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C. LICINIUS MUCIANUS, LEADER IN TIME OF CRISIS¹

“I beg you not to despise Mucianus as partner in your enterprise because you do not find in him a rival. I put myself before Vitellius and you before me.”²

These words of the Roman governor in Syria, C. Licinius Mucianus, which are part of the speech in which Tacitus had him urge on Vespasian to reach for the emperorship, show that Mucianus appreciated his own strength, but nevertheless welcomed Vespasian to the highest office. The above citation suggests that Mucianus might have been a rival to Vespasian, if only he had wished to be one.³ Apparently he considered his claims on leadership as powerful as Vespasian's. As is well known, the result of civil war in the second half of AD 69 was that Vespasian was accepted as emperor in the entire Roman empire, and founded a dynasty. Mucianus, on the other hand, who played an important role in Vespasian's assumption of power, and was in charge of Rome and the northern provinces of the empire for ten months after the Vitellian defeat, ultimately more or less passed into oblivion. In historiography this outcome has led to the idea that Vespasian must have been the leader of the revolt against Vitellius and implicitly, as a consequence, that Mucianus in the above statement overestimated himself. This observation leads to wonder about the relative importance of Mucianus and the significance of his leadership in the uprising of 69. What kind of leader was he? What was his role? Who were his followers? Why did he accept the position of second man in the empire? What was his relation to Vespasian? What were his results, in comparison to Vespasian's? Did he have good reasons to make his claim?

As emperors are paramount in the historiography of the Roman empire, their deeds and personal qualities are expatiated upon in contemporary and later historical narratives alike.⁴ This applies for the years under investigation and is obvious for instance in Suetonius' choice to write *De vita caesarum* in which obviously emperors occupy centre stage. In his outline of Vespasian's life, Mucianus is only mentioned twice.⁵ Flavius Josephus, who had to thank Vespasian for his liberation from captivity and his

- 1 I owe much gratitude to the Fondation Hardt in Geneva for my stay in its residence which is dedicated to Classics research.
- 2 Tac. *Hist.* 2.77.1.
- 3 R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958), 195 was of the opinion that in January of 69 Mucianus seemed the stronger candidate.
- 4 In case of Vespasian: B. Levick, *Vespasian* (London 1999); J. Nicols, *Vespasian and the Partes Flavianae* (Wiesbaden 1978); K. Wellesley, *The Long Year A.D. 69* (London 1975); K. Wellesley, *The Year of the Four Emperors* (London – New York 2000³); E. Flaig, 'Die Usurpation Vespasians', in, *Den Kaiser herausfordern: Die Usurpationen im Römischen Reich* (Frankfurt – New York 1992), 356–416; G. Morgan, *69 A.D. The Year of the Four Emperors* (Oxford etc. 2006); A. J. Boyle – W.J. Dominik (eds.), *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text* (Leiden 2003).
- 5 Suet. *Vesp.* 6.4 and 13.

favourable position in Rome, sided with the winning imperial family.⁶ In his concise account of the revolt in the East in his *Bellum Judaicum*, all attention is given to Vespasian and Titus, and Mucianus is only mentioned in passing. The same holds true for the epitome of Cassius Dio. In the lines telling about the last stages of the long year of the four emperors, attention is focussed on Vespasian.⁷

Tacitus has chosen a somewhat different attitude. The surviving parts of his *Historiae* constitute the most comprehensive narrative of the episode after Nero's death. In the preserved parts of his story, four emperors and a large number of other leaders arise as long as civil war goes on.⁸ Though important, his account is not only bearing on qualities attributed to leaders, it also deals with armies and the Roman populace. This means that Tacitus had an eye for the mutual relations of the leaders he discusses, be they emperors or otherwise, and their connections with their constituencies.⁹ Since the aim of this paper is to investigate the leadership of Mucianus in the story of Vespasian's bid for power, Tacitus' narrative provides more opportunities than those of the other authors. We should, however, have in mind that utilizing Tacitus' *Historiae* here may very well bring in his opinions on leadership and involve the introduction of his partiality.

As the focus is on Mucianus' leadership vis-à-vis Vespasian's in AD 69, attention will first be given to leadership as a concept. Then a short overview of the relevant elements of the careers of both leaders will be followed by a discussion on the networks in which they operated when they were in the East, the alleged rivalry between them, and their manoeuvres in the period between Nero's death in June 68 and Mucianus leaving for Rome in the summer of 69 in order to come to an understanding of why their deliberations ended in the decisions they made.¹⁰ It is prerequisite to distinguish between the followers of either of them in their joint constituency. Only then it is possible to make an attempt to perceive how each 'leader' dealt with his followers and how each coped with their reactions.

Leadership

Leadership is a much-discussed notion in politics, both at present and in the past. Its content, however, is only sporadically made explicit in historiography. It often seems as if leadership is what leaders do. In the last decades, an immense quantity of literature on

6 Liberation: Joseph. *BJ* 623–629; M. Beard, 'The Triumph of Flavius Josephus', in Boyle – Dominik 2003 (n. 4), 543–558 at 546 stresses Josephus' bias towards the Flavian cause. T. Rajak, *Josephus* (London 1983), 185 is of the opinion that Palestinian prejudices exerted more influence on Josephus' writing than his alleged Roman bias.

7 Dio Cass. 64.8.3–65.1.1. Mucianus is mentioned in 64.8.4, 64.9.2–4, 64.14.3, 64.18.1, and 64.22.2.

8 See e.g.: R. Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories* (London 1999); M. Geiser, *Personendarstellung bei Tacitus am Beispiel von Cn. Domitius Corbulo und Ser. Sulpicius Galba*. Die Antike und ihr Weiterleben, Bd. 6 (Remscheid 2007).

9 Ash 1999 (n. 8), esp. 168–169. As for the military, which is an important part of each emperor's constituency, Rhiannon Ash put forward that Tacitus has given each civil war army a distinct collective identity, and that the relationship between military leaders and their armies is a decisive factor in failure or success. When soldiers mistrust their intermediate commanding officers, they invest their emotional energy at the highest level in the command structure, the emperor.

10 According to Wellesley 2000³ (n. 4), 127, Mucianus moved out of Antioch early in August.

leadership has come into being, for the greater part oriented towards business. Seminal has been Burns' work on political leadership, in which the author made a real effort towards a general theory on leadership.¹¹ Burns defined leadership as "the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers."¹² Each word of this definition is essential. It is self-evident that there are no leaders without followers, that both are related, and that leadership requires a mobilizing vision. When goals of leaders and followers are connected but separate, and their relation only a matter of mutual profit based on reciprocity, leadership is called transactional. This form is different from transforming leadership, which assumes that "whatever the separate interests persons might hold, they are presently or potentially united in the pursuit of 'higher' goals."¹³ It implies that the term transforming leader has moral and charismatic connotations.¹⁴ The concepts of transactional and transforming leadership together with derivative modern leadership notions may be useful as instruments to assess leadership in earlier time periods.

Mucianus' leadership cannot be detached from Vespasian's, both before and after the latter's decision to bid for power. What causes amazement is that none of our sources suggests that Mucianus, although he may have had the opportunity both in the East and in Rome, aimed at the emperorship himself. As a consequence, Mucianus is characterized rather a king-maker than a king.¹⁵ The issue is reasoned away by various arguments: Vespasian's military experience made him the right man at the right place, whereas Mucianus' military qualities were insufficient. Or, suggesting that he was homosexual, Mucianus was no acceptable candidate because of his exuberant lifestyle. Furthermore, in contrast to Vespasian, Mucianus had no sons to found a dynasty.¹⁶ There is some point in each of these arguments, but in my view they are not conclusive. As regards to their respective military qualities, I wonder why Vespasian – who is said to have been rather successful in suppressing the Jewish revolt but had not yet recaptured Jerusalem – stayed for months in Alexandria and left both the military operations in Judea to Titus and the war with the Vitellians to Mucianus. Several suggestions have been made to grasp these

11 J. MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York 1978). For an overview of the consecutive stages in leadership research see A. Bryman, 'Leadership in Organizations', in: S.R. Clegg et al. (eds.), *Handbook of Organization Studies* (London 1996), 276–299.

12 Burns 1978 (n. 11), 425.

13 Burns 1978 (n. 11), 425–426. See also: J. MacGregor Burns, *Transforming Leadership* (New York 2003). The idea of leaders raising the moral values of their followers has been inspirational to others, for example Bernard M. Bass, who published lavishly on transformational leadership, lately B.M. Bass – R.E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership* (2nd rev. ed., Mahwah NJ 2006).

14 For charismatic leadership Burns has been greatly indebted to M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen 1922). Chr.R. Hatscher, *Charisma und Res Publica: Max Webers Herrschaftssoziologie und die römische Republik* (Stuttgart 2000), 55–63 offers a short introduction into Weber's charisma concept.

15 Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.4; J.A. Crook, 'Titus and Berenice', *American Journal of Philology* 72 (1951), 162–175 at 162; R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958), 598; Levick 1999 (n. 4), 53 and n. 33;

16 Levick 1999 (n. 4), 53 and n. 33, 90; A.J. Boyle, 'Introduction: Reading Flavian Rome', in Boyle – Dominik 2003 (n. 4), 6 and n. 20.

decisions. Flavius Josephus' explanation that Vespasian wanted to be in control of the Egyptian corn is rather weak, since Josephus shortly afterwards remarked that Vespasian gave priority to Rome over Alexandria and for that reason sent Mucianus to Rome.¹⁷ As regards Titus' command in Judea, Levick put forward that Vespasian would have been unwilling to risk reputation in the struggle. He rather preferred to be last resort. This would have enabled him to consolidate his power in Egypt, thus securing the Egyptian grain and, in addition, if necessary, to lead the Egyptian legions to Africa in order to also get hold of that province's grain.¹⁸ Griffin suggested not to seek Vespasian's motives for staying in Egypt, but rather look for reasons why Vespasian wished not to be in Rome. He would have been purposely absent until inevitable problems were solved. That is until Mucianus had done Vespasian's dirty work.¹⁹ Even if these explanations are accepted, Vespasian's military qualities seem not to have been decisive when responsibilities were divided. Anyhow, that it was decided that Mucianus would march on Rome is an indication that he lacked neither military qualities nor experience.²⁰ Mucianus' supposed homosexuality has two foundations, first Vespasian's remark that he himself at least was a man,²¹ and second the absence of any reference to wife or children. It may be inferred that Mucianus had no natural sons to found a dynasty. Having sons of one's own, however, had not been a requirement for earlier emperors. In fact, from Augustus onwards no emperor had ever been succeeded by his natural son. Up to AD 68 a near male relative, whether or not adopted, along with approval of the praetorians had sufficed. At Nero's death the Julio-Claudian dynasty had run out of alternatives, and the military played an even more important role in choosing the emperor. In case Mucianus had aimed at the emperorship himself, he, like Galba, inevitably would have had to adopt a successor.²² That Vespasian had adult sons was a novelty.²³

When discussing the issue of Mucianus' leadership in Vespasian's accession, the leadership approach focuses on the constituency of either of them at a certain moment in

17 Priority to Alexandria: Joseph. *BJ* 4.605; priority to Rome over Alexandria: Joseph. *BJ* 4.631; Postponement of the corn supply to Rome as weapon against Vitellius is also found in Tac. *Hist.* 3.8 and 3.48.3; Wellesley 2000³ (n. 4), 186. The argument is criticized by Morgan 2006 (n. 4), 187–188. Essential to the case is the estimation of the importance for Rome of the corn supply from the province of Africa. That support for Vespasian in Africa cannot be taken for granted, is evident from Tac. *Hist.* 3.48.3 (Vespasian considering an attack on Africa in order to be in the position to stop the corn supply to Rome from that province) and Tac. *Hist.* 4.48–50 (Mucianus' intervention in that province in AD 70).

18 Levick 1999 (n. 4), 47.

19 M. Griffin, 'The Flavians', *The Cambridge Ancient History*, second ed. XI (Cambridge 2000), 1–83 at 6.

20 See however Levick 1999 (n. 4), 53 and Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 118–119.

21 Suet. *Vesp.* 13.

22 J. Drinkwater, 'The Principate – Lifebelt, or Millstone around the Neck of the Empire?' in O. Hekster – G. de Kleijn – D. Slootjes (eds.), *Crises and the Roman Empire*, Impact of Empire vol. 7 (Leiden – Boston 2007), 67–74 at 67–68 stresses that the Principate still was not seen "as a monarchy, but as the Republic continuing under the patronage and direction of great man and his *domus*." Flaig 1992 (n. 4), 360–361 stresses that the choice for Vespasian and his sons warranted a smooth succession in the future, which was important for all groups in the empire.

23 Levick 1999 (n. 4), 184.

time, instead of family and patronage relations.²⁴ That the civil war of 69 constituted a context of competition and conflict is self-evident. So questions arise as: Who displayed the mobilizing vision? Which goals were set? Who or which groups were the followers of Mucianus and/or Vespasian in 69? Were followers motivated by mutual profit for leader as well as followers, or were higher goals at stake? Who took initiatives?

The careers of C. Licinius Mucianus and Ti. Flavius Vespasianus before the civil war

Little is known about Mucianus' origin, his family or his career up to the sixties of the first century AD, nor are there stories about omens or predictions of a great future.²⁵ Therefore we have to be satisfied with some hints as to his year and place of birth, his family connections and early relationships. He was probably born in a senatorial family in Spain.²⁶ If he reached the consulship at the age of 42, he was born ca. AD 22. According to Tacitus he must have been an ambitious young man, spending his money to acquire the friendship of the great.²⁷ He probably had access to court, as it is told that Claudius got so angry with him that he choose to go into exile. We do not know what caused Claudius' fury. In any case under Nero, in 58, 59 or 60, Mucianus was governor of Lycia-Pamphilia,²⁸ a province neighboring those from which Domitius Corbulo was active in Armenia against the Parthians. It is very likely that Corbulo summoned his assistance and made him *legatus legionis* of one of his legions in Armenia.²⁹ Thereafter, either in AD 64 or one of the following years, he held the consulate. In 67, Nero made him governor of Syria filling in the vacancy resulting from the death of C. Cestius Gallus in that province. Most likely he arrived in Antioch on October 23, AD 67.³⁰

Vespasian's career is known in more detail.³¹ Here it suffices to mention some relevant points. Vespasian was born in AD 9 near Reate in a family without social distinction on his father's side. His mother was a senator's sister and had the ambition to raise her two sons to senatorial rank. Vespasian served as *vigintivir* ca. AD 29, as military tribune in Thrace, and as quaestor in Crete and Cyrene ca. AD 35. Under the reign of Caligula he was aedile in AD 38 and praetor in AD 40. In these years he married a woman from humble origins, who gave birth to his sons Titus, probably in 39, and Domitian in 51, and

24 Nicols 1978 (n. 4); Levick 1999 (n. 4), 14–16 stresses the importance of patronage for Vespasian's earlier offices.

25 Mucianus: *PIR*² L 216 (until 1970); *AE* 1975.130; *AE* 1981.791; *AE* 1995.188; Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 105–106; Levick 1999 (n. 4), 53; R. Mellor, 'The New Aristocracy of Power', in Boyle – Dominik 2003 (n. 4), 69–101, esp. 91.

26 Syme, *Roman Papers* = *RP* II, 585, 591; *RP* VII, 643 n. 51.

27 Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.

28 Syme, *RP* I, 43, 45 n. 3; *RP* II, 585, 744; *RP* III, 891, 1012; E. Dąbrowa, *The Governors of Roman Syria from Augustus to Septimius Severus* (Bonn 1998), 59.

29 According to Tac. *Dial.* 37.2, Mucianus devoted the last years of his life among other things to the publication of interesting details from the areas he had visited, for instance phenomena near the Euphrates river. Pliny quoted these in his *Naturalis Historia*. For all citations see L. Brunn, *De C. Licinio Muciano* (Leipzig 1870), 18–45.

30 Levick 1999 (n. 4), 29.

31 *PIR*² F 398; Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 1–12; Levick 1999 (n. 4), 4–39; Mellor 2003 (n. 25), 70–73.

to a daughter. Claudius gave him the command of *legio II Augusta* in 41 and sent him to Britain in 43. Back in Rome in 44 Claudius awarded him the *ornamenta triumphalia*. He served in his next office, the consulate, in the last months of 51. Under Nero he had to wait until 62 before he was given the proconsulate of Africa.³² At the end of the year 66 he appears in Greece in Nero's retinue. According to Josephus, when the news of Cestius Gallus' armed forces failing against the Jewish rebels near Jerusalem arrived, the emperor put Vespasian in charge of suppressing the Jewish revolt.³³ He travelled to Caesarea in Judea indirectly, arriving in Syria on the first of March AD 67.³⁴

Alleged Rivalry

There is no way of establishing the chronology of events in Greece in winter and spring of 66/67. We do not know who arrived first, Corbulo summoned by Nero and subsequently forced to commit suicide, or the alarming news from Judea.³⁵ It is often supposed that Corbulo killed himself first and that Nero commissioned Vespasian to the task of crushing the Jewish resistance thereafter. In this way, Vespasian's command in Judea is directly connected to Corbulo's death: Nero must have replaced Corbulo by Vespasian and thereafter added the command in Judea. Although not impossible, in my view there is no necessary connection caused by the order of events between the commands of Corbulo and Vespasian, as the Jewish revolt had to be suppressed anyhow. Moreover, if Nero had wished, he might have added Corbulo's mandate to Vespasian's after he had given him the command in Judea. These observations are relevant to the discussion on the nature of Vespasian's command in Judea. If there is no direct connection, there is no reason to see Vespasian as successor to Corbulo, or to align his command to Corbulo's.³⁶ Nevertheless, as there were seven legions based in Syria and none stationed in Judea,³⁷ Vespasian had to make use of the Syrian legions to suppress the Jewish revolt. This meant that he, on arrival, like Corbulo, had to come to terms with the Syrian governor if there was one.

Corbulo had been commander of Syrian legions from the mid fifties onwards. At his first assignment in the East, governor Umnius Quadratus only reluctantly had given him an equal share of the then available four legions and the auxilia.³⁸ Later on, when he himself was governor of Syria, he asked for a special commander in the struggle against the Parthians. He was not pleased with the fact that Nero had appointed Caesennius Paetus as his equal instead of his subordinate, and that they had to share troops. It is only

32 Suet. *Vesp.* 4 and Tac. *Hist.* 2.97 give contradictory judgments.

33 Joseph. *BJ* 3.3–4; Dio Cass. 63.22.1^a; Suet. *Vesp.* 4.5.

34 Levick 1999 (n. 4), 29.

35 Dio Cass. 62.17.5–6; Th. Wiedemann, 'From Nero to Vespasian', *Cambridge Ancient History*² X, 1996, 254–255 is indecisive.

36 Levick 1999 (n. 4), 25; Mellor 2003 (n. 25), 72–73; See Levick 1999 (n. 4), 29 for her view on the earlier discussion on the commands of Corbulo and Vespasian.

37 *IV Scythica, V Macedonia, VI Ferrata, X Fretensis, XII Fulminata, XV Apollinaris*. It is possible that *III Gallica* had already left for Moesia.

38 Tac. *Ann.* 13.8–9.

after his term as governor of Syria (AD 60–63) that Corbulo was given a military command that Tacitus compares to that of Pompeius: “it was written that all tetrarchs, kings, prefects, procurators and praetors governing neighboring provinces had to obey him.” The new Syrian governor C. Cestius Gallus just had to administer the province.³⁹

It might be inferred, first, that from the beginning of Nero’s reign, in addition to the Syrian governor, the struggle against the Parthians in the East was preferably led by a commander specially appointed to the task. Second, that the governor and the special commander had to share the Syrian military forces on an equal footing with the exception of Corbulo, when he was given a higher command in 63. Finally, that Tacitus supposes rivalry between the persons who had to share the troops available at the arrival of the special commander.

As it is not known whether Cestius Gallus was still alive when Vespasian arrived in Syria, we do not know of any rivalry between them. This might have changed at the beginning of Mucianus’ governorship in Syria as both Tacitus and Suetonius mention unfriendly rivalry.⁴⁰ Tacitus is the only author who has given an explanation: *vicinis provinciarum administrationibus invidia discordes*. Suetonius gives none. As neither Josephus nor the epitome of Cassius Dio mentions rivalry between Mucianus and Vespasian, and Suetonius may have read Tacitus’ story, it is quite possible that the only ground for rivalry is to be found in Tacitus’ supposition that it must have existed because they governed neighboring provinces and had to share troops. Anyhow, even Tacitus admits that they improved relations *communi utilitate* soon after Nero’s death. The enmity cannot have been deeply rooted.

Networks

As yet, the disturbances in the empire following Nero’s death had little effect in the eastern provinces to the summer of 69. Tacitus’ perception that relations improved in 68 has led to the idea that preparations for revolt in the East started at short notice. Anyhow, a close eye was kept on the course of events.⁴¹ Most of the key figures in the region, Vespasian, his son Titus, C. Licinius Mucianus, Tiberius Julius Alexander, Herodes Agrippa II, and Antiochus IV may already have had a sound basis for a tentative exchange of thought. The seed might even have been sown a long time ago, at the court of Antonia Minor. From Livia’s death in AD 29 until her own in 37, hers was the leading household in the empire; important people from all over the empire must have

39 Tac. *Ann.* 15.25.3; F.J. Vervaet, ‘Domitius Corbulo and the Senatorial Opposition to the Reign of Nero’, *Ancient Society* 32 (2002), 135–193 at 135–137; Id., ‘Domitius Corbulo and the Rise of the Flavian Dynasty’, *Historia* 52 (2003), 436–464 at 440–441.

40 Tac. *Hist.* 2.5.2; Suet. *Vesp.* 6.4.

41 *RPC I*, 778–780: Coins were struck in Antioch with the names of Galba and Otho, in Alexandria even with Vitellius’; Joseph. *BJ* 4.498: At the news of Nero’s death, Vespasian suspended the Jewish war and sent Titus to Rome; Tac. *Hist.* 2.1: This journey was interrupted by the news of Galba’s death; Tac. *Hist.* 2.7: Vespasian and Mucianus decided that the revolt had to wait for a favorable moment in time.

visited her or stayed in her household for some time. Antonia was a friend of Berenice, the mother of Herodes Agrippa I, who himself was a friend of Caligula and Claudius. His son Herodes Agrippa II, born in 27 or 28, raised in Rome, must frequently have visited Antonia's house. Then there was Alexander the *alabarch*, member of a prominent Jewish family in Alexandria, who had business relations with both Antonia and Herodes Agrippa.⁴² His son, Ti. Julius Alexander, born in the early years of Tiberius, may also have been at court. Vespasian, born AD 9, had a relationship to Antonia's private secretary, the freedwoman Caenis. They all met Claudius, Antonia's son.

Their acquaintance continued in Caligula's reign: Vespasian, serving as aedile and praetor, showed shameless sycophantic behavior towards the emperor,⁴³ Herodes Agrippa I and Antiochus IV of Commagene were at court,⁴⁴ as well as Alexander the *alabarch*.⁴⁵

After Claudius had become emperor with some help of Herodes Agrippa I in 41,⁴⁶ they all benefitted. Josephus lists Claudius' measures shortly after his succession to the throne: Herodes Agrippa's kingdom was extended with Judea and some other territories, his old friend Alexander the *alabarch* who had been imprisoned by Caligula was set free, and Antiochus IV was restored to his kingdom.⁴⁷ In the years thereafter, Vespasian received the command of legio II Augusta and went to Britain, his son Titus (born 39) is said to have been educated at court together with Claudius' son Britannicus (born 41). Ti. Julius Alexander was given the post of *epistrategos* of the Thebaid, and became governor of Judea in 46.⁴⁸ Herodes Agrippa II stayed in Rome after his father died in 44, did not inherit his kingdom, but according to Josephus received some territories in AD 50 and 53.⁴⁹ When in the last five years of Claudius' reign the imperial court was influenced to an increasing extent by Claudius' wife Agrippina, Vespasian fell out of favour.⁵⁰ The consulate in 51 was his last office in her lifetime. Mucianus is little heard of in this reign. Yet he must have been at court in order to let himself in for Claudius' anger.⁵¹ It was only after Agrippina's murder that both Vespasian and Mucianus restarted their career, my assumption is that Mucianus, like Vespasian, had backed the wrong horse.⁵² In conclusion: Vespasian, Titus, Mucianus, Herodes Agrippa II, Ti. Julius Alexander and Antiochus IV of Commagene may well have been members of an informal network stemming from Claudius' court, if not earlier.

42 Joseph. *AJ* 18.159–160; 19.276.

43 Suet. *Vesp.* 2.3; Mellor 2003 (n. 25), 72.

44 Dio Cass. 59.24.1.

45 Joseph. *AJ* 19.276; Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 127 and n. 18.

46 Joseph. *AJ* 19.239–245; Suet. *Claud.* 10.3; Dio Cass. 60.8.2.

47 Joseph. *AJ* 19. 276; Dio Cass. 60.8.1.

48 Thebaid: *IGRom* 1.1165 = *OGI* 663; Governor of Judea: Joseph. *AJ* 20.100; Joseph. *BJ* 2.220.

49 Joseph. *AJ* 19.274–275.

50 Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 21; Flaig 1992 (n. 4), 357; Levick 1999 (n. 4), 20.

51 Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.3

52 A.A. Barret, *Agrippina. Sex, Power, and Politics in the Early Empire*, New Haven – London 1996, 67 stressing Agrippina's aversion to Vespasian, pp. 128–130 to Claudius' libertus Narcissus who had supported Vespasian. Both Mucianus and Vespasian continued their careers after Agrippina's death, in March 59.

The Corbulonian group constituted another network to be discussed here.⁵³ It had its roots in the Roman-Parthian conflict in the period from 54 until 66. When at the close of 54 the news arrived in Rome that the Parthian king Vologaesus had invaded Armenia, Nero appointed Cn. Domitius Corbulo to solve the Armenian problem. Corbulo's preparations led to a first campaign in 58–60, and another in 62–63. The Armenian problem was resolved at the conference of Rhandea, by an agreement stipulating that Vologaesus' brother Tiridates should lay down the Armenian royal crown before Nero's image, and resume it only from the hand of the emperor.⁵⁴ It should be stressed that in 66 all Roman legions in the East had served under Corbulo for some length of time. As a consequence, officers and common soldiers may have perceived Corbulo's death as a turning point for future prospects of advancement.⁵⁵ Suetonius mentioned that Vespasian, as soon as he reached his province, "at once reformed the discipline of the army and fought one or two battles with such daring that in the storming of a fortress he was wounded in the knee with a stone and received several arrows in his shield."⁵⁶ Nicols suggested that the army could not have been ill-trained by Corbulo as implied by Suetonius, but that Vespasian as Nero's representative faced an army which was hostile to him. In Nicols' view he succeeded in winning the confidence of the officers and men of the Syrian legions, because he was able to take over their expectations of patronage in the year in which he commanded all seven legions. The latter seems highly unlikely for two reasons: first, Vespasian had only half a year at his disposal which is a rather short period of time, and second they had never seen anything of him. Even if this is not correct, Vespasian's last military command we know of had been in AD 43. That is more than twenty years earlier. My suggestion is that officers and soldiers alike were not only hostile towards Vespasian, but in addition had little confidence in Vespasian's capability as a military leader. Vespasian, realizing this, must have decided instantly to fight some battles in person in order to raise his military prestige. Mucianus, on the other hand, was already known as commander under Corbulo, a few years earlier. It is more plausible, therefore, that if disappointment caused by the cutting off of patronage expectations at Corbulo's death was the ground for hostility towards Vespasian, Mucianus' appointment to the Syrian governorship restored prospects of advancement by patronage,⁵⁷ if only because Mucianus was already part of their group.

The third network we have to take into consideration is made up of the client kings and their relatives.⁵⁸ In addition to Corbulo's appointment at the end of 54, Nero had summoned the kings Herodes Agrippa II and Antiochus IV to make ready their troops, and had given king Aristobulus of Chalkis and king Sohaemus of Emesa territories bor-

53 Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 118–124; 131–132; Flaig 1992 (n. 4), 574–578, however, casts doubt on the existence of a 'Corbulo-Gruppe'. He confines himself to an overview of known generals.

54 Tac. *Ann.* 15.29; Dio Cass. 57.23.1–4.

55 Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 118; Syme 1958 (n. 15), 789.

56 Suet. *Vesp.* 4.6.

57 Wiedemann 1996 (n. 35), 274 is of the opinion that Mucianus' career "gave him the authority to recommend a name to the Roman establishment."

58 Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 127–129; M. Sartre, *The Middle East under Rome* (Cambridge MA – London 2001), 70–87.

dering Armenia, Armenia minor and Sophene respectively.⁵⁹ Approximately ten years earlier, these kings' predecessors had gathered together in Berytus and ridden out to meet Vibius Marsus, the new Syrian governor, on his arrival in the province, an occasion Marsus thought suspect.⁶⁰ At intervals, bonds between the families of these client kings were strengthened by betrothals and marriages.⁶¹

There is, then, good reason to conclude that three networks existed in the East in 68/69 which partially coincided. First there were Mucianus the Syrian governor, Vespasian the commander-in-chief against the Jewish revolt, and his son Titus, who had met in Antonia's household and Claudius' court the current client kings Herodes Agrippa II and Antiochus IV, and perhaps Tiberius Alexander the present Jewish governor of Egypt. Then there were the men who had been active in Corbulo's army as commanders of legions or auxilia: Mucianus the Syrian governor, Tiberius Alexander the governor of Egypt, and the client kings Herodes Agrippa II, Antiochus IV and Sohaemus. And finally, the client kings who themselves maintained relationships with other client principalities and Tiberius Alexander.⁶² The client kings Herodes Agrippa II and Antiochus IV, and maybe Tiberius Alexander, were included in all three networks. Mucianus was part of two, whereas Vespasian and Titus were members of only one network.

Mucianus and Vespasian: leaders in time of crisis

Tacitus made clear that Mucianus, Vespasian, and Titus started making concrete plans to take over imperial power only after January 69, at a moment in which both Otho and Vitellius considered themselves to be emperor.⁶³ Tacitus' opinion is corroborated by the evidence of some *aes* coins issued at Antioch in the period under consideration.⁶⁴ These coins, showing Galba and Otho respectively on the obverse and a text mentioning Mucianus and the people of Antioch together on the reverse, suggest that the Syrian governor supported both emperors in public shortly after their accession.⁶⁵ The story that Titus went to Rome to congratulate Galba hoping or expecting to be adopted by the elderly emperor, only to return when he was informed of the troubles there,⁶⁶ is another indication that, though in the East the situation in the empire was watched closely, at

59 Tac. *Ann.* 13.7.

60 Joseph. *AJ* 19.338–343

61 See for instance Joseph. *AJ* 20.137–139.

62 His brother Marcus had been married to Herodes Agrippa's sister Berenice: Joseph. *AJ* 19.276.

63 Tac. *Hist.* 2.1.3; Likewise Joseph. *BJ* 4.588.

64 K. Butcher, *Coinage in Roman Syria* (London 2004) = (CRS); Galba: *RPC* 1 4313 = CRS 147; Otho: *RPC* 4316 = CRS 150; *RPC* 1 4317 = CRS 151a; *RPC* 1 4319 = CRS 152. For the interpretation of these bronzes as civic coinage (opposite to provincial imperial coinage) see Butcher 2004, 29.

65 P. Weiss, 'The Cities and their Money', in Chr. Howgego – V. Heuchert – A. Burnett, *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces* (Oxford etc. 2005), 57–68 at 61 is of the opinion that naming the governor on civic coins must have had a reason, but that "it is highly questionable to infer from every reference to a governor that the legate or proconsul was personally involved in minting". Nevertheless, in this period of turmoil, it is quite implausible that these issues would have gone against Mucianus' wishes.

66 Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.6; 2.1–2; Suet. *Tit.* 5.1.

the beginning of 69 usurpation was still beyond serious consideration. In public, Syria and Judea even swore allegiance to Vitellius.⁶⁷ At the same time, the general feeling may well have been that the empire at large was in crisis.

In the process of making concrete plans for a revolt, and reach a decision on how to communicate to the followers goals, strategy, and means, Vespasian and Mucianus had the opportunity to show their leadership. Did either of them display transforming or transactional leadership as specified by Burns?

Three episodes which bear on the deliberations in the East are worth mentioning. Each episode saw a major role for Mucianus: the meeting at the Carmel in which it was decided that Vespasian would try for the imperial reign,⁶⁸ the gathering together of support,⁶⁹ and the conference at Berytus where strategy was determined and tasks allocated.⁷⁰

Tacitus, before examining the first episode, twice outlined personal qualities and characteristics of both Mucianus and Vespasian. The first time, he began with Mucianus. In Tacitus' view, Mucianus was a man of extremes: he showed both luxury and industry, politeness and insolence, virtues in public and vices in private. Yet, with his qualities he knew how to hold on to his subordinates, to those nearest to him, and to his colleagues. Vespasian, on the other hand, was only mentioned at first as the man who had been selected by Nero to direct the war against the Jews.⁷¹ The second time, Tacitus started with Vespasian. He depicted Vespasian as a soldier *pur sang*, a general of old if he had not been avaricious. Mucianus, on the other hand, lived as a grand seigneur, was a readier speaker, experienced in civil administration and diplomacy. Tacitus' conclusion was that the combined virtues of both, Mucianus' social skills and great talent as an orator, and Vespasian's dedication to the military, would have made an excellent emperor.⁷²

Proper virtues and qualities themselves, however, are only prerequisites for leadership in a certain situation. Tacitus may well have been aware of that. Having explained the qualities of both leaders, he demonstrated the ways in which Mucianus and Vespasian used these qualities from the beginning of 69 onwards. When Vespasian started to deliberate upon the possibilities of civil war, according to Tacitus, he estimated his fighting strength. He knew that his legions showed little respect for Vitellius, that *legio III Gallica* would support him, that his son Titus stood high in Mucianus' favour, and that the plans of Ti. Alexander were attuned to Mucianus' and his own.⁷³ Yet in what follows, Vespasian persisted in hesitating, seeing only obstacles: his age, the dangers for his two sons, and the risk of being murdered for money by some individual. These personal drawbacks were aggravated by his doubts about the adequacy and reliability

67 Tac. *Hist.* 2.73.

68 Tac. *Hist.* 2.74–78; Suet. *Vesp.* 5.6; Dio Cass. 64.8.3.

69 Citizens of Antioch and soldiers in Syria: Tac. *Hist.* 2.80–81.

70 Tac. *Hist.* 2.81–82; Dio Cass. 64.9.2–4; Joseph. *BJ* 4.630–632.

71 Mucianus: Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.1–4; Vespasian: Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.5–7.

72 Tac. *Hist.* 2.5.1.

73 Tac. *Hist.* 2.74.1; H. Heubner, *P. Cornelius Tacitus. Die Historien*, Band II (Heidelberg 1968), 264 takes the view that the plans of Tiberius Alexander corresponded to those of both Vespasian and Mucianus.

of his armies.⁷⁴ While reflecting on his military power, Vespasian still was and thought as a private person, shrinking back from assuming supreme leadership.

Mucianus turned out to be able to make a change. A meeting took place, maybe at Mount Carmel,⁷⁵ in which Mucianus, Vespasian and a number of unidentified officers and friends were present.⁷⁶ Long preparatory talks in private between the two governors had not yet resulted in a decision. According to Tacitus, Mucianus delivered a stirring speech at the plenary session in which he called Vespasian to the emperorship in plain terms.⁷⁷ Though Tacitus may well have fabricated this speech, it sheds light on the perceived interaction between them, fitting in with their characters as described by Tacitus. What was Mucianus' line of reasoning? Mucianus formulated the aims to be achieved and dealt with the venture's feasibility. So doing, he distinguished a common ultimate goal, the benefit to/revival of the *res publica*,⁷⁸ and a private goal, Vespasian's own glory. Mucianus understood Vespasian's indecisiveness bearing on the latter. He had to take away Vespasian's fear of being accused of hubris by making a bid for power while being of low birth, only with an eye to his own glory. That is why he put forward that it was no honour to succeed an emperor like Vitellius, that Vespasian had always shown respect for the Julio-Claudians and Galba, and that an emperor chosen by his soldiers would be accepted. Now that civil war was unavoidable, solicitude about private glory had to be subordinate to the major aim, the recovery of the *res publica*.

From the beginning of his speech, Mucianus made clear that, in order to achieve that aim, he himself would take a share in the uprising. So after his attempt to remove Vespasian's worries, he discussed the means at their disposal: the legions in Judea, Syria and Egypt, fleets, cavalry and loyal client kings. Furthermore, he made explicit that he intended to take an equal share in the risks and dangers, but in the end would not head for the top. Rivalry between Vespasian and himself would be pointless, as he would have adopted Titus if he were emperor himself. Implicitly he added a secondary aim to the first, that is the recovery of the state, namely that in the long run Titus should be emperor. With that he raised the level of Vespasian's private aim for glory. Thereafter Mucianus suggested a division of responsibilities between them: Vespasian was to stay in the East, he himself was to go for Vitellius.

So in this speech Tacitus had Mucianus take the position of the transforming leader of the uprising. Mucianus showed vision, formulated the highest aim, took the initiative, made an attempt to empower his co-leader Vespasian, suggested the beginning of a strategy, and hinted at the means to achieve their common goal with that strategy.

74 Tac. *Hist.* 2.74.2–75.

75 Heubner 1968 (n. 73), 249; 253 is of the opinion that it is impossible to know where the meeting took place.

76 K. Scott, 'The Role of Basilides in the Events of A.D. 69', *JRS* 24 (1934), 38–40 suggested that the Egyptian priest Basilides attended the meeting on behalf of Ti. Julius Alexander. See also Heubner 1968 (n. 73), 255–256.

77 Tac. *Hist.* 2.76–77.

78 Tac. *Hist.* 2.76.1: *rei publicae utile*; 2.76.2: *salutare rei publicae* and *exsurgimus*; (...) *torpere ultra et polluentam perdendamque rem publicam relinquere sopor et ignavia videretur*.

Nevertheless, Vespasian did not immediately make a decision. Matters were brought to a head when his troops in Caesarea hailed him emperor.⁷⁹ Independently, only two days earlier, Ti. Julius Alexander had taken the oath of allegiance to the new emperor from the people and the legions in Alexandria.⁸⁰ There was no way back any more. Mucianus, who had been waiting for Vespasian's decision, took action to gather support. As quickly as possible he took the oath of allegiance from both the legions and – after a great speech in Greek in the theatre – the people of Antioch.⁸¹ Next the network of local rulers, Sohaemus of Emesa, Antiochus of Commagene, Berenice, and Herodes Agrippa II who was called back from Rome before Vitellius smelled danger, took part in the uprising. Thereafter all other provinces in the East, from Achaia to Armenia, joined in.

The fact that support from such an area was brought together at such a great pace, shows that groundwork had well been laid. Given his qualities and his presence in the region as governor of Lycia-Pamphilia, as part of the Corbulonian group, and as governor of Syria, this may well have been mainly the result of Mucianus' efforts.

Thereafter a meeting took place in Berytus to discuss the situation. Vespasian must have been present, yet Tacitus pays little attention to the new emperor.⁸² Again Mucianus is mentioned first. He brought along all his military *legati* and *tribuni*, and his well decorated centurions and soldiers. Then there were the most decorated men of the Judean army, and finally the client kings, competing in splendour. The discussion focussed on the strategy to follow and the means to succeed. Bearing on strategy it was decided, as Mucianus had suggested before, that Titus should carry on the war in Judea, that Vespasian should go to Egypt,⁸³ and that Mucianus should go for Vitellius. Furthermore, letters were written to armies and generals in order to try to win over the praetorians, and envoys were sent to the Parthians and the Armenians in order to prevent an attack from the rear. That the latter were successful may have been due to Mucianus' earlier use of his diplomatic talents.⁸⁴ To secure the necessary military means, new troops should be levied, veterans recalled to service, arms made, money coined at the mint in Antioch, and funds raised.⁸⁵ Though Tacitus has Mucianus say that money is the sinews of civil war, he also has Mucianus make a speech in which he promised the military only moderate *donativa*, a promise repeated by Vespasian.

When the plans were put into effect, Vespasian inspected the works and encouraged the officials. Many of them were rewarded later with high posts in the empire. We are not sure whether Vespasian promised those posts in advance, but if he did, he showed transactional leadership at best. Mucianus on the other hand, apparently being in charge

79 Tac. *Hist.* 2.80.1; U. Huttner, *Recusatio Imperii* (Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2004) 176–180 takes Vespasian's refusal of the emperorship in front of the military on July 3rd as stage setting. In his view, Vespasian had already made his decision.

80 Here I follow Heubner 1968 (n. 73), 256–257, contra Nicols 1978 (n. 4), 72 and Levick 1999 (n. 4), 47.

81 Tac. *Hist.* 2.80.2.

82 Tac. *Hist.* 2.81 – 82.

83 Joseph. *BJ* 4.605–606 stresses the importance of Egyptian grain for the war, Joseph. *BJ* 4.607–614 draws attention to the safety offered by the rather isolated location of Alexandria.

84 Tac. *Hist.* 4.51: The Parthian king Vologaesius offered 4000 cavalry as support.

85 Tac. *Hist.* 2.84.1.

of fundraising, used informers to squeeze the rich. In addition, he contributed to the war effort from his private means,⁸⁶ an example followed by others. So, in this phase too, Tacitus sketches a vague picture of Vespasian and stresses Mucianus' importance and leadership. Mucianus motivated the troops without large *donativa* as incentive, he motivated some to give money by his example or used coercion to get money when he saw fit. Again Mucianus' behaviour showed characteristics of transforming leadership, with regard to the situation.

Conclusion

Application of Burns' leadership definition to Tacitus' account of what happened in the East in the first half of AD 69 makes plausible that, when compared to Vespasian, Mucianus was the greater leader. We have seen that in the situation of civil war, Mucianus formulated a high goal to which nobody could raise any objection, that is the restoration of the *res publica*, thus mobilizing the East. In reaction to their separate needs, he pointed out independent goals for Vespasian and Titus, the military, and the civilians of Antioch. Given his diplomatic qualities, he may well have been continuously in touch with members of the Corbulonian group, the network in which he, unlike Vespasian, participated. It is quite possible that Tiberius Alexander's support was secured at an early stage thanks to that network. Mucianus' contribution to the joint enterprise in terms of followers and mobilizing qualities by far exceeded Vespasian's. The greatest asset attributed to Vespasian was his military qualities. He could show more recent military experience than Mucianus, yet Mucianus' military qualities may well have been substantial, and his relationship with the Syrian legions and the client kings in the region was beyond reproach.

Tacitus pays little attention to Mucianus' own motives for the uprising. Is it inconceivable that his major aim for the uprising really was the well-being of the state? I think it is not. My suggestion is that he was of the opinion that the state would be best served by Titus as emperor and that the most secure way to achieve that was an interim emperorship for the elderly Vespasian. It would be pointless to aim at the emperorship himself and, if he were successful, adopt Titus later on. Mucianus was willing to take severe risks and to invest money in the revolt without knowing for sure that he would be paid back. Nevertheless, his private motives must have counted. If the revolt were successful, he would be able to amass great wealth and his wish as a youth to acquire the friendship of the great would be more than fulfilled.

86 Tac. *Hist.* 2.84.2. Here Tacitus lays the foundation of Vespasian's avarice.