

THE ORIGIN AND CAREER OF Q. POMPEIUS FALCO

A. R. BIRLEY

The University of Manchester

The cosmopolitan elite that emerged in the late first and early second centuries A. D. was formed by the coalescence of leading families from the eastern provinces as well as from Italy and the west; and this background at least equipped them for careers that might take them to half a dozen or more provinces in the course of twenty five years or so of public service. Pompeius Falco is not, therefore, completely exceptional, but few senators are recorded in so many different provinces, and he has, further, the distinction of figuring in the correspondence of both Pliny and Fronto as well as being the recipient of an interesting rescript from the emperor Hadrian. In spite of the variety of evidence he remains a shadowy figure, and it may be instructive to investigate him again here by way of tribute to a master of epigraphy and prosopography — especially since M. Pflaum has himself devoted some attention to members of Falco's family.¹

The man's origin is something of a mystery, but he was certainly well-connected by marriage. His wife was Sosia Polla,² daughter of Q. Sosius Senecio (*cos. ord.* 99, *II ord.* 107)³ and granddaughter of Sex. Julius Frontinus (*III ord.* 100);⁴ and he was to leave distinguished descendants, ordinary consuls in 149, 169 and 193, the last of whom was a contender for the throne during his consulship.⁵ Customarily known by the *tria nomina* Q. Pompeius Falco, he had a whole string of additional names, as may be seen from the Tarracina inscription (*CIL X 6321 = D. 1035*):

Q. Roscio Sex. f. / Quir. Coelio Murenæ / Silio Deciano Vibull(i)o / Pio Iulio Eurycli Herc(u)lano / Pompeio Falconi cos. / XVvir. s. f. procos. provinc. Asiae leg. pr. pr. / imp. Caes. Traiani Hadriani Aug. provinc. / Britanniae leg. pr. pr. imp. Caes. Nervæ / Traiani Aug. Germanici Dacici / [pr]ovinc. Moesiae inferior. curator(i) / [via]e Traianae et leg. Aug. pr. pr. provinc. / [Iudaeae e]t leg. X Fret. leg. pr. pr. prov. Lyciae / [et Pamphyl]iae leg. leg. V Macedonic. / [bello Dacico donis militari]bus donato / ...

The final five of these names were no doubt inherited with a legacy from C. Julius Eurycles Herculanus L. Vibullius Pius, last representative of the

royal house of Sparta, who died in 130 or shortly afterwards.⁶ The previous pair of names presumably derives from L. Silius Decianus (*cos. suff.* 94)⁷ or from a son of his. But in no case does the evidence enable us to judge whether there were family connections or only ties of friendship to justify the legacies thus attested. Roscius Coelius — and for that matter Murena — must have been acquired by descent, inheritance or adoption from the M. Roscius Coelius whom Agricola succeeded as legate of XX Valeria Victrix in 70 and who rose to be consul in 81.⁸ Further evidence of his wide-ranging links is provided by the extraordinary nomenclature of his grandson, the consul of 169, which includes, in addition to Falco's six *nomina* and five of his six *cognomina* — Falco alone is omitted — a further eight *nomina* and thirteen *cognomina*, adding for good measure the *praenomina* of Frontinus, Julius Eurycles and Vibullius Pius, to produce the record total of 38 names. With filiation and tribe they occupy nine and a half lines of the inscription erected to him as patron by the senate and people of Tibur (*CIL XIV 3609 = D. 1104 = Inscr. It. IV. I, 126*). Falco's son, the consul of 149, is less well recorded, but two inscriptions that may be referred to him — as M. Pflaum has demonstrated — attest seven of the additional names borne by the *cos.* 169, and M. Pflaum has no hesitation in awarding Falco's son the full 38 names borne by the grandson.⁹ One or two of the personages concerned must remain uncertain, but most are clearly identifiable, revealing a veritable network of alliances and inheritance.¹⁰ This makes it all the more tantalising that there is no obvious source for the principal *cognomen* in the case of either Falco himself or of his son and grandson, each of whom were named Priscus. The latter is colourless and Kajanto has counted 760 examples, making it one of the commonest of all Roman names.¹¹ But Falco is almost unique. Apart from members of this family, only two other cases exist (*CIL III 8160, VI 17982*), the first of which is doubtful. Schulze is hesitant about an Etruscan derivation,¹² and it seems likely that it was a descriptive surname of the traditional kind, referring not only to the bird but to a deformity of the toes.¹³ Further speculation here is unprofitable and one must turn elsewhere for clues to Falco's origin. The inscription at Hierapolis Castabala in Cilicia, erected by Ἀῦλος Λαβέριος Καμερίνος καὶ Λαβέριος Καμερίνος υἱὸς αὐτοῦ, ἑκατοντάρχης λεγ. εἰ Μακεδονικῆς to honour Falco τὸν ἴδιον φίλον καὶ εὐεργέτην, may be of some assistance. Cilicia was not one of the provinces in which Falco served at any stage in his career, and we may be justified in supposing that the reason for an inscription being set up in his honour at this place was that it was his home, if not that of the dedicators. The balance is tipped in favour of the former alternative by the conjunction of names of the dedicators, Laberius Camerinus, suggestive of an Italian rather than a provincial origin; yet there was no Italian settlement in Cilicia where one might expect to find rare Italian names persisting. The *nomen* Pompeius is of course commonly found in the Greek east and neither that nor the tribe Quirina create any difficulties.¹⁴ It could well be that an ancestor, a Cilician dignitary, had been granted Roman citizenship by Pompeius Magnus in the 60s B. C. An alternative suggestion has been put forward, that Falco's ancestor might be a known client of Pompey, the historian Theophanes of Mytilene, whose descendants still flourished in the early second century, having acquired senatorial rank three or four generations previously.¹⁵

However this may be, Falco certainly had strong links with the Greek world — eastern origin has been suggested for his father-in-law Sosius Senecio,¹⁶ although this is perhaps no more decisive for Falco himself than is the marriage of his great-grandson the consul of 193 with a member of a notable Lycian family, or the alliances with Italian and western families which the nomenclature reveals.¹⁷ At all events, he may be regarded as a fine specimen of the new multinational aristocracy.

Pliny's letter (*Ep.* 1.23) in response to his enquiry whether or not he should continue to practise law during his tribunate of the plebs, may be assigned to the year 97,¹⁸ which makes it probable that he was born *ca.* 70. His initial post in the vigintivirate, as a *Xvir stlitibus iudicandis*, shows that Domitian had not specifically marked him out for military advancement,¹⁹ but he nonetheless commenced a military career by a term as *tribunus laticlavius*. In the inscription from Hierapolis, the only one in which the earliest stages of his *cursus* are preserved, the legion is given as *X F[ret.]* — which he was later to command as praetorian legate of Judaea. But E. Groag pointed out in one of his contributions to Ritterling's *Fasti des römischen Deutschland*²⁰ that this should be corrected on the basis of an unpublished fragment from Ephesus, 'demzufolge Roscius Pompeius Falco *trib. mil.* in der *leg. X Gemina* (nicht in der *X Fretensis*) gewesen ist.' If the reading in the Hierapolis inscription is accurate, one would be obliged to conclude that the legion's title had been incorrectly transcribed, by confusion with the later mention of *X Fretensis* in line 6. Certainly, although the contrary is sometimes asserted, imperial practice seems not to have favoured repeated service in the same legion or even in the same province, at different stages in the *cursus*.²¹ *X Gemina* was still at that time in Lower Germany, and there can have been little opportunity of active service — unless he had already taken up his commission by the time of Saturninus' uprising in January 89, which is not impossible. The quaestorship, at Rome, followed, then the tribunate of the plebs — already referred to — in 97 and the praetorship.²² Next came the command over the legion V Macedonia and military decorations for what must have been the First Dacian war, of 101—102. He proceeded from this to the governorship of Lycia-Pamphylia, probably, as Sir Ronald Syme has pointed out, in 103, the year when his predecessor Trebonius Mettius Modestus was consul suffect.²³ Unusually, this appointment was followed by the governorship of a second praetorian province, Judaea. The first recorded parallel comes from many decades later, in the difficult period of the 160s when plague and warfare had created gaps in the ranks of eligible men.²⁴ It might be that the annexation of Arabia in 105—106 made it seem desirable to have a particularly experienced man in the adjacent province.²⁵

His consulate seems to have come in September 108. Although only the letters — — — *ius F* — — are recorded, the identification looks thoroughly plausible,²⁶ and there would be no difficulty about accepting it were it not for the anomalous language of the Hierapolis inscription, in which he is described as *leg. Aug. leg. X Fret. et leg. pr. pr. [pr]ovinciae Iudaeae consularis*. An inscription from Athens honouring his granddaughter Sosia Falconilla appears to echo this language, for, while the lady's other distinguished forebears are called ὕπατος, Falco is apparently labelled ὕπατινός.²⁷ On the

other hand, elsewhere the term *cos.* is applied to him, which, although it might represent *co(n)s(ularis)*, appears not to have been so intended on the inscriptions from Tarracina, Minturnae and Ciria.²⁸ The question must remain unresolved, although it may be noted that, even if Falco's name is restored on the Fasti Ostienses for 108 — which is the last year with any vacancies until 114 — he need not necessarily have come to Rome to bear the *fasces*. In all probability he acquired consular status in Judaea, whether as consul suffect or as *adlectus inter consulares*, and may well have remained there for much of the following year. While he was in that province, it would seem, Falco received a letter from Pliny (*Ep.* 7.22), who requested an appointment as tribune for his friend Cornelius Minicianus, *ornamentum regionis meae*. Although Pliny hoped that his friend could thus omit the *militia prima*, Falco evidently had no vacancy for a tribune, for an inscription from Bergomum (*CIL* V 5126 = *D.* 2722) reveals that the post held by Minicianus in Judaea was that of *praef. coh. prim. Damasc(enorum)*; he was later to obtain a tribunate in *III Augusta*.²⁹ During the ten years or so that separated this from his first letter from Pliny, Falco had had one further missive, on the subject of light verse (4.27). The husband of Sosia Polla might well be expected to have shared the literary interests of her father and grandfather.

After his return to Italy Falco was co-opted into the *XVviri sacris faciundis*.³⁰ Sir Ronald Syme has eloquently described what this may have meant to Tacitus some twenty or thirty years earlier: 'The *quindecimviri* embrace a superior selection — fashionable young men, with literary talent at a premium, and certain wise old politicians. To be of the company was delight and instruction — who could fail to benefit from Fabricius Veiento? It was also a promise (seldom delusive) of further honours'.³¹ Veiento was doubtless dead by the time that Falco entered the college,³² but there were others from whose company he could not have failed to benefit, not least the historian Cornelius Tacitus. In the meantime, it was probably after his return from Judaea to Rome that he received a final letter from Pliny (9.15), a complaint about the trials of landownership, coupled with a request for information from the capital: *tu consuetudinem serva nobisque sic rusticis urbana acta perscribe*.³³

In spite of the favour suggested by the consulate — at a relatively early age³⁴ — and a major priesthood, Falco's only employment for some years seems to have been as curator of the *via Traiana*, but it was probably as first holder of the post, for the new road, from Beneventum to Brundisium, was commenced in 109 and commemorated on the coinage of 112.³⁵ One might have expected him to have received a command in the Parthian War in 113, not least because his influential father-in-law Sosius Senecio was apparently still alive at this time.³⁶ At all events, by 116 he had returned to active service, for in that year³⁷ he is found governing the large consular province of Moesia Inferior — greatly extended from its original proportions for it now included a large tract beyond the Lower Danube.³⁸ He may, indeed, have taken up this post as early as 113.³⁹

He was still in Lower Moesia in 117, and was probably there when Trajan died.⁴⁰ It is reasonable to conjecture that he must have met and conferred with the new emperor — who had been a friend and protégé of his father-in-law

Senecio — when Hadrian came swiftly to the Lower Danube in the winter of 117—118.⁴¹ Falco may well have been concerned in the delicate negotiations with the refractory king of the Roxolani, who complained about the Roman failure to pay him his subsidy;⁴² and, no less important, in Hadrian's decision to abandon the transdanubian portion of his province.⁴³ There were personal reasons, besides, to make this a memorable year for Falco. Although he must now have been in his late forties, his wife bore him a son, the future consul of 149.⁴⁴ They may well have been married for many years — it will be recalled that Agricola's wife bore him a son some twenty years after the birth of the daughter whom Tacitus married.⁴⁵ But no other children of Falco and Sosia are known.

The empire was beset with troubles on all sides during the first year of Hadrian's reign,⁴⁶ and it may well have been that the emperor received news of disturbances in Britain while still in Moesia, and that he decided to send Falco to that province soon after meeting him. To date the British governorship, there is only the diploma of 17 July 122 (*CIL XVI 69*), issued to troops *dimissis honesta missione per Pompeium Falconem*, but still serving under his successor Platorius Nepos, who can only have arrived shortly before. It is not unreasonable to suppose that Falco was in Britain for about four years, from 118—122.⁴⁷ Hence, although no epigraphic records of his activity in Britain survive, 'the odds are rather better than four to one', as Eric Birley has put it,⁴⁸ for the rescript to him deriving from his service there rather than in Moesia. It concerns the testament of a soldier who had committed suicide: if he had taken his life *taedio vitae vel dolore*, Hadrian ruled, the will would be valid; but not if he chose death *ob conscientiam delicti militaris* (*Digest* 28.3.6).

The period of Falco's governorship was once thought to have been marked by a major disaster, the destruction of the Ninth legion,⁴⁹ but, although it is now clear that it survived, to meet its end elsewhere,⁵⁰ there must have been fighting. The demeanour of the personified province on coins assignable *ca.* 119 is thought to suggest trouble within the province,⁵¹ and it has been proposed, on archaeological grounds, that the building of the continuous frontier barrier between Tyne and Solway commenced in 120 rather than in 122, and hence under Falco's supervision rather than that of Nepos.⁵² However this may be, Falco's presence on the Lower Danube in 117—118 should have made him familiar with the policy of retrenchment at first hand, and he may well have been asked to prepare the ground for the erection of Hadrian's Wall by completing a strategic withdrawal from Scotland.

Almost immediately after his return from Britain, Falco was successful in the ballot and obtained the proconsulship of Asia, where he is attested in 124, having evidently taken up the post in the previous summer.⁵³ While he was in the province, two delegates from Flavia Neapolis (Samaria) in Judaea came to honour him at Ephesus, on the motion of the council and people of their town, as their saviour and benefactor.⁵⁴ He was thus still remembered in Judaea a decade and a half after his governorship, and doubtless he was one of several Judaeans with whom Hadrian was to discuss his fateful Judaeans policy in the course of the next few years. One may assume that Falco passed the remainder of his life in comfortable retirement; but he was a figure

whose advice must have been canvassed on a number of issues. He is last heard of in a letter of the young M. Aurelius to his tutor Fronto, written in 143 and recalling a visit which he and Antoninus Pius had paid to Falco's estate three years previously (Fronto, *ad M. Caes.* 2.6 = Haines i 140 = 29 van de Hout). He had shown his admiring imperial visitors a product of his experiments in arboriculture.⁵⁵ It might be that Antoninus had also availed himself of the opportunity to discuss the situation in Britain — where the frontier was being moved north once more:⁵⁶ but that is pure speculation, as so much in the field of prosopography must be.

¹ Augustianus Alpinus Bellicius Solers, membres de la gens Cassia, *Archivo español de arqueología* 39 (1966), 3—23; L'inscription de Bologne concernant Q. Pompeius Sossius Priscus, *Bonner Jahrbücher* 172 (1972), 18—23.

² *CIL* III 7663 (Samos) = D. 1037; *CIL* VIII 7066 (Cirta) = D. 1105 = *ILAlg* II 652; etc.

³ E. Groag, *RE* 3 A (1927), 1180—1193; C. P. Jones, Sura and Senecio, *JRS* 60 (1970), 98—104 (although I am doubtful about the identification of the *ignotus* D. 1022 with Senecio).

⁴ *PIR*², J. 322.

⁵ Wolf, *RE* 21 (1952), 2288—2290; and see now the important article by Pflaum, *Bonner Jahrb.* 172 (1972), 18 ff. (cited in n. 1 above).

⁶ *PIR*², J. 302. Falco seems to have acquired these names after 116, since they are not on the Hierapolis inscription (discussed below); but since they do not feature on the new inscription from Ephesus either (n. 54, below), the *terminus post quem* should perhaps be extended to 124 — unless a desire for brevity was decisive in both cases. Jones, *JRS* 60 (1970), 103 suggests that he may have inherited the names from Senecio, following R. Syme, *The Ummidii*, *Historia* 17 (1968), 72—105, p. 100 f.

⁷ E. Groag, *RE* 3 A (1927), 77—79, suggesting that he was son of the poet Silius Italicus. The consular date there given must be adjusted to 94: A. Degrassi, *I Fasti consolari* (1952), 28.

⁸ E. Groag, *RE* 1 A (1914), 1121.

⁹ *Bonner Jahrb.* 172 (1972), 18 ff.

¹⁰ Note that the new inscription from Bologna gives the *cos. ord.* 149 the names Julius Acer (not Aper): see Pflaum's comments, *Bonner Jahrb.* 172 (1972), 22 f.; he notes that these names and the *cognomina* Rutilianus Rufinus firmly attested for the *cos.* 149 on VI 31782 suggest a connection with M. Sedatius Severianus cet. (*cos.* 153), who was a Gaul (*D.*

9487, Sarmizegethusa; Lucian, *Alex.* 27). Augustianus Alpinus cet. was from Verona, see Pflaum, *Arch. esp. arq.* 39 (1966), 3 ff. (n. 1 above).

¹¹ I. Kajanto, *The Latin Cognomina* (1965), 288.

¹² W. Schulze, *Zur Geschichte lateinischer Eigennamen* (1904), 272.

¹³ *TLL* VI. 1, 175—6, s. v. 'falco'.

¹⁴ Mommsen made this point long ago, *ad CIL* III 12117: 'Titulum centurio exercitus Moesiaca videtur dedicasse in patria non sua sed honorati, quem Graecum hominem fuisse et tribus significat et quod inter vocabula eius Eurycles.' I suggested Cilician origin in 'The Roman governors of Britain', *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (1967), 63—102, p. 69. The suggestion, which I owe to E. Birley, was regarded favourably by Jones, *JRS* 60 (1970), 103. L. Petersen, who takes the two Laberii to be natives of Hierapolis (*PIR*², L 5) does not consider the difficulties: see P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower* 225 B. C. — A. D. 14 (1971), 227 for the paucity of Italian settlement in Cilicia. It may be noted here that the town is sometimes mistakenly spelt Hieropolis: see the stern correction by L. Robert, in A. Dupont-Sommer and L. Robert, *La déesse de Hiéropolis Castabala (Cilicie)* (1964), 17—22.

¹⁵ Thus L. Schumacher, *Prosopographische Untersuchungen zur Besetzung der vier hohen römischen Priesterkollegien im Zeitalter der Antonine und der Severer* (96—235 n. Chr.) (1974), 256 and stemma (Anlage VII), taking up a suggestion of J. Morris, *Changing fashions in Roman nomenclature in the early empire*, *Listy filologické* 86 (1963), 34—46, p. 42 f.

¹⁶ Jones, *JRS* 60 (1970), 103; Syme, *Historia* 17 (1968), 101 n. 127: 'perhaps descendant of a dynastic house in Cilicia'. Syme, ap. Jones 103 n. 64 cites the Falconilla, daughter of Queen Tryphaena of the *Acta Pauli et Theclae* 27 ff. (for

the real queen see *PIR*², A 900) as a further hint of eastern origin.

¹⁷ See n. 10 above. The *cos. ord.* 193 was married to Sulpicia Agrippina, a member of an influential Lycian family: see now S. Jameson, Two Lycian families, *Anatolian Studies* 16 (1966), 125—137. Two recently discovered inscriptions illustrate further the wide-ranging connections of the family. *AE* 1967, 144 (nr. Mila, Numidia) adds to the information in *CIL* VIII 7066 = *ILAlg* II 652 (Cirta) in honour of Sosia Falconilla: *Q. Pompeio Sosio Prisco Iuniori et testament. Q. Saenii Bassi* — and the word *Iuniori* is perhaps a hint that the consul of 169 had the same nomenclature as his father. The second inscription is more enigmatic: *Pom---/Qui---/Falco---/Q. Pom---/Prisci---/dotas---* (C. Veny, *Corpus de las inscripciones Balearicas hasta la dominacion arabe* [Rome 1965] no. 61, Petra, Majorca). What the relationship of the family to the Cirtensian region of Numidia and to the Balearics may have been remains obscure.

¹⁸ See R. Syme, *Tacitus* (1958), 76 n. 1, identifying Falco as the tribune Murena who intervened in the Publicius Certus debate of 97 (Pliny *Ep.* 9.13.19), followed by A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* (1966), 138 f., 497.

¹⁹ E. Birley, Senators in the emperors' service, *Proc. Brit. Academy* 39 (1953), 197—214, pp. 201 ff.

²⁰ p. 147 '(Mitteilung Groags vom 12. Febr. 1927)', a reference I owe to Eric Birley. The information seems to have been overlooked in most treatments of Falco. However, the inscription referred to by Groag has evidently remained unpublished.

²¹ The question requires fuller treatment than would be possible within the limits of the present paper.

²² A. Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien* (1940), 64 n. 3 refers to a revision of *CIL* III 12117 by Keil and Bauer ('Scheden des Wiener Arch. Inst.') according to which Falco was '*pr. inter fisc... peregrinos*' (*sic*: presumably *privatos* is meant), hence not before Nerva, cf. *Digest* 1.2.2.32.

²³ R. Syme, Consulates in absence, *JRS* 48 (1958), 1—9, p. 4; see also *IGR* III 739 I, lines 3—4 (Rhodiapolis) for the Lycian governorship; Modestus' consulship is given by *AE* 1954. 223 (Ostia).

²⁴ Syme, *JRS* 48 (1958), 4; W. Eck, *Senatoren von Vespasian bis Hadrian*

(1970), 15 n. 69. The next example on record seems to be the unknown *leg. Augustorum pr. prov. Galat. item prov. Ciliciae* (*CIL* III 254, Ancyra) probably from the 160 s, see Syme 4 n. 53 and W. Eck, Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Italiens unter Mark Aurel, *ZPE* 8 (1971) 71—92 (esp. p. 78 n. 27), who also discusses L. Saevinius L. f. Quir. Proculus, *leg. Aug. pro pr. prov. Galatae item Ciliciae* (*AE* 1969/1970. 601, Ancyra). For *CIL* XIII 6806 (Mainz) see *Ep. Stud.* 4 (1967), 74 f.

²⁵ Thus Syme, *JRS* 48 (1958) 4, *Tacitus* (1958), 222 n. 5.

²⁶ E. Groag, Zu neuen Inschriften. I. Zu einem neuen Fragment der Fasten von Ostia, *JÖAI* 29 (1935), Bbl. 117—204.

²⁷ J. H. Oliver, Greek and Latin inscriptions, *Hesperia* 10 (1941), 237—261, pp. 239 ff. It is possible, of course, in spite of Oliver's drawing, that the *cos.* 149 was also labelled *δπαρκουδ* in line 7, in which case this term would have been employed for the two men who had been consul once only, while Senecio and Frontinus were described as *[βιζ δ]παρκουδ* and *αβιζ δπαρκουδ* respectively. See Schumacher, *Priesterkollegien* 312 n. 77 for a discussion of the differing views. I think it most likely that he was consul *in absentia* (there is no need to date Pliny, *Ep.* 9.15, addressed to Falco at Rome, to the year 108, see below n. 33): see Eck, *Senatoren* 15 n. 69, who very reasonably suggests that *consularis* may have been used on the Hierapolis inscription because Falco 'in der Provinz den Konsulat verwaltete und auch noch anschließend in der Provinz blieb. Vielleicht war er bereits mit der Aussicht auf den Konsulat nach Judäa gesandt worden'.

²⁸ *CIL* X 6321, VIII 7066 = *ILAlg* II 652, *AE* 1935. 26.

²⁹ E. Birley, *Roman Britain and the Roman Army* (1953), 141 n. 17 doubts the identification, but, as he now kindly points out to me, the cohort is attested in Syria Palaestina in 139 (*CIL* XVI 87) and probably belonged to the army of Judaea before that.

³⁰ Schumacher, *Priesterkollegien* 313 n. 82 notes that the priesthood is given in chronological order on the Hierapolis inscription.

³¹ Syme, *Tacitus* 66.

³² *PIR*², F 91. Veiento owed a small debt to Falco for his conduct as tribune in 97 (n. 18 above) and might have spon-

sored his co-optation over a period, as Frontinus did for Pliny with the augurs (Ep. 4.8.3).

³³ Book 9 cannot be dated easily, cf. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* 39 ff. The traditional date for Pliny's Bithynian appointment, 111–113, would of course make it easier to date 9.15 later than 108. See now Schumacher, *Priesterkollegien* 296 n. 36, criticising attempts to redate the appointment to 109–111.

³⁴ Cf. Syme, *Tacitus* 652.

³⁵ Stein, *Moesien* 65 n. 6 conveniently cites the evidence.

³⁶ HA Hadrian 4.2: *qua quidem tempestate [sc. expeditionis Parthicae] utebatur Hadrianus amicitia Sosi (Senecionis Aemili) Papi et Platori Nepotis ex senatorio ordine*. See H.-G. Pflaum, *Un ami inconnu d'Hadrien: M. Aemilius Pappus*, *Klio* 46 (1965), 331–337 for the emendation. Jones, *JRS* 60 (1970), 103 suggests that Senecio died ca. 113–115.

³⁷ *CIL* III 12470 (Tropaeum Traiani).

³⁸ R. Syme, *The Lower Danube under Trajan*, *JRS* 49 (1959), 26–33, esp. 31 ff. = *Danubian Papers* (1971), 122–133, esp. 130 ff., and note also p. 108 in the latter work.

³⁹ P. Calpurnius Macer Caulius Rufus, his presumed predecessor, was there in 112 (*CIL* III 777, Troesmis); he might have been there for some time, however, whatever the dates of Pliny's appointment in Bithynia, which coincided with his own (Ep. 10. 42, 61. 5, 62, 77). He had been consul in 103 (*AE* 1954, 223, Ostia).

⁴⁰ *CIL* III 7537 (Tomi). No enlightenment is provided by the language of the Tarracina inscription, which describes him as Hadrian's legate of Britain and Trajan's legate of Moesia Inferior—unless he had been retired by Trajan and not given the British appointment until after Hadrian's accession. See further n. 47.

⁴¹ Syme, *Tacitus* 243 f., *Emperors and Biography* (1971), 114.

⁴² HA Hadrian. 6.8: *cum rege Roxalorum, qui de minutis stipendiis querebatur, cognito negotio pacem composuit*.

⁴³ See now Syme, *Danubian Papers* 102 f., 108 f., 167.

⁴⁴ The date of birth is furnished by VI 1490 = D. 1106, set up to him after his death and revealing that he *vixit annis LXII mens. VIII d. XIII in Praesente. II cos.* (180): hence he was born at latest in April 118.

⁴⁵ *Agricola* 6.2, 9.6, 29.1.

⁴⁶ HA Hadrian. 5.2.

⁴⁷ Eck, *Senatoren* 186 n. 306 suggests that the Tomi inscription *AE* 1957. 336 indicates that he went to Britain direct from Lower Moesia ([*leg.*] *Aug. pr. pr. Moesia[iae] inferioris leg. Aug. [pro] p[ro]r. provinciae [B]ritanniae*) and that the move was in 118. It is not known who his predecessor in Britain was. It might have been M. Atilius (Appius) Bradua (*cos. ord. 108*): *Ep. Stud.* 4 (1967), 68 f., 100. Note also the *ignotus RIB* 8 (London), who could be a governor, as G. Alföldy pointed out, *Bonner Jahrb.* 166 (1966), 639; noted in *Ep. Stud.* 4 (1967), 82. The dedication may have been made, e. g., by [A. Larcius Pris]cus, [*ob vi]ctoriam [Parthi]cam*, but this is very uncertain.

⁴⁸ *Roman Britain and the Roman Army* 50.

⁴⁹ Thus e. g. W. Weber, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Hadrianus* (1907), 110.

⁵⁰ E. Birley, *The fate of the ninth legion*, in R. M. Butler (ed.), *Soldier and Civilian in Romana Yorkshire* (1971), 71–80; W. Eck, *Zum Ende der legio IX Hispana*, *Chiron* 2 (1972), 459–462.

⁵¹ *RIC* II nos. 577 a, b; 561–2, 572, with Mattingly's discussion, pp. 315, 322.

⁵² C. E. Stevens, *The Building of Hadrian's Wall* (1966), 39, 52.

⁵³ *AE* 1957.17 (Lydia, provenance unknown), dated 124.

⁵⁴ *AE* 1972.577 (Ephesus).

⁵⁵ As Syme puts it, 'he went in for grafting, an operation that should not have proved arduous or uncongenial to a Roman senator of consular standing' Pliny's less successful friends, *Historia* 9 [1960], 362–379, p. 379).

⁵⁶ A. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* (1966), 73.

Q. Pompeius Falco je dokaj tipičen primer kozmopolitskega pripadnika vodilnih družin v rimskem imperiju, kot so se pojavili konec 1. in v začetku 2. stoletja po Kr., zanimiv pa je posebej, ker je znan iz korespondence Plinija in Frontona in kot prejemnik respkripta cesarja Hadrijana. Cel niz dodatnih imen, ki so ohranjena na napisu iz mesta Tarracina (*CIL X 6321 = ILS 1035*, glej tudi tekst) — njegov vnuk, konzul leta 169, je imel že vsega skupaj 38 imen (*CIL XIV 3609 = ILS 1104*) — kaže na razvejane, v glavnem sorodstvene zveze, zlasti po ženini strani, z vrsto odličnih družin. *Cognomen* Falco (doslej nepojasnjena izvora) je skoraj enkrat, saj razen pri članih te družine nastopi le še v dveh primerih in še od teh je eden dvomljiv. Avtor meni, da izvira Falco iz Cilicije in se pri tem opira na napis, ki sta ga v njegovo čast v Ciliciji postavila Aulus Laberius Camerinus in njegov sin. Avtor navaja tudi mnenje nekaterih, da bi bil njegov prednik Pompejev klient zgodovinar Theophanes iz mesta Mytilene. V vsakem primeru gre za močne vezi z grškim svetom. Domneva se, da tudi njegov tast Sosius Senecio izvira iz vzhoda. Vsekakor je Falco lep primerek nove multinacionalne aristokracije.

Rojen je bil okoli leta 70, prvo mesto je bilo *Xvir stlitibus iudicandis*, vojaško kariero je začel kot *tribunus laticlavus X Fretensis*, kot je navedeno v napisu iz Hierapolis, ali, če gre v tem napisu za pomoto, X Gemine. Pozneje je bil pretorski legat *X Fretensis*. Kvestor je bil v Rimu, leta 97 je bil *tribunus plebis*; v to leto datira Plinijev odgovor na Falkonovo vprašanje, ali naj kot *tribunus* še dalje nastopa kot pravnik. Sledila je pretura. Potem ko je imel poveljstvo nad *legio V Macedonica*, je bil guverner v provinci Lycia-Pamphylia, verjetno leta 103, nato pa guverner v pretorski provinci Iudaea, kar je nenavadno. Razložiti bi se dalo s tem, da so zaradi aneksije Arabije v letih 105—106 Rimljani rabili posebej izkušenega moža v sosednji provinci. Konzul je postal septembra 108. (dopolnjevanje fragmentiranega mesta na *Fasti Ostienses* se zdi kljub napisu iz Hierapolis logično) in je verjetno še nekaj časa ostal v Judeji. V Judejo mu je pisal Plinij, naj njegovemu prijatelju Korneliju Minicijanu priskrbi mesto tribuna. Med prvim in tem pismom je Falco prejel še Plinijevo pismo v zvezi s poezijo, kar kaže na njegov interes za literaturo.

Po povratku v Italijo je bil izvoljen med *XVviri sacris faciundis* in s tem prišel v zelo ekskluzivno odlično družbo, v kateri je bil tudi zgodovinar Cornelius Tacitus. V zadnjem pismu, ki ga je Falco prejel po povratku iz Judeje, se mu Plinij pritožuje nad razzosdbami glede posestev. Nato je bil nekaj leta samo *curator viae Traiana*, ki so jo začeli graditi leta 109, in se omenja na novcih leta 112. Pričakovati je, da je v vojni s Parti leta 113 imel poveljniško mesto; vsekakor je bil nato (morda že leta 113) guverner zelo povečane konzularne province Moesia inferior, kjer je izpričan za leto 116. V Spodnji Meziji je bil še leta 117 in se verjetno razgovarjal s Hadrijanom, ko je ta po Trajanovi smrti pozimi 117/118 prispel na spodnjo Donavo. Verjetno je bil udeležen v pogajanjih s kraljem Roksolanov in pri Hadrijanovi odločitvi, da opusti del province onstran Donave. Tega leta se mu je tudi rodil — najbrž edini — sin, poznejši konzul leta 149.

Zdi se, da je Hadrijan poslal takoj leta 118 Falkona v Britanijo, ki jo je upravljal, kot kaže, do leta 122 (za datacijo je na razpolago le diploma *CIL XVI 69*) in cesarjev respkript v zvezi s samomorom nekega vojaka se verjetneje nanaša na njegovo službo v Britaniji kot v Meziji. V Britaniji so v tem času bili nemiri in zgodovinarji menijo, da je že Falco (ne Nepos) z dobrimi izkušnjami iz Mezije nadziral gradnjo začetka Hadrijanovega zidu med mesti Tyne in Solway.

Po vrnitvi iz Britanije je postal prokonzul v Aziji, kjer je izpričan leta 124. Spomin nanj je bil v Judeji še živ, saj sta se mu prišla v Efez kot dobrotniku poklonit dva odposlanca iz Samarije (*Flavia Neapolis*). Po vsej verjetnosti je nato odšel v pokoj. Poslednjič slišimo o njem v pismu, ki ga je leta 143 pisal Marcus Aurelius Frontonu, svojemu vzgojitelju. V pismu se spominja, kako je pred tremi leti z Antoninom Piem obiskal Falkonovo posestvo.