators were dissuaded at the very last moment by Appius Claudius Caecus' commanding and dramatic speech.[71]

In 266, after almost two decades of active Roman military involvement in southern Italy, the whole region to the tip of the boot had fallen under Roman rule, and the senators who had had their eyes on the north were finally able to pursue their policy. In the same year both consuls fought in Umbria and the senate considered intervening in Volsinii (where both the consuls of 265 would eventually fight). At that specific point of time, when Rome was about to resume her northward expansion by securing the necessary land routes in Umbria and Etruria,[72] she unexpectedly pulled back to the south. The conflict in question, however, erupted further south, across the straits of Messina in northeastern Sicily.

The Mamertines, the Campanian mercenaries who had served the Syracusan ruler Agathokles (319-287) and seized Messena in 288, were defeated in 270/269 by Hiero II, who had just gained control over Syracuse and in 267/6 laid siege to Messena. The chronology of these years and the sequence of events in this famous episode are hopelessly confused,[73] and it is impossible to establish unequivocally if the Mamertines first turned to the Carthaginians (which I believe they did) and only afterwards to Rome, or, as Polybius states, they asked both powers for help simultaneously. The question, despite its importance, is irrelevant in this context; what is of utmost significance here is the implications for the Roman course of action.

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67 Pliny *NH* 34.22.

68 Liv. *Per.* 12; App. *Samn.* 7; Dio frg. 39.2-3.

69 Dion. Hal. 19.12.2; Flor. 1.8.21; App. *Samn.* 6; Dio frg. 38.

70 Polyb. 2.20; Front. *Str.* 1.2.7.

71 On the speech, see Liv. *Per.* 12; Cic. *Brut.* 61, *Sen.* 16, *Pro Cael.* 34; Plut. *Pyrr.* 19; Val. Max. 8.13.5.

72 Feig Vishnia (1996), 13-25.

73 Walbank (1957), 53-63; Lazenby (1996), 36-9. See also Hoyos (1998).

Both Polybius and Livy testify that the senators debated for a very long time whether to form an alliance with the Mamertines and to lend the requested help to a city that lay outside Italy.[74] Polybius even relates that the senate refrained from reaching a decision and the consul finally brought the issue before the assembly. The resolution that ensued led to the outbreak of the First Punic War in 264. Taking all these factors into consideration, I would conjecture that debate over the Mamertines' request began as early as 266, or perhaps even earlier, and that the senators who objected to the Sicilian venture — not only because of its impending dangers — were headed by Rullianus' son, Fabius Maximus Gurges. Gurges, who had taken part in the closing battles of the Third Samnite War as consul in 292 and proconsul in 291,[75] may have been the chief opponent to Rome's policy in southern Italy in the mid-280's. It is interesting to note that he ran for a third consulate (265) only when attention turned to the north once again. I would, therefore, further conjecture that the Apollonian delegation arrived when the senate was bitterly debating the Mamertines' request for help. Did the Apollonians turn up in Rome in connection with the crisis that had developed in northeastern Sicily? Was their visit meant to be a demonstration of good will? We will probably never know.

According to Polybius' description (1.10-11), the controversy in the senate over the Mamertine question was fierce. Intense debates were probably conducted outside the senate as well, and it is not implausible that the Apollonian delegates took part in such a debate, or perhaps chanced upon an ongoing argument, and were abused in some way, either because they spoke for the Mamertines or merely because they served as a vivid reminder of some of the unwanted results of Rome's southward expansion. The young Verrucosus may have been championing his father's policy when he encountered the Greek delegates. It is unclear whether a physical fight actually occurred. Verrucosus, however, did not need to resort to blows in order to be extremely rude.

Verrucosus seems to have been a law unto himself; he was a sharp-tongued, condescending individual who never hesitated to abuse his contenders verbally. He was assertive, single-minded and disdainful of deep-rooted and long-established customs when these conflicted with his own convictions. From the information we have, which relates to only the last two decades of his life, he seems to have been involved in endless disputes. In 232 he emerged as the sole substantial opponent of C. Flaminius' agrarian law.[76] He crossed words with Flaminius again in 217, on the eve of the battle of Trasimene, when, according to Plutarch (*Fab.* 2-3), Flaminius refused to heed his warnings.[77] When elected *dictator rei gerundae causa* — a capacity that was revived after long disuse, and an irregular procedure in itself, necessitated by the absence of both consuls in 217 — he immediately asked the senate's permission to ride a horse in the field, an act strictly forbidden by ancient custom. He also took special care '...to show forth at once the magnitude and grandeur of his office, that the citizens might be more submissive and obedient to his commands. He therefore appeared in public attended by a united band of twenty-four lictors with their fasces and when the remaining consul was

74 Polyb. 1.10-11; Liv. *Per.* 16.

75 Sources in *MRR* 1 under the relevant years.

76 Cic. *Sen.* 12.

77 Plut. *Fab.* 4-5.

coming to meet him, sent his adjutant to him with orders to dismiss his lictors, lay aside the insignia of his office, and meet him as a private person'.[78]

In 217, while still dictator, Verrucosus disobeyed the senate's orders and reached an agreement with Hannibal on an exchange of prisoners. When the senate refused to provide the necessary funds for the ransom, he sold some of his estates and paid for the prisoners' redemption from his own pocket.[79] His bitter conflict with Minucius Rufus, first master of the horse and afterwards his co-dictator in 217, is also well-documented.[80] In 216, when his consular colleague of 228, Sp. Carvilius Ruga, suggested that the depleted senate (177 members short) be refilled with two senators from the Latin states chosen by the senate, in view of the terrible losses at Cannae and the massive withdrawal of the allies, Verrucosus silenced him brutally. He snapped in reply that 'the rash utterance on the part of a single man should be drowned by silence on the part of them all [i. e. the senators] ...covered, concealed, forgotten, considered unsaid'. In 215, when Verrucosus presided as consul over the consular elections for 214, the *centuria praerogativa,* which was chosen by lot, voted for T. Otacilius Crassus and M. Aemilius Regillus. Both had been praetors in 217. At this stage, Fabius, as the presiding officer, stopped the elections and warned the people that even the greatest general might fail against Hannibal because, in contrast to the Punic commander whose authority was unlimited by term of office or legal restrictions, the Roman commander's office ended before he had time to complete his preparations. Fabius emphasized that he was not motivated by personal enmity, but that he firmly believed that Otacilius, who was married to his niece, and Regillus were not a match for Hannibal. He urged the voters to elect consuls who would not repeat the disasters of Trasimene and Cannae and asked the members of the *centuria praerogativa* to reconsider their choice. When Otacilius, furious at being cheated of his consulship, protested loudly that Fabius wanted to prolong his own term as consul, Verrucosus cut Otacilius short, had his lictors approach the disappointed candidate and explicitly warned him that since he had not yet entered the city (Fabius had come to the *campus Martius* straight from Puteoli)[81] 'the fasces carried before the consuls had their axes'.[82] No one dared raise a voice against this gross deviation from the fundamental republican principal of annuality in office.

Another incident involves the prefect Marcus Livius, who managed to hold on to the citadel of Tarentum for four years after the city had defected to Hannibal, until he was relieved by Verrucosus in 209.[83] When he rashly boasted to the latter that it was his efforts that had enabled Verrucosus to recapture Tarentum, expecting to be praised, he was probably deeply shocked by Verrucosus' blunt reply: '... if you had not lost it [i.e. Tarentum], I should never have recovered it'.[84]

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78 Plut. *Fab.* 4.2.

79 Plut. *Fab.* 7.4.

80 E.g. Liv. 22.25.12-16; Plut. *Fab.* 5; 11.

81 Liv. 24.7.10-11.

82 *Quia in urbem protinus in campus ex itinere profectus, admonuit cum securibus ibi fasces praeferri.*

83 Liv. 27.12.15-16; Plut. *Fab.* 21-3.

84 Cic. *Sen.* 11; Liv. 27.25.5; Plut. *Fab.* 23.3.

Even the last recorded episode of Verrucosus' life was one of bitter contention. In 205 he harshly criticized the policy promoted by the young consul P. Cornelius Scipio, later Africanus, who promised to end the lingering Hannibalic war by transferring the campaign to Africa in order to compel Hannibal to leave Italy and hasten homewards. Fabius was about ninety at the time, Scipio in his early thirties. When Scipio accused Fabius of jealousy, he retorted: 'What rivalry can I have with a man who is not even my son's contemporary?'[85] He accused Scipio of seeking glory for himself rather than the advantage of the state: 'My opinion is that P. Cornelius was elected consul for the republic and not himself and his personal ends'.[86] His firm conviction that '*Pax ante in Italia quam bellum in Africa sit*' was perhaps a distant echo of his, or rather his father's, likely opposition to the plan to cross the straits of Messina some sixty years earlier. His arguments and authority won the day. The legions were kept in Italy and Scipio was allowed only a volunteer army.[87]

We can, then, piece together a fairly reliable portrait of Fabius's political principles and character from the existing documentation. This evidence, combined with the information we have gleaned concerning his age, gives us grounds to conjecture that the young senator who mistreated the Apollonian delegates in 266 was indeed none other than Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus.

VI

Verrucosus most likely paid a heavy price for his misdemeanor. He was handed over to the Apollonians for punishment in Brundisium, but it is unclear whether he actually crossed to Greece. In view of Rome's ascendancy and the eminence of the offender, the Apollonians apparently preferred to overlook the insult and release him. Hence, Fabius probably did not lose his citizenship, as might have been the case had he been accepted by the Apollonians.[88] This incident, together with Gurges' death as consul in Volsinii in 265, may have tipped the scales in favor of those senators who supported the crossing of the straits of Messina.

It is quite likely that the decision to hand Fabius over to the Apollonians was controversial, as can be deduced from Valerius Maximus' statement (6.6.5) that the offenders were accompanied by a quaestor to prevent their relatives from intervening. Yet it is not implausible to argue that, as a result of this episode, the censors of 265 struck Fabius off the senatorial *album*. Consequently, he needed to be re-elected quaestor in order to resume his senatorial status, perhaps in 258 when the next pair of censors was elected.[89] After his father's death in 265 he probably remained the only heir to the family's illustrious name and fortune. One may assume that relatives and supporters

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85 Liv. 28.40.9-10.

86 Liv. 28.43.3-8.

87 Liv. 29.1; 4.7-5.1.

88 The legal status of a Roman who had been delivered to non-Romans but was not accepted by them is discussed in *Dig.* 50.7.18 (17). Some jurists believed that such a person lost his citizenship, but the prevailing view was that when there was no actual *deditio* — the surrendered was not accepted by the offended party — *postliminium* did not ensue and therefore there was no loss of citizenship. On these issues see Watson (1967), 245-6.

89 On the censors of 265 and 258 see *MRR* 1.202; 206.

wished to prevent the family's downfall and they, with the assistance of his father's fellow augurs, may have initiated Verrucosus' co-optation as an augur, presumably in his father's place. This would be a good place to begin his rehabilitation.[90]

It was precisely this disgrace that Fabius Pictor took special care to omit from his work, the very first written history of Rome. The disreputable incident probably lived on in memory,[91] but the identity of the offender was gradually, and perhaps intentionally, blurred. Verrucosus' longevity, his success later in life and his reputation as Rome's savior made it difficult even for the ancient sources to explicitly identify him as the young offender.

Assuming that the offender was indeed the future *Cunctator*, it is impossible to establish whether he preferred to withdraw from politics after the scandal. We have no information as to whether he participated in the First Punic War, although it seems reasonable to assume that he was military tribune and quaestor (both for the second time) during the war years (264-241). We do not know whether he ran unsuccessfully for the consulate before he was first elected to the office in 233, when he fought against the Ligurians and celebrated his first triumph.[92] When he arose from obscurity in 233, he was about sixty years old, but the lack of information regarding his early career extends also to the years 233-217, during which he had obviously gained influence since he was elected to the censorship (230) and to a second consulate only five years after his first term as consul (228), in contravention of one of the *leges Genuciae*. No source has survived to tell us why he was elected and even Plutarch, as we have seen, seems to know nothing about it.

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90 Appointment to a priesthood as a remedy for a problematic young man was not unusual. In 209 the relatives of the young C. Valerius Flaccus, who shamed his family by his irresponsible and dissipated behavior, asked the *pontifex maximus* to choose him *flamen Dialis* so that he would improve his ways. Upon his appointment, Valerius immediately changed for the better and began using religion as his guide (Liv. 27.8.5-10; Val. Max. 6.9.3). He was praetor in 183 (Liv. 39.45.4). Another case in point is that of C. Servilius Geminus (cos. 203) who was both plebeian aedile (209) and curule aedile (208) and who was appointed *pontifex* in 210 although he had already been *X vir sacris faciundis*. On the peculiar career that probably resulted from an unpremeditated act against the laws, see Feig Vishnia (1996a). Cf. also Hahn (1963), 82.

91 There are hints of an anti-Fabian tradition in both Livy (5.35.4-36.11) and Appian (*Celt.* 2-3). Both authors recount that it was the undiplomatic behaviour of the three sons of M. Fabius Ambustus that brought the Gallic invasion upon Rome: Clusium, threatened by the Gallic advance, turned to Rome for help and the senate sent the three Fabii to reprimand the Gauls for their attack on Rome's ally. It was meant to be a peaceful embassy, but the Fabii 'who were more like Gauls than Romans' (Liv. 5.36.2) encouraged the Clusii to attack the Gauls and even participated in the battle. The Gauls considered this act a breach of the law of nations (Liv. 5.36.8; App. *Celt.* 3) and demanded the surrender of the Fabii. The senate, furious at the action but unable to act because of the wealth of the Fabii and their superior position, transferred the decision to the people, who elected the three Fabii as consular tribunes. As a result, the Gauls then sacked Rome. Is it possible that the memory of the repercussions from the failure to surrender the three Fabii in 391 played a role in the decision to surrender Fabius *ca.* 266?

92 *MRR* 1.224. It is unlikely that he was a candidate for praetor.

When Fabius Maximus Verrucosus ended his term as consul in 227 he was nearing 70 and could not have conceived even in his wildest dreams that the pinnacle of his career still lay ahead of him. Yet Hannibal's invasion of the Po valley in the winter of 218 and the heavy losses inflicted on the younger cadres of the Roman political and military elite during the first two years of the Second Punic War brought the old senatorial guard, headed by Verrucosus, to the fore.[93] In many ways, Verrucosus was the uncrowned king of Rome in the aftermath of the disaster at Cannae in August 216 and remained so until 208/7, when the tide began to turn in Rome's favor.[94] He held three consulships, two of them successively (215, 214 and 209), was appointed *pontifex* in 216/5,[95] thus becoming one of the very few Romans ever to hold two priesthoods simultaneously (he was *augur* from 265), and he was nominated *princeps senatus* in 209 (and again in 204).[96] Verrucosus carefully guided Rome through her most difficult period and, as he said to Scipio in the senate in 205, 'I have prevented Hannibal from conquering, in order that your men, whose powers are still strong, might conquer him'.[97]

This phenomenal success, which came so late in life, compensated in many ways for his long-postponed career and for the disgrace that he had probably suffered as a young man. Verrucosus could do little to rectify his own past, but he was well able to shape the future of his son. Under his father's patronage, Quintus Fabius Maximus was military tribune in 216 at Cannae, curule aedile in 215, praetor in 214 and consul in 213, by all criteria, an exceptionally irregular and accelerated *cursus*. (He was elected to the last two offices when his father presided over the *comitia centuriata*). It is reasonable to assume that the *Cunctator*'s son was not a mere youth in 216. We have seen that in 205 Verrucosus teased Scipio, saying that he was not even a contemporary of his son. Scipio was then thirty-one years old.[98] The very fact that Verrucosus' son jumped to the curule aedilate from a military tribuneship implies that he had been quaestor beforehand and was military tribune for a second time in 216 (perhaps appointed by the consul of that year, L. Aemilius Paullus, who was on close terms with his father).[99] Although it is impossible to determine whether the career of Verrucosus' son's career was faltering before his father's unexpected ascendancy in Roman politics, it is obvious that Verrucosus left no room to chance. He ensured that the career of the delayer's son would not be similarly delayed.

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93 Feig Vishnia (1996), 101-3.

94 At the very same year, after the capture of Tarentum, Verrucosus set up the colossal statue of Hercules, which he had removed from Tarentum, next to an equestrian statue of himself in the Capitol (Plut. *Fab.* 22. 6).

95 See (n. 2) above.

96 Hahn (1963).

97 Liv. 28.40.14: *Vincere ego prohibui Hannibalem, ut a vobis quorum vigent nunc vires etiam vinci posset.*

98 Verrucosus' son predeceased his father (Plut. *Fab.* 1.5, Cic. *Sen.* 11). He died sometime *ca.* 205. It is impossible to gauge his age, but it is not unlikely that he was about forty years old in 213. We can assume that it was the latter's son, Q. Fabius Maximus, who succeeded Verrucosus as augur in 203. Consequently, Q. Fabius Maximus, who was praetor in 181 (*MRR* 1.384), was probably the *Cunctator*'s great-grandson.

99 Liv. 22.39-40.4; Plut. *Fab.* 14.3-5.

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