

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE PRO CAELIO

- 82 Marcus Caelius Rufus born (May 28)
- 66 Caelius joins Cicero's Household
- 63 Cicero consul with C. Antonius Hybrida; Catiline's failed coup d'etat
- 61 Caelius serves as military tribune in Africa
- 60 The " First Triumvirate" formed by Pompey, Caesar and Crassus
- 59 Ptolemy Auletes secures Caesar's influence; Clodia widowed
- 58 the senate votes to support Ptolemy on the throne; embassy to the senate of the Alexandrians opposed to Ptolemy's kingship is waylaid
- 57 Dio the philosopher, one of the ambassadors, is murdered at Rome
- 56 The trial of Caelius (April 3 and 4); Cicero speaks on April 4, the first day of Ludi Megalenses (Apr. 4-10)

THE CHARGES AGAINST CAELIUS

The first three charges were handled by Crassus, the other two by Cicero

1. *De seditionibus Neapolitanis*
Concerning the insurrection at Naples
2. *De Alexandrinorum pulatione Puteolana*
Concerning the battery of Alexandrians at Puteoli
3. *De Bonis Pallae*
Concerning the property of Palla
4. *De Dione*
Concerning the attempted murder of the Alexandrian ambassador Dio
5. *De veneno in Clodiam Parato*
Concerning the attempted poisoning of Clodia Metelli

IN THE MATTER OF M. CAELIUS RUFUS: THE PLAYERS

AGAINST CAELIUS:

L. Sempronius Atratinus. Officially the initiator of the prosecution. Age: 17. Son of L. Calpurnius Bestia, a friend of Cicero.

P. Clodius. Probably not the same as Clodius the enemy of Cicero, but a freedman or lesser member of the same family, brought in as *subscriptor* (assistant) to Atratinus for this case.

L. Herrenius Balbus. An old friend of Atratinus' father Bestia.
Subscriptor to Atratinus for this case

AGAINST CAELIUS, BUT IN THE BACKGROUND:

Clodia Metelli. Recently widowed. Also recently the lover of Caelius. Age 35, give or take a few years. Perhaps the real instigator of the charge against Caelius after their falling out. Perhaps to be identified with the Lesbia of Catullus poems, although there is no evidence to indicate whether Lesbia was Clodia Metelli, her sister Clodia Luculli, or their sister Clodia

P. Clodius Pulcher. Cicero's enemy. Not the same as the prosecutor, it seems. As aedile of 56 he would be holding the *Ludi Megalenses*. Brother of Clodia. Born a patrician Claudius, but had himself adopted into the plebian branch of the family so he could be elected Tribune of the Plebs. As Tribune, he sponsored the bill leading to Cicero's exile.

FOR CAELIUS:

M. Caelius Rufus. Speaking in his own defense. Age: 25. Served his political apprenticeship with Cicero, but broke away from him at 63. Known as a powerful speaker, better at attack than defense. Early in 56, prosecuted Calpurnius Bestia on a charge of electoral bribery.

L. Crassus. One of the wealthiest men in Rome of the so called "First Triumvirate". Some people saw the attack on Caelius as part of a campaign against Pompey.

M. Tullius Cicero. Age: 50 Ex-consul, the famous orator.