

**FROM *ARMA* TO *FAMA*: THE MILITARY RECORD OF ROMAN
REPUBLICAN COMMANDERS IN SPEECH AND TEXT (219-19 BC)**

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There are three main scholarly approaches to the mechanisms by which the military record of Roman Republican commanders was disseminated in Rome: the ceremony of the triumph, the erection of monuments with their inscriptions, and finally the minting of coins. Alongside this ceremonial and material publicity this thesis investigates how and why more ephemeral media, as well as autobiographical texts, were employed to disseminate, promote and at times denigrate the Roman military record during the period of 219-19 BC. It encompasses five core chapters: introduction; oratory as praise; oratory as criticism; letters; and autobiographical prose. Chapter two argues that military achievements were orally disseminated in various contexts in Rome: it was a fundamental facet of the triumphal process; a regular part of attaining and maintaining military commands; and the military record was frequently employed in forensic defence speeches, particularly in the late Republic with the growth of the law-courts. Chapter three focuses on how and why the military record was criticised back in Rome in a variety of contexts, arguing that it was a key means by which the Roman elite regulated excessive claims of *gloria*. Owing in part to the increasing concerns about self-serving Roman magistrates, focusing on behaviour beyond the battlefield was a common means of undermining commanders' military reputations. Chapter four details the heavy and regular dependence on dispatches for short-term, yet proficient, martial self-promotion. It emphasises the key role of letters in the triumphal process, including the passing of legislation aimed in part at regulating their exploitation. It also argues that private correspondence played a valuable role, particularly in the targeting of senators and other influential sections of Roman society. Chapter five investigates the role of commentaries, memoirs and historical literature in the promotion of military *res gestae* and how criticism alongside concerns about posterity influenced their composition. It addresses the influence of Greek biography on their composition as well as the Roman aristocratic practice of preserving correspondence and other documentation.

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TRANSLATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The translations employed are the most readily available from Penguin Classics, Oxford World Classics or the Loeb Classical Library series. Ancient sources have been cited according to the abbreviation system employed in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* third edition (*OCD*³).

<i>AC</i>	<i>L'Antiquité classique</i>
<i>AE</i>	<i>L'Année Épigraphique</i>
<i>AJAH</i>	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
<i>AJP</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> (1972-)
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i>
<i>CAH</i>	<i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> (2nd ed. 1961-)
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Classical Journal</i>
<i>C Phil.</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>DNP</i>	<i>Der Neue Pauly</i>
<i>FGrH</i>	<i>Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i>
<i>G&R</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>HRR</i>	<i>Historicorum Romanorum Reliquiae</i>
<i>ILLRP</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae</i>
<i>ILS</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i>

<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>LTUR</i>	<i>Lexicon Topigraphicum Urbis Romae</i> (Steinby 1993-2000)
<i>MRR</i>	<i>The Magistrates of the Roman Republic</i>
<i>ORF</i> ³	<i>Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta</i> (Malcovati 1967 3rd ed.)
<i>PCPS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
<i>RDGE</i>	<i>Roman Documents from the Greek East</i>
<i>RE</i>	<i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (1893-)
<i>RIC</i>	<i>The Roman Imperial Coinage</i>
<i>RRC</i>	<i>Roman Republican Coinage</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>TPSulp.</i>	<i>Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum</i>

1. Introduction

1. The militaristic nature of Roman Republican society

Lucius Hostilius Mancinus, who had been the first man over the wall at the storming of Carthage, similarly angered Aemilianus by exhibiting in the Forum a diagram of the plan of the city and of the assaults on it: he stood beside it and personally described the details of the siege to the general public who looked on. This ‘popularity-hunting’ gained him the consulship at the next election.¹

Pliny’s description of Mancinus’ electioneering efforts in 146 BC illustrates two of the main ways by which military records were publicised in Rome, the heart of the *res publica*, first of all, by visual media and, secondly, by oral means.² This thesis argues that, besides the monumental and ceremonial transmission of military achievements, Roman commanders employed a broad spectrum of audio-visual media to establish, maintain and further their martial reputations in the city of Rome in the period 219-19 BC, particularly via speech and text.³ Furthermore, it contends that *imperatores* were frequently targeted by invective as well as more subtle criticisms from their peers back in Rome; and that these various criticisms

¹ Plin. *HN* 35.23: “non dissimilem offensionem et Aemiliani subiit L. Hostilius Mancinus, qui primus Carthaginem inruerat, situm eius oppugnationesque depictas proponendo in foro et ipse adsistens populo spectanti singula enarrando, qua comitate proximis comitiis consulatum adeptus est”.

² Publicity, advertisement, promotion and promulgation are a number of the terms that suitably describe these dissemination practices; following Flower 1996, 11, the term ‘propaganda’ carries too many negative overtones through its heavy use in the 20th century, particularly in regard to the reporting of military events during the two world wars, and thus it is omitted from this thesis.

³ The two hundred year period I have selected for this thesis stretches from the start of Hannibalic War to the final non-imperial triumph of L. Cornelius Balbus. This period encompasses good source material at either end, particularly for chapters two and four, thus allowing the observation of a number of distinctive developments and patterns.

consequently tempered and developed the nature of the martial ethos that these aristocrats were engineering and promulgating.

There were few years within our period when Rome was not engaged in some sort of military conflict as her legions campaigned across the various regions of the Mediterranean basin. As Nicolet and Harris argue (specifically in relation to the middle Republic) there was an almost biological necessity about this constant warfare.⁴ Table 1, with its catalogue of victory speeches, and Table 3, with its record of the dispatches, show that for our period numerous successes, some defeats, and other notable military activities were being habitually reported back to the Senate by magistrates, thus illustrating the regularity of Rome's military activity.⁵ Rich makes the point, though, that the reality is more complex than Harris's picture of constant warfare, stating that: "the levels of Roman belligerence fluctuated very greatly. Periods of intense warfare, often on several fronts, alternated with only a few minor campaigns, and sometimes, as in 167-154, these peaceful interludes were quite extended".⁶ Nonetheless, minor campaigns could still be exploited by certain magistrates in order to promote a martial ethos, as demonstrated by Cicero from Cilicia in 51-50 BC.

Roman aristocrats were at the heart of the militaristic culture, commencing their military service at the age of 17; and, according to Polybius, no one stood for political office at Rome without completing ten years of military service.⁷ Although there were exceptions due to conspicuous achievements at a young age, like Scipio Africanus in 210 and Scipio Aemilianus in late 148, this requirement appears to have been customary until the late Republic when more and more magistrates with limited military experience were given consular commands and governorships, like P. Licinius Crassus in Asia in 131-130 and

⁴ Nicolet 1969, 119; Harris 1985, 9-10.

⁵ See Chapter 2, Section 3, 55-68 for Table 1 and Chapter 4, Section 3, 225-232, for Table 3.

⁶ Rich 1993, 47-48.

⁷ Polyb. 6.19.4; Harris 1985, 11-12; Rosenstein 2006, 368.

Cicero's Cilician command of 51-50.⁸ On the other hand, the increasing professionalization of the Roman army also had an impact on its leadership, with the rise of a cadre of experts in warfare, individuals whom Rosenstein terms *virī militares*.⁹ Alongside renowned commanders like Sulla, Pompeius and M. Antonius the triumvir, we should also place less well-known warfare specialists in this category, individuals like M. Fonteius, L. Cornelius Balbus (Caesar's *praefectus fabrum*) and C. Pomptinus (the ex-praetor who aided Cicero in Cilicia).¹⁰

From the earliest days of the Republic there was a competitive drive amongst the Roman elite to display their *virtus*. *Virtus* was a distinctively masculine attribute, which in the early and middle Republic most commonly meant 'manly courage'.¹¹ Unsurprisingly, in this warrior culture it was predominantly exhibited in martial contexts. Sallust, looking back to the aristocrats of the generations that preceded Sulla, describes the aristocratic striving to display their *virtus* thus:

... to such men no toil was unfamiliar, no ground was too steep or rugged, no armed enemy was forbidding; *virtus* was dominant in all respects. Yet the greatest struggle for *gloria* was amongst themselves: each one of them strove to strike down an enemy, to scale a rampart, to be seen doing such a great deed. This they considered riches, good reputation (*bona fama*) and high nobility.¹²

⁸ Gell. 1.13.10; Rosenstein 2006, 375; *MRR* 1.280; 462-3; 500 & 503; 2.243 & 251-2.

⁹ Rosenstein 2006, 378.

¹⁰ Cic. *Att.* 5.20.3; *Fam.* 15.4.8-9; in a letter to the younger Cato, Cicero admits that Pomptinus led the Roman forces against the difficult Cilician town of Erana; *MRR* 2.245.

¹¹ Harris 1985, 20.

¹² Sall. *Cat.* 7.5-6: "... talibus viris non labor insolitus, non locus ullus asper aut arduus erat, non armatus hostis formidulosus: virtus omnia domuerat. sed gloriae maxumum certamen inter ipsos erat: se quisque hostem ferire, murum ascendere, conspici, dum tale facinus faceret, properabat; eas divitias, eam bonam famam magnamque nobilitatem putabant".

Although this passage is part of a moralizing comparison, Sallust here sheds light on the type of military success for which the elite was striving: above all, the desire to be seen to be the first amongst one's peers. As Pliny states about Mancinus: he was "the first man over the wall at the storming of Carthage."¹³ Associated with these acts of pre-eminent prowess were the decorations the Romans awarded for outstanding individual displays of *virtus*, particularly the *coronae*, such as the *corona muralis* for the first over the enemy wall and the *corona civica* for the rescuing of Roman citizens.¹⁴ Some individuals in the early and middle Republic even channelled their competitiveness through the practice of single combat; and a number of prominent aristocrats, like M. Claudius Marcellus, M. Servilius Geminus and Scipio Aemilianus, added to their reputations by their performances as successful monomachists.¹⁵

In the course of the second and first centuries, the meaning of *virtus* became increasingly sophisticated. For instance, good generalship – particularly the leadership of a victorious campaign – became more and more worthy of *laus*, as indicated by Metellus' much cited *laudatio* where being a *fortissimus imperator* is specifically cited.¹⁶ This added to the complex meaning of *virtus*, with successful planning, speed of movement, and cumulative conquests also being seen to be indicators of *virtus*. A display of *virtus* could also, on occasion, be perceived negatively, such as when the individuals in pursuit of *gloria* were deemed rash and thoughtless of the immediate consequences; Caesar portrays the actions of a

¹³ Plin. *HN* 35.23: "qui primus Carthaginem inruperat".

¹⁴ Maxfield 1981, 67-81.

¹⁵ Plut. *Marc.* 2.1, states that Marcellus (cos. 222) fought a number of single combats; Livy 45.39.16: in a speech from 167, M. Servilius Geminus (cos. 202) claimed to have been victorious in at least twenty-three duels; Polyb. 35.5.1-2: as a military tribune in 150, Scipio defeated a Celtiberian chieftain in single combat at Intercatia in north-western Spain; Oakley 1985, 392-410.

¹⁶ *ORF*³, Q. Caecilius Metellus = Plin. *HN* 7.139-140.

few of his troops in this manner.¹⁷ *Virtus* could also be exhibited in non-military contexts (as will be subsequently discussed), thus giving it further meaning.

Wiseman indicates how the aristocratic desire for pre-eminence frequently resulted in the use of ‘boastful superlatives’ when communicating martial deeds.¹⁸ The inscription on Gaius Duilius’ triumphal column (from the mid third century) illustrates this.¹⁹ It told the viewer of the monument that Duilius had put to flight all (*omnes*) the greatest (*maximos*) Carthaginian forces and that he had been the first consul (*consol primos*) to fight a successful sea battle.²⁰ The successful transmission of an aristocrat’s conspicuous achievements resulted in *laus* and consequently a *bona fama* amongst his peers and the Roman people, all of which consequently increased his *dignitas* and *auctoritas*.²¹ This thesis investigates the means and motives behind this transmission, focusing on the more ephemeral mechanisms that *imperatores* and their associates employed.²²

Excessive or unwarranted claims of *virtus* on campaign, however, often resulted in fellow aristocrats criticising these claims or other aspects of the individual’s military record, criticisms that might muddy his martial ethos and even on occasion result in a *mala fama*. A number of scholars point towards the self-regulatory nature of the Roman elite, but they do not

¹⁷ Caes. *B Gall.* 5.44; during the Gallic attack on Quintus Cicero’s winter encampment in 54 BC, Caesar, when describing the actions of T. Pullo and L. Vorenus, portrays their desire for *virtus* as recklessness; 7.47: later in 52 during the siege of Gergovia, Caesar blamed his troops’ failure to withdraw and their resultant losses in part on their thinking that “there was nothing too difficult to attain by their *virtus*”; Harris 2006, 312.

¹⁸ Wiseman 1985, 5.

¹⁹ *ILLRP* 319; Gordon 1983, 124-7; although the original inscription has been lost, we do have an imperial copy of the inscribed base of Duilius’ *columna rostrata*. There is, however, scholarly debate about the accuracy of the imperial copy due to the copyist’s imperfect knowledge of third century Latin.

²⁰ *ILLRP* 319 “[Consol Segest]ano[s, socios p(ople) R(omani), Cartaginiensiom] / [opsidione]d exemet legion[esque Cartaginienses omnes] / [ma]ximosque magistr[at]os l[uci palam post dies] / [n]ovem castreis exfogiont. ...enque eodem mag[istrat]ud bene] / [r]em navebos marid consol primos g[eset copiasque] / [c]lasesque navales primos...”; Wiseman 1985, 3-4.

²¹ Syme 1939, 13: *dignitas* meant more than just honour and dignity to the elite; it was a deep value of one’s personal and one’s family worth within Roman society; Brunt & Moore 1967, 83, define *auctoritas* as “the influence or prestige which ensures that one’s views are accepted”; during the Republic this applied to the members of the Senate, particularly “the leading senators, who had held the highest offices (*principes*).”

²² Although it is accepted that autobiographical prose, the focus of chapter five, is a more permanent means of promoting and thus preserving military *res gestae*.

go into depth about the how this self-regulation manifested itself when dealing with martial publicity.²³ We have to go beyond the votes for and against triumphal claims, and focus on the ways in which rivals actively criticised *imperatores* both during and after their campaigns, especially by the means most accessible to them in Rome – namely oratory. This vital component of the Roman aristocracy’s self-regulatory nature, in relation to the military record, is analysed in chapter three. Furthermore, the accumulation and projection of excessive martial achievements during the late Republic was responsible in part for undermining the consensus on which the aristocracy’s dominance depended. The role of letters specifically in this process is dealt with in chapter four.

It should be stressed that the cultural practices of Republican Rome were not wholly bent on warfare, a perspective that might be drawn from a number of Polybius’ comments during his excursus on Rome’s constitution in the sixth book of his history.²⁴ The display of non-military or civic exploits could also produce a pre-eminent reputation amongst this ancient state’s competitive aristocracy. Wiseman cites civic construction projects, like roads and buildings, as one way of projecting one’s name and achievements to the community.²⁵ The election to a political office or priesthood was also deemed a praise-worthy achievement, and

²³ Brunt 1978a, 47, highlights the role of the Senate in overseeing the actions of magistrates; see Crawford 1992, 24 & 26, on how the Roman elite espoused an “ideology of collective rule in the middle and late Republic”; Rosenstein 2006, 373, maintains that “the aristocracy was collectively vigilant in policing its moral boundaries”, citing the Elder Cato’s actions against deviations from acceptable aristocratic behaviour; Cf. Rich 1993, 59.

²⁴ Polyb. 6.11-57; it should be stated that this excursus concerned Rome’s constitution at the height of the Hannibalic War, and yet it still deals with a number of the city-state’s civic institutions; nonetheless, Polybius is frequently cited as a good perspective on the militaristic nature of the Roman state during the middle Republic. Indeed, as a hostage in Rome and later a client of Scipio Aemilianus, he had close access to the working heart of this state’s political system. However, it must not be forgotten that Polybius had considerable military experience, witnessing the might of the Roman war machine during the Pydna campaign and later at Carthage. As well as providing good information with which he could make his many assessments of Roman society, these experiences also caused him perhaps to provide an over-respectful perspective on the military side of the *res publica* at the expense of its civic attributes; Harris 2006, 309-310, concerning Polybius’ analysis of the punishment practices of the Roman army, states “his whole account is tendentious: it improves Rome’s record, and probably ... exaggerates greatly the disciplinary effects of aristocratic control, obviously because of his partiality for his informants in that social class”.

²⁵ Wiseman 1985, 5-6; he cites *ILLRP* 454, an inscription on a milestone in Lucania, which he attributes to the consul of 128 T. Annius Rufus; *MRR* 1.506. This inscription enumerates the distances covered in building “the road from Regium to Capua” and also another civic achievement, the recapture of 917 runaway slaves.

these civic *honores* were prominently displayed as well on inscriptions as well as other media, like coins.²⁶ By the second century the writing, or even sponsorship, of historical, philosophical or other literary works had also developed and become a means of attaining renown for Roman aristocrats.²⁷ This development in literary attainment occasionally melded with the need for projecting and monumentalizing military endeavours, resulting in the composition of laudatory works. Of these works we have good evidence of autobiographical prose, and this will be the focus of chapter five.

Amongst civic attributes, the most sought after was a good public speaking record. In Metellus' *laudatio*, sandwiched between his being the first of warriors and most powerful of commanders, Metellus also claimed that his father was the best of orators.²⁸ Conspicuous oratory in both political and forensic contexts gained more and more *kudos* during the second century as demonstrated by effective and renowned practitioners like the elder Cato, M. Antonius (cos. 99), and L. Crassus (cos. 95). By the late Republic, with the increasing influence of Greek rhetoric, prominent orators such as Hortensius and Cicero were competing with each other to see who could compose and deliver the most effective and memorable speeches. In spite of the *fama* that these orators attained, the conspicuous display of one's *virtus* in a military context was still deemed to be of the highest value. Cicero even argued for its extraordinary worth in his defence of Murena in 63 BC:

²⁶ For example, *ILS* 1, the famous epitaph of L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus (cos. 298) states that he had been consul, censor and aedile before providing details of his military successes in Italy; *RRC* 443/1; one coin series issued by Caesar displays the pontifical emblems of the *culullus*, *aspergillum*, axe and *apex* on its obverse.

²⁷ For the benefits of historiography and biography see Bates 1983, 362-7; Rawson 1985, 49-50, 91-93; Steel 2005, 9-10; Flower 1995, 170-190, investigates in what ways the *fabulae praetextae* put on during the middle Republic promoted or at least reflected contemporaneous military events; Cf. Manuwald 2001, 53-236; see Wiseman 1982, 33; Hillard 1987, 37-41; White 1993, 66-7 & 80, for poets who wrote potentially laudatory works for Roman *imperatores*.

²⁸ *ORF*³, 6 Q. Caecilius Metellus = Plin. *HN* 7.139.

In truth there is no doubt – I must speak my mind – that success in a military career counts for more than any other. It is this which has won renown for the people of Rome and eternal glory for their city, which has compelled the world to obey our rule. All the activities of this city, all this noble profession of ours, our hard work and recognition here at the bar lurk in obscurity under the care and protection of prowess in war.²⁹

Although the military threat of Catiline heightened the current need for *homines militares* like Murena, Cicero demonstrates here, as on other occasions, that he accepted the primacy of the military arena for winning *laus* and *gloria*.³⁰ This acknowledgement of military *virtus* influenced Cicero’s rhetoric on a number of occasions, particularly in the speeches where he praises or criticises individual *imperatores*, as will be highlighted in chapters two and three.³¹

²⁹ Cic. *Mur.* 22: “ac nimirum – dicendum est enim quod sentio – rei militaris virtus praestat ceteris omnibus. haec nomen populo Romano, haec huic urbi aeternam gloriam peperit, haec orbem terrarum parere huic imperio coegit; omnes urbanae res, omnia haec nostra praeclara studia et haec forensis laus et industria latet in tutela ac praesidio bellicae virtutis”. This defence speech was delivered in the context of the Catilinarian conspiracy, when Cicero was concerned about Catiline’s military forces in Etruria.

³⁰ Cic. *Off.* 1.74; when arguing that civic successes could lead to pre-eminence, Cicero admits that “there is a common assumption that military achievements are more important than civil ones, a belief which must be toned down”, which points to the widespread belief in the primacy of martial *gloria*; 2.45; later he confirms this belief: “the first thing, then, to recommend a young man for *gloria* is that he tries to win it, if he can, in a military career. Many youths among our forebears attained prominence in this way, for wars were almost always being waged then”; Harris 1985, 22.

³¹ These two chapters, particularly chapter two, draw on and intersect with the considerable recent research into the role of oratory in popular and senatorial politics, most notably: Fantham 1997, “The contexts and occasions of Roman public rhetoric”; Millar 1998, *The Crowd in the Rome in the Late Republic*; Mouritsen 2001, *Plebs and Politics in the Late Roman Republic*; Steel, 2002, *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire*; Morstein-Marx 2004, *Mass Oratory and Political Power in the Late Roman Republic*.

2. Modern approaches to the transmission of the military record

The reflection of the self in the mirror of the community is important enough to impel a man to risk his life.³²

This observation was made by the anthropologist Turney-High, as part of his investigations into why warriors sought renown in primitive societies. He identified how many primitive warriors frequently looked to their people for the recognition of the individual prowess that they had achieved in combat. For instance, he highlighted how many tribal warriors employed both oral and physical means to advertise their personal exploits, such as the Californian Creeks, who, with great ceremony set the legs, arms and scalps of their defeated enemies on poles.³³ Likewise, scholars of the Roman Republic have identified the innate desire of Rome's leaders to communicate their individual military successes to their peers and the people by various mechanisms. Sometimes these communications are seen under the umbrella of political publicity, especially in works that emphasize the broad 'display culture' of the Roman elite.³⁴ For instance, Hölkeskamp describes the widespread application of publicity thus:

'Publicity' in all respects, appearance in public, permanent interaction with the people in a number of ways, a genuinely 'public' political life, in the Forum and elsewhere, were absolutely indispensable for this 'ruling class' as a whole, because popular participation

³² Turney-High 1971, 152.

³³ Turney-High 1971, 144; citing Swanton 1922, 378.

³⁴ For example, Gruen 1996, 216: "the ascendancy of the Roman ruling class rested in part on self-image, display, and a sense of common values".

was part and parcel of the institutional, social and ideological framework which the elite dominated and refined.³⁵

Alongside such broad approaches, there are also modern treatments of the specific mechanisms that disseminated military *res gestae*.

First of all, scholars see the triumph as the most prominent expression of Roman military success. Owing to the considerable documentary and iconographic evidence concerning the triumph, a number of modern studies tackle this multi-faceted ceremony.³⁶ Versnel and Rüpke both focus on the triumph's religious attributes, with the former investigating its origins and consequently arguing for links with certain Hellenistic rites.³⁷ Künzl highlights the visual impact of the procession, particularly the display of living and material representations of the vanquished, as well as investigating the logistical requirements of putting on a triumph.³⁸ Richardson and Auliard examine the nature and development of the regulations that surrounded the awarding of a triumph.³⁹ Beard's recent work is a more critical analysis of the triumph, during which she deconstructs a number of the modern assumptions surrounding the ceremony.⁴⁰ In so doing she argues that as well as glorifying military success and its associated values, it "also provided a context within which those values could be discussed

³⁵ Hölkeskamp 1993, 30.

³⁶ Ehlers 1939, 493-51, provides a comprehensive collection of the sources on the triumph.

³⁷ Versnel 1970; Rüpke 1990, 223-233.

³⁸ Künzl 1988, 30-44, on the triumphal procession; 65-84 on logistics, including the roles of the various participants during the ceremony.

³⁹ Richardson 1975, 50-63; Auliard 2001.

⁴⁰ For example, Beard 2007, 209-211, argues that the triumphal regulations cited by Valerius Maximus (2.8) were an attempt by the imperial commentator to impose rules on an earlier historical period; 225-223, she also questions the modern theory that the triumphator impersonated Jupiter Optimus Maximus; Cf. Raphael's mixed review of Beard in *The Spectator* from the 14th November, <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/the-magazine/books/354006/the-conquering-hero-as-showoff.shtml>>, accessed December 13th 2007, and Fitzgerald's more positive review in *The Times Literary Supplement*, from the December 5th 2007, <http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/the_tls/article3004230.ece>, accessed December 13th 2007.

and challenged”.⁴¹ In line with Beard’s approach on this latter issue we must not perceive the triumph as being wholly separate from the other means of transmitting military success. It was an *honos*, a short-lived summit of *gloria*, that derived from not only the *imperator*’s victorious efforts in the field, but also from his and his allies’ subsequent endeavours to disseminate this success, an *honos* which had been voted for by a gathering of the Senate and a caucus of the Roman people. It was during the process that *preceded* a triumph that letters and oratory played a frequent and fundamental part, a role that has not been given the scholarly attention that it deserves.⁴² This imbalance will be addressed in chapters two, three and four.

Secondly, alongside the triumph, the erection of monuments and their accompanying inscriptions have received the most scholarly attention. Harris identifies monumental publicity as one of the primary “mechanisms for spreading fame”.⁴³ Pietilä-Castrén’s *Magnificentia publica* and Ziolkowski’s *The Temples of Mid-Republican Rome* survey the numerous monuments erected in Rome, particularly in the middle Republic, and how the majority of these edifices had an association of some sort with military success.⁴⁴ Hekster and Rich identify how “ordinary commanders” seem to have stopped the practice of erecting temples “in the period from 100 B.C. to the death of Caesar” before a revival during the triumviral and early Augustan period.⁴⁵ Hölkeskamp sees these columns, statues, arches, temples and paintings as the permanent visual representation of these individuals’ successes,

⁴¹ Beard 2007, 4; in 187-218 she looks at the various opportunities by which rivals could challenge an *imperator*’s triumphal claim.

⁴² For example, Beard 2007, 203, in relation to dispatches states that “the occasional references to ‘laurelled dispatches’ are certainly not enough to prove them a permanent feature of the procedure”; she then goes to discuss where the laurel came from. By focusing on the appearance of victorious letters she disregards the considerable evidence indicating that dispatches reporting military success were regularly sent to the Senate.

⁴³ Harris 1985, 20; 30; 261-2 for his additional note VI entitled ‘The fame of victorious commanders as it was reflected in the monuments’ in which he lists the most significant monuments and inscriptions.

⁴⁴ See also Orlin 1997, 45-66 on the vows taken on campaign by magistrates to erect temples; and 117-139 on the role of *manubiae* and *praeda* in the construction of these temples.

⁴⁵ Hekster & Rich 2006, 152-153.

collectively describing them as “the triumphal landscape” of Rome.⁴⁶ In a later paper he emphasizes how the presence of these structures influenced aspects of Roman public life, such as the triumph. In so doing he makes the point that these structures were an expensive investment, which raises the question: how did *imperatores* with limited financial resources promote their military achievements?⁴⁷ Hölscher follows a similar line to Harris, arguing in considerable depth about how monuments were the primary means of transmitting military achievements. From the perspective of posterity and maintaining the family name in the political heart of the Roman city-state, this argument has considerable weight. However, there is a significant temporal gap in Hölscher’s thesis between the attainment of success in the field and the completion of a triumphal monument.⁴⁸ What did *imperatores* do in the interim besides holding a triumph? Were there any alternative, less costly means of disseminating and maintaining the aristocrat’s name in the mean time? It seems to me that the strong focus on the surviving material culture has blinkered many scholars to the more ephemeral, yet proficient, non-ceremonial mechanisms by which *imperatores* initiated and communicated their military records.

Linked to these triumphal monuments are their accompanying inscriptions. Elsner, in his analysis of Augustus’ *Res Gestae*, emphasizes the close link between inscriptions and their monuments, as the inscribed text informed the reader not only of the subject’s achievements,

⁴⁶ Hölkeskamp 1993, 26-9; I first heard this concept of the ‘triumphal landscape’ in a paper given by Professor Hölkeskamp at the Institute of Classical Studies London on 27th April 2002 entitled “Icons of Virtus - Exemplary heroic deeds in the monumental memory of the Roman Republic”; he returns to this idea in a number of subsequent papers.

⁴⁷ Hölkeskamp 2006, 485, emphasizes the permanent nature of the ‘triumphal landscape’ thus: “these temples often recalled military victories and were frequently built from the profits of war in the shape of booty. Such buildings were a religious as well as expensive way forever to inscribe the ephemeral ceremony of the triumphal procession in the monumental memory of the city”.

⁴⁸ Hölscher 2006, 27, underscores the transient nature of success in the field: “a victorious battle is a momentary factual event, limited in space and time”; he then goes on to differentiate between two sorts of ‘transmission’: “in Greek and Roman antiquity the symbolic transformation of military victories into political power ... was achieved on the one hand by significant actions, such as rituals or celebrations, and on the other hand by visual signs, above all by powerful monuments”.

but also shaped his or her perception of the structure.⁴⁹ As stated earlier, Wiseman points out some of the ways in which these *tabulae triumphales* (as he terms them) communicated military success. Alongside superlatives, he highlights how they frequently enumerated achievements, such as the numbers of enemy dead and captured or the number of days in which the victory was attained, in order to create a distinctive and hopefully pre-eminent image of individual success.⁵⁰ This habit of lapidary enumeration exhibited itself not only in inscriptions, but also in the speeches and letters that promoted these *imperatores'* successes, as will be argued in chapters two and three of the thesis.

Thirdly, the role of coins in disseminating the military records of individual Roman *imperatores* has been given a degree of scholarly attention, although ancestral rather than contemporaneous achievements have been the focus of some studies.⁵¹ Crawford provides a cursory history of public and private issues at the end of his catalogue of Republican coins, within which he points to the diversity of the militaristic iconography of the coins minted during the Republic.⁵² Zehnacker goes into more depth identifying a number of the ways in which moneyers reflected current events, particularly those images relating to the various external and internal conflicts of the late Republic.⁵³ Hölscher argues that many of the coins issued during the late Republic acted as a cipher through which leading aristocrats disseminated abstract concepts like “*Libertas, Salus, Fortuna, Felicitas, Pax* oder *Virtus,*

⁴⁹ Elsner 1996, 35; Cf. Cornwell 2007, 6-9.

⁵⁰ For example, Livy 41.28.8-10, records the inscription that Ti. Gracchus placed in the temple of Magna Mater, which commemorated his consular campaign of 176 in Sardinia; it mentions that 80,000 Sardinians were either killed or captured; *ILLRP* 133: the consul C. Sempronius Tuditanus communicated details of his Illyrian campaign on a pedestal inscription found near Duino, including how in “four times in fifteen days he defeated and put to flight the Taurisci and Carni and Liburni, whom he drove from the seas to the shores”; Wiseman 1985, 4-5.

⁵¹ Zehnacker 1973, 477-534 & 969-1081; Hölscher 1982, 278; Flower 1996, 79-88, for a good treatment of the coins which promoted ancestral achievements.

⁵² Crawford 1974, 712-744.

⁵³ Zehnacker 1973, 544-549, on issues relating to military events of the late second century; 562-577 for issues connected with the Social War, the civil war between Marius and Sulla and its aftermath; 594-600 includes analysis of issues relating to Pompeius' conquests; 602-616 on Caesar's issues; 623-626 on series issued during the triumviral period.

Honos, Concordia, Fides etc” as well as more tangible concepts like the specific symbolic depictions of cities and countries, such as Pompeius’ links to his African successes through the personified head of Africa wearing an elephant skin on the obverse of an issue from 71 BC.⁵⁴ By focusing on the political ideology of these coins, however, Hölscher underplays the role of the individual aristocrat’s personal achievements. Nonetheless, Zehnacker and Hölscher demonstrate that coins, particularly from the late second century, reflected contemporary military events, and this raises the question about what other types of media were employed to transmit contemporaneous achievements.

One other issue needs to be addressed. The active participation of the individual commanders in their martial publicity has been significantly under-represented within modern scholarship, especially their role in the composing of military dispatches and the delivery of public speeches. This study aims to demonstrate how these men exploited and made innovations to existing communication mechanisms in order to enhance their military reputations.⁵⁵ Unlike monumental publicity, written and oral advertisement – specifically letters and speeches – would have enabled commanders to report their recent military actions more quickly and efficiently. Furthermore, although more ephemeral, such publicity devices would have had a greater likelihood of catching the current mood and interest of the people back in Rome, thereby increasing the overall chance of the *imperator* attaining a *bona fama*.

⁵⁴ Hölscher 1982, 271-2; *RRC* 401/1; see Clark 2007, *Divine Qualities: Cult and Community in Republican Rome*, for the most recent study of how these divine qualities, as espoused by religious cults and other media in Republican Rome, interacted with the Roman community at large.

⁵⁵ Hopkins 1978, 26; Millar 1977, 352; Millar 1984, 5; during my research only two scholars, Hopkins and Millar, have come to my notice who specifically cite speeches and letters as key means of disseminating military success during the middle and late Republic. Unfortunately neither goes into extensive detail about the fundamental role that these two types of media played in both promoting and shaping the martial ethos that many *imperatores* were endeavouring to project.

2. Oratory as a means of publicising the military record

Sergius in his second campaign lost his right hand; in two campaigns he was wounded twenty three times, with the result that he was crippled in both hands and both feet, only his spirit remained intact; although disabled, he served in numerous subsequent campaigns. He was twice captured by Hannibal – no ordinary enemy – and twice he escaped from captivity although kept in chains and shackles every day for twenty months. He fought on four occasions with only his left hand, while two horses he was riding were stabbed beneath him. He had a right hand made of iron for himself and, going into battle with this bound to his arm, raised the siege of Cremona, saved Placentia and captured twelve enemy camps in Gaul. *All these exploits are testified by the speech he made* during his praetorship when his colleagues tried to keep him away from the sacrifices, as one who was disabled.¹

The speech of the praetor Marcus Sergius Silus in 197 BC exemplifies how the martial exploits of Roman magistrates were prominent subject matter for public oratory during the middle and late Republic. Sergius demonstrates that such oratory was not simply about reporting recent victories, but that military service was seen as a valuable means of countering the hazards that magistrates frequently faced within the competitive Roman aristocracy. Whether it was deliberative, forensic or epideictic oratory, as will be demonstrated in the following two chapters, various aspects of military behaviour were frequently communicated

¹ Plin. *HN* 7.104-5; *ORF*³, 97-8: “secundo stipendio dextram manum perdidit; stipendis duobus ter et viciens vulneratus est, ob id neutra manu, neutro pede satis utilis, uno tantum salvus, plurimis postea stipendiis debilis miles. bis ab Hannibale captus (neque enim cum quolibet hoste res fuit), bis vinculorum eius profugus, in viginti mensibus nullo non die in catenis aut compedibus custoditus. sinistra manu <una die> sola quater pugnavit, duobus equis insidente eo subfossis. dextram sibi ferream fecit eaque religata proeliatu Cremonam obsidione exemit, Placentiam tutatus est, duodena castra hostium in Gallia cepit: quae omnia ex oratione eius apparent habita cum in praetura sacris arceretur a collegis ut debilis”; *MRR* 1.333.

to, and debated before, a range of audiences within the city of Rome. This chapter focuses on the speeches that promoted the magisterial military record, whilst the subsequent chapter analyses the ways in which it was denigrated. In order to highlight the heavy and varied employment of oratory to promote a martial ethos within Rome, this chapter breaks down into four sections: the education of public oratory; victorious oratory; the oratory employed to attain or maintain military commands; and finally, the role of military achievements in forensic defence speeches. In following this approach this chapter will not only emphasize the diversity of the contexts in which the military record was promoted, but, moreover, point to resultant benefits and difficulties as well as the nature of the audiences being targeted.

1. Oratory and oratorical training

Oratory was one of the most integral facets of political life during the Roman Republic and considerable scholarship emphasizes that it was the primary means through which incumbent magistrates and other leading men communicated with the Senate and people of Rome. Scholars, such as Millar, Mouritsen and Morstein-Marx, have focused heavily on the role and nature of *contiones* in Rome, whilst attempting to gauge the democratic elements of Roman political life.² Fantham, Alexander and Ramsey amongst others, though, have recently re-emphasized the Senate and law-courts as fundamental platforms for public oratory.³ These three areas will be the primary focus of the following two chapters.

In relation to the oral promotion of military achievements though, the role and influence of oratory within the Roman Republican army also needs to be addressed. Pina Polo and

² Millar 1998, *The Crowd in the Rome in the Late Republic*; Mouritsen 2001, *Plebs and Politics in the Late Roman Republic*; Morstein-Marx 2004, *Mass Oratory and Political Power in the Late Roman Republic*; Alexander 2007, 100-1, provides an excellent overview of the views espoused on the political role of *contiones* by these three scholars.

³ Fantham 2005, 209-236; Alexander 2007, 98-108; Ramsey 2007, 122-35.

Chrissanthos have pointed out that Roman military leaders delivered speeches to their troops in a number of different contexts.⁴ Of these, three significant contexts stand out: military *contiones* in camp, pre-battle harangues, and *laudationes* for individual soldiers. Military *contiones* in camp frequently involved the communication of news and intelligence, which in a number of cases augmented the commander's *auctoritas*. For example, whilst encamped near Petra in Palestine in 63 Pompeius received a dispatch and after a mound of saddles was put together, he informed his men from this make-shift platform that Mithridates had died – news that probably signalled the end of the campaign.⁵

Then there was the delivery of battle harangues, and although many of those directly quoted within ancient historiography are fictional or embellished, such oratory did occur now and again, probably in an informal and briefer way, and in many cases it was a key means of encouragement, involving the reiteration of past achievements.⁶ For instance, prior to the engagement at Thapsus, the Caesarian commentator states that:

Caesar himself, on foot, quickly made the rounds of the troops and roused their fighting spirit by making persuasive appeals and recalling his veterans' qualities in previous battles.⁷

⁴ Pina Polo 1995, 203-16, investigates the nature of *contiones* in both civil and military life and within the latter environment he identifies a number of significant contexts including: *laudationes*, *dona militaria*, punishments, upon taking up or completing a campaign, communicating orders or intelligence and battle harangues; see also Pina Polo 1989, *Las contiones civiles y militares en Roma*; Chrissanthos 2004, 341-67, takes the perspective of the Roman soldier and raises the issue of how much freedom he had as a citizen to express his views within military society. He points out a number of occasions when soldiers, particularly during the late Republic, expressed their discontent to their commander, but were also directly influential in forcing agreements between civil war leaders.

⁵ Plut. *Pomp.* 41.

⁶ Hansen 1993, 161-80, following his argument about the historiographical fabrication of harangues, admits that ancient commanders still probably moved up and down the lines of troops prior to battle delivering a few apophthegms; Goldworthy 1996a, 146, adopts a similar line maintaining that Roman generals in many cases rode amongst their troops addressing small sections of them with some encouraging words.

⁷ *B Afr.* 81: "ipse pedibus circum milites concursans virtutesque veteranorum proeliaque superiora commemorans blandeque appellans animos eorum excitabat".

The delivery of *laudationes* on campaign was also influential, since in praising certain individuals for their bravery, the commander would have both emphasized and given formal recognition to the soldier's *virtus*. This is demonstrated when P. Cornelius Scipio informed a *contio* of his men, after the capture of New Carthage in 210 BC, that Q. Trebellius and Sex. Digitius were both being awarded the *corona muralis* because they had reached the top of the city-wall at the same time.⁸ Cato in a later speech also describes how during his Spanish campaign of 195 he personally praised his men at a military *contio*.⁹ Hence, commanders would often be communicating recent achievements on campaign. Furthermore, legates, on occasion, also delivered speeches to the men, as, for instance, when they were leading a contingent on a separate operation, as demonstrated by Labienus in 53 prior to leading his legion against the Treveri.¹⁰ Therefore, even when away from Rome, these aristocrats were speaking to crowds made up of thousands of Roman citizens, as well as allied contingents, in a variety of contexts.

In many ancient and modern societies the skilled and legitimate employment of violence by soldiers has been seen predominantly as a masculine virtue; warfare was frequently perceived in Republican Rome as being a more manly pursuit than oratory, as even Cicero attests in the *Pro Murena*.¹¹ The supposedly self-sacrificing commanders of earlier periods, like M. Furius Camillus, M'. Curius Dentatus, and C. Fabricius Luscinus, were regarded by commentators like Ennius, the Elder Cato and Cicero as exemplifying the ideal values of

⁸ Livy 26.48.3; Pina Polo 1995, 214.

⁹ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 35: "If any man performed courageously, I rewarded him handsomely, and praised him with many words when the soldiers were paraded".

¹⁰ Caes. *B Gall.* 6.8.

¹¹ Cic. *Mur.* 22; Alston 1998, 205; Connolly 2007, 83, argues for this perception and she opens her argument by citing an exchange of words in Virgil's *Aeneid* between Turnus and his rival the eloquent Drances, including Turnus' question that: "... is your martial spirit to be found always in that wind-fickle tongue and those flying feet of yours?", Virg. *Aen.* 11.389-91; McDonnell 2003, 236: "In Rome ... physical prowess or courage, especially as displayed in war, remained the central element of manliness throughout the Republican period and into the Empire".

Roman manliness.¹² On the other hand, Connolly makes the important point that oratory “was taught, studied and practised in public space, which is to say male space, by men, for men, to men, according to men’s interests”.¹³ To these urban contexts we should add the speeches delivered on campaign, again by men, to men and for men, oratory that could often entail the encouragement and praise of successful violence. Connolly argues that there were a number of inter-connecting tensions between the practice of rhetoric and masculinity, “between eloquence and virtue, word and action, style and substance, artifice and integrity, politics and war”.¹⁴ In the promotion and denigration of the martial ethos such tensions frequently arise, including at times the feminisation of an *imperator*’s military achievements, a subject that is addressed in chapter three.

Prior to his military service the young Roman aristocrat was already expected to learn about the theory and practice of public oratory. There was no established state education system or curriculum in Republican Rome and so a young aristocrat was dependent on his parents, the quality of his tutors and, above all, his own proclivities and experiences.¹⁵ Cumulatively each aristocrat absorbed a spectrum of theoretical and practical experience about public oratory in his formative years.

Primary education occurred in the home with some parents actively involved in teaching their children the rudiments of literacy, history, law and mathematics.¹⁶ The elder Cato is even said to have written out his histories in large letters, so that his son would learn about the old Roman traditions, an exercise that would have involved verbal recitation.¹⁷ From the late third century onwards an increasingly number of elite households included Greek-speaking

¹² Connolly 2007, 84; Harris 1985, 65-6; Enn., *Ann. Fr.* 186-193, 209 & 468-9.

¹³ Connolly 2007, 83-4.

¹⁴ Connolly 2007, 84.

¹⁵ Corbeill 2007, 70.

¹⁶ Bonner 1977, 12; Plaut. *Most.* 120-54 alludes to how Roman parents taught their children letters and the principles of the law.

¹⁷ Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 20.

tutors or pedagogues who not only taught the boys to read and write Latin, but also instructed them about Greek language and literature. These tutors were usually skilled in rhetoric and grammar; and they employed exercises that often involved the retelling of well known-narratives as well as debates on set themes when students became more proficient.¹⁸ For example, the young Julius Caesar was taught by Antonius Gniphio, a rhetorician renowned for his declamations.¹⁹ Additionally, a number of the Greek rhetoricians and grammarians, who came to Rome from the second century onwards, started to give public lectures in Rome and by the late Republic a number of schools had been established in Rome.²⁰ Suetonius, for instance, mentions that Cicero, even as praetor, attended Antonius Gniphio's school.²¹ Certain Roman aristocrats, moreover, in the late Republic travelled to Greece to learn about philosophy and rhetoric at the schools of established Greek intellectuals and Cicero, Caesar, and Octavian when young men all spent time in the East learning and improving their rhetorical skills.²² Only a few aristocrats, though, had the means for this overseas education prior to the mid first century BC.²³

Greek rhetoric gave better structure to speeches and promoted such concepts as *inventio* (developing one's argument), *pronuntiatio* (delivery) and *elocutio* (style).²⁴ Furthermore it taught Roman orators how to employ certain rhetorical mechanisms more effectively, such as digressions, exaggerations, pathos and historical exemplars, mechanisms that enabled them to appeal to the prejudices and emotions of their audiences, so increasing the chance of gaining

¹⁸ Corbeill 2007, 70.

¹⁹ Suet. *Gram.* 7.

²⁰ Suet. *Gram.* 3 states that there were more than twenty flourishing grammar schools towards the end of the Republic; Hopkins 1978, 77.

²¹ Suet. *Gram.* 7.

²² Cic. *Brut.* 307; Suet. *Iul.* 4; Caesar and Cicero both travelled to Rhodes to see the rhetorician Molo; in 45-44 BC, Octavian was at the school of the rhetorician Apollodorus of Pergamum at Apollonia in Illyria.

²³ Rawson 1985, 9-12, believes that such sojourns were rare in Cicero's youth and became more common amongst the subsequent generation.

²⁴ Clarke 1996, 24.

their attention, sympathy and support. The inclusion of a commander's martial achievements within a speech was, above all, about influencing an audience's perspective about an individual or a bill, whether this audience was composed of influential senators, the citizens who voted in the assemblies, or the members of jury who decided the fate of a defendant. On a number of occasions, however, tensions arose amongst the Roman elite over how oratory should be taught and in particular over the perceived impact of Greek rhetorical theory on traditional Roman practices.²⁵

Of these the *tirocinium fori* was probably the most traditional; upon taking up the *toga virilis* at around sixteen a young Roman aristocrat commenced this apprenticeship. The *tirocinium fori* involved the youth accompanying an established orator for a period of time and observing public business in the Forum.²⁶ Cicero fulfilled his apprenticeship at the start of the Social War (90-89 BC) and he mentions that he constantly heard various orators at *contiones* and *quaestiones*.²⁷ Tacitus also emphasizes the practical benefits of the *tirocinium* during the Republic, such as observing the reaction of a jury or a crowd.²⁸ It is highly probable that these apprentices listened to speeches from returning commanders outside the *pomerium*, as well as any criticisms or concerns about ongoing operations from the *rostra*, and the forensic speeches delivered on behalf of or against prosecuted magistrates. The Ciceronian and Tacitean descriptions of the *tirocinium fori*, however, do not mention the observation of senatorial sittings, presumably because they were closed sessions, although the apprentice was probably

²⁵ Suet. *Rhet.* 1.2; Stroup 2007, 28-9; these tensions are especially reflected in two senatorial decrees recorded by Suetonius. The first one in 161 BC instructed the praetor M. Pomponius to expel all the Greek rhetoricians and grammarians from Rome and the second one in 92 was a statement of disapproval against the schools of Latin rhetoricians currently in Rome and how their teachings went against ancestral practice. These decrees in their different ways highlight the concerns that many senators felt about the influence of Greek rhetorical theory on the traditional ways oratory was being learnt and practised and it perhaps demonstrates their disquiet about the sophisticated rhetorical skills that were now being displayed.

²⁶ Bonner 1977, 84-5; Clarke 1996, 20.

²⁷ Cic. *Brut.* 304-5.

²⁸ Tacit. *Dial.* 34.

still instructed on senatorial procedures and, moreover, informed of any resultant *senatus consulta* or *rogationes*.

The influence of the *laudatio funebris* must not be overlooked. This public funeral eulogy for Roman aristocrats was delivered from the Rostra usually by the eldest son or heir and it included a citation of the deceased's attributes and achievements, as well as the *virtutes* and *laudes* of other renowned family ancestors.²⁹ It had a long history and, in the surviving fragment of Q. Caecilius Metellus' *laudatio*, being a pre-eminent *bellator* and *imperator* is stated as a fundamental requirement for a *summus vir*.³⁰ Some of these speeches were written up, preserved and possibly circulated.³¹ Polybius in his description of the Roman aristocrat's funeral emphasizes that the rendition, via images and oratory, of ancestral successes and exploits was intended to inspire the young.³² At the funerals of *imperatores* with pre-eminent military records, like M. Claudius Marcellus, Q. Fabius Maximus, P. Scipio Aemilianus and L. Cornelius Sulla, though the impact of each eulogy would have depended on its contents and delivery as well as the mood of the audience, we should consider their potential not only to inspire individual listeners to be more pugnacious, but also to provide returning commanders and their advocates with rhetorical mechanisms that might benefit the deliberative and forensic speeches that they subsequently delivered within the very same environment in which they had heard these *laudationes*.³³

²⁹ Flower 1996, 128-58; Crawford 1941, 17-27.

³⁰ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 5.17.3 states that the *laudatio* was an ancient native practice; Plin. *HN* 7.139 = *ORF*³ 6, Fr. 2 for Metellus' *laudatio*, delivered in 221 BC for his consular father L. Caecilius Metellus.

³¹ Malcovati 1967, *ORF*³ for surviving examples.

³² Polyb. 6.54.4: "But the most important result is that young men were inspired to endure every suffering for the public welfare in the hope of winning the glory that intends on brave men".

³³ Livy 28.27.12 = *ORF*³, 5 Fr. 1, refers to a copy of the *laudatio* delivered by Marcellus' son in 208; Plut. *Fab.* 27 mentions the funeral of Fabius, but not the *laudatio*; *Schol. Bob. Mil.*, Strangl 1964, 118 = *ORF*³, 22, gives a fragment of the *laudatio* for P. Scipio Aemilianus delivered by his nephew Q. Fabius Maximus in around 129 BC; App. *BC* 1.106 states that at Sulla's funeral in 78 because his son was too young "the finest orator of the day gave the funeral address"; Crawford 1941, 20 suggests that this might have been Q. Hortensius Hortalus.

Overall, these commanders and their legates should not be perceived as stiff and uncomfortable when they stood upon the *rostra* or before a Senate meeting, but, on the whole, as experienced speakers who had already delivered a number of public speeches in both civic and military contexts. Domestic and public oratorical education provided them with considerable grounding in the theory and practice of oratory, particularly during the last generation of the Republic. It must be stressed that every leading Roman in our period employed oratory in one form or another during his public life and unfortunately we only have a small glimpse of the speeches delivered. Furthermore, when focusing on Cicero's individual speeches it is easy to forget that there were opposing and supporting speakers in these debates and, what is more, as demonstrated by Cicero's account of the Senate meeting in the Circus Flaminius in February 61 BC, in which he describes the plain-spoken address of Pompeius and Crassus' elaborate praise of Cicero, some speakers were skilled and confident in public oratory and willing to employ sophisticated rhetoric, whilst others were happy to communicate through more straightforward rhetoric. Their oratory depended on the current circumstances and their individual rhetorical predilections.

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Map 1. Rome in the late Republic

2. Victorious orations

As Table 1 illustrates, with its 45 attested and 114 potential speeches to the Senate, the oral reporting of military victories within Rome was a frequent phenomenon during our period of 219 to 19 BC.³⁴ This section falls into four parts: the procedures when requesting a triumph; the content of the victorious orations to the Senate; the speeches delivered by the commander's legates; and, finally, the victorious orations delivered at *contiones*. Through such an analysis the developing requirements and customary practices of returning *imperatores* will be emphasized, as well as the nature and role of the senatorial and popular assembly audiences who received their verbal reports. Above all, this section will argue that these oral presentations of military success played a fundamental role in establishing the

³⁴ See the criteria for Table 1 on pages 66-68 for the methodology behind these two figures.

formal recognition of a commander's achievements within Rome, a role that has been either downplayed or overlooked within the modern treatments of the triumph.³⁵ In addition, even if an *imperator* was not awarded a triumph, calling a Senate meeting and informing his peers about his victorious achievements was still a superb opportunity to project a positive martial ethos through the customary *relatio* of his campaign.

When he [the *imperator*] returned home, he would assemble the Senate and ask it to have a triumph voted for him. And if he obtained a favourable vote from the Senate and from the popular assembly, the title of *imperator* was also ratified for him.³⁶

Zonaras, the 12th century Byzantine epitomator of Cassius Dio's history, within his detailed account of the republican triumph, emphasizes the central role played by the Senate and people of Rome in the decision to award a triumph: the highest recognition of *virtus* within Roman society. Upon receiving a victorious dispatch or an oral report, the Senate could vote for *supplicationes* (thanksgiving prayers), a common precursor to a triumph. (This rite will be dealt with in depth in chapter four). Then on arrival in Rome, the commander assembled the Senate outside the *pomerium* of the city, usually in the Temple of Bellona on the Campus

³⁵ Auliard 2001, 19-39, 134, concentrates primarily on the various triumphal regulations; in the section entitled 'The general soliciting the triumph' she simply states that the *imperator* justified his claim "through the narrative of his campaign"; Bonnefond-Coudry 1989, 269-74, focuses on the timing of triumphs within the magisterial year; Richardson 1975, 50-63, concentrates on how the Senate dealt with the influx of triumphal claims in the early second century BC; Versnel 1970, 164-97, predominantly focuses on the origins and religious attributes of the triumph and when addressing the *ius triumphandi*, following the arguments of Mommsen (1887, 126-136) and Laqueur (1909, 215-236), he emphasizes the legal and religious status of the potential triumphator not the actual content of his petition.

³⁶ Zonar. 7.21: ἐλθὼν δὲ οἴκαδε τὴν γερουσίαν συνήθροϊζε καὶ ἤτει ψηφίσασθαί οἱ τὰ ἐπινίκια. καὶ εἰ ἔτυχε ψήφου παρὰ τε τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δήμου, ἐβεβαιοῦτο αὐτῷ καὶ ἡ ἐπωνυμία τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος. This description occurs in Zonaras' detailed account of the republican triumph in the context of Dio's account of Camillus's eye-catching fourth century BC triumph.

Martius, but also on occasion in the Temple of Apollo Medicus, (see Map 1); this enabled the magistrate to hold on to his *imperium* for his potential triumph.³⁷

The *imperator's* *petitio* was then debated by the sitting senators prior to a vote, during which senators were not only free to ask questions of the *imperator*, but also deliver speeches that supported or disagreed with the proposal.³⁸ If this *consultum* was passed by the Senate, a *rogatio* still had to be passed by the *comitia tributa* to allow the *imperator* to cross the *pomerium* with his *imperium*. Yet before this latter vote, an *imperator's* claim could still be disputed by speeches at preceding *contiones*, or be blocked by a tribunician veto, a phenomenon that resulted in a small number of commanders during the late Republic, like Lucullus, being prevented from crossing the *pomerium* for a number of years.³⁹ (The speeches and vetoes against triumphal claims, both inside and outside the Senate, will be looked at in depth within chapter three). Finally, we must not forget that the Senate was in charge of state religion and finance, and so a senatorial decree and its subsequent ratification by the *comitia* were doubtless necessary to publicise the date of the ceremony and also ensure key public spaces, like the Circus Flaminius on the Campus Martius, the Forum and the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, were cleared and prepared for the impending triumphal parade.⁴⁰

Certain specific criteria (the *ius triumphandi*) aided the Senate in deciding how they should respond to a commander's petition. Mommsen saw the *ius triumphandi* as a series of

³⁷ *LTUR* 1.49-54; 190-2; Livy 26.21; 28.9 & 38; 31.47; 33.22; 36.39; 38.44; 39.29; 41.6; 42.9, 21 & 28; Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.41; for requests or military reports delivered in the Temple of Bellona; Livy 34.43; 37.58; 39.4; 41.17; for those petitions and reports given in the Temple of Apollo Medicus; *DNP* 2.589-590; Livy 10.19.17; Plin. *HN* 35.12; Tib. 1.6.43-54; the former temple would have especially heightened the martial nature of the request, since the petition's formula not only concerned the propitiation of the gods for the recent success, but also because the *relatio* of the campaign was delivered in the sacred precinct of Bellona, an archaic Roman war goddess who was the personification of frenzy in battle.

³⁸ Lintott 1999, 80.

³⁹ Plut. *Luc.* 37.

⁴⁰ Richardson 1975, 58, emphasizes the Senate's responsibility for State religion and finance; Gisborne 2005, 37, points to the necessary preparations for the holding of a triumph; Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 160, asserts, however, that the *imperator* was the key instigator of the triumphal process and that he "only turned to the Senate for certain enabling decisions."

timeless regulations.⁴¹ Richardson, on the other hand, argues that, particularly in the early second century with the increasing ambitions of non-consular magistrates, new criteria were established through trial and error within this regulatory framework.⁴² Following on from Richardson, Gruen and Auliard have recently argued that we should see the *ius triumphandi* at best as guidelines for the Senators.⁴³

These criteria were in part a product of the reactions to the numerous written and oral presentations of military success to the Senate, as senators raised concerns about the veracity of the information with which they were presented. Once a guideline or hurdle came into place this in turn would have induced the *imperatores* to adapt their presentational efforts. Thus, we should see the triumphal process not as rigidly established (with certain exceptions), but more a customary framework to which developments were added, such as the lesser award of an *ovatio*. The re-emergence of the *ovatio* in the late third and early second century is significant because it provided an alternative to a black or white judgement on reported military success, allowing senators to recognise that the commander had at least attained a certain level of *virtus*, even if it was say against a slave revolt.⁴⁴ Although Richardson rightly associates the development of the *ovatio* with the occurrence of non-consular triumphal claims, particularly from Spain, it also underscores the Senate's ability to adapt the triumphal

⁴¹ Mommsen 1887, 126-136; Richardson 1975, 50; if one reads through Mommsen's criteria, he gives the appearance that they are firmly established; Wells 1992, 50, concerning the constitutional settlements of Augustus, makes the invaluable comment that the *princeps* "was not a German lawyer dreaming of 1848 or a British civil servant drawing up an impeccably liberal constitution for a new African state". This astute observation is just as applicable to the triumphal regulations of the Republic, since they developed on an *ad hoc* basis in order to deal with changing circumstances.

⁴² Richardson 1975, 62-3.

⁴³ Gruen 1990, 132, on the *ad hoc* regulations of the second century, states that: "the Senate was groping for ways to control the hunt for martial honours without discouraging the hunt itself"; Auliard 2001, 19-33; Gisborne 2005, 38, argues that: "there was no such checklist of criteria for the granting of triumphs to victorious Roman generals in the Republican period" and following the arguments of Gibbon (1796, 584-590), points out the possibility that they were "post Republican creations"

⁴⁴ Richardson 1975, 54; Degrassi 1947, 540; Livy 7.11.2: the consul C. Fabius Ambustus apparently celebrated an ovation in 360 BC. It then appears to fall into disuse until 211 when the proconsul M. Claudius Marcellus was awarded one (Livy 26.21).

process to current circumstances.⁴⁵ When looking at the content of the victorious orations to the Senate, some of the other guidelines will come to the fore, as they directly relate to the subject-matter being communicated.

Victorious orations to the Senate

To start with, the senatorial audience for these victorious orations requires evaluation. Before Sulla's reforms, the total number of senators was around 300, yet owing to absences through serving the state or for other reasons, there are quorums of 100 or 150 for certain senatorial sittings in 186 and 172, thus pointing to variable attendance numbers.⁴⁶ After the Sullan reforms, which added around 300 equestrians to the Senate, its membership probably totalled around 600 and we are told of maximum attendances of over 400 in 61 and 57 BC.⁴⁷ In times of extensive mobilisation though, such as during the Hannibalic War and the civil wars of the late Republic, when a number of senators served in the legions, or when the time of year saw low political activity with members residing away from the city, we can believe that attendances might be around half this number. Therefore, the timing of the victorious oration could significantly influence how many senators were present, although one can believe that an *imperator*, prior to his report to the Senate, might very well have sent out his legates, messengers, or letters to give some days' warning of his imminent report.⁴⁸ Furthermore, as Table 1 indicates with its identification of 45 attested speeches and 114 potential occasions on

⁴⁵ Richardson 1975, 54-6.

⁴⁶ Lintott 1999, 70; *CIL* 1² 581; the senatorial decree concerning Bacchic meetings, states that for a Roman or Latin citizen to attend a Bacchant meeting needed the authority of the urban praetor "with the approval of the Senate, provided that no fewer than one hundred senators be present when the matter is deliberated (*utei senatus noster decerneret, dum ne minus senatoribus C adesent [quom e]a res cosoleretur*)"; Livy 42.28.9 tells how a quorum of 150 was needed in 172 BC for a senatorial decree over the allocation of funds for triumphal games. It would seem that financial decrees required higher quorums.

⁴⁷ Lintott 1999, 70; Cic. *Att.* 1.14.15 has a total of 415 senators voting for a decree in 61 BC; Cic. *Red. Sen.* 26 mentions how the vote for Cicero's return in 57 involved a sitting of 417 members.

⁴⁸ Livy 28.9.4, some months after their victory over Hasdrubal at the Metaurus, the consuls C. Claudius Nero and M. Livius Salinator informed the Senate by letter that they would soon be returning to Rome.

which victorious orations were delivered to the Senate between 219 and 19 BC, during his membership of the house a senator would have listened to a fair number of victorious reports. It is accepted though that some decades saw higher or lower concentrations of these speeches. Finally, in senatorial debates members sometimes indicated their support or displeasure by moving towards or away from an advocate of a position.⁴⁹ In what way such behaviour manifested itself during the petition of the *imperator* and the subsequent debate is difficult to tell, but it is significant that individual senators through their body language could demonstrate their attitude towards an oration, particularly if they wanted to emphasize either their pleasure or their concern when listening to an *imperator*'s statement.

It certainly seems in the sources that it was a customary practice for a returning commander to provide a *relatio* of his campaign. Unfortunately, when analysing the content of these speeches, we do not have a directly reported version of any of the 45 attested victorious orations delivered to the Senate in our period and thus it is difficult to assess how formulaic these speeches were and how much freedom and discretion the commander had to amplify his achievements. Nonetheless, the sources do provide a number of indirect and circumstantial details that cumulatively allow us some idea of their contents.

Plautus in his comedy *Amphitruo* provides the most insightful view of an *imperator*'s speech when the slave Sosia describes the return of his master, the victorious Theban general Amphitruo.

With the enemy defeated, our legions are returning home victorious, a mighty contest concluded and the enemy exterminated. The town that has brought so many casualties to

⁴⁹ Cic. *Cat.* 1.16; Ramsey 2007, 125.

the Theban people has been crushed and captured by the strength and valour of our troops, chiefly under the command and auspices of my master Amphitruo.⁵⁰

The punchy and formal nature of this address appears to be, as Beard states, a “parody of the traditional language” employed by returning *imperatores*.⁵¹ As we shall see, particularly in Livy’s indirect accounts of these speeches, the damage inflicted on Rome’s enemies, the completion of a campaign, and the central role of the general and his troops in the reported success seem to be frequent rhetorical elements.

A straightforward version of victorious speech delivered to the Senate in 189 BC is described by Livy.

Lucius Aemilius Regillus, who had defeated Antiochus’ admiral with his fleet, was given an audience with the Senate in the Temple of Apollo outside the city. When they had heard of his achievements, the size of the enemy fleets he had met in battle, and the number of ships in them he had sunk or captured, the senators voted him a naval triumph by a large majority.⁵²

⁵⁰ Plaut. *Amph.* 188-192: “victores victis hostibus legiones reveniunt domum, duello extincto maximo atque internecatis hostibus. quod multa Thebano populo acerba obiecit funera, id vi et virtute militum victum atque expugnatum oppidum est imperio atque auspicio eri mei Amphitruonis maxime”.

⁵¹ Beard 2007, 201-202; see Beard 2003, 41-42 for a more in depth analysis; Halkin 1948, 297-304, details the similarities between Plautus’ speech and the triumphal rhetoric that occurs in the historical sources, particularly in Livy.

⁵² Livy 37.58: “per eos dies L. Aemilio Regillo, qui classe praefectum Antiochi regis devicerat, extra urbem in aede Apollinis cum senatus datus esset, auditis rebus gestis eius, quantis cum classibus hostium dimicasset, quot inde naves demersisset aut cepisset, magno consensu patrum triumphus navalis est decretus”.

This description suggests that Regillus' account of his campaign included the intensive naval engagement against the Seleucid fleet at Myonnessus.⁵³ As demonstrated by Duilius' naval column and its accompanying inscription, as well as the pirate rostra that decorated the forecourt of Pompeius' house, communicating enemy naval losses was popular with some commanders.⁵⁴ Regillus' oration, more generally, highlights the Roman habit of memorialising the damage inflicted upon their enemies. The dissemination of enemy losses to home audiences occurs throughout history as a means of directly and concisely presenting them with their military forces' successes. For example, a London newspaper placard during the Battle of Britain read:

BIGGEST RAID EVER
SCORE 78 TO 26
ENGLAND STILL BATTING⁵⁵

The humorous sporting analogy plays on the fondness that many Londoners had for cricket. Roman commanders frequently cited statistics to communicate the magnitude of their successes over the enemy as well; and this might include the number of towns taken, the number of battles fought, or the listing of the various tribes or peoples defeated during a campaign. These statistics were frequently presented in a lapidary fashion, a practice that

⁵³ Polyb. 21.7-8; Livy 37.26-32; the naval battle at Myonnessus of 190 was decisive in the war with Antiochus, as it gave Rome and her allies control of the Aegean, so enabling the crossing of Lucius Scipio's army into Asia Minor that year.

⁵⁴ *MRR* 1.205; Polyb. 1.22-24; *CIL* 1², 193; *ILS* 65; C. Duilius, consul in 260 BC, defeated a Carthaginian fleet off Mylae in Northeast Sicily. He commemorated his success and subsequent triumph through the erection of a *columna rostrata*, a column decorated with the beaks of captured ships, and the accompanying honorific inscription states that "... by force he captured with his allies 1 septirème and 30 quinqueremes ..."; Cic. *Phil.* 2.68: the forecourt of Pompeius' house in Rome was decorated with the rostra taken from the pirate ships that he had captured.

⁵⁵ Calder 1991, 32; Brittain 1981, 93; the socialist commentator Vera Brittain saw this placard in Piccadilly in mid-August 1940, although she does not say which publication.

Augustus took to unprecedented levels within his *Res Gestae*. Thus, an assembly of senators, many of whom had military experience as well as aspirations for military *gloria*, were being informed of the skilful and effective employment of violence by one of their colleagues. (The employment of numbers in disseminating military achievements is an ubiquitous feature of the evidence quoted throughout the thesis).

An excellent example of this approach within a victorious oration occurs in a speech of Scipio Africanus upon his return from Spain in late 206 BC:

At a meeting of the Senate held for him outside the city in the Temple of Bellona he gave an account of his Spanish campaigns, detailing the number of pitched battles fought, of enemy towns captured, and of the Spanish peoples forced to acknowledge the dominion of Rome. He reminded the Senate that he had gone to Spain to face four enemy commanders and four victorious Carthaginian armies and had left not a single Carthaginian soldier in the country.⁵⁶

Now although Scipio was not granted a triumph, because he was a *privatus*, this account still demonstrates another fundamental challenge faced by returning commanders, convincing the Senate of their successful completion of their assigned command.⁵⁷ Scipio achieves the appearance of completion by enumerating the immense task faced by him – “four enemy commanders and four victorious Carthaginian armies” – and then following up this statement with the claim that no Carthaginian soldier remained in Spain. This was a highly ambitious statement given that the Carthaginians had colonized and fought in Spain for a number of

⁵⁶ Livy 28.38.2-3: “... senatu extra urbem dato in aede Bellonae quas res in Hispania gessisset disseruit, quotiens signis conlatis dimicasset, quot oppida ex hostibus vi cepisset, quas gentes in dicionem populi Romani redegisset; adversus quattuor se imperatores, quattuor victores exercitus in Hispaniam isse; neminem Carthaginiensem in iis terris reliquisse”.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 4, Section 2: the citation of the enemy leader’s death or capture within a dispatch was seen as a good means of symbolising the completion of a military command.

centuries, and it was nigh on impossible that Scipio had driven every single Carthaginian soldier out of the peninsula.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, Scipio was delivering this speech to an audience used to receiving such statistical claims of military success, and Scipio had undoubtedly broken the Carthaginian dominance of Spain. We should interpret his bold generalization as an effective means of projecting both his name and military reputation in Rome, by stating that he was the *imperator* who had unequivocally removed Carthage's military presence from Spain.

The enumeration of enemy dead by Roman *imperatores* is a particularly prevalent feature of these victorious speeches. The consul P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica in 191 BC extravagantly informed his colleagues of the casualties that he had inflicted on the Boii, a Gallic tribe who inhabited Northwest Italy.

He was asking for a triumph over the Gallic Boii, whom he had defeated in battle, seized their camp, and two days after the battle had accepted the surrender of the entire tribe, taking hostages from them to secure peace in the future. But in fact, there was a much more important point: he had in the field killed a huge number of Gauls, and certainly no general before him had faced in battle so many thousands of Boii. Of their 50,000 men, more than half had been killed, and many thousands had been taken prisoner – the Boii were left with only old men and children.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Lancel 1995, 82; the late sixth and early fifth century saw the Carthaginians start to establish colonies on the southern Iberian peninsula; Polyb. 2.1.6; Scullard 1989, 20-21; how extensively these developed and extended is difficult to tell, but they appear to have diminished in the intervening centuries before Hamilcar Barca's stated intention, according to Polybius, to recover Carthage's Iberian possessions in 237.

⁵⁹ Livy 36.40.3-5: "se de Gallis Bois postulare triumphum, quos acie vicerit, castris exuerit, quorum gentem biduo post pugnam totam acceperit in deditionem, a quibus obsides abduxerit, pacis futurae pignus. Verum enimvero illud multo maius esse, quod tantum numerum Gallorum occiderit in acie, quot cum milibus certe Boiorum nemo ante se imperator pugnauerit. plus partem dimidiam ex quinquaginta milibus hominum caesam, multa milia capta; senes puerosque Bois superesse".

The enumeration of enemy losses was doubtless a common feature of victorious oratory and a significant indication of its consistent employment comes from a piece of triumphal legislation detailed by Valerius Maximus. He records a “law that no one should triumph who had not killed 5,000 of the enemy in a single engagement.”⁶⁰ Richardson attributes this law to the 170s BC, since this was a period where a number of triumphs were disputed.⁶¹ Although we do not know the circumstances of the legislation it indicates that a magistrate or magistrates passed a bill that required aspiring triumphators to attain a specific benchmark of success.

According to Valerius this stipulation was then supplemented by a tribunician law in 62 BC. This required returning *imperatores* as “they entered the city to take an oath before the urban quaestors that both numbers [enemy dead and Roman citizen losses] have been stated by them to the Senate truthfully.”⁶² The urban quaestors supervised the *aerarium* into which, amongst other things, contributions from successful campaigns and public documents such as *rogationes* and *senatus consulta* were deposited.⁶³ What this law intended, above all, through the verification of an *imperator*’s previous statements, was to re-iterate the principle of public accountability before the magistrates responsible for preserving public accounts and documents. As Millar argues, it was certain “that the oath was administered publicly, before the crowd” which must have put additional pressure on the magistrate if he had knowingly embellished or even fabricated his oral or epistolary statements.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Val. Max. 2.8.1: “... lege cautum est ne quis triumpharet, nisi qui quinque milia hostium una acie cecidisset”.

⁶¹ Richardson 1975, 62; Livy 40.38.9, states that in 180 BC the proconsuls P. Cornelius Cethegus and M. Baebius Tamphilus, following their Ligurian campaign, were the first commanders to triumph without waging a war; Richardson believes the law was a response to this bloodless triumph; Oros. 5.4.7; the stipulation must have been in place by 143 as Orosius tells how one of the consuls that year, Ap. Claudius Pulcher, was prevented from triumphing due to suffering 5,000 Roman losses as well as killing 5,000 Gallic Salassii; Beard 2007, 209-211, questions the veracity of Valerius Maximus’ account of this law, arguing that his information was extrapolated from “various arguments and contradictory practices in republican triumphal history”. She, however, underplays the fact that for all his mistakes Valerius Maximus had access to good source material.

⁶² Val. Max. 2.8.1: “iubetque eos, cum primum urbem intrassent, apud quaestores urbanos iurare de utroque numero uere ab iis senatui esse scriptum”.

⁶³ Lintott 1999, 137.

⁶⁴ Millar 1998, 115.

Like the 180s, the 60s BC was a period of disputed triumphal claims, such as those of Lucullus and Marcius Rex in 66 and that of Metellus Creticus in around 64.⁶⁵ Furthermore, one wonders if Pompeius' imminent return to Rome from his lengthy Eastern campaigns, (he arrived at Brundisium probably in December 62), was a factor that motivated the tribunes responsible for the bill, the younger Cato and Lucius Marius, in that this stipulation might have been an attempt to limit the extraordinary *auctoritas* that they feared Pompeius would gain through the public recognition of his military achievements against the pirates and Mithridates.⁶⁶

As Scipio demonstrates by his speech in 206 BC, in the later third and early second centuries a number of commanders became increasingly conscious of the need to demonstrate the completion of their command. This is particularly evident in the need to demonstrate that one had brought one's troops home, a stipulation that Mommsen termed *deportatio exercitus*.⁶⁷ Livy emphasizes the unusual occasion when the praetor L. Furius Purpureo in 200 rode in a triumph without the presence of his troops.⁶⁸ A number of commanders, conscious of this need, wrote or sent their lieutenants to the Senate asking permission to withdraw their troops, as occurred in 180 when the legates of the propraetor Q. Fulvius Flaccus make such a request.⁶⁹ In response the Senate passed a decree stating that Flaccus could withdraw under two conditions: first of all, he could bring home those men who had been recruited for Spain prior to 186, and, secondly he could withdraw those involved in his victorious Celtiberian engagements, as long as they did not exceed the number that made up

⁶⁵ Plut. *Luc.* 37; Sall. *Cat.* 30.

⁶⁶ *MRR* 2.176; Dio 37.20.6; Plut. *Luc.* 42.5: states that Lucullus, Crassus and Cato were Pompeius's chief detractors and responsible for successfully opposing his Eastern settlement and the allocation of land to Pompeian veterans; Plin. *HN* 7.97 records a statement Pompeius deposited in the temple of Minerva upon his return to Rome in 62, in which he claimed that he had routed, scattered, slain or received the surrender of 12,183,000 people.

⁶⁷ Mommsen 1887, 129; Richardson 1975, 61.

⁶⁸ Livy 31.49.

⁶⁹ Livy 40.35.

two legions and its associated auxiliary forces, which in total was the make-up of a standard consular army.⁷⁰ Like the employment of the *ovatio*, the Senate demonstrates a willingness here to adapt to current circumstances in order to recognise its members' endeavours, yet not undermine current foreign policy in the frequently turbulent Spanish *provinciae*.

These requests, moreover, demonstrate certain tensions arising from Roman military success and the subsequent control of new *provinciae*. Roman commanders were recruiting and leading troops to areas of the Mediterranean which frequently required further military campaigns to suppress and prevent subsequent revolts. This is especially demonstrated in Spain.⁷¹ Yet victorious *imperatores* needed to claim that they had brought their troops home as an additional indication of their undisputed success. This, however, did not necessarily mean the commander withdrew *all* the Roman forces, but at least those troops most closely associated with the commander and his military success. This is because these men were an integral part of the triumphal ceremony: they followed their *imperator's quadriga*, singing about their leader, and sometimes received crowns and financial rewards from him prior to the parade.⁷²

Within the victorious oration there could be a marked emphasis on the role that the troops played in the successful campaign. Such stress occurs in the Livian account of M. Fulvius Nobilior's petition in 188 BC for his Aetolian campaign during which he captured the city of Ambracia, where Nobilior is said to have described the engagement in order to

⁷⁰ Livy 40.36; Polyb. 6.19.7, in his description of a regular Roman *dilectus*, states that two consuls recruited a total of four legions.

⁷¹ Dio 54.11.2-6; for all Scipio's claims to have gained the acknowledgement of Rome's dominion from the Spanish tribes, it was not until the Cantabrian War of 26-19 BC that Augustus finally secured the Iberian peninsula.

⁷² Suet. *Iul.* 51 quotes some triumphal verse sung by Caesar's troops in 46 BC; Vell. Pat. 2.67.4; such songs were sung at the triumphs of Lepidus and Plancus in 43; Livy 39.5; prior to his triumphal parade in January 187, M. Fulvius Nobilior "presented military decorations in the Circus Flaminius to a large number of tribunes, prefects, cavalymen, and centurions, both Roman and allies" and he gave out cash donatives. One would presume that the decorated men then paraded their crowns and so forth during the parade.

highlight his men's *virtus* as well as his own. This included Nobilior pointing out that a *Senatus consultum* had stated that:

Ambracia had not appeared to have been taken by force, although it had been attacked with earth-works and siege-sheds; even when fresh siege-works had been constructed after the original ones were burned; when there had been fifteen days of combat around the city-walls, above and below ground; when our soldiers had been long engaged in an undecided battle from the crack of dawn, when they scaled the walls, right until nightfall; and when more than 3,000 of the enemy had been hacked down.⁷³

Nobilior is concisely informing his senatorial audience of his troops' diverse efforts against Ambracia, including the launching of missiles, the building of siege weapons, the mining of the city walls, as well as the storming the city and the subsequent enemy losses. This speech was partly a result of the consul M. Aemilius Lepidus's endeavours to undermine Nobilior's claim by introducing Ambracian envoys to the Senate and then passing the decree to which Nobilior referred.⁷⁴ Thus, for Nobilior, Lepidus' actions were not only a personal attack on him, but also an assault on '*nostri*' (our soldiers), who had displayed such laudable belligerence during this intensive military engagement.

Overall, when considering the content of these victorious orations, which might entail the citation of enemy losses or the completion of their campaign or even the bravery of the men, we must not forget that these magistrates had a single opportunity to persuade the Senate and this meant that they had to be aware of and frequently react to the current political context in Rome in order to gain a favourable vote, as demonstrated by Nobilior. However, as will be

⁷³ Livy, 39.4.9-11.

⁷⁴ Livy 38.43; see Chapter 3, Section 4 for a detailed analysis of this triumphal dispute.

subsequently demonstrated with the speeches by personal legates, and then later in chapter four with dispatches, there were other important means of reporting military successes prior to the *petitio* and so the assembled senators in most cases would have a good idea of the speech's subject-matter.

Lieutenants' orations

Upon achieving success in the field a commander might send one or more of his lieutenants back to Rome with an official dispatch. In lieu of the dispatch or as a means of supplementing it, these officers might also provide oral accounts to the Senate and people. Following his victory at Pydna over King Perseus in 168, L. Aemilius Paullus dispatched the legates Q. Fabius Maximus Aemilianus, L. Cornelius Lentulus and Q. Caecilius Metellus and upon their arrival in Rome Livy describes what happened when the consul presented them to the Senate:

They were kept there just long enough to explain how large the king's forces of infantry and cavalry had been, how many thousands of them had been killed, and how many had been captured, with how few of our soldiers had been lost in the accomplishment of this great slaughter of the enemy, and how the king had made a headlong flight.⁷⁵

This type of behaviour by a commander's lieutenants has been not fully addressed by a number of scholars in their treatment of the roles played by the officers who made up a commander's *cohors*.⁷⁶ This responsibility and function needs addressing, since it highlights a

⁷⁵ Livy 45.2.4-5: "ibi tantum temporis retenti, dum exponerent, quantae regiae <copiae> peditum equitumque fuissent, quot milia ex iis caesa, quot capta forent, quam paucorum militum iactura tanta hostium strages facta, quam praeceps rex fugisset".

⁷⁶ For example, Lintott 1993, 50-2, in relation to the legates in a governor's *cohors*, simply states that they played a military and advisory role; Linderski 1990, 53-71, in his analysis of the Roman officers who were part of L. Aemilius Paullus' *cohors* during the Pydna campaign, omits the significant duty that three legates performed by

significant, yet not altogether straightforward, means by which a commander's achievements could be disseminated within the capital.

Various types of officers could make up a commander's *cohors*. It might include a quaestor, particularly in the late Republic.⁷⁷ A quaestor, usually the only other regular magistrate in the *cohors*, was appointed to the *provincia* by senatorial lot and he had a wide number of responsibilities, including deputising for the commander when necessary and supervising the finances of the *provincia*.⁷⁸ It is probably a consequence of these responsibilities and also the fact he was not chosen by the commander that there is no evidence of a quaestor reporting military success back in Rome on behalf of his superior. This responsibility in nearly every case was given to one or more of his personal legates. (The one significant exception is that of M. Porcius Cato during the Thermopylae campaign in 191. He was a military tribune elected by the people, but still sent to Rome, with the legate L. Cornelius Scipio, by his superior M'. Acilius Glabrio to report the victory over Antiochus.)⁷⁹

There were two main sorts of legates during the Republic. Firstly, there were the legates who were dispatched by the Senate on specific foreign policy missions.⁸⁰ Secondly, there are those legates selected by the commander or governor to be members of his *cohors* and, following Linderski, these will be termed personal legates.⁸¹ These latter individuals were usually of senatorial rank, men sometimes with past magisterial experience and often a relative

being sent to Rome to deliver the news of the eventual victory; one of these legates was Aemilius' son Q. Fabius Maximus Aemilianus; Broughton 1951, x, in his preface states that the legates who functioned as lieutenants could be sent to the Senate, and within the main text he frequently mentions their communications to the Senate.

⁷⁷ As demonstrated by Caesar's quaestor in Gaul, Q. Atius Labienus.

⁷⁸ Lintott 1999, 136; Lintott 1993, 50.

⁷⁹ Livy 36.21.4-8; Cic. *Sen.* 32; *MRR* 1.354; Broughton terms Cato both a military tribune and a legate, since Livy (36.21.8) labels Cato and L. Cornelius Scipio as legates prior to their speeches to the Senate.

⁸⁰ Polyb. 29.27.1-8; Lintott 1999, 19-20, describes the former type of legates as those "dispatched overseas to solve problems, reconcile peoples, give instructions, receive surrenders, and to declare war", as in Popilius Laenas's famous mission to pressurize the Selucid monarch Antiochus IV to leave Egypt; Schleussner 1978, 9-100 & 101-215, places the legates of the Republic into two divisions within his study: 1. the ten member commissions; 2. the permanent assistants.

⁸¹ Linderski 1990, 54; Mommsen 1887, 682, defines these legates as *Beaufrage* (representatives) of the commander.

or close associate of the commander.⁸² For example, M'. Acilius Glabrio during his Thermopylae campaign took the consular L. Quinctius Flamininus as well as the ex-praetors L. Cornelius Scipio, Ti. Sempronius Longus and L. Valerius Flaccus; Cicero took two ex-praetors, C. Pomptinus and his brother Quintus, to Cilicia in 51 BC.⁸³ These personal legates played an active role in the numerous campaigns of the Republic, since commanders often delegated the leadership of legions as well as independent commands to these men, as in the cases of P. Crassus and Q. Cicero during Caesar's Gallic campaign.⁸⁴ Thus, these men frequently witnessed and actively participated in the engagements and campaigns that they might later report. In addition, through senatorial rank and magisterial experience many personal legates were familiar with the customary procedures of the Senate and popular assemblies and, above all, conscious of the fundamental role that commanders and legates played in communicating Rome's military activities to these bodies. For example, when C. Laelius reported Syphax's defeat to the Senate in 203, he had already delivered a previous victorious oration when reporting the capture of New Carthage in 209; and in both of these engagements he played an active role.⁸⁵ Hence, it would seem that he was someone who was trusted by Scipio to communicate his superior's achievements to the Senate.

Unfortunately the existing evidence of the orations delivered by these personal legates is poorer than that for the victorious speeches of their commanders, with only the odd indirect account, like that of the speeches given by Paullus' legates in 168 or the Livian description of the speech delivered by Laelius in 209.

⁸² Lintott 1993, 50.

⁸³ Cic. *Att.* 5.6.1; 5.1.5; Livy 36.1; 36.19-22.

⁸⁴ Caes. *B Gall.* 3.20-1; 5.38-52.

⁸⁵ Livy 27.7; 30.16-7; Polyb. 10.12 & 14.4 tells of Laelius' command of the Roman fleet that blockaded New Carthage and later also of Laelius' firing of Syphax's camp.

The day after his arrival, he [Laelius] was introduced before the Senate and he related (*exposuit*) the capture of New Carthage in a single day's fighting, the recovery of a number of towns which had gone over to the enemy, and the inclusion of fresh ones in the Roman alliance.⁸⁶

In the same vein as the victorious orations of *imperatores*, Laelius indicates that legates could also construct a positive and plausible image of military achievement and again we see the enumeration of the success. As a consequence of Laelius' oral presentation the Senate voted for a day's *supplicatio* for Scipio's victory.⁸⁷ (*Supplicationes* receive a detailed analysis in chapter four).⁸⁸ Furthermore, by reporting the beneficial consequences of the ongoing campaign through the recovery and addition of Spanish allies, Laelius also very probably aided in the next senatorial debate on whether to prorogue Scipio's Spanish command.⁸⁹ Thus, this legate through his oration projected his commander's military record and won for him significant public recognition in the form of a *supplicatio* and perhaps a prorogation, both of which would have substantially increased Scipio's *auctoritas* in Rome.

Further insight into the potential impact of the victorious orations by personal legates occurs in two letters of March 43 BC from the Ciceronian corpus. The first of these is the dispatch to the Senate from the proconsul L. Munatius Plancus, the governor of Transalpine Gaul, in which he gives the reasons for his orally conveyed statements of loyalty to the Senate, assertions that resulted from the highly fluid political and military environment that followed the assassination of Caesar.

⁸⁶ Livy 27.7.2: "postero die in senatum introductus captam Carthaginem caput Hispaniae uno die, receptasque aliquot urbes quae defecissent nouasque in societatem adscitas exposuit".

⁸⁷ Livy 27.7.4.

⁸⁸ See Chapter four, Section two, 207-208.

⁸⁹ *MRR* 1.291; Livy 27.22.7 makes no mention of the debate of late 209 proroguing Scipio's command; he simply states that "Scipio and Silanus were entrusted for a further year with their own provinces of Spain, with the armies they already commanded ...".

That is why the greater part of the communication which I entrusted to my legate C. Furnius, a gallant and energetic officer, was by word of mouth rather than in writing, in order that it might reach you with less publicity and that I might run less risk.⁹⁰

Then in a private letter to Plancus, Cicero briefly describes how Furnius' speech was received in the Senate.

Our friend Furnius' account of your political disposition was most agreeable to the Senate and warmly approved by the Roman people. But your letter, which was read out to the Senate, appeared by no means in accordance with Furnius' statement.⁹¹

Although Furnius' oration does not deal primarily with military success, Plancus did later in 43 win a triumph over the Raetians and Cicero, in an earlier letter to Plancus, in December 44 mentions Furnius' private visit to Cicero in Rome, in which the legate "gave me an account of your military prowess."⁹² Cicero's account indicates that a personal legate's account could benefit his commander, yet at the same time diverge from the dispatch which he bore to Rome.⁹³ On the one hand, the above comments on Furnius' behaviour demonstrate that a personal legate could, alongside a dispatch, provide an extensive supplementary account to the Senate as well as private accounts to influential senators. On the other hand, in so doing he could give a substantially different account that could in some cases weaken the preceding

⁹⁰ Cic. *Fam.* 10.8.5: "quo nomine etiam C. Furnio legato, viro forti atque strenuo, plura etiam verbo quam scriptura mandata dedimus, ut et tectius ad vos perferrentur et nos essemus tutiores".

⁹¹ Cic. *Fam.* 10.6.1: "quae locutus est Furnius noster de animo tuo in rem publicam, ea gratissima fuerunt senatui, populo Romano probatissima; quae autem recitatae litterae sunt in senatu, nequaquam consentire cum Furnii oratione visae sunt".

⁹² Cic. *Fam.* 10.3.1.

⁹³ Degrassi 1947, 567; Vell. Pat. 2.67.4.

dispatch, particularly if it expanded on events that the commander had deliberately omitted, or, if the legate wanted to emphasize his own endeavours.

As a consequence of this ability to provide differing reports, we should not assume that the speeches of personal legates always followed their commander's wishes and there are odd cases where a legate might exploit this opportunity for self-promotion. Such behaviour comes to the fore after M'.Acilius Glabrio's victory over Antiochus at Thermopylae in 190 BC. According to Livy, Glabrio dispatched M. Cato and L. Scipio to Rome; they reached the capital separately, with Cato's faster journey enabling him to deliver his report to the Senate before Scipio. Although Cato was elected a military tribune and not chosen by Glabrio, the fact that the consul sent him probably indicates that Glabrio believed Cato's oratorical skills would ensure an effective communication of Glabrio's success.⁹⁴ On the other hand, the public announcer who is first to present eagerly awaited news, through the attention of his or her listeners or watchers, can create their own authoritative image and as a consequence provide an excellent opportunity for personal publicity.⁹⁵

Though we do not have the contents of Cato's oration to the Senate, we know that in a fragmentary defence speech soon afterwards he took personal credit for defeating Antiochus. "Likewise when very recently I dispersed and allayed the very great disturbance, threatening from Thermopylae and Asia."⁹⁶ In addition, in the accounts of the Thermopylae campaign by Livy and Plutarch, Cato's personal leadership of a mountainside assault on an Aetolian held fort is prominent and it is very likely that this detail derived from Cato's own speeches or

⁹⁴ Livy 36.21.

⁹⁵ The exploitation of eagerly awaited news for self-promotion has been demonstrated in the ongoing Iraq war; <<http://www.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/10/28/mission.accomplished>>, accessed 26th November 2007; there was George W Bush's statement on the 7th May 2003 that the Second Gulf War was over; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3317429.stm>, accessed 26th November 2007; then there was Paul Bremmer's announcement on the 14th December 2003 that Saddam Hussein had been captured.

⁹⁶ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 49: "item ubi ab Thermopuleis atque ex Asia maximo tumultus maturissime disieci atque consedavi"; Astin 1978, 58.

possibly his *Origines*, sources which both writers employed in their work.⁹⁷ Thus, I believe, Cato's rush to Rome was not solely to report the victory and so enhance Glabrio's *auctoritas*, but also because he was eager to exploit this customary form of Roman communication to augment his own military reputation. Furthermore, Cato was a 'new man' without ancestors possessing pre-eminent achievements. As a result, he had to seize every opportunity to promote his name.

One wonders, though, how exceptional Cato's behaviour was. Was Cato simply taking advantage of the extraordinary circumstances that saw Glabrio dispatch him to Rome? This is particularly relevant on account of the fact that the majority of evidence concerning lieutenants' victorious orations comes from the middle Republic. In table 1, of the seventeen occasions when commanders dispatched lieutenants to the Senate, sixteen of the resultant victorious orations occurred in the period 219 to 167 BC.⁹⁸ This concentration is in part owing to the historical period covered by Livy's extant books, in which all these orations are cited. If the period 165-19 BC of his histories had survived, we would probably see more of these incoming reports described. However, there might be another factor influencing this concentration, bearing in mind the good source material for the late Republic. It could be that Roman field commanders were employing their personal legates much less for this task during the latter period on account of a desire to maintain close control over the *gloria* attained. For instance, during the 58-50 BC Gallic War in which Caesar sent at least three victorious dispatches to the Senate, we know he had a large *cohors*, from which some legates returned to Rome during the campaign, such as P. Crassus and P. Vatinius.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, nowhere in Cicero's writings or Caesar's commentaries is there a mention of a lieutenant accompanying a

⁹⁷ Astin 1978, 57-9; Plut. *Cato Mai.* 13-4; Livy 36.17-9.

⁹⁸ VS 7-9, 12, 14-16, 32, 35, 43, 47, 51, 58, 67-69, and 140.

⁹⁹ Caes. *B Gall.* 2.35; 4.38; 7.90; Dio 39.31.2; P. Crassus returned to Rome in 56 with some veterans to support the consular bids of Pompeius and M. Crassus; Cic. *Vat.* 35 mentions Vatinius' presence in Rome in 56.

victorious dispatch. Yet we know legates were still being employed by commanders to send reports to Rome as demonstrated in 43 BC with the orations of L. Varius Cotyla and C. Furnius.¹⁰⁰

Although this argument for maintaining close control of victorious reports is primarily one made from silence, we should view it in light of the examples of subordinates who sought personal publicity during the late Republic, such as Marius, when he was legate to Metellus, and later Sulla when he was legate to Marius.¹⁰¹ In addition, in his treatise on the good provincial governor, Cicero makes some notable comments about the senior members of a governor's *cohors*. He states that if a governor has any concerns about the behaviour of one or more of his legates, he should "not allow him to use for profit the authority which you confer upon him as conducive to his *dignitas*."¹⁰² Though Cicero's warning primarily derives from his concern about the exploitation of provincials, this comment still indicates that a governor should keep a weather eye open for any self-serving personal legates. Overall, on account of the intensification of political competition during the late Republic and perhaps also the increasing rhetorical abilities of more and more Roman aristocrats, commanders might very well have been more conscious of the need to control the dissemination of their victorious achievements.

¹⁰⁰ Cic. *Phil.* 8.24-33; *Fam.* 10.6.1.

¹⁰¹ *MRR* 1.547 & 549; Sall. *Jug.* 65.4-5; Marius was legate during Metellus' Numidian campaign and supposedly induced some of his equestrian associates in Africa to write letters to Rome criticising Metellus; *MRR* 1.551, 554 & 557; Plut. *Sull.* 3-4; Sulla was quaestor and then legate to Marius during the Numidian campaign; Sulla's personal role in the capture of Jugurtha apparently irritated Marius.

¹⁰² Cic. *Q Fr.* 1.1.12: "... non ut ea potestate quam tu ad dignitatem permisisses ad quaestum uteretur".

Victorious orations to *contiones*

During the Republic news of military victories was not only reported to the Senate, but also in various contexts to *contiones*, assembled crowds that represented the people of Rome.¹⁰³ Of these contexts four stand out in the sources concerning victorious orations. Pina Polo, in his analysis of the *contio*, emphasizes that Festus and Gellius' descriptions of this assembly demonstrate that its main distinguishing feature "was its communicative character: it was the only popular assembly which allowed the speaker to address the people, something forbidden in *comitia* and *concilia plebis*".¹⁰⁴ Only incumbent magistrates of quaestorian rank or higher could summon a civil *contio*, thus excluding pro-magistrates.¹⁰⁵ Once a magistrate had decided to hold a *contio* in the city, *praecones* (heralds) went through the streets summoning the citizens to the required meeting place.¹⁰⁶ When and where these *praecones* were sent out is significant, since this would have influenced who immediately received the summons. Consequently the magistrate, who convened the *contio*, might take advantage of certain factors, such as market or festival days, when he knew that an additional concentration of people would be present within the city.¹⁰⁷ Once assembled, the presiding magistrate might speak himself or at his discretion bring forward other speakers and these might be other magistrates or private individuals, including personal legates with news of successes, or *imperatores* following their triumphs.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Morstein-Marx 2004, 10; Pina Polo 1995, 209-10.

¹⁰⁴ Pina Polo 1995, 204-5; Festus, 38L & 113 L; Gell. 13.16.3 & 18.7.5-9 provide informative descriptions of the *contio*.

¹⁰⁵ Morstein-Marx 2004, 38.

¹⁰⁶ Pina Polo 1995, 207, attributes this behaviour to *praecones*, although there is no direct example of them acting in this way. There are, however, references to *praecones* maintaining order during *contiones*; for example, Livy 43.16.8, mentions that the censor C. Claudius Pulcher in 169 employed a *praeco* to bring a *contio* to order; Apul. *Met.* 10.7, tells of *praecones* announcing the convening of a Senate meeting.

¹⁰⁷ Pina Polo 1995, 207, argues that market days and major festivals were when *contiones* were often called in order to increase the potential audience.

¹⁰⁸ Morstein-Marx 2004, 40.

In principle only male citizens could attend a *contio*, but as no-one checked those attending, the audience could consist of foreigners and slaves, as appears to have occurred during the late Republic. Fantham, moreover, argues that Cicero's letters point towards fluctuating numbers of idlers during the late Republic.¹⁰⁹ Thus, the crowds appear to be of a heterogeneous composition, at least in the first century BC and as demonstrated in his speech supporting the Manilian Law, Cicero was conscious of the various social classes represented in the crowd before him.¹¹⁰ Mouritsen, however, believes that *contiones* did not represent a cross section of the urban population, arguing that they were small audiences assembled by individual magistrates to deliver their views or news to a receptive crowd.¹¹¹ But even an initial audience of a few thousand could still result in considerable secondary dissemination via word of mouth, although the information would have been distorted or embellished to some extent.¹¹²

Cicero's descriptions of some *contiones* suggest that the Forum was now and again packed out and one can imagine that eagerly awaited news in conducive circumstances might very well have seen a good turnout.¹¹³ It is difficult though to assess the actual numbers attending *contiones* in Rome during the middle and late Republic. Nonetheless, a number of scholars provide maximum crowd estimates, particularly for the later period. A *contio*'s location in the city is significant, since it would have influenced the potential audience. Some *contiones*, on occasion, were held in the Circus Flaminius, and others prior to 121 more frequently were assembled on the Capitol as well, but most gathered in the Forum

¹⁰⁹ Fantham 2005, 224; Morstein-Marx 2004, 128-9; Cic. *Att.* 1.16.11; *Q Fr.* 2.5.3; *Flacc.* 18.

¹¹⁰ Cic. *Man.* 17-19; Rawson 1983, 53.

¹¹¹ Mouritsen 2001, 21 & 45.

¹¹² Laurence 1994, 63: "of the original action, as first communicated, only about 40% of this information would have been passed on via four people"; citing Rosnow & Fine 1976, 36.

¹¹³ Cic. *Man.* 44 mentions the crowds assembled in 67 BC for the *contiones* about the Gabinian Law.

Romanum.¹¹⁴ Prior to the mid second century the traditional meeting place for a *contio* was the old Comitium in the northwest corner of the Forum (see map 2).¹¹⁵ For its capacity, Thommen provides an estimate of 1,000, whilst MacMullen goes for a higher figure of 5-6,000 closely packed persons.¹¹⁶ Mouritsen, citing Hansen's comparative evaluation of modern day Swiss citizen assemblies, probably provides the most reliable estimate of 3,800 to 4,800 people crammed into the Comitium.¹¹⁷

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Map 2. The Forum Romanum in the late Republic

¹¹⁴ Livy 45.36.4 for a *contio* on the Capitol in 167 about Paullus' triumph; Taylor 1966, 20 & 45-46, points out that *contiones* could gather around the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus "where the Area Capitolina was a large area, though not always large enough for the crowds"; Livy 25.3.15 in 212 BC; 33.25.7 in 196; 34.1.4 in 194; 43.16.9 in 169; Plut. *C. Gracch.* 13 in 121; nonetheless, between 212 and 121 tribunes of the plebs presided over a number of legislative and judicial assemblies on the Capitol; Cic. *Att.* 1.14.1-4, in February 61 Pompeius addressed a *contio* in the Circus Flaminius.

¹¹⁵ Thommen 1995, 360; Mouritsen 2001, 18.

¹¹⁶ Thommen 1995, 364, bases his calculation on an area measuring around 30 by 40 metres; MacMullen 1980, 456, employs an area measuring 35.6 by 40 metres.

¹¹⁷ Mouritsen 2001, 18-20, reduces his 46 by 30 metre capacity due to protruding *cavea* resulting in an area of 1,300 square metres; Hansen 1995, 334, noted that in an assembly of citizens within an area of 1,000 square metres in the Swiss canton of Obwalden could be tightly packed with 4,000 people. These regional Swiss assemblies are called *Landsgemeinde* during "which every adult citizen has the right to speak and vote."

In the middle of the second century tribunes, when speaking on the Rostra, started to look out southwards from the Curia into the central Forum, a much bigger area into which to summon a *contio*.¹¹⁸ Some speakers addressed the crowds assembled in this area from the temple of Castor. For the central Forum Thommen provides a capacity estimate of 6,000, whilst MacMullen argues for a much higher figure of 15-20,000. Depending on the calculation of this area, over 12,000 people does seem plausible.¹¹⁹ In addition, just because an individual was unable to reach the central Forum on account of over-crowding, this does not necessarily mean that he was not informed about the key points delivered at a *contio* and as a result Millar's argument that "around 20,000 people could have been present in and around the Forum at moments of particular political involvement" does seem very tenable.

Addressing a crowd of thousands, however, would not have been easy without modern amplification equipment.¹²⁰ This difficulty is shown when Abraham Lincoln addressed a crowd of 15-20,000 people at Gettysburg in November 1863, since some witnesses stated that he was badly heard.¹²¹ Furthermore, we do not know how much the raised platforms of the Rostra and the Temple of Castor aided the speaker and, moreover, whether the surrounding buildings provided beneficial or distortional acoustics. The listening crowd through its behaviour could also have impeded an orator's delivery. Bearing such difficulties in mind, Keegan suggests that around 5,000 men are the most a speaker can clearly and directly address in the open, whilst Ramsey, citing the crowds addressed by William Gladstone during the

¹¹⁸ Cic. *Amic.* 96 states that the tribune C. Licinius Crassus in 145 BC was the first to face towards the Forum when addressing the people; Mouritsen 2001, 20; Plut. *C. Gracch.* 5.3; by 122 when C. Gracchus was introducing his pieces of legislation it would appear that the Comitium stopped holding *contiones*.

¹¹⁹ Ramsey 2007, 124, provides two calculations for the central Forum. First of all, for an area of 3,200 square metres in front of the rostra, a capacity of 12,800. Secondly, for an area in front of the Temple of Castor with an area of 4,800 metres squared, a capacity of 19,000.

¹²⁰ Ramsey 2007, 124.

¹²¹ Goldsworthy 1996a, 146; Harper 1951, 285-7; Young 1901, 70; John Russell Young, a journalist who witnessed the Gettysburg address, described how some listeners close to Lincoln's platform were distracted both by clapping and also the actions of a nearby photographer.

elections of 1874, suggests anywhere from 5,000 to 15,000 persons is possible.¹²² It should be possible to communicate orally to tens of thousands if the message was simple, as demonstrated by Daniel O’Connell in nineteenth century Ireland when he spoke at mass open-air rallies termed ‘monster meetings’.¹²³ Keegan believes such massed numbers could be addressed, on occasion, as the information “could have been relayed by a sort of Chinese whisper” to those who could not clearly hear.¹²⁴ Yet however simple the message, it still might get misinterpreted or see key details omitted through such secondary transmission.¹²⁵

There were four main contexts in which military achievements were orally delivered to a *contio*: first of all, when a victorious dispatch was read out, secondly, when a commander’s lieutenant provided a supplementary oration, thirdly, during one of the *contiones* that preceded the vote of the *comitia tributa*, and, finally, following his triumph an *imperator* might be invited to address the people. We know that C. Licinius Crassus reported the victory at Pydna in 168 BC after he had read Paullus’ dispatch to the Senate.¹²⁶ A few days later Paullus’ legates then gave orations to a *contio*.¹²⁷ We are also told that the consular M. Servilius delivered a speech prior to the second vote of the *comitia*, and later Paullus himself addressed a *contio* after his triumph.¹²⁸ Thus, the assembled crowds in Rome were being repeatedly informed of Paullus’ achievement by a number of different individuals. How frequently all or any of these four contexts were employed to report a successful campaign is difficult to gauge in our period of 219-19 BC. If, however, it was a customary practice for victorious dispatches to be read out after military success, then following table 3 with at least forty-five dispatches

¹²² Keegan 1987, 54; Ramsey 2007, 124, citing Jenkins 1995, 377.

¹²³ Lydon 1998, 295; the term “monster meetings” was invented by *The Times*, though the largest numbers of 300,000 people reported at such meetings was certainly an exaggeration.

¹²⁴ Keegan 1987, 55.

¹²⁵ Laurence 1994, 63.

¹²⁶ Livy 45.1.8-9.

¹²⁷ Livy 45.2.4-7.

¹²⁸ Livy 45.36.2-9 & 40.9-42.1; Plut. *Aem.* 31 & 36 depicts this more as a funeral oration over his recently deceased sons.

reporting victory, the Roman people would have been regularly informed about their military leaders' overseas activities. Without more substantial evidence to support such a practice, though, this must remain as speculation.

The reading out of dispatches will be addressed within chapter four and lieutenants' orations have already been addressed in this section. This leaves the *pre-comitia* and post triumphal orations. The sources provide few instances of the speeches that publicised the military success in a *pre-comitia contio*. This is most probably due to the perception of commentators, like Livy and Cicero, who following the Senate's assent perhaps saw the subsequent vote as a mere formality. Nonetheless, a *rogatio* from the Senate still had to be read out by a magistrate. In 167 BC this was performed by the tribune of the plebs Ti. Sempronius on the Capitol following the Senate's granting of Paullus' petition BC.¹²⁹ Following the rendition of this *rogatio*, orators could be then invited to speak by the presiding magistrate. There had to be a gap of at least twenty-five days before the *comitia* voted, thus also providing an opportunity for the *imperator* and his allies as well as his enemies to address a *contio*, if they were asked. For instance, during the dispute of the *rogatio* awarding Paullus' triumph in 167, in which the *comitia tributa* initially voted against confirming the senatorial claim, the consular M. Servilius addressed the people, and through his oratory and the display of his own battle-scars to enhance his message, he persuaded them to vote again.¹³⁰ Another disputed triumph which involved lobbying on behalf of an *imperator*, was that of the proconsul L. Licinius Lucullus. He had returned from the East in 66 and won the Senate's

¹²⁹ Livy 45.36.1.

¹³⁰ Plut. *Aem.* 31; Livy 45.37-9; *MRR* 1.315; Stadter 1999, 448 is correct to comment that Servilius would have been quite old in 167 BC having held the consulship in 202. He was, however, elected prior to the *Lex Villia annalis* of 180 and so not bound by the minimal age requirement of 42, and, as demonstrated by the Elder Cato, a number of Roman aristocrats could still deliver effective oratory in old age.

approval, but a tribune C. Memmius persuaded the people to vote against confirmation. As a result according to Plutarch:

Lucullus strove mightily against this decision, and the foremost and most influential men mingled with the tribes, and by much entreaty and exertion at last persuaded the people to allow him to celebrate a triumph.¹³¹

This could be narrowly interpreted as Lucullus's aristocratic allies wandering around the assembled tribes of the *comitia tributa*, but we know Lucullus' triumph was considerably delayed, since the Senate voted for it in 66 and there was at least one popular vote against him, with the triumph finally being held in 63 BC.¹³² Thus, Lucullus and his associates' activities in this two to three year period probably included speeches before *contiones*. Additionally we know that *imperatores*, on occasion, addressed a *contio* outside the *pomerium* prior to their triumphs.¹³³ These pre-*comitia* orations, although infrequent in the sources, should not be seen as a mere formality.

Likewise we have few examples of the post-triumphal orations of *imperatores*; nonetheless, they are still informative. Livy, prior to providing his readers with the supposed words of Aemilius Paullus' speech, states that a few days after his triumph "a *contio* was called by M. Antonius a tribune of the plebs, and Paullus discoursed, as was customary for commanders, on his exploits."¹³⁴ This practice possibly derives from the custom whereby a

¹³¹ Plut. *Luc.* 37: ἐλθόντος δ' εἰς ἀγῶνα τοῦ Λουκούλλου μέγαν οἱ πρῶτοι καὶ δυνατώτατοι καταμίξαντες ἑαυτοὺς ταῖς φυλαῖς πολλῇ δεήσει καὶ σπουδῇ μόλις ἔπεισαν τὸν δῆμον ἐπιτρέψαι θριαμβεῦσαι.

¹³² Cic. *Mur.* 37 & 69.

¹³³ For example, Cic. *Att.* 1.14.1-4, in February 61 BC Pompeius addressed a *contio* in the Circus Flaminius, although there is no direct evidence that this speech was related to his triumphal process.

¹³⁴ Livy 45.40.9: "... paucis post diebus data a M. Antonio tribuno plebis contione, cum de suis rebus gestis more ceterorum imperatorum edissereret ...".

senior Roman magistrate at the end of his term in office addressed the people about his achievements, since the conclusion of the triumphal ceremony also marked the end of the triumphator's *imperium*.¹³⁵ Furthermore, the triumphator's speech was probably aimed at exploiting the crowds already gathered for his ceremonial parade. In addition, such speeches sometimes involved more than a rendition of military achievement. For example, in 191 BC, following his triumph, the consul P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica spoke not only about his success over the Gallic Boii, but also attacked a tribune of the plebs, P. Sempronius Blaesus, who had attempted to dispute Scipio's triumphal claim.¹³⁶ Plutarch's account of Sulla's post-triumphal oration in 81 indicates that this practice continued into the late Republic and, moreover, the extent to which it could be exploited:

he gave an account of his achievements in a speech to the people, laying just as much stress on the instances of his good fortune as he did on instances of bravery. In conclusion, he said that in view of his achievements he should be given the cognomen 'Fortunate'.¹³⁷

Thus, Sulla was informing a crowd of people in Rome that his name would now memorialise his success; just as in the fragments of his *Memoirs*, Sulla frequently associated his military achievements with divine favour, playing on the Roman belief that the triumphator was the

¹³⁵ Pina Polo 1995, 211; Cic. *Fam.* 5.2.7, although not triumphal, details how Cicero was prevented from performing this customary practice at the end of 63 by the tribune Metellus Nepos.

¹³⁶ Livy 36.38.6 & 40.14; *MRR* 1.352-3.

¹³⁷ Plut. *Sull.* 34: ... ἀπολογισμὸν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ τῶν πράξεων ποιούμενος οὐκ ἐλάσσονι σπουδῇ τὰς εὐτυχίας ἢ τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας κατηριθμεῖτο, καὶ πέρας ἐκέλευσεν ἑαυτὸν ἐπὶ τούτοις Εὐτυχῆ προσαγορεύεσθαι.

bearer of *felicitas* into the city.¹³⁸ It must not be forgotten that in his original petition to the Senate, a commander asked to be allowed to give thanks to the gods; and so it would not be surprising if many *imperatores* employed this post-triumphal address not only to publicise their achievements, but also to inform the people of their intention to construct a temple to reciprocate the gods for their divine favour. Additionally, we must not separate the various ephemeral and permanent means by which *imperatores* promoted their military ethos and be conscious of how they were frequently interlinked.

In conclusion, table 1 with its citation of the regularly delivered orations demonstrates the heavy and consistent dissemination of military success within the Senate during the middle and late Republic. Such oratory was primarily associated with the process through which *imperatores* sought their triumphs, and the contents of these speeches often reflected the parameters involved in attaining such recognition, parameters that were not set in stone, but at times developed in response to the frequency and nature of these triumphal claims. In addition, commanders' lieutenants played a modest, yet significant role in this process, particularly in the earlier period; and other customary opportunities to communicate military achievements to *contiones* should also not be underestimated. The public platforms, however, which provided these *imperatores* and their allies with the means of such oral publicity, were also environments in which their political rivals could challenge and criticise such triumphal claims, a phenomenon that is addressed in chapter three.

¹³⁸ For example, Plut. *Sull.* 17 cites the *Memoirs'* description of how a Roman businessman had received favourable divine omens from the shrine of Trophonius at Lebadea prior to the Battle of Chaeronea in 86 BC; Versnel 1970, 378-84. This link with *felicitas* is looked at in detail in Chapter 5, Section 3.

Table 1. Victorious speeches to the Senate 219-19 BC

VS	Date	Magistrate	Provincia	Achievements	Reference
1	219	L. Aemilius Paullus, consul	Illyricum	Reports the successful campaign over the forces of Demetrius of Pharos. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi, 550; Polyb. 3.19.12.
2	219	M. Livius Salinator, consul	Illyricum	Reports the successful campaign over the forces of Demetrius of Pharos. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi, 550; Auct. <i>Vir Ill.</i> 50.
3*	211	M. Claudius Marcellus, proconsul	Sicily	Reports his capture of Syracuse and defeat of Carthaginian force from Agrigentum. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi, 551; Livy 26.21.
4*	210	M. Valerius Laevinus, consul	Greece	Reports his praetorian operations in Greece, including his capture of Anticyra.	Livy 26.28.
5*	210	M. Valerius Laevinus, consul	Sicily	Reports his completion of the subjugation of Sicily.	Livy 27.5.
6	209	Q. Fabius Maximus Cunctator, consul	Italy	Reports the recapture of Tarentum. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi, 551; Plut. <i>Fab.</i> 23.
7*	209	C. Laelius, legate	Spain	Serving under proconsul P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus in Spain, reports the capture of New Carthage.	Livy 26.51, 27.7; Polyb. 10.18, 19.8.
8*	207	L. Veturius Philo, legate	Italy	Reads consular dispatch reporting victory at the Metaurus over Hasdrubal and “added a fuller and clearer account of his own”.	Livy 27.51.
9*	207	Q. Fabius Maximus, legate	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports that consular army in Gaul under M. Livius Salinator could be withdrawn to Italy.	Livy 28.9.
10*	207	C. Claudius Nero, consul	Italy	Details defeat of Hasdrubal at Metaurus. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi, 551; Livy 28.9.
11*	207	M. Livius Salinator, consul	Italy	Details the defeat of Hasdrubal at Metaurus. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi, 551; Livy 28.9.
12*	206	L. Cornelius Scipio, legate	Spain	Reports defeat of Carthaginian forces in Spain.	Livy 28.17.
13*	206	P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus, proconsul	Spain	Reports his Spanish achievements. Perhaps awarded an ovation.	Degrassi, 551; Livy 28.38; Polyb. 11.33.7.
14*	203	C. Laelius, legate	Africa	Reports Scipio’s defeat of Syphax’s forces.	Livy 30.16-7.
15*	201	L. Veturius Philo, legate	Africa	Reports Scipio’s victory at Zama.	Livy 30.40.

16*	201	M. Furius, legate	Greece	Reports on proconsul M. Aurelius Cotta's successes in defending Rome's Greek allies from Macedonian raids.	Livy 30.42.
17	201	P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus, proconsul	North Africa	Details his victorious campaign against Carthage including his defeat of Hannibal at Zama. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi, 551; Polyb. 16.23; Livy 30.45.
18*	200	L. Furius Purpureo, praetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his successful suppression of Gallic and Ligurian tribes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 551; Livy 31.47-9.
19*	200	L. Cornelius Lentulus, proconsul	Spain	Reports his Spanish successes. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi 551; Livy 31.20.
20*	199	L. Manlius Acidinus, propraetor	Spain	Details his Spanish successes. Tribune P. Porcius Laeca vetoes the subsequent senatorial vote for a triumph.	Livy 32.7.
21*	197	C. Cornelius Cethegus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Details his successes over the Insubres and Cenomani. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 551; Livy 33.23.
22*	197	Q. Minucius Rufus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Details his successes over the Boii and Ligurians. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi 552; Livy 33.23.
23	196	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Details his success over the Boii. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 552; Livy 33.37.
24	196	Cn. Cornelius Blasio, proconsul	Spain	Reports his successes over the Celtiberians. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi 552; Livy 33.27.
25	195	M. Helvius, propraetor	Farther Spain	Reports his victory over the Celtiberians. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi 552; Livy 34.10.
26	195	Q. Minucius Thermus, propraetor.	Nearer Spain	Reports his Spanish successes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 552-3; Livy 34.10.
27	194	M. Porcius Cato, proconsul	Spain	Reports his Spanish successes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 553; Livy 34.46.
28*	194	T. Quinctius Flamininus, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his defeat of Philip V of Macedon and Nabis of Sparta. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 553; Livy 34.52.
29*	193	L. Cornelius Merula, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports success over the Boii. Refused a triumph.	Livy 35.8.
30	191	M. Fulvius Nobilior, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports his Spanish successes. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi 553; Livy 36.21.
31*	191	P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports success over the Boii. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 553; Livy 36.40.
32*	191	M. Porcius Cato, military tribune and L. Cornelius Scipio, legate	Greece	Report M'. Acilius Glabrio's victory over Antiochus at Thermopylae.	Livy 36.21.

33*	190	M'. Acilius Glabrio, proconsul	Greece	Reports his defeat of Antiochus at Thermopylae and the capture of Heraclea. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 37.46.
34*	190	Q. Minucius Thermus, proconsul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his successes over the Ligurians. Refused a triumph.	Livy 37.46.
35*	189	M. Aurelius Cotta, legate	Asia	Reports L. Cornelius Scipio's victory over Antiochus at Magnesia.	Livy 37.52.
36	189	L. Aemilius Paullus, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports his Spanish successes, including his defeat of the Lusitanians in battle. Possibly awarded a triumph.	Vell. 1.9.3; <i>ILS</i> 15.
37*	189	L. Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus, proconsul	Asia	Reports his victory over Antiochus at Magnesia. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 554; Livy 37.58.
38*	189	L. Aemilius Regillus, propraetor	Greece	Reports his Aegean naval successes including the destruction of the Seleucid fleet at Myonnessus. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 553; Livy 37.58.
39*	188	Q. Fabius Labeo, propraetor	Greece	Reports his naval successes over the Seleucid navy. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 554; Livy 38.47.
40*	187	M. Fulvius Nobilior, proconsul	Greece	Reports his siege of Ambracia and his successful Greek campaign. Despite senatorial decrees against his successes awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 554; Livy 39.5.
41*	187	Cn. Manlius Vulso, proconsul	Asia	Reports his Galatian successes and despite senatorial criticisms he is awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 554; Livy 39.7.
42*	185	L. Manlius Acidinus Fulvianus, propraetor	Nearer Spain	Reports his successes over the Celtiberians. Awarded an ovation.	Livy 39.29.
43*	184	L. Iuventius Thalna and T. Quinctilius Varus, legates	Spain	Report the Spanish successes of propraetors C. Calpurnius Piso and L. Quinctius Crispinus and request permission for the commanders to bring their armies home.	Livy 39.38.
44	184	C. Calpurnius Piso, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports the joint successes with Crispinus over the Celtiberians and Lusitanians. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 39.42.
45	184	L. Quinctius Crispinus, propraetor	Nearer Spain	Reports the joint successes with Piso over the Celtiberians and Lusitanians. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 39.42.
46	182	A. Terentius Varro, propraetor	Nearer Spain	Reports his various successes over the Celtiberians. Awarded an ovation.	Livy 40.16.

47*	181	L. Aurelius Cotta and C. Sulpicius Galus, legates	Liguria	Report L. Aemilius Paullus' successes in Liguria and ask permission for the proconsul to return with his troops.	Livy 40.28.
48	181	L. Aemilius Paullus, proconsul	Liguria	Reports his victory over the Ligurian Ingauni. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 40.34.
49	180	M. Baebius Tamphilus, proconsul	Liguria	Reports his Ligurian successes and his forced movement of the Apuani to Samnium. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 40.36-8.
50	180	P. Cornelius Cethegus, proconsul	Liguria	Reports his Ligurian successes and his forced movement of the Apuani to Samnium. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 40.36-8.
51*	180	L. Minucius, T. Maenius and L. Terentius Massaliota, legates	Further Spain	Report the proconsul Q. Fulvius Flaccus' two victories over the Celtiberians and ask whether Flaccus could bring his troops home.	Livy 40.35.
52*	180	L. Duronius, propraetor	Illyricum	Reports his achievements in Illyricum, blaming King Genthius of Illyria for supporting piracy in the Adriatic.	Livy 40.42.
53	180	Q. Fulvius Flaccus, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports his victories over the Celtiberians. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 40.43.
54	179	Q. Fulvius Flaccus, consul	Liguria	Reports his successful Ligurian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Livy 40.59.
55*	178	L. Postumius Albinus, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports his successes over the Vaccaeii and Lusitanians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 555; Livy 41.6.
56*	178	Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, propraetor	Nearer Spain	Reports various victories over the Celtiberians and the subsequent treaty. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 555; Livy 41.6.
57*	177	C. Claudius Pulcher, consul	Liguria	Reports on his Istrian and Ligurian victories. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 555; Livy 41.13.
58*	176	Legates	Sardinia	Report on proconsul Ti. Sempronius Gracchus' successful Sardinian campaign & request permission for Gracchus to return to Rome.	Livy 41.17.
59	175	P. Mucius Scaevola, consul	Liguria	Reports his successful Ligurian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 555-6; Livy 41.19.
60	175	M. Aemilius Lepidus, consul	Liguria	Reports his successful Ligurian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 555; Livy 41.19.
61	175	Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, proconsul	Sardinia	Reports his successes over the Ilienses and Balari tribes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 555; Livy 41.28.

62	175	M. Titinius Curvus, propraetor	Nearer Spain	Reports his Spanish successes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 555.
63	174	Ap. Claudius Centho, propraetor	Nearer Spain	Reports his successes over the Celtiberians. Awarded an ovation.	Degrassi 556; Livy 41.28.
64*	173	M. Popillius Laenas, consul	Liguria	Reports his victory over the Ligurian Statelliates, but Senate passes a decree demanding the restoration of the Statelliate captives and property.	Livy 42.9.
65*	172	C. Cicereius, propraetor	Corsica	Reports his victories in Corsica. Refused triumph, so celebrated a triumph on the Alban Mount.	Degrassi 556; Livy 42.21.
66*	172	C. Popillius Laenas, consul	Liguria	Reports his successes over the Ligurians.	Livy 42.28.
67*	168	M. Perperna, legate	Illyricum	Reports the victory of praetor L. Ancius Gallus over the forces of King Gentius of Illyria.	Livy 44.32.5.
68*	168	Q. Fabius Maximus Aemilianus, L. Cornelius Lentulus and Q. Caecilius Metellus, legates	Macedonia	Report consul L. Aemilius Paullus' victory over the forces of King Perseus of Macedon at Pydna.	Livy 45.1-2.
69*	168	C. Licinius Nerva and P. Decius, legates	Illyricum	Reports the victory of praetor L. Anicius Gallus over the forces of King Gentius of Illyria.	Livy 45.3.
70	167	L. Aemilius Paullus, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his successful Macedonian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 556; Livy 45.35.
71	167	Cn. Octavius, propraetor	Macedonia	Reports on his naval successes against the Macedonians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 556; Livy 45.35.
72	167	L. Anicius Gallus, propraetor	Illyria	Reports his victory over the forces of King Gentius of Illyria. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 556; Livy 45.35.
73	166	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports on his successes over Alpine tribes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 556-7; Livy <i>Per.</i> 46.
74	166	C. Sulpicius Galus, consul	Liguria	Reports on his successes against the Ligurians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 557; Livy <i>Per.</i> 46.
75	158	M. Fulvius Nobilior, proconsul	Liguria	Reports his victory over the Ligurian Eleate tribe. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 557.
76	155	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Liguria	Reports on his victory over the Ligurian Apuani tribe. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 557.

77	155	P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica, consul	Dalmatia	Reports his capture and destruction of the town of Delminium. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 557-8.
78	152	L. Mummius, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports on his successes over the Lusitanians. Awarded a triumph.	App. <i>Hisp.</i> 57.
79	146	Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus, propraetor	Macedonia	Reports his victories over the Macedonian forces of Andriscus and over the Achaean League at Scarpheia and Chaeroneia. Awarded a triumph.	Cic. <i>Mur.</i> 31; Livy <i>Per.</i> 52.
80	146	P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, proconsul	Africa	Reports his capture and destruction of Carthage. Awarded a triumph.	App. <i>Lib.</i> 135; Cic. <i>Rep.</i> 6.11.
81	145	L. Mummius, proconsul	Greece	Reports his capture and destruction of Corinth. Awarded a triumph.	Cic. <i>Mur.</i> 31; Livy <i>Per.</i> 52.
82	143	Ap. Claudius Pulcher, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his success over the Salassi tribe. Refused a triumph, but held one, possibly on the Alban Mount, against a tribunician veto through the presence of his daughter, a Vestal.	Livy <i>Per.</i> 53; Val. Max. 5.4.6; Oros. 5.4.7.
83	136 or 135	D. Iunius Brutus Callaicus, proconsul	Further Spain	Reports his victories over the Lusitanians and Callaecians. Awarded a triumph.	Plut. <i>TG</i> 21.2; Eutrop. 4.19.
84	132	P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, proconsul	Nearer Spain	Reports on his capture and destruction of Numantia. Awarded a triumph.	Livy <i>Per.</i> 59; App. <i>Hisp.</i> 98.
85	129	C. Sempronius Tuditanus, consul	Illyricum	Reports his success over the Iapydes in Illyricum. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 559.
86	126	M'. Aquillius, proconsul	Asia	Reports on successful campaign in Asia. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 559.
87	123	M. Fulvius Flaccus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports on his victories over the Ligures, Vocontii and Salluvii. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 559.
87	122	L. Aurelius Orestes, proconsul	Sardinia	Reports on successful Sardinian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 560.
88	122	C. Sextius Calvinus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports on his victories over the Ligures, Vocontii and Salluvii. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 560.
89	121	Q. Caecilius Metellus Baliaricus, proconsul	Balearic Islands	Reports on his successful Balearic campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 560.
90	120	Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports on Gallic campaign including victory over the Averni. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 560; Flor. 1.37.5-6; Eutrop. 4.22.

91	120	Q. Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his Gallic campaign, including victories over Allobroges and the Avernian chieftain Betuitus. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 560; Flor. 1.37.5-6; Eutrop. 4.22.
92	117	L. Caecilius Metellus Delmaticus, proconsul	Dalmatia	Reports his successful Dalmatian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 560; App. <i>Illyr.</i> 11; Eutrop. 4.23.
93	117	Q. Marcius Rex, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his victory over the Ligurian Stoenei tribe. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 560.
94	115	M. Aemilius Scaurus, consul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his victory over the Gallic Karnei. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561.
95	111	M. Caecilius Metellus, proconsul	Sardinia	Reports his successful Sardinian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561; Vell. 2.8.2.
96	111	C. Caecilius Metellus Caprarius, proconsul	Thrace	Reports his successful campaign in Thrace. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561; Vell. 2.8.2.
97	110	M. Livius Drusus, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his successes over the Macedonians and Scordiscians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561.
98	107	Q. Servilius Caepio, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports his successful Spanish campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561.
99	106	Q. Caecilius Metellus Numidicus, proconsul	Africa	Reports his successful Numidian campaign including his defeat of Jugurtha. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561; Vell. 2.11.2.
100	106	M. Minucius Rufus, proconsul	Thrace	Reports his successful Thracian campaign including his victory over the Scordisci. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561; Vell. 2.8.3.
101	105	C. Marius, proconsul	Africa	Reports his Numidian campaign including his capture of Jugurtha. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 561; Sall. <i>Jug.</i> 114.
102	101	C. Marius, consul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his victory with proconsul Catulus over the Cimbri. Awarded a joint triumph with Catulus.	Livy <i>Per.</i> 68; Plut. <i>Mar.</i> 27; Eutrop. 5.2.
103	101	Q. Lutatius Catulus, propraetor	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his victory with the consul Marius over the Cimbri. Awarded a joint triumph with Marius.	Livy <i>Per.</i> 68; Plut. <i>Mar.</i> 27; Eutrop. 5.2.
104	100	M. Antonius, propraetor	Cilicia	Reports his campaign against Cilician pirates. Awarded a triumph.	<i>CIL</i> 1 ² .2.2662; Livy <i>Per.</i> 68; Plut. <i>Pomp.</i> 24.
105	100 or 99	T. Didius, propraetor	Thrace	Reports his successes over the Scordisci in Thrace. Awarded a triumph.	Cic. <i>Pis.</i> 61; Flor. 1.38.3-5.

106	99	M'. Aquilius, proconsul	Sicily	Reports his pacification of a Sicilian slave revolt. Awarded an ovation.	<i>FGrH</i> 87, Posidonius Fr. 29; Diod. 36.10.1.
107	98	L. Cornelius Dolabella, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports his success over the Lusitanians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 562.
108	95	L. Licinius Crassus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his defeat of Alpine bandits in Cisalpine Gaul. Refused a triumph.	<i>Cic. Pis.</i> 62; <i>Inv.</i> 2.111; <i>Asc.</i> 15C.
109	93	T. Didius, proconsul	Nearer Spain	Reports his successes over the Celtiberians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 562; <i>App. Hisp.</i> 100
110	93	P. Licinius Crassus, proconsul	Further Spain	Reports his successes over the Lusitanians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 563; <i>Cic. Pis.</i> 58; <i>Asc.</i> 15C.
111	89	Cn. Pompeius Strabo, consul	Italy	Reports his capture of Asculum and his other successes during the Social War. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 563; <i>Asc.</i> 14C; <i>Val. Max.</i> 6.9.9.
112	88	P. Servilius Vatia, propraetor	Unknown	Reports a successful campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 563.
113	81	L. Licinius Murena, propraetor	Asia	Reports his successes in Asia including his defeat of Mithridates. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 563, <i>Cic. Mur.</i> 15; <i>Leg. Man.</i> 8.
114	81	C. Valerius Flaccus, proconsul	Nr. Spain & Transalpine Gaul	Reports his successes in Celtiberia and Transalpine Gaul. Possibly awarded a triumph.	<i>RRC</i> 365/1; <i>Gran. Licin.</i> 36.5.
115	81	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, propraetor	Africa	Reports his Sicilian and African campaigns. Awarded a triumph against Sulla's wishes.	<i>Cic. Leg. Man.</i> 61; <i>Livy Per.</i> 89; <i>Plut. Pomp.</i> 14.
116	77	Cn. Cornelius Dolabella, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his successful Macedonian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Cic. Pis.</i> 44; <i>Suet. Iul.</i> 4.1.
117	74	P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus, proconsul	Cilicia	Reports his Cilician campaign including his defeat of the Isaurians and the capture of the city of Olympus. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Cic. Verr.</i> 2.1.56-7; <i>Eutrop.</i> 6.3.
118	72	C. Scribonius Curio, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his Macedonian campaign including victory over the Dardanians. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Cic. Pis.</i> 44; <i>Eutrop.</i> 6.2; <i>Livy Per.</i> 92.
119	71	Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius, proconsul	Spain	Reports his successes against Sertorius's Spanish forces. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Vell.</i> 2.30; <i>App. BC</i> 1.121.
120	71	M. Licinius Crassus, proconsul	Italy	Reports his successful suppression of the Spartacus slave revolt. Awarded an ovation.	<i>Plut. Cras.</i> 10- 11; <i>Plin. HN</i> 15.125.
121	71	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Spain	Reports successful campaign against Sertorius. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Cic. Leg. Man.</i> 62; <i>Vell.</i> 2.30; <i>Plut. Cras.</i> 11.

122	71	M. Terentius Varro Lucullus, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his successful Macedonian campaign including his defeat of the Danubian Bessi. Awarded a triumph.	Cic. <i>Pis.</i> 44; Eutrop. 6.10.
123	69?	L. Afranius, praetor	Unknown	Reports his successful campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Cic. <i>Pis.</i> 58.
124	69	M. Pupius Piso Frugi Calpurnius, propraeator	Spain	Reports his successful Spanish campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Cic. <i>Pis.</i> 62; Asc. 15C.
125	66	L. Licinius Lucullus, proconsul	Asia	Reports his Asian campaign including victories against Mithridates and Tigranes. Awarded triumph, but blocked by tribune C. Memmius; triumph finally held in 63 BC.	Plut. <i>Luc.</i> 37; Cic. <i>Mur.</i> 37.
126	66	Q. Marcius Rex, proconsul	Cilicia	Reports his Cilician successes, but refused a triumph.	Sall. <i>Cat.</i> 30.
127	64?	Q. Caecilius Metellus Creticus, proconsul	Crete	Reports his successful campaign against the Cretan pirates, eventually awarded triumph in 62 BC.	Degrassi 566; Sall. <i>Cat.</i> 30; Vell. 2.34.
128	63	L. Manlius Torquatus, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his achievements in Macedonia.	Cic. <i>Pis.</i> 44.
129	61	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Asia	Reports his successful Eastern campaigns, including victories over the Cilician pirates, Mithridates and Tigranes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 566; Plut. <i>Pomp.</i> 44-5; Plin. <i>HN</i> 7.98.
130	60-54?	C. Pomptinus, propraeator	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his 62-1 BC victory over the Allobroges, eventually being awarded triumph in 54 BC.	Degrassi 566; Cic. <i>Att.</i> 4.18.4; Q. <i>Fr.</i> 3.4.6.
131	54	A. Gabinius, proconsul	Syria	Reports to the Senate within the <i>pomerium</i> about his successes in Syria, Judaea and Egypt.	Cic. <i>Q. Fr.</i> 3.2.1-2.
132	51	P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther, proconsul	Cilicia	Reports his Cilician successes. Awarded a triumph.	Cic. <i>Att.</i> 5.21.4.
133	47	M. Aemilius Lepidus, proconsul	Nearer Spain	Reports his civil war successes in Spain. Awarded a triumph.	Dio 43.1.2.
134	45	Q. Fabius Maximus, proconsul	Spain	Reports his Spanish achievements. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 567; Quint. <i>Inst.</i> 6.3.61.
135	45	Q. Pedius, propraeator	Spain	Reports his successful Spanish campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 567; Dio 43.31.1; Plin. <i>HN</i> 35.21.
136	43	M. Aemilius Lepidus, triumvir	Spain	Reports his recent Spanish successes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 567; Vell. 2.67.4; App. <i>BC</i> 4.31.

137*	43	C. Furnius, legate	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his proconsul L. Munatius Plancus' achievements in Gaul.	<i>Cic. Fam.</i> 10.6.1.
138	43	L. Munatius Plancus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his Gallic achievements including victory over the Raetians. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 567; <i>Vell.</i> 2.67.4.
139	42	P. Vatinius, proconsul	Illyricum	Reports his Illyrian campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 567-8.
140	42	L. Antonius, unknown magistracy	Transalpine Gaul?	Reports his successful Alpine campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 568; <i>Dio</i> 48.4.
141	39	L. Marcus Censorinus, consul	Macedonia	Reports his achievements in Macedonia. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 568.
142	39	C. Asinius Pollio, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his suppression of the Illyrian Parthini. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 568; <i>Hor. Carm.</i> 2.1.15-6.
143	38	P. Ventidius Bassus, proconsul	Syria	Reports his successful campaign against the Parthians including victories in the Taurus and Amanus mountains. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 568; <i>Dio</i> 49.21.3; <i>Plut. Ant.</i> 34.
144*	36	Imp. Caesar, triumvir	Sicily	Reports his successful Sicilian campaign. Awarded an ovation prior to the speech.	Degrassi 569; <i>Suet. Aug.</i> 22; <i>App. BC</i> 5.130; <i>Dio</i> 49.15.3.
145	36	Cn. Domitius Calvinus, proconsul	Spain	Reports his achievements in Spain. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 569.
146	34	C. Norbanus Flaccus, proconsul	Spain	Reports his achievements in Spain. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 569.
147	34	C. Sosius, proconsul	Syria & Cilicia	Reports his successes in Judaea. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 569.
148	34	T. Statilius Taurus, proconsul	Africa	Reports his successes in Africa. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 569.
149	33	L. Marcus Philippus, probably a proconsul	Spain	Reports his achievements in Spain. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Fast. Barb.</i> Degrassi 569.
150	32	Ap. Claudius Pulcher, proconsul	Spain	Reports his achievements in Spain. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Fast. Barb.</i> Degrassi 570.
151	32	L. Cornificius, proconsul	Africa	Reports his successes in Africa. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Fast. Barb.</i> Degrassi 570.
152	29 or 28	C. Carrinas, proconsul	Gaul	Reports victories over the Morini and Suebi. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 570; <i>Dio</i> 51.21.
153	28	L. Autronius Paetus, consul	Africa	Reports his African achievements. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 570-1.
154	28	C. Calvisius Sabinus, proconsul	Spain	Reports his Spanish achievements. Awarded a triumph.	<i>Fasti Barb.</i> Degrassi 570.

155	27	M. Licinius Crassus, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his successes over various Balkan tribes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 571; Dio 51.24-7.
156	27	M. Valerius Messala Corvinus, proconsul	Gaul	Reports his Gallic campaign including his success over the Aquitani. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 571; Tib. 1.7.1-9; App. <i>BC</i> 38.
157	26	S. Appuleius, proconsul	Spain	Reports his Spanish campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 571.
158	21	L. Sempronius Atratinus, proconsul	Africa	Reports his African campaign. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 571.
159	19	L. Cornelius Balbus, proconsul	Africa	Reports his African campaign, including successes over the Garamantes. Awarded a triumph.	Degrassi 571; Plin <i>HN</i> 5.35-7.

* = attested speech

Degrassi = Degrassi (ed.) 1947 *Inscriptiones Italiae 13.1, Fasti Consulares et Triumphales*.

Criteria for Table 1

Table 1 contains the victorious speeches (VS) that are either attested in the sources or were potentially delivered to the Senate by commanders or their legates during the period of 219 to 19 BC.¹³⁹ Three primary criteria dictated what to incorporate or omit. First of all, when a source specifically cites a victorious oration, such as Livy's account of the consul C. Claudius's speech in 177 BC or Cicero's mention of the legate C. Furnius' statement in 43, it is included unless there is a serious question over its reliability.¹⁴⁰

Secondly, if a source states that a commander celebrated a triumph or ovation (or an Alban mount triumph) then, unless there is again a major doubt, it is presumed, following Zonaras, that the returning commander made an oral petition for a triumph to a sitting of the Senate outside the *pomerium* and that this request included some sort of citation of the achievements that he intended to celebrate.¹⁴¹

Thirdly, on occasion, this customary practice was bypassed during the late Republic when three *imperatores* possessed overwhelming military and political *auctoritas* over the *res publica* – Sulla in 81-80, Caesar in 46-44, and Octavian in 36 and 29-19 – and the Senate as a result voted these *imperatores* or their principal lieutenants triumphs or ovations *in absentia*.¹⁴² For instance, Dio tells how the Senate had already voted Caesar a triumph in 46 BC prior to his return from Africa and he also states that in 19 BC the house voted the absent

¹³⁹ Broughton 1951-52-86, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic 3 vols.*, and Degraasi (ed.) 1947, *Inscriptiones Italiae 13.1, Fasti Consulares et Triumphales*, were the two works from which Table 1 was primarily drawn.

¹⁴⁰ Livy 41.13; Cic. *Fam.* 10.6.1; the asterisked speeches in Table 1 are attested in the sources.

¹⁴¹ Zon. 7.21.4; Richardson 1975, 58-9, emphasizes the formal and religious nature of this petition.

¹⁴² Plut. *Sull.* 30 & 34 states that, after Sulla's victory at the Colline gate, the proconsul addressed the Senate in the Temple of Bellona, an account that does not mention the reporting of his achievements; Livy *Per.* 115-6; Vell. Pat. 2.56; Dio 43.13 & 43.42; detail Caesar's triumphs of 46 and 45 without mentioning any senatorial address; Dio 48.31; M. Antonius and Octavian were awarded ovations in 40 BC, presumably for their Philippi campaign, but there is no mention of any petition by either leader; Dio 51.21; details Octavian's three day triumph in 29 following his return from Egypt. Dio does state that before the triumph "... Octavian spoke in praise of his subordinates, and conferred honours upon them as was his custom ...", but he does not mention to whom Octavian was speaking.

Agrippa a triumph “at Augustus’ behest”.¹⁴³ Therefore, unless a source states that that one of these leaders delivered a victorious speech to the Senate (in line with the first criterion), such as Octavian’s speech on his Sicilian campaign in 36 BC, then it is omitted from the table.¹⁴⁴ How commonly this practice of voting honours to absent commanders occurred prior to 19 BC is difficult to assess and it may have been a development arising from the fall of the late Republic and the establishment of the principate. In addition, Sulla and Octavian, and to some extent Caesar, made significant and public efforts to work with and rebuild, not undermine, the authority of the Senate.¹⁴⁵ For instance, on Octavian’s triple triumph of 29 Dio states:

he did everything in the customary manner, except that he permitted his fellow-consul and the other magistrates, contrary to precedent, to follow him along with the senators who had participated in the victory; for it was usual for such officials to march in advance and for only the senators to follow.¹⁴⁶

It must also be stressed that the *imperator*’s oral request to the Senate was a customary opportunity for martial publicity within Rome and there is no evidence that Sulla, Caesar or Octavian avoided the customary opportunities of Roman military self-promotion. On the contrary, all three of them frequently exploited various platforms and media to promote a

¹⁴³ Dio 43.14.3: 54.11.6, states that, following Agrippa’s successful, but difficult, Cantabrian campaign in 19 BC: “... he sent no dispatch to the Senate about these achievements and did not accept the triumph which was voted at Augustus’ behest”.

¹⁴⁴ App. *BC* 5.130: “Senate and people, garlanded, went to meet him a long way from the city and escorted him to the temples and from there to his house. On the following day, he gave addresses to the Senate and to the people, detailing his achievements and administration from the beginning until that time ...”.

¹⁴⁵ Keaveney 1982; Seager 1994a, 200-3; both emphasize Sulla’s efforts to reform and strengthen the authority of the Senate; Gelzer 1968, 290-1; Caesar increased the Senate’s membership to around 900 by including many of his provincial followers in order to weaken its influence, but the Senate continued to pass *consulta* and *rogationes* during his dictatorship; Brunt 1984, 444, argues that even with the numerous reforms of the Senate, Augustus continually referred “all sorts of measures to the Senate for its approval in accordance with Republican practice”.

¹⁴⁶ Dio 51.21.9: ... τὰ μὲν ἄλλα κατὰ τὸ νομιζόμενον ἐπραξε, τὸν δὲ δὴ συνῦπατον τούς τε λοιπούς ἀρχοντας περιεῖδε παρὰ τὸ καθεστηκός ἐπισπομένους οἱ μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν βουλευτῶν τῶν συννεκτικῶτων· εἰώθεσαν γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἡγεῖσθαι οἱ δὲ ἐφέπεσθαι.

victorious martial ethos.¹⁴⁷ Overall, Table 1 is a combined list of the 45 attested speeches and the 114 potential occasions when speeches reporting military success were delivered to the Senate during the middle and late Republic.

¹⁴⁷ For example, all three sent dispatches to the Senate with included a citation of their martial achievements; App. *BC* 1.77; *Mith.* 60: both tell of Sulla's dispatch to the Senate in 84; Cic. *Fam.* 16.11; Caes. *B Civ.* 1.1; cite Caesar's dispatch from Gaul to the Senate in 49; Cic. *Phil.* 14.6 mentions a joint dispatch from Octavian and two consuls after their success at Forum Gallorum; in addition, various coins were minted that emanated the military ethos of Sulla, Caesar and Octavian; *RRC* 367/1; 368/1 in 82; 468/1 in 46-5; *RIC* 1², 271 in c.29-27.

3. Oratory to attain and maintain military commands

... despite having no experience of making the type of speeches that are required by those who stand before you on this platform, the subject on which I now have the opportunity to address you is one on which no one could fail to be eloquent. This is because my subject is the outstanding and unique *virtus* of Gnaeus Pompeius – a subject on which it is more difficult to finish speaking than to begin. In making my speech, therefore, my task will not be to strive after abundance but for moderation.¹⁴⁸

As Cicero states, the main aim of this deliberative speech, which was delivered in 66 BC in support of C. Manilius' tribunician bill to appoint Pompeius to an extraordinary command against Mithridates, was to communicate this general's abilities to the people assembled in the Forum.¹⁴⁹ However, these speeches on upcoming commands not only concerned the promotion of one commander, but also frequently involved the criticism or praise of the other magistrates affected by such an appointment. Rose makes the important point that these deliberative speeches were more than simply supporting a proposal, but often about creating a vision of reality that undermined any potential criticisms of the speaker's position.¹⁵⁰

This section will focus on the two main arenas in which the appointment, prorogation and supersession of republican magistrates to military commands were debated: the Senate and *contiones* in Rome. Within modern scholarship, there are numerous analyses of the

¹⁴⁸ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 3: "quod in hac insolita mihi ex hoc loco ratione dicendi causa talis oblata est, in qua oratio deesse nemini possit. dicendum est enim de Cn. Pompei singulari eximiaque virtute: huius autem orationis difficilium est exitum quam principium invenire. ita mihi non tam copia quam modus in dicendo quaerendus est".

¹⁴⁹ Berry 2006, 108; Cic. *Orat.* 102, later describes the objective of the speech: "the task was to glorify Pompeius; in a tempered and moderate style we drew on the full resources of rhetorical ornament".

¹⁵⁰ Rose 1995, 367: "an oration does more than propose a specific course of action: its persuasive function is aimed at constructing a vision of the real in which all potential grounds for opposing the speaker's proposals lose any serious claim to validity. This vision of the real is the oration's enabling fiction".

circumstances that surrounded specific military commands.¹⁵¹ There is, however, no overall treatment of the numerous command debates and, above all, of how the past and ongoing military achievements of the individuals who competed for the *provinciae* played a fundamental role in the persuasive oratory employed. Other significant issues, like the current political context within Rome, the audiences for this oratory, and the motivations of the speakers who made the proposals will also be addressed, as they frequently dictated the way these military records were treated.

Speeches on the allocation of *provinciae* within the Senate

The allocation of the annual consular and praetorian *provinciae* was customarily decided by the Senate, and for the period of 219 to 123 BC these *provinciae* were nearly always selected by the assembled Senators *after* the election of the senior magistrates and then allocated by lot.¹⁵² (On the odd occasion, though, instead of an allotment some consuls made a mutual agreement between themselves.)¹⁵³ With the commands being decided in this way, one would assume that the senatorial deliberations over up-coming *provinciae* primarily focused on Rome's current foreign and domestic policy requirements. It would not be surprising, however, with the consuls-elect present in Rome during these deliberations, in light of the competitive nature of the Roman aristocracy, that some magistrates exploited their current *auctoritas* to influence which *provinciae* were proposed and subsequently voted upon.

¹⁵¹ For example, Eckstein 1987, 268-324, provides a comprehensive treatment of Flamininus' relationship with the Senate during his four year command in Greece (198-194 BC); Marshall 1973, 109-121, assesses the means by which Crassus was given the command against Spartacus; Steel 2001, 113-161, gives a detailed analysis of Cicero's speeches' *De imperio Cn. Pompei* and *De provinciis consularibus*, in a section aptly called 'Controlling the uncontrollable: Cicero and the generals'.

¹⁵² Lintott 1999, 101; Livy 32.8, for example, in 198 BC the consul Flamininus received Macedonia by lot, whilst his colleague S. Aelius Paetus received Italy.

¹⁵³ Lintott 1993, 47; Rosenstein 1995, 51-52; Sall. *Cat.* 26.4, for example, in 63 BC Cicero agreed that his consular colleague C. Antonius would take the *provincia* of Macedonia; Livy 30.1.1-2 in 203; 42.4.1 in 173; 43.12.1 in 169; Lintott 1999, 101; Bertrand 1989, 191-215; for the period covered *provincia* was primarily interpreted as a geographical space for either conquest or administration, but it was originally seen as a task or assignment.

Unfortunately, as Harris has emphasized, there is a severe paucity of information on the debates and decisions made during Senatorial sittings and hence one has to be cautious in suggesting that the military records of elected magistrates regularly influenced the selection and allocation of *provinciae*.¹⁵⁴ Nonetheless, a change in the late second century at least points towards a concern about the selection process.

In 123 or 122 C. Gracchus passed tribunician legislation whereby the two consular *provinciae* were now chosen by the Senate *before* the election of the consuls. Now, although information on this law is meagre, providing little idea of Gracchus' motives, as Lintott says, "it would have diminished jobbery in the allocation".¹⁵⁵ It must be stressed that it was not only through mutual agreement between magistrates that *provinciae* were assigned, but also through the annual senatorial debates.¹⁵⁶ Within the sources there are at least three senatorial debates which shed some light on the oratory employed during the allocation of military commands.

A good indication of the complexities that these senatorial debates encompassed comes to the fore in our only extant senatorial speech on the allocation of *provinciae*: Cicero's *De provinciis consularibus*.¹⁵⁷ Delivered in the summer of 56, this oration concerned the upcoming consular provinces for 55, four of which were under consideration: Cisalpine Gaul,

¹⁵⁴ Harris 1985, 6-7 & 253.

¹⁵⁵ Cic. *Dom.* 24; Sall. *Iug.* 27; Lintott 1994, 80; Evans 1994, 76 suggests that the allotment of the consular provinces of 125 was a factor in the Gracchan legislation, since the consul M. Fulvius Flaccus, whilst proposing bills to grant the citizenship and the right of appeal to the Italians, was deliberately diverted by opponents in the Senate with a command to defend Massilia against the Salluvii and the Vocontii (Val. Max. 9.5.1; Liv. *Per.* 60; App. *BC* 1.34); Stockton 1979, 131-2, on the other hand, suggests that Gracchus was perhaps concerned that one of his political allies of 123, C. Fannius, who was candidate for the consulship of 122, would "be removed from Rome ... by being sent off to govern a distant province."

¹⁵⁶ Lintott 1993, 47; Dio 56.1; this allocation process stood until 52 when Pompeius introduced an additional measure whereby there had to be a gap of five years between the election of a consul and the taking up of his consular command. It was soon abandoned, though, due to the civil war, Caesar's dictatorship and the establishment of the triumvirate.

¹⁵⁷ Rose 1995, 391-7, focuses on Gabinius' alleged persecution of the *publicani*; Steel 2001, 156-160, underscores how Cicero was reassuring the Senate by portraying Caesar as a good loyal servant of the *res publica*; Fantham 2005, 214-19, emphasizes how this deliberative speech makes heavy use of the rhetorical genus of *laudativum* whereby blame and then praise are skilfully wielded by Cicero to persuade his senatorial audience.

Transalpine Gaul, Macedonia and Syria.¹⁵⁸ Prior to Cicero's speech, a number of proposals had been made that threatened Caesar's current governorship of the two Gauls. The presiding consul's proposal was to allocate Cisalpine Gaul and Syria, and if Cicero is to be believed there were at least two more: one in which Transalpine Gaul would be re-allocated and another in which both Gauls would be re-assigned.¹⁵⁹ In April 56 the informal alliance of Pompeius, Crassus and Caesar had agreed a number of self-serving political measures, including the prorogation of Caesar's Gallic command.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, as Cicero was obliged to Pompeius for aiding his recent return from exile, the orator was persuaded into speaking on behalf of Caesar in the critical senatorial debate.¹⁶¹ As a result Cicero argued for the proposal of the consular P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus that Macedonia and Syria, currently held by the proconsuls L. Calpurnius Piso and A. Gabinius respectively, should be the new consular *provinciae*.¹⁶² Despite the fact that Caesar's extraordinary command involved a five year allocation of *provinciae*, which probably increased the intensity of the debate, consular *provinciae* still had to be assigned; and if we consider that there were at the *very least* four proposals and five speeches during this senatorial gathering, it illustrates that vigorous deliberations amongst leading senators *could* develop and, I believe, such discussions regularly occurred at these Senate meetings, particularly during ongoing military campaigns, as leading senators vied to promote themselves and their allies, and at the same time challenge their peers and rivals.

¹⁵⁸ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 3.

¹⁵⁹ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 17, 36-38; Fantham 2005, 215; Butler & Cary 1924, 13; *MRR* 2.207; the consuls of 56 were Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus and L. Marcius Phillipus; it is unclear, however, within the speech which of these two made the initial proposal.

¹⁶⁰ Cic. *Fam.* 1.9.8-10; Cic. *Caes.* 21.6; Gelzer 1968, 121-4.

¹⁶¹ Cic. *Fam.* 1.9.9; in a letter to the consular P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther in December 54, Cicero mentions Pompeius' significant role in ensuring his return from exile.

¹⁶² Cic. *Prov. cons.* 1; *MRR* 2.82.

Within this debate Cicero aimed to create a strong contrast between good and bad magisterial behaviour, during which the military records of the three incumbent governors come to the fore. On the one hand, Piso and Gabinius are portrayed as rapacious and irresponsible, and so worthy of supersession. On the other hand, Caesar is depicted as a dutiful and successful commander, who unquestionably deserves prorogation. Thus, we see the combined employment of laudatory and critical rhetoric in this deliberative speech, so presenting us with a good flavour of such debates.¹⁶³ In addition, Caesar and Pompeius demonstrated political savvy in persuading Cicero to speak, as the orator resented Piso and Gabinius for their lack of support in 58 when they were consuls and he was being threatened by exile.¹⁶⁴ Cicero, therefore, had strong reason to wield such invective against them.

Piso's tenure of Macedonia was Cicero's first port of call.¹⁶⁵ Although there was no ongoing military conflict in this province, the orator still inveighed against Piso's military character with the allegation that the proconsul ill-treated his troops.

It is truly pitiable how soldiers of the Roman People have been captured, killed, abandoned, scattered; destroyed by neglect, famine, disease, and utter ruin, so that, most disgraceful of all, the crime of a general seems to have been expiated by the sufferings of his army.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Fantham 2005, 216-217.

¹⁶⁴ *Cic. Prov. cons.* 1; *Plut. Cic.* 31 tells of Piso's and Gabinius' unhelpful attitude towards Cicero in 58 when Clodius was threatening him with exile; Fantham 2005, 214.

¹⁶⁵ *Cic. Prov. cons.* 4-8.

¹⁶⁶ *Cic. Prov. cons.* 5: "miserandum in modum milites populi Romani capti, necati, deserti, dissipati sunt, incuria, fame, morbo, vastitate consumpti, ut, quod est indignissimum, scelus imperatoris poena exercitus expiatum esse videatur".

Cicero parodies the traditional asyndetic catalogue of achievements that Roman aristocrats like to employ in their letters and *elogia*.¹⁶⁷ He does not, however, provide specific details of how Piso's troops suffered in these various ways. This is in marked contrast to his extensive descriptions in the *Verrines* of how Verres neglected his armed forces in Sicily.¹⁶⁸ This is possibly owing to the different nature of the audience that Cicero was targeting in 56, not the readership of an undelivered forensic speech, but a senatorial debate in which participants had a limited amount of time to speak and, as Cicero himself recommends in his *De Oratore*, oratory in the Senate should be plain and simple in order to prevent the appearance of over-elaborate cleverness.¹⁶⁹ Consequently, what we see here is Cicero employing a brief, yet emotive description in order to create a characterisation of a selfish and irresponsible commander.

This does not mean, however, that the whole of the *De provinciis consularibus* is plain and simple; in his subsequent treatment of Gabinius' governorship of Syria, Cicero constructs an elaborate picture of a degenerate Roman general, including this depiction:

Then again, Syria: is this new Semiramis to be retained any longer there? As he marched to his province, it seemed as though King Ariobarzanes was hiring your own consul to kill and slay like some Thracian cut-throat. Then no sooner had he arrived in Syria than his cavalry were lost, and afterwards some excellent cohorts were cut to pieces. So while he was conquering in Syria, nothing else has been done or settled except money bargains with princes, settlements by compounding, robberies, brigandage, massacres, when in open day, a general of the Roman People, with his troops drawn up in order of battle, as he held out his right hand, was not exhorting his

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Chapter 4, Section 2.

¹⁶⁸ For example, Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.131 details Verres' neglect of his Sicilian fleet.

¹⁶⁹ Ramsey 2007, 123; Cic. *De Orat.* 2.333-4; it is accepted, though, that the *De provinciis consularibus* was written up to some extent prior to publication.

soldiers to glory, but proclaiming that he had bought or was ready to buy everything for money.¹⁷⁰

Cicero labels Gabinius with the name Semiramis, a ninth century Assyrian warrior queen supposedly responsible for conquering Armenia and Bactria; in the sources that depict her, there is an ambiguity over whether her clothing marked her out as a man or a woman.¹⁷¹ For his senatorial audience Cicero was creating a humorous image of Gabinius, a Roman who through his activities in Syria was behaving like an effeminate orientalisised commander, a marked antithesis to the hard masculine image that he later creates for Caesar. Then as with Piso, Cicero cites some substantial, but vague troop losses to reinforce the image of poor generalship. Finally, in this passage Cicero recreates a traditional Roman military scenario, where a commander assembled his troops for a military *contio* and, with his arm outstretched in *adlocutio*, he then praised them for their endeavours.¹⁷² Instead of extolling his men, however, Gabinius was informing them of his intention to employ money, not traditional Roman *virtus*, to attain success. Although this appears somewhat fantastical, Cicero was placing the idea in the heads of the listening senators – that Gabinius had in some way raised such an issue before his men – so making the proconsul appear like a degenerate tyrant who was corrupting the troops of the Roman people.

¹⁷⁰ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 9: “an vero in Syria diutius est Semiramis illa retinenda? cuius iter in provinciam fuit eius modi, ut rex Ariobarzanes consulem vestrum ad caedem faciendam tamquam aliquem Thraecem conduceret. deinde adventus in Syriam primus equitatus habuit interritum, post concisae sunt optimae cohortes. igitur in Syria imperatore illo nihil aliud umquam actum est nisi pastiones pecuniarum cum tyrannis, decisiones, direptiones, latrocinia, caedes, cum palam populi Romani imperator instructo exercitu dexteram tendens non ad laudem milites hortaretur, sed omnia sibi et empta et emenda esse clamaret”.

¹⁷¹ Butler & Cary 1924, 53; Daley, *OCD*³, 1383; Diod. Sic. 2.6.6-7; Semiramis supposedly campaigned alongside her husband Shamshi-Adad V against the Syrian region of Commagene and during her husband’s siege of Bactra she is described as wearing “a garb which made it impossible to distinguish whether the wearer of it was a man or a woman.” Later in the siege Diodorus tells of her leadership of an armed party which seized the town’s citadel.

¹⁷² Pina Polo 1995, 214; for example, *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 35; the Elder Cato tells of his own performance praising his troops in Spain in 195; certain statues of generals exhibit the *adlocutio* gesture, such as the statue of Augustus from Prima Porta.

After spending just under a third of the oration denigrating Piso and Gabinius, Cicero moves on to provide the sitting senators with a strong contrast in the form of a powerful picture of successful Roman generalship.¹⁷³ First of all, he emphasized the extensive, yet unfinished, nature of Caesar's achievements so far in Gaul:

A most important war has been fought in Gaul; Caesar has subdued mighty peoples, but the ties that bind them to us are not yet those of laws, nor of established rights, nor of a sufficiently consolidated peace. We see the war well carried on and, to tell the truth, almost brought to an end, but it is only on condition that he who began the operations follows them up to the last, that we may presently see a result that is final.¹⁷⁴

Cicero portrays an embryonic Roman province, one whose establishment requires more time through the extension of the Caesar's command. In addition, this concept of a superlative, yet incomplete, achievement was doubtless employed by other republican orators when speaking on behalf of prorogation. For instance, one wonders if a similar technique was employed by Flaminius' associates back in Rome during the winter of 198/197 in the midst of the Roman-Macedonian negotiations, perhaps by the citation of Flaminius' success at the Aous Gorge against Philip V, and then at the same time promoting the need for prorogation in order to complete the defeat of Macedonia.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 3-18.

¹⁷⁴ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 19: "bellum in Gallia maximum gestum est; domitae sunt a Caesare maximae nationes, sed nondum legibus, nondum iure certo, nondum satis firma pace devinctae. bellum adfectum videmus, et, vere ut dicam, paene confectum, sed ita ut, si idem extrema persequitur qui inchoavit, iam omnia perfecta videamus, si succeditur, periculum sit ne instauratas maximi belli reliquias ac renovatas audiamus".

¹⁷⁵ Eckstein 1987, 278; Livy 32.32.7 states that Flaminius in late 198: "did not know whether his command would be extended, a goal which he had instructed his friends and relatives to do their utmost to attain"; Eckstein argues that Livy's comments were part of a "longer Polybian analysis of Flaminius's motives"; in the same way Caesar has insured that one of his allies Cicero is promoting his achievements in Rome.

Secondly, Cicero cites the various means of publicity back in Rome associated with the Gallic campaign. “Can I then be an enemy of this man, whose dispatches, whose fame, whose envoys fill my ears everyday with fresh names of races, peoples, places?”¹⁷⁶ A little later he states how “... you [the Senate] have voted to Gaius Caesar public thanksgivings for more days than were ever voted for a single war to one general”.¹⁷⁷ By stressing the recent good news from Gaul and its subsequent laudatory recognition, Cicero was urging the Senate to continue their support of Caesar and not vote for a proposal that would result in his supersession, since he did not believe “that the lustre and glory of his triumph ought to be lessened by meanness on our part.”¹⁷⁸ When focusing on the Senate’s recognition of Caesar’s achievements, Cicero also cites Piso’s lack of victorious dispatches as well as Gabinius’ failure to attain *supplicationes* (following his dispatch announcing his suppression of the Maccabean prince Alexander).¹⁷⁹ One had nothing to report, and the other’s report failed to win recognition, which together was in stark contrast to Caesar’s successes.

Finally, Cicero underscored the pre-eminence of Caesar’s ongoing campaign by detailing the difficult nature of the people and geography in Gaul. He even makes a sarcastic suggestion for why Caesar was lingering in Gaul: “I suppose it is the pleasantness of the country, the beauty of the cities, the culture and refinement of the inhabitants and peoples, the desire for victory, the extension of the boundaries of our Empire, that detain him”.¹⁸⁰ He then reveals the harsh reality of what had been achieved in the region.

¹⁷⁶ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 22: “an ego possum huic esse inimicus, cuius litteris, fama, nuntiis celebrantur aures cotidie meae novis nominibus gentium, nationum, locorum?”

¹⁷⁷ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 25: “... C. Caesari supplicationes decrevistis numero ut nemini uno ex bello ...”; Caes. *B Gall.* 2.35; in 57 the Senate voted for 15 days of *supplicationes* following their reception of Caesar’s dispatches.

¹⁷⁸ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 28: “sed decus illud et ornamentum triumphi minuendum nostra parsimonia non putavi”.

¹⁷⁹ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 14-5.

¹⁸⁰ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 29: “amoenitas eum, credo, locorum, urbium pulchritudo, hominum nationumque illarum humanitas et lepos, victoriae cupiditas, finium imperii propagatio retinet”.

What can be found more savage than those lands, more uncivilised than those towns, more ferocious than those peoples, what moreover more admirable than all those victories, what more distant than the ocean?¹⁸¹

A little later Cicero reinforced these ideas with more specific detail, stating that he had “with brilliant success, crushed in battle the fiercest and greatest tribes of Germania and Helvetia”.¹⁸² Through these descriptions Cicero ensured that the listening senators were in no doubt about the extent of Caesar’s success. In detailing Caesar’s aims and successes he was also indicating that the rest of Gaul would be soon brought to heel, so portraying Caesar as a pre-eminent magistrate who must not be disrupted from successfully completing his duty.¹⁸³

When commanders like Flamininus and Caesar were away from Rome they looked to allies like Cicero and Servilius Vatia back home for support in the Senate.¹⁸⁴ Prior to 123 BC, however, when the *provinciae* were chosen *after* the consular elections, the recently elected consuls also had the personal opportunity to influence the nature of the upcoming commands. In the winter of 206-205 P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus, having recently returned from Spain, was elected consul alongside P. Licinius Crassus for 205. His electoral success undoubtedly derived in no small part from the overt display of his recent military successes in Spain against the Carthaginians.¹⁸⁵ The debate on the upcoming consular *provinciae* then centred on how

¹⁸¹ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 29: “quid illis terris asperius, quod incultius oppidis, quid nationibus immanius, quid porro tot victoriis praestabilius, quid oceano longius inveniri potest?”

¹⁸² Cic. *Prov. cons.* 33: “itaque cum acerrimis Germanorum et Helvetiorum nationibus et maximis proeliis felicissime decertavit ...”.

¹⁸³ Fantham 2005, 217, describes these descriptions as “an *amplificatio* of Caesar’s Gallic conquests”.

¹⁸⁴ Livy, 32.32.7, mentions that Flamininus asked his friends and relatives back in Rome to support his prorogation in late 198 BC, but he does not say by whom or how this occurred, although one would assume that the senatorial debate about the allocation of the upcoming consular *provinciae* was where their efforts were focused.

¹⁸⁵ For example, Livy 28.38, P. Scipio delivered a speech to the Senate upon his return home in 206 which promoted the completion of his Spanish campaign; Livy 26.51, for Scipio’s dispatch of Laelius to Rome following his capture of New Carthage in 209: “... he furnished him with a quinquereme, embarked the prisoners in six ships, together with Mago and some fifteen senators who had been taken prisoner at the same

best to defeat Carthage and Hannibal, who was currently operating in Bruttium; as a result the Senate designated Sicily and Italy.¹⁸⁶ Crassus, though, as pontifex maximus was not allowed to leave Italy; and hence Scipio was in line to receive Sicily.

Before, during, or after this senatorial decision, however, Scipio espoused his intention to invade Africa from Sicily, and from Livy's account Scipio and Fabius both delivered speeches in the Senate on this topic.¹⁸⁷ (Fabius's oration against Scipio's proposal will be analysed in chapter 3).¹⁸⁸ Unfortunately Livy's detailed narrative of the deliberations is problematic, involving a lively embellishment of the protagonists' speeches.¹⁸⁹ As Lazenby points out, the account was possibly coloured by Livy's late Republican concerns over whether the Senate or the people should be deciding consular commands.¹⁹⁰ Nonetheless, there is no reason to doubt that this debate took place, since the Senate was responsible for allocating *provinciae* and during ongoing operations the house must have had scope to amend *provinciae* in response to current requirements. Scipio, moreover, as consul-elect (or even consul if the debate took place after he had taken office) very probably exploited his recent electoral successes to pass such a proposal; during both the debate and election his recent Spanish successes would have made persuasive subject-matter. Scipio also threatened to resort to a tribunician bill if the Senate opposed his wishes, which suggests he was opposed.¹⁹¹ Whether Scipio's threat was made inside or outside the Senatorial debate is difficult to tell and again it might be a later embellishment of the tradition. According to Livy when the *provinciae* were eventually assigned, or amended, the *provincia* of Sicily included the

time, and sent him to Rome to report the victory"; Livy 28.17: L. Scipio's report to the Senate in 206 on his brother's victories over Hasdrubal and Mago.

¹⁸⁶ Livy 28.38.12.

¹⁸⁷ Livy 28.40.

¹⁸⁸ Livy 28.38.

¹⁸⁹ Livy 28.40.3-44.18.

¹⁹⁰ Lazenby 1978, 193; Walsh 1961, 272, emphasizes Livy's republican sympathies and, moreover, his concerns about the monarchical behaviour of certain republican leaders.

¹⁹¹ Livy 28.40.1-2.

stipulation “that the consul was also given leave to cross to Africa if he felt it to be in the interests of the state”.¹⁹² Thus, it appears that Scipio through his *auctoritas* and oratory, amongst other means, persuaded the house to adopt his proposal. Furthermore, despite concerns over his account, Livy, in presenting his elite audience with Scipio’s and Fabius’ speeches, was fulfilling a recognition that the proposals for *provinciae* were debated during the Republic and that the assembled senators heard heated arguments involving the military achievements and abilities of the proposed commanders, debates in which recently elected magistrates could personally take part, both before and after sortition. How often such personal participation took place is impossible to gauge though due to the paucity of the sources.

The third and final set of senatorial debates requiring analysis occurred in 44-43 BC during the chaotic period that followed Caesar’s assassination, when Caesarian and Republican leaders vied for control of Rome’s various *provinciae* through a variety of political, financial and military means. In the midst of this fluid situation the Senate was frequently assembled to debate command proposals, and to these sittings Cicero delivered eleven of his *Philippics*. In these deliberative speeches we see again the significant employment of individual military records.¹⁹³ For example, the third *Philippic* was delivered in a senatorial debate on the 20th of December 44, a debate primarily concerned about ensuring that the consuls elect entered office smoothly. Who controlled Cisalpine Gaul and the standing legions in Italy, however, was Cicero’s main focus. On the one hand, he praises Octavian’s recent actions as well as those of Decimus Brutus, whilst on the other hand M. Antonius’ reputation was strongly criticised. For instance:

¹⁹² Livy 28.45.8: “permissumque ut in Africam, si id e re publica esse censeret, traiceret”.

¹⁹³ Hall 2002, 274.

For by Caesar's admirable courage, and the staunchness of the veteran soldiers, and of those legions which with the finest judgement have come to the aid of authority, of the liberty of the Roman people, and of Caesar's courageous action, Antonius has been cast from our necks.¹⁹⁴

What courageous action had Octavian performed? He had gained the loyalty of a number of Caesarian legions in Campania and at Brundisium by means of his name, financial gifts, the distribution of leaflets, and other means of persuasion.¹⁹⁵ Cicero passes over these unseemly actions by concisely labelling Octavian's behaviour as virtuous and then focusing on the loyalty of the veteran troops whom the young man had recruited. Through these tactics, Cicero avoided a significant problem: Octavian's lack of a military record.¹⁹⁶

There was one additional key feature of these orations that contrasts with the earlier speeches on military commands; this was the praise of certain Roman legions, together with the highlighting of the welfare and ill-treatment of legionaries. For instance, Cicero praised the loyalty of the legions which had joined Octavian.¹⁹⁷ This reflects the political reality of the period in which the Senate's authority over military commands had been undermined by the extended commands of the late Republic and the resultant loyalty many troops now had for their commanders instead of the state. Thus, Cicero promoted the dutiful nature of the Roman

¹⁹⁴ Cic. *Phil.* 3.8: "virtute enim admirabili Caesaris constantiaque militum veteranorum legionumque earum, quae optimo iudicio auctoritatem vestram, libertatem populi Romani, virtutem Caesaris secutae sunt, a cervicibus nostris est depulsus Antonius".

¹⁹⁵ App. *BC* 3.44; describes how Octavian's agents distributed leaflets around the Macedonian legions stationed at Brundisium; *FGrH* 90, Nic. Dam. Fr.133 for how Octavian in 44 toured a number of Caesarian camps and veteran colonies in central Italy in order to canvass support, part of his entourage including "a baggage train carrying money and other supplies"; Syme 1939, 125.

¹⁹⁶ *FGrH* 90, Nic. Dam. Fr.126-127; Octavian's lack of a military record was an awkward issue that he had to deal with in his autobiography; subsequently Nicolaus of Damascus faced the same issue in his biographical work on the *princeps'* early life.

¹⁹⁷ Cic. *Phil.* 3.3 & 7-8.

soldier as well as their leaders, since the political context dictated the need to appeal to certain legions as well as individual commanders.

Unfortunately for Cicero, the legions looked to their generals and not the Senate and following the establishment of the triumvirate at Bononia in late 43 the Senate lost its authority to select *provinciae* and prorogue or supersede field commanders. Even with the later Augustan settlement in which some *provinciae* remained *provinciae publicae*, the *princeps* was still the key figure influencing appointees, depriving orators of a meaningful platform from which to persuade the assembled senators about the ability or degeneracy of individual magistrates.¹⁹⁸

Oratory in support of tribunician bills allocating military commands

The key development in the late Republic that enabled influential commanders to bypass, and therefore undermine, the Senate's authority to choose and allot military commands was the increasing use of tribunician legislation (see table 2). Lintott points out how the military emergencies of the period provided the primary political impetus for a number of these extraordinary commands.¹⁹⁹

Under the Republican constitution all laws had to be passed by popular vote and the *comitia tributa* or *concilium plebis* were the assemblies through which nearly all *leges* and *plebiscita* were passed during the middle and late Republic.²⁰⁰ In most cases, a piece of legislation was proposed to the *comitia* by one of the tribunes of the plebs; this entailed the

¹⁹⁸ Dio 53.12.

¹⁹⁹ Lintott 1999, 114.

²⁰⁰ Taylor 1966, 60; Crawford 1992, 194-7; Mouritsen 2001, 26; Morstein-Marx 2004, 8; originally bills passed by the *comitia tributa* were termed *leges* whilst the proposals passed by the *concilium plebis* were termed *plebiscita*. The *Lex Hortensia* of 287 established that *plebiscita* were binding on all Roman citizens and this caused the old terminology between *leges* and *plebiscita* to become blurred, with *plebiscita* described as *leges* in some sources. Except for the addition of the small number of patricians, the *comitia tributa* had the same make-up as the *concilium plebis*; as a result the term *comitia* will be subsequently employed to mean both thirty-five tribe assemblies.

proposing magistrate disseminating his bill orally at a *contio* and then posting up a written version of the *rogatio*.²⁰¹ A set period of time then passed before the vote of the *comitia*; this period, after 98 BC, was a *trinundinum* (three market days), a gap of around seventeen to twenty-five days.²⁰² It was during this period that the proposing tribune, and the others who had been invited, could speak at *contiones* on behalf or against the proposal. This section will investigate the role of the prospective commander's military record in such speeches.²⁰³

In the late Republic, a number of tribunes, such as the Gracchi, employed their constitutional power to initiate such legislation independently of the senior magistrates and Senate.²⁰⁴ Tribunes were not wholly independent, as they nearly always required powerful allies, frequently in the form of incumbent or ex-consuls, to mobilize the support for their proposed legislation; in a number of cases tribunes owed their current and future positions to such men, as will be demonstrated.²⁰⁵ Unfortunately, because many of the key sources on tribunician legislation were influenced by aristocratic bias, a number of tribunes are characterized as shadowy sycophants who instigated much of the domestic and military violence that marked the late Republic.²⁰⁶ Nonetheless, the sources provide significant details about the contexts that facilitated the tribunician legislation which allocated military commands.

²⁰¹ Millar 1998, 207-8.

²⁰² Mommsen 1887, 3.376; Morstein-Marx 2004, 8.

²⁰³ Cic. *Leg. agr.* 2.10-3; Dio 38.5.3; Crawford 1988, 132-3, argues that, alongside the posting up of the text, the reading out of proposed bills at *contiones* was a good means of publicizing their contents.

²⁰⁴ Taylor 1962, 19-27.

²⁰⁵ Cic. *Acad. Pr.* 2.13; for example, states that the consul P. Mucius Scaevola was initially supportive of Tiberius Gracchus' legislative proposals; Stockton 1979, 27.

²⁰⁶ For example, Cic. *Leg.* 3.19, in his dialogue, Cicero has his brother Quintus describe the tribunate thus: "it seems to be pernicious; for it came into being at a time of sedition, and its effect is to promote sedition"; Plut. *Mar.* 35, on the tribune P. Sulpicius states that: "Marius had found the perfect tool for the destruction of the state in the militancy of Sulpicius, who was essentially an admirer and imitator of Saturninus ..."; Stockton 1979, 2-4; Stadter 1999, 79.

Table 2. Military commands and tribunician legislation

Commander	Date	Tribune of the plebs	Command
P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus	148	Anonymous	Africa (Third Punic War)
P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus	148	Anonymous	Africa (Third Punic War)
C. Marius	107	T. Manlius Mancinus	Africa (Jugurthine War)
C. Marius	88	P. Sulpicius	Asia (Mithridatic War)
Cn. Pompeius	67	A. Gabinus	Extraordinary command against pirates
Cn. Pompeius	66	C. Manilius	Bithynia, Pontus & Cilicia (Mithridatic War)
C. Iulius Caesar	59	P. Vatinius	Cisalpine Gaul & Illyricum
M. Antonius, M. Aemilius Lepidus & C. Iulius Caesar	43	P. Titius	Three-way division of <i>provinciae</i>

The first known instance of a tribunician intervention in relation to a military command followed the consular election of Scipio Aemilianus.²⁰⁷ Scipio had returned in late 148 from the ongoing campaign against Carthage, in which he had distinguished himself as a military tribune in a number of engagements.²⁰⁸ There was considerable publicity before and during the consular elections, including correspondence from the Roman troops serving in Africa to their friends and family relaying Scipio's deeds, and, as Astin says, "Scipio's military record certainly played a part."²⁰⁹ Following the election of Scipio and C. Livius Drusus there should have been the customary drawing of lots for the two consular *provinciae*, one of which was the Carthaginian command.²¹⁰ Appian then describes how

When his colleague, Drusus, bade him cast lots to determine which should have Africa as his province, one of the tribunes proposed that the appointment to this command should be made by the people, and the people choose Scipio.²¹¹

The anonymous tribune would have then issued a *rogatio* proposing that Scipio should receive the African command; prior to the vote of the *comitia* Scipio's military record was possibly further exploited in *contiones* to attain the necessary support. The context of the 148 consular

²⁰⁷ Astin 1967, 61-69, on Scipio's election to the consulship and his subsequent appointment to the command against Carthage; Goldsworthy 2000, 346-7.

²⁰⁸ App. *Lib.* 103; Plin. *HN* 22.13; for instance, Scipio's famously rescued some stranded cohorts after an inconclusive engagement with Hasdrubal in the wilderness near Nopheris to the southeast of Carthage.

²⁰⁹ Astin 1967, 63; Cf. Chapter 2, Section 3.

²¹⁰ *MRR* 1.463.

²¹¹ App. *Lib.* 112: καὶ αὐτὸν ὁ σύναρχος Δροῦσος περὶ Λιβύης πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐκέλευε διακληροῦσθαι, μέχρι τις τῶν δημάρχων ἐσηγήσατο τῆσδε τῆς στρατηγίας τὴν κρίσιν τοῦ δήμου γενέσθαι· καὶ ὁ δῆμος εἴλετο τὸν Σκιπίωνα; Val. Max. 8.15.4 states that: "the Senate twice gave him a province without drawing lots, first Africa, then Spain"; Livy *Per.* 51 says that he received Africa "without the lot."

elections, however, causes uncertainty over whether this procedure was strictly followed, since Scipio was elected consul by the *comitia centuriata* without having either held the praetorship or reached the required age for consular candidates.²¹² This makes one wonder what other constitutional customs were bypassed to ensure Scipio's appointment to the Carthaginian command. Nonetheless, this tribunician bill, if this was the first instance of its use, created a precedent, a precedent that was a product of the unusual circumstances of 148 where there was overwhelming popular support for a specific individual to be given charge of an ongoing campaign.

Gaius Marius exploited this mechanism on at least two occasions to attain prominent commands. Firstly, after Marius' election to consulship for 107, a tribune T. Manlius Mancinus proposed a bill that transferred the command of the Jugurthine War from the proconsul Q. Caecilius Metellus to Marius; Sallust says that "they choose Marius by a large majority."²¹³ Evans points out that one of Marius' personal legates in the subsequent campaign was A. Manlius, a relative possibly a brother of the tribune, and so a subsequent recipient of *gratia*.²¹⁴ Unfortunately, we do not know about the oratory employed by Mancinus or others in support of this bill. Sallust, however, provides an account of Marius' famous oration to a *contio* after the *provincia* had been allocated. During this address Marius displayed his scars as a demonstration of his *virtus*, unlike the *virtus* of other consuls which had been derived from their ancestors' achievements.²¹⁵ If, as Evans argues, Sallust's speech largely derived from Marius' own words, it exemplifies how an *imperator* could communicate his past military record to a crowd of citizens in Rome.²¹⁶

²¹² App. *Lib.* 112.

²¹³ Sall. *Iug.* 73.7: "... frequens Marium iussit".

²¹⁴ Evans 1994, 110.

²¹⁵ Sall. *Iug.* 85.1-50.

²¹⁶ Evans 1994, 71.

In 88 Marius again looked to a tribune to attain a command. Instead of superseding a commander in the field though, this bill involved the transfer of the command of the Mithridatic War from the new consul Sulla, who had already received this *provincia* by the customary sortition, to Marius a *privatus*.²¹⁷ The tribune P. Sulpicius who proposed this Mithridatic bill was hoping for reciprocal support from Marius over his other bills, owing to the Marius's good rapport with the equestrians.²¹⁸ Even though the consuls tried to block the distribution bill, Sulpicius through violence managed to pass all his legislation.²¹⁹

Although there are no clear examples of the oratory employed in support of Sulpicius's bill, Luce identifies a passage from Plutarch's *Life of Marius*, which indicates the old general's personal efforts within Rome.²²⁰

... Marius committed himself wholeheartedly and with youthful enthusiasm to the project, cast off his old age and ill health, and went down to the Campus Martius every day to exercise with the young men. He demonstrated that he was still agile under arms and a fine horseman, even though he was no longer a trim figure, but tended towards obesity and was rather heavy. Some people liked what he was doing and they used to go down to the Campus Martius and watch him competing with determination, but the sight moved the best men of Rome to pity him for his greedy desire for status ... Despite all the triumphs and glory he had won in the past, he was setting out for Cappadocia and the Euxine Sea as if he had everything to prove, and carrying his advanced years ashore with the intention of fighting it out with Archelaus and Neoptolemus, the satraps of Mithridates. And the way Marius justified his behaviour was obviously just plain

²¹⁷ Evans, 1994, 132-3; Keaveney 1982, 58-62.

²¹⁸ *MRR* 2.41-2; Badian 1958, 233, argues that the relationship between Marius and Sulpicius benefited both men and that the equestrian order, unsettled by the recent disasters in the East, looked to Marius for action; one of Sulpicius' bills aimed to incorporate new Italian citizens into the thirty-five voting tribes.

²¹⁹ Plut. *Mar.* 35; App. *BC* 1.56.

²²⁰ Luce 1970, 192-3.

nonsense: he said he wanted to take part personally in the campaign in order to train his son.²²¹

This story derives in part from a source hostile to Marius, very probably Sulla's *Memoirs*.²²² Yet, it is not wholly unflattering since Marius is depicted as attracting crowds to the traditional military training area of Rome; and he appears to have been informing them about his intentions for the upcoming command. Luce points out that Plutarch's details of Cappadocia, the Euxine river and Mithridates's deputies Archelaus and Neoptolemus are an accurate reflection of Appian's account of the outbreak of the Mithridatic war in early 88; he argues that Plutarch's account "must closely reflect a contemporary or near-contemporary memory", so supporting the story's veracity.²²³ Whether Marius' stated intentions were delivered through formal oratory or passing comments or other means, we cannot tell. Nonetheless, Marius through his physical activities and presence on the Campus Martius was making a highly visible statement in order to keep his name in the mind of the citizens of Rome prior to their vote on Sulpicius' bill. Finally, there is Marius' intention to train his son during the campaign. By espousing this notion on the respected military training ground of Rome, Marius was playing on the traditional practice of training one's sons for later public service and consequently portraying himself as a strong supporter of Rome's future. This theme of

²²¹ Plut. *Mar.* 34.3-5: οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ Μάριος φιλοτίμως πάνυ καὶ μειρακιωδῶς ἀποτριβόμενος τὸ γῆρας καὶ τὴν ἀσθένειαν ὁσημέραι κατέβαινε εἰς τὸ πεδῖον, καὶ μετὰ τῶν νεανίσκων γυμναζόμενος ἐπεδείκνυε τὸ σῶμα κοῦφον μὲν ὄπλοις, ἔποχον δὲ ταῖς ἵππασίαις, καίπερ οὐκ εὐσταλῆς γεγονὼς ἐν γῆρα τὸν ὄγκον, ἀλλ' εἰς σάρκα περιπληθῆ καὶ βαρεῖαν ἐνδεδωκῶς. Ἐνίοις μὲν οὖν ἤρεσκε ταῦτα πράττων, καὶ κατιόντες ἐθεῶντο τὴν φιλοτιμίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς ἀμίλλας, τοῖς δὲ βελτίστοις ὀρώσιν οἰκτεῖρειν ἐπήει τὴν πλεονεξίαν καὶ τὴν φιλοδοξίαν ... ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐνδεῆς ἀπάντων εἰς Καππαδοκίαν καὶ τὸν Εὐξείνιον Πόντον ἄρας ἐκ θριάμβων καὶ δόξης ἐκφέρει τοσοῦτον γῆρας, Ἀρχελάω καὶ Νεοπτολέμῳ τοῖς Μιθριδάτου σατράπαις διαμαχοῦμενος. αἱ δὲ πρὸς ταῦτα τοῦ Μαρίου δικαιολογίαι παντάπασιν ἐφαίνοντο ληρώδεις· ἔφη γὰρ ἐθέλειν τὸν υἱὸν ἀσκῆσαι παρῶν αὐτὸς ἐπὶ στρατείας.

²²² Stadter 1999, 120; Plut. *Mar.* 25, 26 & 35; Plutarch cites Sulla's *Memoirs* three times in his *Life of Marius* including the tale of Sulla's escape from the violence that surrounded Sulpicius' legislation.

²²³ Luce 1970, 193; App. *Mith.* 10-21.

young Roman aristocrats being blooded in their fathers' campaigns was employed by Cicero in 66 during his speech on behalf of the Manilian law as it highlighted Pompeius' long active military career.²²⁴

Pompeius exploited tribunician legislation on two occasions; during the promulgation of these two bills we gain an insight into the benefits and difficulties of the required oratory and, above all in Cicero's speech in support of the latter one, the potential for exploiting a commander's past service record. In 67 the tribune A. Gabinius proposed an extraordinary command for him against the Cilician pirates.²²⁵ The *rogatio* entailed giving an ex-consul a three year proconsular command over all the Mediterranean Sea and its coastlines up to 50 miles inland with *imperium* equal to any incumbent proconsul. Dio states that Gabinius, when proposing it, "did not directly utter Pompeius' name", although it was obvious who it was for and this oratory perhaps involved nuanced praise of Pompeius.²²⁶ Millar highlights the significance of the oratory surrounding the passage of the bill, oratory that included a speech by Caesar in support and at least three in opposition from the consulars Q. Hortensius Hortalus and Q. Lutatius Catulus and the tribune L. Roscius Otho.²²⁷ Although we have no details of Caesar's rhetoric, if Cicero's exaggerated account is believed, it was delivered before a considerable and appreciative audience:

²²⁴ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 28 for Pompeius' military service during the Social War: "... a man who left school and studies of boyhood to join his father's army and study war in a serious campaign against formidable foes".

²²⁵ De Souza 1999, 97-148, provides a comprehensive analysis of the activities of the Cilician pirates in the decades prior to Pompeius' command.

²²⁶ Dio 36.23.5; Pompeius' command included the appointment of fifteen legates with propraetorian *imperium* as well as considerable resources to fund and recruit naval and land forces; App. *Mith.* 94; Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.213; *MRR* 2.101-2; De Souza 1999, 141; Pompeius' extraordinary command was possibly not without precedent, since M. Antonius Creticus was given propraetorian *imperium* in 74 to deal with the pirates and it is clear that he operated in more than one *provincia*.

²²⁷ Millar 1998, 80-2; Cic. *Leg. Man.* 51; Dio 36.30-36; Plut. *Pomp.* 25.8 states that only Caesar endorsed the bill.

... that great day on which the entire Roman people, thronging into the Forum and filling every temple that commands a view of this platform [the Rostra], demanded the appointment of Gnaeus Pompeius to be the sole *imperator* for the war on behalf of all peoples.²²⁸

This provides a glimpse of how deliberative oratory could benefit not only the *imperator* proposed for the command, but also the orator supporting the proposal.

In 66, following Pompeius' speedy suppression of the pirates, the tribune C. Manilius posted a bill proposing a new five year command with the same *imperium* to Pompeius for the ongoing war against Mithridates, so superseding the proconsul M'. Acilius Glabrio, who had only that year taken up the governorship of Bithynia and Pontus from Lucullus.²²⁹ Fortunately, of the various speeches in favour of the proposed bill, we have the published version of Cicero's, a laudatory performance from the Rostra in which he openly admits to exploiting his current authority as praetor.²³⁰ Cicero was primarily motivated by personal political ends, including his future bid for consulship in 64. Sherwin-White rightly describes it as "a speech of skilful misrepresentation", in which various themes permeate and repeat throughout, of which four stand out: the past and ongoing threat of Mithridates, the combined praise and denigration of Lucullus, the need for a commander of the highest military and moral ability and finally how Pompeius' numerous achievements fulfilled this model.²³¹

In the first third of the speech (4-19 and 22-25) Cicero establishes the idea that Mithridates posed a considerable military threat to Rome's provinces and allies in Asia Minor

²²⁸ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 44: "... non illius diei fama pervaserit, cum universus populus Romanus, referto foro completisque omnibus templis ex quibus hic locus conspici potest, unum sibi ad commune omnium gentium bellum Cn. Pompeium imperatorem deposcit".

²²⁹ Plut. *Pomp.* 30.1; Cic. *Leg. Man.* 68; Cicero deals with the problem of Glabrio within his speech by providing little if any information about this magistrate, so creating an inactive void between Lucullus' and Pompeius' tenure of the command.

²³⁰ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 2.

²³¹ Sherwin-White 1994, 251; Rose 1995, 377-390; Steel 2001, 125-135.

as well as the people of Rome.²³² He even claims that the Pontic king “had constructed and fitted out enormous fleets and assembled vast armies.”²³³ He supported these assertions by citing recent letters from *equites* in Asia about such threats as well as providing an emotive description of how Mithridates’s aggression had resulted in the death of Roman citizens at the start of the First Mithridatic War in 88.²³⁴ Cicero then goes on to assert that the king’s attacks on the eastern provinces then had a knock-on effect on the financial and commercial operations of Rome.²³⁵ Such claims were being aimed at the commercial classes in Rome, not only wealthy *publicani* and merchants, but also the more humble tradesmen, both of which classes Cicero mentions, people who had suffered from the previous Mithridatic Wars and were now impatient with the continued disorder.²³⁶

So who should deal with this immense eastern threat? Lucullus had been dispatched to deal with Mithridates in 73 and as Cicero says he initially achieved great success, with the orator citing, albeit concisely, some of Lucullus’ endeavours, such as the relief of Cyzicus “by his valour, perseverance and skill.”²³⁷ Cicero was careful not to criticise Lucullus directly, attributing his later defeats “to no fault of his, but due to the allotment of fortune.”²³⁸ This in itself, however, provides an important foil to the orator’s later characterisation of Pompeius as having the virtue of luck (*felicitas*), a military quality in which the Romans placed much weight, since returning *imperatores* were seen to carry this *felicitas* into the city of Rome.²³⁹

²³² Cic. *Leg. Man.* 4 & 9: “a serious and mighty war is being waged against your tributaries and your allies by two mighty kings, Mithridates and Tigranes, who are led ... to suppose that an opportunity is offered them to lay hold of Asia”.

²³³ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 9: “... cum maximas aedificasset ornassetque classes exercitusque permagnos ...”.

²³⁴ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 7: “for disgrace it is that that man who, on a single day in so many cities throughout the whole of Asia, by a single message and a single word of command ordained that the Roman citizens in Asia should be killed and butchered ...”.

²³⁵ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 17-19.

²³⁶ Rawson 1983, 53.

²³⁷ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 20.

²³⁸ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 10.

²³⁹ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 48: “that this good luck may always and especially be his, gentlemen, should be, as it is, his earnest hope, both for his own sake and equally for the sake of our state and our empire”; Versnel 1970, 384.

Cicero, nonetheless, did subtly exploit Lucullus' later defeats, implying that they primarily derived from the Roman soldier's desire for plunder. He achieves this impression by comparing Mithridates to the legendary Medea, who in the same region scattered the limbs of her brother Absyrtus to distract the pursuers of the Argonauts, since the Pontic king in his retreat left behind treasures that also distracted his pursuers. This distraction gave Mithridates time to escape, re-group his forces, and as a result inflict a major defeat on Lucullus' forces later at Zela in 67.²⁴⁰ Cicero even mentions the rumoured desecration of "a very wealthy and much-venerated temple."²⁴¹ This creates a generalised picture of greed and rapacity which plays on the recent concerns that many in Rome had about the corrupt behaviour of their governors and troops.²⁴² This all builds on the strong need for incorruptible military leadership, which Lucullus by implication has not provided, and which, Cicero will later claim, Pompeius possesses in the best Roman tradition.²⁴³

Cicero also plays on the Roman losses at Zela to undermine Lucullus' *auctoritas*.

At this moment, gentlemen, allow me to use the license customary with poets writing of Roman history and to pass over our disaster, of which the magnitude was such that it was no messenger from the battle but the rumour of the countryside which brought the tidings of it to the general's ears.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁰ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 22; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.24; App. *Mith.* 89; Plut. *Luc.* 35.

²⁴¹ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 23; Berry 2006, 296; probably the Temple of Nanaea of the goddess Anaitis in the western Persian region of Elymais, which had been previously raided by a number of Hellenistic Kings.

²⁴² Rose 1995, 381.

²⁴³ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 40-41 promotes Pompeius' past moderation: "avarice did not entice him from his appointed course to plunder of any kind."

²⁴⁴ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 25: "sinite hoc loco, Quirites, sicut poetae solent, qui res Romanas scribunt, praeterire me nostram calamitatem, quae tanta fuit, ut eam ad auris imperatoris non ex proelio nuntius, sed ex sermone rumor adferret".

In pretending to overlook the losses of Roman citizens, Cicero cleverly puts the picture of disaster in the mind of his audience, many of whom had doubtless served or knew friends or family who had served in the difficult overseas campaigns of the previous decade. Although Lucullus was not present at Zela, Cicero still places the *imperator* in the rhetorical picture he has drawn.

Through the huge threat of Mithridates and then the ill-starred setbacks of Lucullus, the speech points towards the need for a formidable and incorruptible *imperator* and Cicero expands this model by detailing the virtues that the new commander required. For example, he states that:

For the qualities proper to an *imperator*...dedication to one's duty, courage in danger, thoroughness in undertaking the task in hand, speed in execution, wisdom in strategy – qualities that are as evident in this single man as in all the other commanders, put together, that we have ever seen or heard of.²⁴⁵

Later he goes on he expands this model saying how “we must not look for military genius alone” and lists the additional virtues required:

First, how great is the integrity needed by generals; and again what self-control in everything they do; what trustworthiness, what graciousness; what intelligence and what humanity!²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 29: “neque enim illae sunt solae virtutes imperatoriae, quae volgo existimantur,—labor in negotiis, fortitudo in periculis, industria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providiando: quae tanta sunt in hoc uno, quanta in omnibus reliquis imperatoribus quos aut vidimus aut audivimus, non fuerunt”.

²⁴⁶ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 36: “ac primum, quanta innocentia debent esse imperatores? quanta deinde in omnibus rebus temperantia? quanta fide? quanta facilitate? quanto ingenio? quanta humanitate?”

By creating this characterization of the multi-talented commander required for the difficult task of defeating Mithridates, Cicero has raised a tremendous expectation in his audience of Pompeius' abilities. In the middle of the speech, to substantiate this expectation, he cites Pompeius' military record.²⁴⁷

The civil war, the wars in Africa, Transalpine Gaul and Spain, the Slave war and the Naval war [against the pirates], wars different in type and locality and against foes as different, not only carried on by himself unaided but carried to a conclusion.²⁴⁸

The statement here about Pompeius' completion of his previous campaigns plays on Lucullus' inability to finish his. On occasion, the audience heard more specific details about these campaigns such as his rapid forty-nine day defeat of the Cilician pirates.²⁴⁹ Again there is a claim of campaign completion, one that includes a measurement of Pompeius' *celeritas*. Through these general and specific details Cicero repeatedly disseminates Pompeius' extensive service record, so advertising him as the pre-eminent military commander of his day to the people in Rome and thus the only *imperator* blessed with the attributes to deal with this eastern threat.

Although we only have Cicero's two speeches on behalf of Pompeius and Caesar, these were not one-off pieces of martial promotion. They were a product of a long established, yet developing genre of deliberative oratory by commanders, their allies and their opponents, in which past, ongoing and potential military records were exploited in the senatorial debates that

²⁴⁷ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 28-46.

²⁴⁸ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 28: "Civile, Africanum, Transalpinum, Hispaniense, servile, navale bellum, varia et diversa genera et bellorum et hostium, non solum gesta ab hoc uno, sed etiam confecta, nullam rem esse declarant in usu positam militari, quae huius viri scientiam fugere possit."

²⁴⁹ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 35: "... he himself, within forty-nine days of starting from Brundisium, added Cilicia to the Roman Empire. All the pirates, wherever they were, were either captured and put to death, or they surrendered to his power and authority and to his alone".

decided *provinciae* as well as before *contiones* from the mid second century BC onwards. When we consider the tribunician and senatorial decrees that gave Caesar his extraordinary command of Illyricum, Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul in 59, we have to imagine the various orations delivered by Caesar and his supporters, such as the one by Pompeius, who proposed the senatorial decree.²⁵⁰ Although we know none of the contents of these speeches, it is extremely likely that, in the same vein as Cicero's vilification of Mithridates, they espoused the idea that the Gallic and Germanic tribes had been and still were a threat to Rome and her allies, as maintained by the opening book of the *The Gallic War*.²⁵¹ These speeches also possibly included the promotion of Caesar's recent military successes, as governor of Further Spain in 61-60, against a similar sort of Celtic adversaries in the form of the Callaecians and Lusitanians.²⁵² What little direct evidence we have points to Roman aristocratic reliance on past military achievements and the vilification of the enemy as core means of facilitating such publicity. In the competitive aristocratic society of Rome in which public oral communication was an integral custom and individual martial success was of unparalleled value, it is little wonder that orators like Cicero could – through their rhetorical skills and their awareness of their audience's knowledge, hopes and fears – promote or denigrate colleagues' military records through a diversity of rhetorical mechanisms.

²⁵⁰ Dio 38.8.5; Cic. *Att.* 8.3.3.

²⁵¹ For example, Caes. *B Gall.* 1.7 mentions that in 107 BC “the consul L. Cassius had been killed by the Helvetii, and his army routed and sent under the yoke.”

²⁵² Cic. *Balb.* 43; Suet. *Iul.* 54.1; Dio 44.41.1.

4. The military record of magistrates in defence speeches²⁵³

I have gone to the law, not about assault or killing with a weapon or poisoning, but about three nanny goats. I claim that they are missing because a neighbour has stolen them. The judge requires proof. In loud tones, using your whole stock of gestures, you boom about Cannae and the Mithridatic War, and the perjuries of Punic rage and Sullas and Mariuses and Muciuses. Postumus, it is time you said something about my three nanny goats.²⁵⁴

The poet Martial satirises the tendency of Roman advocates to employ elaborate historical digressions in their speeches, including at times famous military conflicts, in order to appeal to the patriotic nostalgia of the jury. Unlike modern Western courts, in which lawyers are obliged on the whole to keep to material relevant to the case, Roman legal oratory could, and frequently did, entail a wide breadth of digressive and emotive information to move and persuade the assembled court.²⁵⁵ This section demonstrates how one prominent type of forensic digression, that of the military record of Roman magistrates, was employed in a diversity of ways in the defence speeches of the middle and late Republic.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ This section is published in Bragg, Hau & Macaulay Lewis (eds.) 2008, *Beyond the Battlefields: New Perspectives on Warfare and Society in the Graeco-Roman World*, 7-24. I would like to thank Professor Jonathan Powell and Dr Richard Evans for reading and commenting on its earlier drafts.

²⁵⁴ Martial 6.19: “non de vi neque caede nec veneno, sed lis est mihi de tribus capellis: vicini queror has abesse furto. hoc iudex sibi postulat probari: tu Cannas Mithridaticumque bellum et periuria Punici furoris et Sullas Mariosque Muciosque magna voce sonas manueque tota iam dic, Postume, de tribus capellis”.

²⁵⁵ Powell & Paterson 2004, 4; Nicolet 1980, 378: “the reading of the indictment, the examination of witnesses, the presentation of exhibits, speeches for the prosecution and defence—all lent itself admirably to theatrical performances by great advocates who were also great artists”.

²⁵⁶ Canter 1931, 352-3 and 360, identifies a considerable number of *digressiones* in the 57 extant or near extant speeches of Cicero. It should be stressed that the term digression is employed throughout this chapter in a broad modern sense and not in the sense of *digressio*, which scholars correctly identify as a specific rhetorical mechanism.

There were two legal tribunals within which prominent legal cases of the middle and late Republic were held.²⁵⁷ Firstly, there was the *iudicium populi*, before which prosecutions were brought in the third and second century. This involved three separate *anquisitiones* (investigations) before a *contio* and then finally after a *trinundinum* (a gap of three market days) there was a formal vote of the assembled people.²⁵⁸ Although the *iudicium populi* functioned in the first century, as demonstrated by the trial of Rabirius for *perduellio* (harm to the state) in 63 BC, it became largely obsolete, and it was before the *quaestiones perpetuae* that prosecutions were primarily brought during the late Republic.²⁵⁹ Assembled juries of between roughly 50 and 70 men now decided the outcome, and the first of these permanent standing courts to be established was the *quaestio de repetundis* in around 149 BC by the *lex Calpurnia*.²⁶⁰ This *quaestio* aimed to provide redress to provincials who had suffered illegal exactions by unscrupulous Roman governors.²⁶¹ Further *quaestiones* developed in the subsequent decades and these included amongst others: one for *ambitus* (electoral malpractice), one for *peculatus* (embezzlement of public money), and one for *maiestas populi Romani minuta* (diminishing the majesty of the Roman people).²⁶² These *quaestiones perpetuae* were overseen by praetors in the Roman Forum and it was before these courts that most of Cicero's forensic oratory was delivered.

Unsurprisingly, owing to his ubiquity, the majority of evidence concerning the employment of the military record comes from Cicero. Nonetheless, we do have some details

²⁵⁷ See Cloud 1994, "The constitution and public criminal law", *CAH IX*², 491-530.

²⁵⁸ Cic. *Dom.* 45; Cloud 1994, 501-2.

²⁵⁹ Cic. *Rab. Perd.* 15-18; Dio 37.26.1-28.4.

²⁶⁰ Lintott 2004, 75 cites the varying jury numbers with 70 votes in the trials of both Gabinius and Scaurus in 54 BC (Cic. *Att.* 4.18.1; *Q.Fr.* 3.4.1) and only 56 votes cast during Clodius' trial for *incestum* (Cic. *Att.* 4.18.4); see Cloud 1994, 505-6 on the establishment of the *quaestio de repetundis*; Cic. *Brut.* 106.

²⁶¹ Richardson 1987, 1-12; Cloud 1994, 505-514; Lintott 2004, 70-74; originally established in 149 BC to provide Roman citizens and allies with a means of redress from unscrupulous Roman governors, the *quaestio de repetundis* had its parameters extended by C. Gracchus in 123 or 122 to include provincials who had also suffered illegal exactions.

²⁶² See Lintott 1999, 158.

of its pre-Ciceronian use with the fragments of one of the elder Cato's orations entitled *Dierum dictarum de consulatu suo*. According to Astin, this was probably delivered before a *contio* of the *iudicium populi* in late 191 or 190 BC, when Cato defended himself against a tribunician prosecution.²⁶³ The fragments that survive demonstrate how Cato informed the court of his military service, in particular his Spanish campaign of 195 BC.²⁶⁴

To start with, a number of the fragments detail the preparations and the voyage to Spain of the consular expedition, whereby Cato informed his audience of the logistical requirements and the distances crossed when mounting such an overseas operation. For instance, Cato says that:

They praise me to the skies, saying no one would ever have thought that one man could have raised so great a fleet, so great an army and so many provisions; while I succeeded in raising them in the shortest time possible.²⁶⁵

Although it is difficult to judge who supposedly praised Cato, this is an effective rhetorical mechanism that would nowadays be termed a "man of straw". This involves the orator setting up a supposed belief held by people or critics and then knocking it down by citing real achievement (a mechanism frequently employed by Tony Blair in his political oratory).²⁶⁶

²⁶³ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 21-55; Astin 1978, 60.

²⁶⁴ Livy 34.8.4-21.8 and Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 10 detail Cato's Spanish achievements.

²⁶⁵ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 28; Charisius *Gramm.* 266 B: "laudant maximis laudibus, tantum navium, tantum exercitum, tantum [com]meatum non opinatum esse quemquam hominem comparare potuisse; id me tam maturime comparavisse". Note the flowing rhythm acquired through the triple use of *tantum*, which gives breadth to Cato's campaign preparations.

²⁶⁶ For example, the following excerpt from the Prime Minister's speech to the Labour Party conference at Brighton on October 2nd 2001 demonstrates the use of a 'man of straw'. "People say: we are only acting because it's the USA that was attacked. Double standards, they say. But when Milosevic embarked on the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in Kosovo, we acted. The sceptics said it was pointless, we'd make matters worse, we'd make Milosevic stronger; and look what happened, we won, the refugees went home, the policies of ethnic cleansing were reversed and one of the great dictators of the last century will see justice in this century". See *Guardian*

One wonders who exactly the people are supposedly making these critical comments of Cato, but without a specific reference the audience is subtly, yet deliberately left in the dark.

In a later fragment of his defence speech Cato went on to detail the military campaign itself including one engagement and a description afterwards of how he personally praised his men in a military *contio*. “If any man performed courageously, I rewarded him handsomely, and praised him with many words when the soldiers were paraded”.²⁶⁷ Cato, doubtless conscious of his trial audience, which was very probably a crowd of citizens gathered somewhere within Rome, was astutely informing them of his generous treatment of Roman troops, thus pointing to his role as a good traditional paternal commander.

One other fragment which stands out from Cato’s speech involves the recent Roman campaign against Antiochus in 191 BC, in which Cato was a military tribune to the consul M. Acilius Glabrio and played a major part in the decisive battle at Thermopylae.²⁶⁸ In the following fragment Cato appears to over-emphasize his role in this achievement. “Likewise when very recently I dispersed and settled the greatest of threats from Thermopylae and Asia.”²⁶⁹ Without the adjoining sentences it is difficult to judge the extent of the self-promotion here. Nonetheless, it is clear that Cato is highlighting his personal participation in the defeat of Antiochus, very possibly playing on that other well-known achievement at Thermopylae in 480 BC by the Spartans against that other great threat from the East, namely

Unlimited for the full speech, <<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/labour2001/story/0,1414,562006,00.html>>, accessed December 15th 2007.

²⁶⁷ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 35: “si quis strenue fecerat, donabam honeste, ut alii idem vellent facere, atque in contione verbis multis laudabam”.

²⁶⁸ For Cato’s role at Thermopylae engagement see Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 12-14; Livy 36.17-21; *MRR* 1.354-5.

²⁶⁹ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 49: “item ubi ab Thermopuleis atque ex Asia maximo tumultus maturissime disieci atque consedavi”.

the Persian forces of Xerxes.²⁷⁰ This interpretation does, however, depend on how well the story of Leonidas was known amongst the people of 2nd century BC Rome.²⁷¹

Overall, in the fragments of Cato's *Dierum dictarum de consulatu suo* one already senses a diversity of martial self-advertisement, in which the active and correct personal behaviour of the commander is frequently emphasized, a theme reiterated throughout many of Cicero's later defence speeches. Although the remaining evidence of such second century defence speeches before the *iudicia populi* is poor and frequently of an indirect, fragmentary and confusing nature, as demonstrated by the "Trial of the Scipios" in the 180s BC and the prosecution of Gaius Gracchus for dereliction of duty in 124, the subject of military service was undoubtedly still a significant aspect of such prosecution cases and so very likely part of the resultant defence speeches.²⁷²

Fortunately, with the rise and establishment of the *quaestiones perpetuae* in the late Republic, the literary sources provide significant details about the forensic context in which the military record was employed. One of its most dramatic and stereotypical uses occurred during the trial of Manius Aquillius, an ex-consul who was charged with *repetundae* in about 95 BC. Aquillius had been legate to Marius at the start of the Cimbric campaign in 103 and had then later, as consul in 101, overseen the suppression of a slave revolt in Sicily, during

²⁷⁰ See Hdt. 7.204-39 for the best account of the Battle of Thermopylae.

²⁷¹ Livy 36.15, prior to the 191 BC engagement, Livy describes how "it [Thermopylae] is renowned for the deaths of the Spartans in the struggle against Persia, deaths more famous than the engagement which was fought there"; Cato in his *Origines* does specifically compare the heroic sacrifice of a Roman military tribune during the Hannibalic War to Leonidas's defiant last stand, thus demonstrating that Cato himself believed that the Roman audience for his historical work knew about the Spartan King's heroism (*HRR*, Cato Fr. 83; Gell. 3.7.1-20).

²⁷² The principal sources for the 'Trial of the Scipios' are Livy 38.50-60; Gell 4.18, 6.19; Polyb 23.14. The sources, however, provide a confusing and fragmentary picture of the political attacks on Publius and Lucius Scipio. Nonetheless, it is clear that their behaviour during the campaign against Antiochus the Great was of central importance in the disputes, in particular the issue of moneys received from the Syrian king. Gaius Gracchus, upon returning to Rome from his quaestorship in Sardinia, was charged with dereliction of duty and there are fragments from one or perhaps two speeches in which he defended himself (Stockton 1979, 219; *ORF*³, 180-2).

which he apparently killed the rebel leader and subsequently won an ovation.²⁷³ Aquillius was, therefore, a defendant with a good service record, details of which his advocate Marcus Antonius doubtless elaborated on in court. According to Cicero's dialogue *De Oratore* the most memorable part of Antonius' defence was when he ripped open Aquillius' tunic in order to expose the scars on the front of the consular's body.²⁷⁴ This display, according to Cicero's account, was so moving that it apparently brought tears to Marius' eyes.²⁷⁵ Antonius' action was aimed at inducing sympathy amongst the jurors for Aquillius by displaying evidence of the wounds which the consular had received when putting his body on the line for Rome.

Matthew Leigh highlights how battle scars were a recognised means of self-promotion within Roman Republican politics. He counters the argument that they might be a literary *topos* by pointing out how the artwork of the late Republic favoured verism, where every wrinkle and physical defect was displayed and that there was a propensity to admire the marked, modified and worked body.²⁷⁶ In addition, Leigh cites the Elder Cato's comment on how political candidates for office wore togas without a tunic in order to show their scars as well as the famous display of Servilius' scars in 167 BC as part of his speech supporting Aemilius Paullus' triumph. Both of these cases demonstrate that the positive value of advertising one's scars went back at least to the middle second century.²⁷⁷ Richard Evans, on the other hand, argues that their overt display from the mid second century onwards was not always positively viewed and he cites Terence's play *The Eunuch* in which a slave character

²⁷³ *MRR* 1.564; 571; *Plut. Mar.* 14.7; Aquillius was placed in charge of the army in Gaul when Marius returned to Rome to oversee elections. *MRR* 2.2; *FGrH* 87, Posidonius Fr. 36 and *Diod. Sic.* 36.10.1 detail Aquillius' Sicilian successes.

²⁷⁴ *Cic. De Orat.* 2.194-6: "Assuredly I [Antonius speaking within the Ciceronian dialogue] felt that the Court was deeply affected when I called forward my unhappy old client, in his garb of woe, and when I did those things approved by yourself, Crassus – not by way of technique, as to which I know not what to say, but under stress of deep emotion and indignation – I mean my tearing open his tunic and exposing his scars. While Gaius Marius, from his seat in the court, was strongly reinforcing by his weeping the pathos of my appeal, and I, repeatedly naming him, was committing his colleague to his care ...".

²⁷⁵ *Cic. De Orat.* 2.196.

²⁷⁶ Leigh 1995, 207-8.

²⁷⁷ Leigh 1995, 195-6; *Plut. Quaest. Rom.* 49; *Livy* 45.39.

portrays the display of battle-scars as boorish.²⁷⁸ In addition, barring Aquillius' case, it was through the *reference* to honourable or dishonourable scars, and not through their actual display, that scars were usually exploited to promote or denigrate a military reputation during the late Republic.²⁷⁹ Taking Leigh's and Evans's arguments into account, I do not want to argue that the display of scars was the norm and one of the primary means by which the military record was exploited. This is in contrast to the approach taken by Vasaly. In her article on Cicero's early speeches, she makes this statement about the challenge facing Roman prosecutors.

The worst that a prosecutor had to fear in such cases was for the defence counsel suddenly to disrobe his client, revealing his scars that testified to his battlefield heroics on Rome's behalf.²⁸⁰

As has already been demonstrated by the Elder Cato and will be made even more evident by the following analysis of some of Cicero's defence speeches, I maintain that the military record was employed in a variety of ways as the gathered people and juries were not only targeted by dramatic displays, but by more nuanced rhetoric as well.

For example, the prosecution of Aquillius demonstrates one significant tactic that is frequently overlooked, namely the exploitation of the martial ethos of others present in the court, in Aquillius' case Gaius Marius. Now Marius was following the practice of friends and family by sitting near to the defendant, and according to Cicero he cried following Antonius'

²⁷⁸ Evans 1999, 90; Ter. *Eun.* 480-5: the slave Parmeno to the courtesan Thais, "and the donor of these gifts is not making demands on you to live with him alone, to the exclusion of everybody else. He doesn't recount battles and display his scars or lie in wait for you like someone else I know".

²⁷⁹ Evans 1990, 83; for example, Cic *Verr.* 2.5.32 has Cicero claiming that Verres had received some scars on his chest from one of his female lovers, thus playing on the stereotype of honourable scars.

²⁸⁰ Vasaly 2002, 99.

theatrics.²⁸¹ These tears, whether real or pre-meditated, would have, together with Antonius' naming of Marius, drawn attention to this pre-eminent commander. Thus, one man's physical display of his *virtus* induced a subsequent focus on one of the most well-known Roman *imperatores* of the period, someone with immense *auctoritas*. Later, in his defence of Murena in 63 BC, Cicero employed the same tactic, when he pointed to the presence in court of Murena's commander during the Mithridatic War, the renowned L. Licinius Lucullus.²⁸² Furthermore, one could argue that the personal appearance of such illustrious and formidable personalities was also a means of intimidating the jurors.

As stated earlier, the most detailed information concerning the forensic employment of the military record occurs in the speeches of Cicero, more specifically in the orations defending Fonteius, Murena, Archias, Flaccus, Balbus, Sestius and Plancius, which all include extensive digressions.²⁸³ For brevity and to demonstrate the diversity of this practice, only the *Pro Fonteio*, *Pro Archia* and the *Pro Sestio* will be given detailed analysis here. Prior to this, it should be stressed that Cicero, as a new man with a meagre military record, was acutely aware of both his personal and his ancestral lack of military *auctoritas*, and this was a factor in the way he approached military achievements in his speeches.²⁸⁴ For example, at times he himself attempts to adopt military *auctoritas*, as demonstrated in the speeches against Catiline, and on other occasions he emphasizes the military records of his clients or their supporters as a means of associating himself with their martial successes.²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ Cic. *De Orat.* 2.196; the individuals who on the day of the trial lend assistance to the defendant by either practical measures or simply by their presence near to him in court are termed in general *advocati*.

²⁸² Cic. *Mur.* 20: "this I venture to assert in Lucius Lucullus' presence..."

²⁸³ See Cic. *Mur.* 11-2, 15-22, 31-34, 89; *Flacc.* 6, 27-33, 60-63, 101-103; *Balb.* 5-6, 9, 63-64; *Planc.* 28, 61; it should be stated that a number of the surviving Ciceronian speeches are likely to have been revised prior to publication and therefore are perhaps not exactly the orations actually delivered.

²⁸⁴ May 1988, 13.

²⁸⁵ Cic. *Cat.* 2.12-16, cf. May 1988, 56-7; for example, in Cicero's *Pro Lege Manilia* we see Cicero's efforts to associate himself with the recent military successes of Pompey.

The first case is that of Marcus Fonteius. Fonteius had been the praetorian governor of Transalpine Gaul from around 74-72 BC and was later prosecuted before the *quaestio de repetundis* in either 70 or 69.²⁸⁶ Throughout his defence speech Cicero paints a portrait of Fonteius as a dutiful and virtuous man with a good military record; and early on in the oration he provides this general description of how Fonteius policed his apparently troublesome *provincia*.

Marcus Fonteius was in charge of the province of Gaul, which comprises a type of men and communities which (to say nothing of ancient times) have either within our own memory waged long and bitter wars with the people of Rome, or have been quite recently subdued by our generals, subjugated in war, brought to notice by the triumphs and memorials of which their conquest has been the occasion, and have lately had their lands and cities made forfeit by the senate; in some cases they have met in armed encounter with Marcus Fonteius himself, and have, at cost of much sweat and effort to him, been brought beneath the power and dominion of the Roman people.²⁸⁷

On the surface this digression makes Fonteius appear like an active military governor. Cicero does this by alluding to past Roman victories against the Gauls in order to provide a positive backdrop to Fonteius' recent military activities, emphasising how the Gauls, in both distant and present times, had been a bitter enemy of Rome, as demonstrated by their famous sacking of the city in 386 and by their participation in the more recent Hannibalic and Cimbric wars.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁶ *MRR* 2.104.

²⁸⁷ Cic. *Font.* 12: "provinciae Galliae M. Fonteius praefuit, quae constat ex eis generibus hominum et civitatum qui, ut vetera mittam, partim nostra memoria bella cum populo Romano acerba ac diuturna gesserunt, partim modo ab nostris imperatoribus subacti, modo bello domiti, modo triumphis ac monumentis notati, modo ab senatu agris urbibusque multati sunt, partim qui cum ipso M. Fonteio ferrum ac manus contulerunt multoque eius sudore ac labore sub populi Romani imperium dicionemque ceciderunt".

²⁸⁸ Polyb. 1.6.1, 3.60.11; Plut. *Mar.* 11-27; Cornell 1995, 313-4; Williams 2001, 140-150.

Hence, Fonteius was continuing the long established Roman fight against the Gauls. Cicero's description, however, of both Fonteius' and the earlier Roman victories is intentionally vague, since by not detailing or labelling the past successes through the names of specific *imperatores*, tribes and places, he is, in a sense, under no subsequent rhetorical obligation to detail Fonteius' actions, which in reality were very probably not that memorable. Unsurprisingly, though not all of its sections have come down to us, there are no details in Cicero's speech of Fonteius performing frontline military service, something one might expect considerable emphasis on, or reference to, throughout the oration if Fonteius had been an active and successful *homo militaris* during his governorship.²⁸⁹

The next tactic related to Fonteius' military service comes when Cicero justifies the magistrate's various exactions from the Gauls:

... he requisitioned large troops of cavalry to serve in the wars then being waged all over the world by the people of Rome, large sums of money to provide these with pay, and enormous quantities of corn to enable us to carry on the war in Spain.²⁹⁰

Cicero invokes Rome's heavy logistical requirements in the mid 70s BC, particularly during the long and bitter Sertorian War of 77-72 BC.²⁹¹ In doing so he is presenting Fonteius' activities to the jurors as a functional part of Rome's war machine, where pay, horses, and corn were all needed, requirements that a number of the jurors would have been aware of through their military and commercial experiences. Thus, Fonteius' apparently illegal

²⁸⁹ Cic. *Font.* 20 does mention the *Bellum Vocontii* in a passing reference, which makes it appear that a section or reference to this war was omitted from the published version of the speech. However, we do not know what the *Bellum Vocontii* was, nor whether Fonteius was personally involved in it.

²⁹⁰ Cic. *Font.* 13: "... magnos equitatus ad ea bella quae tum in toto orbe terrarum a populo Romano gerebantur, magnas pecunias ad eorum stipendium, maximum frumenti numerum ad Hispaniense bellum tolerandum imperavit".

²⁹¹ The principal sources for the Sertorian War: Plut. *Sert.* 10-27; App. *BC* 1.108-115.

exactions from the Gallic provincials, as alleged by the prosecution, were being painted by Cicero as being not for personal gain, but a necessary part of his military responsibilities.

Finally, Cicero in winding up his speech creates an impression that there was a current dearth of military men in Rome, so pushing the jury to believe that the conviction of Fonteius would undermine the state's capability to wage war.

And today how should you act, now that the profession of arms has fallen out of fashion among our youth; when our best men and our greatest generals have been wasted either by age or by civil dissension and public calamity; when wars so numerous are either unavoidably undertaken by us, or sprung upon us with unforeseen suddenness?²⁹²

This generalisation is then supported by Cicero naming “past masters of warfare holding praetorian rank” such as Sulla, Marius, Catulus and Crassus, “men who gained their military knowledge not from text-books but from their operations and their victories”.²⁹³ This gives the impression that, following Fonteius' alleged suppression of the Gauls, this experienced ex-praetor would soon be pursuing a similarly illustrious career. Thus, Cicero points to the potential of Fonteius' future military service on behalf of Rome, an invaluable duty that will be cut short if they, the jury, find him guilty. To emphasize the point further Cicero then goes on to make the jury consider the welfare of their families with or without this skilful and dutiful *homo militaris*.

²⁹² Cic. *Font.* 42: “quid nunc vobis faciendum est studiis militaribus apud iuventutem obsoletis, fortissimis autem hominibus ac summis ducibus partim aetate, partim civitatis discordiis ac rei publicae calamitate consumptis, cum tot bella aut a nobis necessario suscipiantur aut subito atque improvisa nascantur?”

²⁹³ Cic. *Font.* 43: “scietis fuisse ... praetorios homines, belli gerendi peritissimos ... non litteris homines ad rei militaris scientiam, sed rebus gestis ac victoriis eruditos”.

View carefully these considerations, gentlemen, and you will assuredly prefer to retain at home in the service of yourselves and your children a man tireless in the toils of war, so valiant in the face of its perils, so skilled in its theory and its practice, so wise in its strategy, so fortunate in its accidents and its chances ...²⁹⁴

There is a parallel here, and throughout the speech, to the various idealised martial virtues that a top-notch Roman commander should possess, as espoused by Cicero during his 66 BC oration *Pro Lege Manilia* that supported Pompeius' appointment to the Mithridatic command.²⁹⁵ There is a marked difference, however, in that Pompey's achievements were well known unlike those of Fonteius; Cicero, thus, has to pass over Fonteius' fighting record by such means as deliberate blurring, something that he hoped the jury would not pick up on.

The second Ciceronian speech to be analysed is the defence of Archias, a Syrian-born poet who was prosecuted in 62 over the illegal possession of Roman citizenship. The *Pro Archia*, above all, demonstrates the extent that the promotion of Roman military achievements influenced criminal advocacy, since it provided Cicero with the means to defend a poet, someone who was not a *homo militaris*. The speech highlights in particular how a Roman orator could play on the poetical commemoration of Roman military history to woo the nostalgic patriotism of the jury. Berry, for instance, points out how Cicero in the *exordium* established "an atmosphere of culture and sophistication ... in which the jury are flattered into

²⁹⁴ Cic. *Font.* 43: "quae si diligenter attendetis, profecto, iudices, virum ad labores belli impigrum, ad pericula fortem, ad usum ac disciplinam peritum, ad consilia prudentem, ad casum fortunamque felicem domi vobis ac liberis vestris retinere ...".

²⁹⁵ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 28-9.

fancying that they also belong”.²⁹⁶ Thus, Cicero was warmly preparing his audience for the upcoming literary citations that they believed that they should know.

It is the military achievements of Archias’ patron L. Licinius Lucullus, which Cicero, above all, employs, by highlighting the poet’s role in their promotion.

The Mithridatic War, a great and difficult undertaking pursued with many changes of fortune on land and sea, has been treated by Archias in its entirety. The books he wrote on it cast glory not only on the valiant and illustrious Lucius Lucullus, but also on the reputation of the Roman people.²⁹⁷

Cicero then continues to play on how the combined role of the Roman people under the command of Lucullus produced this success, attributing specific well-known victories to the citizen body, of which the jurors and the whole court of course were members. For example he states:

That astonishing naval battle off Tenedos, when Lucius Lucullus killed the enemy commanders and sank their fleet, will always be spoken of and proclaimed as ours: ours are the trophies, ours the monuments, ours the triumphs.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Cic. *Arch.* 3: “... I trust ... that you will allow me, speaking as I am on behalf of an eminent poet and a most learned man and before the crowd of highly educated people, this civilized jury, and such a praetor as is now presiding, to speak rather more freely on cultural and literary matters ...”; Berry 2004, 297-8.

²⁹⁷ Cic. *Arch.* 21: “Mithridaticum vero bellum, magnum atque difficile et in multa varietate terra marique versatum, totum ab hoc expressum est: qui libri non modo L. Lucullum, fortissimum et clarissimum virum, verum etiam populi Romani nomen inlustrant”.

²⁹⁸ Cic. *Arch.* 21: “nostra semper feretur et praedicabitur L. Lucullo dimicante, cum interfectis ducibus depressa hostium classis, et incredibilis apud Tenedum pugna illa navalis: nostra sunt tropaea, nostra monimenta, nostri triumphus”.

Berry points out that Cicero is taking a liberty here, since according to the second century AD Pontic historian Memnon, it was Lucullus' legate C. Triarius who was responsible for the victory at Tenedos in 72 BC, not Lucullus.²⁹⁹ Cicero's claim, however, may simply be reflecting Archias' poem, which like later Roman imperial literature and art probably bestowed the honours on the senior commander at the expense of his more active subordinates.³⁰⁰ Cicero then concluded this section of the speech by saying that "those who use their talents to write about such events serve therefore to increase the fame of the Roman people".³⁰¹ Cicero here, by pressing Archias' service on behalf of the Roman people, is pointing to someone who, though he has a question hanging over his status, undoubtedly deserved to be a Roman citizen.

Cicero adds further support to Archias' services to Rome by listing previous and current members of other *imperatores'* entourages, individuals who had publicised their patrons' military deeds. These included the poet and dramatist Ennius, who was believed to have accompanied the consul M. Fulvius Nobilior during his Ambracian campaign in the early second century BC, as well as the historian Theophanes of Mytilene, who had accompanied Pompeius during his Eastern wars; both of whom subsequently produced works commemorating their patrons.³⁰² Thus, Archias, as Berry says, "is firmly set within the serious, masculine, and Roman context of Roman warfare, rather than the frivolous and self-

²⁹⁹ *FGrH* 434, Memnon Fr. 29; within the surviving books that Memnon wrote on the history of his city of Heraclea in Pontus, there is a long digression on the rise of Rome; Berry 2004, 309.

³⁰⁰ For example, Fronto *Ep.* 2.1 and 2.3: the Emperor Lucius Verus was in nominal command of the Roman military forces against Parthia in AD 162-6 and he remained for the most part behind in Syria as Avidius Cassius and Statius Priscus brought the war to a successful conclusion. Nonetheless, Verus saw the campaign as a way of establishing a military reputation for himself back in Rome and from AD 163 onwards he wrote to Fronto asking his old tutor to write a history of the war which eulogised him.

³⁰¹ *Cic. Arch.* 21: "quae quorum ingeniis efferuntur, ab eis populi Romani fama celebratur".

³⁰² *Cic. Arch.* 24, 27; *Cic. Tusc.* 1.3 cites a speech of the elder Cato in which the censor criticized Nobilior for taking Ennius to Aetolia. Strabo 13.2.3; Plut. *Pomp.* 37 & 42, on Theophanes' services to Pompeius.

regarding world of Greek poetry”.³⁰³ Cicero was also creating a concept here of an established tradition of Roman martial publicists. For instance, he asks “ought we not greatly to prefer to leave behind us a representation of our designs and characters, moulded and finished by artists of the highest ability?”³⁰⁴ It is amongst this genre of artists that Cicero was placing Archias, and in doing so he hoped to further persuade the jury of this poet’s artistic and patriotic worth.

Finally, there is the case of Publius Sestius. He had held the quaestorship in 63 BC and then the tribunate in 57, and it was during this latter office that he became involved in the political street fighting that affected Rome that year.³⁰⁵ As a consequence he was charged with *vis* (violence), the trial occurring in 56. During his defence of Sestius, Cicero primarily emphasized his own *auctoritas* as part of his various efforts to re-establish himself following his return from exile. He achieved this by creating for the jury and watching public, as May says, “a stunning manifesto of his political philosophy”, including his famous analogy of being the helmsman of the ship of state.³⁰⁶ Nonetheless, within one early digression in *Pro Sestio* Cicero promotes the martial *virtus* of his client. This is when he harks back to the Catilinarian Conspiracy and Sestius’ role as quaestor in dealing with the rebellion outside Rome.

Also, after that conspiracy had burst out from its hiding place in the darkness and was openly winging its way in arms, he [Sestius] went with an army to Capua, since we suspected that that city might be made the object of a sudden attack by that villainous band of rascals owing to the many advantages of its military situation. He drove headlong out of Capua Gaius Mevulanus, Antonius’ military tribune, a desperate man,

³⁰³ Berry 2004, 308-9.

³⁰⁴ Cic. *Arch.* 30: “... consiliorum relinquere ac virtutum nostrarum effigiem nonne multo malle debemus, summis ingeniis expressam et politam?”

³⁰⁵ *MRR* 2. 168, 202.

³⁰⁶ Cic. *Sest.* 20, 45-6; May 1988, 90.

who had openly taken part in that conspiracy at Pisaurum and in other parts of the Gallic territory. He also saw to it that Gaius Marcellus was expelled from Capua, since he had not only come there, but had joined a large band of gladiators under the pretext of exercising himself in the use of arms.³⁰⁷

Capua was a major centre of gladiatorial schools and the place where the Spartacus revolt had started in 73 BC. As a consequence Sestius' actions against Gaius Mevulanus and Gaius Marcellus would have seemed to the jury an extremely laudable and sensible military operation.³⁰⁸ In order to support the veracity of these statements Cicero cites a letter from the decurions of Capua (local senators) which detailed the services Sestius had given them and their public vote of thanks to him. Some of the jurors, moreover, probably had been municipal decurions, or at least related to ones, and so appreciated and understood the actions of the Capuans. The recognition and honouring of *virtus* was a central feature of Roman aristocratic society, and although the decurions of Capua might not be the Senate of Rome voting on *supplicationes*, Cicero was nonetheless still following the traditional Roman process of recounting and subsequently praising martial endeavour. He then takes this recollection one step further by asking Sestius' son to come forward:

Read out, I beg you, O Lucius Sestius, what the decurions of Capua decreed, in order that your boyish voice may now give a hint to the enemies of your family what it seems likely to accomplish when it shall have grown stronger. [The decree of the decurions is

³⁰⁷ Cic. *Sest.* 9: "idem, cum illa coniuratio ex latebris atque ex tenebris erupisset palamque armata volitaret, venit cum exercitu Capuam, quam urbem propter plurimas belli opportunitates ab illa impia et scelerata manu temptari suspicabamur; C. Mevulanum, tribunum militum Antoni, Capua praecipitem eiecit, hominem perditum et non obscure Pisauri et in aliis agri Gallici partibus in illa coniuratione versatum; idemque C. Marcellum, cum is non Capuam solum venisset, verum etiam se quasi armorum studio in maximam familiam coniecisset, exterminandum ex illa urbe curavit."

³⁰⁸ Kaster 2006, 132-4; App. *BC* 1.116.

read.] ... I am reading out a record of danger undergone, a declaration of a most signal favour rendered, an expression of present gratitude, a testimony from a time that is past.³⁰⁹

By disclosing this positive information through the defendant's young son, Cicero was providing flesh and blood evidence to the jury of what Sestius would lose if they convicted him. Cicero here has combined the mechanism of filial pathos with the detailing of the defendant's military record, so producing a powerful means of persuasion.³¹⁰ Although this is only a precursory digression within a much more complex speech, it nonetheless illustrates the lengths to which an orator would go to create a martial ethos for his client, thus demonstrating his belief in its persuasive value before the court.

Overall, within the extant speeches of Cicero and earlier orators there is a repeated and diverse employment of the military record to create images of dutiful, brave and unselfish Roman magistrates for the various juries. During his defence of Gnaeus Plancius in 54 BC on a charge of *ambitus*, Cicero even plays on this practice, pointing towards the expectation of the jury that they would receive such information. "You ask what active service he has seen (*rogas, quae castra viderit*)".³¹¹ To achieve this end, Cicero utilised all sorts of rhetorical mechanisms and tactics to ensure that his audience accepted his positive characterisations of these *homines militares*. These included the blurring and detailing of specific engagements and the exploitation of the presence in court of distinguished ex-commanders. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the fragmented and indirect evidence of the pre-Ciceronian period, the

³⁰⁹ Cic. *Sest.* 10: "recita, quaeso, L. Sesti, quid decrerint Capuae decuriones, ut iam puerilis tua vox possit aliquid significare inimicis vestris, quidnam, cum se conroborarit, effectura esse videatur ... recito memoriam perfuncti periculi, praedicationem amplissimi benefici, vocem officii praesentis, testimonium praeteriti temporis".

³¹⁰ Livy *Per.* 49 details the famous instance of filial pathos in 149 when the prosecuted commander Servius Sulpicius Galba displayed his children in court.

³¹¹ Cic. *Planc.* 61.

digression on military endeavour was a recurring practice. When we consider the scale and variety by which Cicero in his surviving orations over 25 years followed this practice, I believe it was an oratorical means that was frequently employed throughout the middle and late Republic as part of defendant's and advocate's efforts to counter the numerous prosecutions that ex-magistrates and others were facing.

The question of why the military record was employed in the ways illustrated needs addressing. Firstly, the practice was a product of the innate militarism of Roman Republican society, in which martial *virtus* was highly valued particularly amongst the Roman aristocracy, as argued by scholars such as Harris and Wiseman.³¹² Thus, in the case of Sestius, a magistrate who had had few opportunities of displaying such *virtus*, Cicero still found a small, yet convincing example of military service that his client had performed during the Catilinarian revolt.³¹³

Secondly, the employment of the military record in these digressions frequently arose in response to the preceding prosecution speeches, especially those which denigrated the behaviour and achievements of governors and military leaders such as Fonteius and Murena. For example, when defending Murena, Cicero tells how the Younger Cato, one of the prosecutors, asserted that "the whole of that war against Mithridates was only fought against a load of little women".³¹⁴ Cato here, by feminizing the enemy whom the defendant had fought, was debasing Murena's most distinguished claims of *virtus*. This alongside other similar criticisms was what caused Cicero to promote the credibility of Murena's eastern endeavours,

³¹² Harris 1985, 10-41; Wiseman 1985, 3-19.

³¹³ In addition to his swift actions at Capua, Cicero (*Sest.* 12) also emphasizes Sestius's presence in the army that finally defeated Catiline near Pistoria in 62 BC.

³¹⁴ Cic. *Mur.* 31: "... bellum illud omne Mithridaticum cum mulierculis esse gestum".

and this included his promotion of Lucullus's official dispatches to Rome, in which Murena's actions were positively cited.³¹⁵

Finally, this type of digression was a result of the nature and frequency with which military achievements were publicised in Rome. The middle and late Republic saw considerable dissemination of reports of martial success via dispatches and speeches, often within the Forum, the very environment in which these defence speeches were delivered.³¹⁶ Hence, the forensic references to military engagements and endeavours were playing on established Roman communication practices, customs with which many of the jurors were familiar. That is why in the *Pro Archia* we have the rhetoric about the Roman naval victory over Mithridates: "That astonishing naval battle off Tenedos when Lucius Lucullus killed the enemy commanders and sank their fleet, will always be spoken of and proclaimed as ours: ours are the trophies, ours the monuments, ours the triumphs".³¹⁷ Just as in the dispatches and speeches that the orators had heard, individual successes and achievements were again being promoted on behalf of the Roman people.

5. Conclusion

The individuals, who delivered the speeches in Rome promoting the military record, were all, to some extent, educated in the theory and practice of public oratory. In addition, the *imperatores* and their lieutenants, whilst on campaign, were required to speak to their troops in a variety of contexts and this oratory frequently entailed martial panegyric of one sort or another. Therefore, although the majority of these *homines militares* were not pre-eminent

³¹⁵ Cic. *Mur.* 20.

³¹⁶ For example, Livy 27.50 tells how, following the defeat of Hasdrubal at the river Metaurus in 207 BC, the consuls' victorious dispatches were read out in a *contio* very possibly in the Forum; Livy 45.1 likewise tells of Paullus' victorious Pydna dispatch being disseminated in 168.

³¹⁷ Cic. *Arch.* 21; Cf. note 291.

orators, they did have extensive experience of public oratory in a number of civil and martial contexts. When military success had been attained, the surviving evidence points to three distinct contexts in which these achievements were orally presented in Rome during the middle and late Republic.

First of all, returning commanders, and at times their personal legates, reported their successes to an assembly of the Senate and there were at least 165 attested victorious orations delivered to this body during our period and these achievements were often subsequently communicated to an assembled *contio*. When addressing the Senate, numerous commanders requested a triumph and the frequency, regularity and nature of these orations, alongside the other means of dissemination such as dispatches, influenced the developing triumphal regulations that these returning commanders had to negotiate. For instance, the enumeration of the enemy dead was a prevalent element of these speeches and in relation to this practice at least two separate pieces of regulatory legislation were passed in the 170s and 62 BC. It must not be forgotten that these customary requests to the Senate and the subsequent speeches to *contiones* were in themselves excellent opportunities for an *imperator* to convey his *res gestae* to his peers and the citizens of Rome and consequently establish, or even further, his military ethos.

Secondly, once a magistrate had military achievements under his belt, and this might occur during a command as well as upon its completion, he or his allies could deploy his successes in public oratory as part of their efforts to prorogue an ongoing command or to seek a new one. The opportunities for such rhetoric depended on the political and military situation in Rome, but it must be stressed that consular and praetorian *provinciae* (some of which of course had considerable military responsibilities, whilst others had few) were being proposed, debated and voted on by the Senate on an annual basis. What Cicero's *De Imperio Cn.*

Pompei and *De provinciis consularibus* demonstrate are the complexities of these debates and how they involved not only the promotion of one commander's military reputation, but also overt and nuanced criticisms of the other magistrates associated with the *provinciae* being debated. Although Cicero was the pre-eminent orator of his generation and these speeches were written-up and to some extent expanded prior to publication, the deliberative oratory that they exhibit did not develop out of a vacuum, as indicated by the indirect references to the other speeches delivered during these debates. As well as the speeches delivered in the Senate, from 148 onwards oratory in support of commands was also being delivered before *contiones*. These additional orations, as well as targeting a different type of audience, also probably expanded and intensified the nature of the laudatory rhetoric employed.

Thirdly, when a *homo militaris* was prosecuted, the positive aspects of his military record could be portrayed as digressions within the defence speeches. This forensic exploitation was not simply about the stereotypic display of battle-scars or the citation of the defendant's battlefield exploits, but, as Cato and Cicero demonstrate, they encompassed more nuanced rhetoric, in which the magistrate's wide-ranging military responsibilities and activities were brought to the attention of the jury, frequently as a direct means of countering some of the prosecution's allegations. The development and increasing number of *quaestiones perpetuae* in the late Republic was a significant factor influencing these frequently sophisticated digressions, as forensic speakers became more experienced in crafting a persuasive martial ethos.

Overall, this ephemeral mechanism of promoting a magistrate's military *res gestae* should not be seen as a single-dimensional instrument of reporting contemporaneous events, but as a multi-faceted and developing means of targeting a number of influential audiences in

Rome – primarily in the form of assembled senators, *contiones* and *quaestiones* – the audiences that decided the current and future prospects of these *homines militares*.

3. Attacking the military record

1. A spectrum of criticism

You do not lie, Pompeius. Indeed I come from the underworld and I come as Lucius Libo's accuser. But while I was there, I saw Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus all bloody lamenting that he, a man of the noblest birth, life unstained, a sincere patriot, had been put to death by your order in the very flower of his youth. I saw Marcus Brutus, no less conspicuously distinguished, lacerated with steel, complaining that this happened to him first by your treachery, then too by your cruelty. I saw Gnaeus Carbo, the zealous defender of your boyhood and of your father's property, bound by the chains which you ordered placed upon him in his third consulship, protesting that against all things lawful and unlawful he was slaughtered while holding highest authority by you, a Roman knight. I saw Perperna, an ex-praetor, in the same guise and crying the same protest, cursing your savagery, all of them with one voice indignant that without judicial sentence they perished at your bidding, the teenage butcher.¹

Helvius Mancina, a freedman's son, according to Valerius Maximus, delivered this piece of invective before the censors of 55 BC and it was a response to a gibe made by Pompeius that the decrepit Mancina must have come from the underworld. Pompeius was consul in 55

¹ *ORF*³, 270-1 = Val. Max. 6.2.8: "non mentiris Pompei: venio enim ab inferis, in L. Libonem accusator venio. sed dum illic moror, vidi cruentum Cn. Domitium Ahenobarbum deflentem, quod summo genere natus, integerrimae vitae, amantissimus patriae, in ipso iuventae flore tuo iussu esset occisus. vidi pari claritate conspicuum M. Brutum ferro laceratum, querentem id sibi prius perfidia, deinde etiam crudelitate tua accidisse. vidi Cn. Carbonem acerrimum pueritiae tuae bonorumque patris tui defensorem in tertio consulatu catenis, quas tu ei inici iusseras, vinctum, obtestantem se adversus omne fas ac nefas, cum in summo esset imperio, a te equite Romano trucidatum. vidi eodem habitu et quiritalu praetorium virum Perpernam saevitiam tuam execrantem, omnesque eos una uoce indignantes, quod indemnati sub te adolescentulo carnifice occidissent".

possessing considerable *auctoritas*; and there were various manifestations of his military achievements around Rome, including the theatre-temple complex of Venus Victrix on the campus Martius.² Mancina, however, through his allegorical visit to the underworld, reminded those present at the censorial review that Pompeius had a negative military record too, particularly his actions during the civil wars of the 80s BC and their aftermath, such as his execution of Perperna at the end of the Sertorian War.³ These killings of prominent Romans were details that Pompeius and his publicists would have omitted from the various commemorations of his military record, since civil war was viewed by Roman society as the worst of crimes.⁴

This piece of invective, though extreme, exemplifies a frequent phenomenon during the middle and late Republic whereby the military records of Roman commanders were publicly attacked, predominantly through political or forensic speeches within Rome. This chapter aims to investigate the nature of these attacks and then argue that a spectrum of criticisms could be wielded against the martial ethos of Roman magistrates. In establishing this model, this chapter furthers my core argument that the military record was not simply about winning triumphs, erecting monuments and issuing coins, but that it was part of an intensively competitive culture that employed ephemeral media to censure as well as to praise its *imperatores*.

The Latin word for invective or censure is *vituperatio*; ‘invective’ itself derives from the verb *invehi*, literally ‘to ride in to attack’. As Powell points out, *invehi* frequently occurs

² Gell. 10.1.6-7; Plin. *HN* 8.20; *MRR* 2.214-5.

³ Plut. *Sert.* 27.

⁴ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 28; Steel 2001, 140-7; in a section entitled ‘whitewashing the teenage butcher’, Steel points out that Cicero, in his speech supporting Pompeius’ command against Mithridates, gives a careful yet brief picture of Pompeius’ early career, in which unsavoury details such as his actions during the civil wars of the 80s BC are passed over.

in straightforward military contexts.⁵ Within the context of Roman oratory, however, it means ‘to launch an attack’ and this would usually be aimed against an individual, but also now and again against a policy or issue. In this chapter I will be using the English word *invective* primarily to mean a direct personal attack. On occasion, however, attacks on the martial ethos could be of a more subtle nature. For instance, in the *Pro lege Manilia* Cicero’s treatment of Lucullus’ military achievements was not invective, but a combination of tempered praise and nuanced criticism.⁶

Corbeill defines *vituperatio* “as a series of examples of what a Roman is not”, arguing that it was employed during the middle and late Republic to target a number of personal attributes, including unsightly physical features, unflattering ancestry and unusual sexual behaviour.⁷ The one characteristic missing from Corbeill’s list is the military record, a frequent target for denigration during this period. Craig includes the category of ‘cowardice in war’ in his wider *loci* of invective, but, like Corbeill, overlooks the wide-ranging importance of the military record.⁸ Epstein, on the other hand, does highlight its significance within his book on personal enmity during the Republic, arguing that *inimicitiae* were vehemently pursued in Roman political life through a variety of mechanisms. He concentrates on the motives for these attacks, maintaining that they targeted every aspect of an enemy’s public and private life, and that:

⁵ Powell, 2007, 2; Professor Powell very kindly sent me a copy of this paper prior to publication.

⁶ See Chapter 3, Section 3; Cic. *Leg. Man.* 10, 20-3; Steel 2001, 148-154, indicates that Cicero appears to praise Lucullus, but that this praise “has quite clear boundaries”. Later Cicero subtly undermines Lucullus’ *auuctoritas*, including an emphasis on his failure to vanquish Mithridates completely.

⁷ Corbeill 2002b, 199-201, lists ten common topics of accusation within Roman invective: 1. servile heritage; 2. barbarian (non-Roman) background; 3. having a non-elite occupation; 4. thievery; 5. non-standard sexual behaviour; 6. estrangement from family and community; 7. melancholy disposition; 8. unusual appearance, clothing, or demeanour; 9. cowardice; 10. bankruptcy.

⁸ Craig 2004, 190-1, lists seventeen topics of Roman invective by amalgamating the topics cited by Nisbet 1961, 192-7; Süß 1910, 245-62; Merrill 1975, 203-4: 1. embarrassing family origin; 2. unworthy of the family name; 3. physical appearance; 4. eccentricity of dress; 5. gluttony and drunkenness; 6. hypocrisy for appearing virtuous; 7. avarice; 8. accepting bribes; 9. pretentiousness; 10. sexual misconduct; 11. hostility to family; 12. cowardice in war; 13. squandering of one’s patrimony; 14. aspiring to *regnum*; 15. cruelty to citizens and allies; 16. plunder of private and public property; 17. oratorical ineptitude.

The goal was to destroy a man's *auctoritas*, the most elusive and at the same time the most essential component of power in Rome.⁹

Later he specifically states that:

Military prestige was the largest promoter of Roman *auctoritas* and therefore provided an inviting field on which *inimici* could unleash their passions. A general had to reckon on interference from his enemies in Rome at every stage of the campaign.¹⁰

Epstein, however, presents a narrow picture of such behaviour relying on Cicero for his core argument.¹¹ One key aim of this chapter is to emphasize that the invective and the other criticisms of the military record were established practice prior to the Ciceronian era and that Cicero's own attacks on the military ethos followed existing tradition. It was perhaps simply the case that Cicero was delivering these criticisms in a more sophisticated and far-reaching manner, as he employed a wide range of allegations against his victim's *auctoritas* and Roman identity.

Furthermore, it must be stressed that these attacks on the military record were not always a product of personal enmity, but frequently a result of a complex of factors. The *Catilinarians* and *Philippics*, for instance, were in part driven by Cicero's concern for the stability and security of the state. Invective in the law courts was motivated in some degree by the need for aspiring orators to make a name for themselves, as demonstrated by the

⁹ Epstein 1987, 77.

¹⁰ Epstein 1987, 78.

¹¹ Hölkeskamp 1989, 189, highlights Epstein's heavy reliance on Cicero, in particular the belief that "Cicero illustrated the paranoia all Romans felt about the *inimicitiae* they saw everywhere around them."

composition and subsequent publication of Cicero's *Verrines*.¹² Finally, as Nisbet, Paoli and Arena point out, Roman society had a long tradition of coarse personal ribaldry and thus such criticisms should be seen as part of a culture employing a swathe of oral and literary denigration.¹³ Ruffell emphasizes the prominent role of popular verse invective in the late Republic, as demonstrated by the taunting that Roman triumphators received from their men, such as when Caesar's troops sang of his supposed sexual practices and baldness during his Gallic triumph of 46 BC.¹⁴ Thus, the spectrum of criticisms aimed at *imperatores* must be seen against a complex background and not simply as derived from *inimicitiae*.

Epstein's comment about the extensive nature of oral invective against Roman commanders raises the question of what specific contexts saw the Roman military ethos being denigrated; within the sources six contexts are prominent. First of all, before the magistrate acquired or took up a command, questions might be raised about his military ability and suitability for such a post. Secondly, during a command there might be criticisms of the magistrate's ongoing operations. Thirdly, following the completion of his command a magistrate might claim a triumph back in Rome and on a number of occasions this resulted in disputes about the nature or quality of his supposed military success. Fourthly, after the completion of a command, there were often general political criticisms of the magistrate's military ethos, particularly within the Senate or at *contiones*. Fifthly, there was the invective delivered in the law-courts, particularly in prosecution speeches against returning magistrates. Finally, there was the invective delivered during the civil wars and internal crises of the late Republic. This categorization does not work perfectly in every case, since a number could be

¹² Brunt 1988, 373; Cic. *Brut.* 159; as well as the prosecution of Verres, Brunt also cites the young L. Crassus' successful prosecution of C. Carbo in around 119 BC.

¹³ Nisbet 1961, 192-7; Arena 2007, 156-7; Paoli 1990², 267-78, points to the ribald songs at Roman weddings and triumphs as well as the abusive epithets in Plautus and other satirists and poets.

¹⁴ Ruffell 2003, 35-65; Suet. *Iul.* 49.4 & 51.1.

placed into two or three of these six categories. Nonetheless, this approach nuances Epstein's argument that a Roman "general had to reckon on interference from his enemies in Rome at every stage of the campaign".¹⁵

2. Criticisms prior to a command

Prior to being allotted or voted a *provincia*, a Roman commander, on occasion, could be criticised by his peers in the Senate or before a civil *contio* in Rome. The one significant example occurred in early 205 BC during the Hannibalic War. The newly elected consul P. Cornelius Scipio was going to receive the *provincia* of Sicily, a command from which Scipio publicly stated that he would lead an invasion force against Carthage.¹⁶ This *provincia* was going to Scipio without the usual sortition because the other consul P. Licinius Crassus was *pontifex maximus* and therefore not allowed to leave Italy. Furthermore, as highlighted in chapter two, Scipio's recent military achievements in Spain were a key factor in the resultant debate. Livy maintains that the proposed project was not viewed favourably by a number of prominent senators, of whom the most vocal was Q. Fabius Maximus. Unfortunately the lengthy direct oration representing Fabius' speech to Senate in Livy's narrative is very probably a rhetorical construct in a similar fashion as the speeches that he puts in the mouths of Scipio and Hannibal prior to the Battle of Zama.¹⁷ Thus, we have to treat Livy's Fabian speech with extreme caution. Nonetheless, it certainly seems that the debate occurred and

¹⁵ Epstein 1987, 78.

¹⁶ Livy 28.40.1-2.

¹⁷ Livy 28.40-44; Walsh 1961, 219-44 analyses this Livian practice; Hansen 1993, 161-80, in his treatment of battle exhortations within ancient historiography, highlights the frequently fictitious nature of the direct speeches placed in the mouths of major protagonists, such as the Livian orations between Scipio and Hannibal before Zama (Livy 30.30-1).

some of its fundamental concerns and criticisms can be gleaned from Livy, as well as from Plutarch's briefer indirect account.¹⁸

First of all, Fabius was worried about Hannibal's continued presence in Bruttium and believed that both consuls should remain in Italy to prevent any further Punic successes.¹⁹ He portrayed Scipio's proposal to invade Africa, whilst Rome's most feared enemy leader was still active on Italian soil, as being detrimental to Rome's security. Secondly, it appears that Fabius made an issue of Scipio's age and inexperience.²⁰ Although he had pre-eminent military achievements in Spain, such as his capture of New Carthage, Scipio had not followed the traditional *cursus honorum* when being awarded his Spanish command, since he was below 40 and a *privatus* when he received the proconsular command through a vote of the *comitia centuriata*.²¹ Fabius was possibly playing on the irregularity of this appointment and even downplaying Scipio's Spanish achievements as they had not been against Hannibal, as his own had been. Overall, Fabius' oratory against Scipio was probably not a case of overt invective like that considered in the subsequent sections. It was more likely motivated by his concerns about Scipio's inexperience and ability to organize and lead in North Africa, a campaign that would entail considerable logistical and tactical difficulties, as so markedly demonstrated by the heavy losses suffered in 255 BC by M. Atilius Regulus during the First Punic War.²²

Fabius' speech against Scipio highlights another significant aspect of the public criticism of Roman commanders. The orators in many cases cited possessed considerable

¹⁸ Plut. *Fab.* 25; Lazenby 1978, 193-5; Briscoe 1989, 73; Goldsworthy 2000, 286; have all drawn on Livy's and Plutarch's accounts of the debate.

¹⁹ Livy 28.41.

²⁰ Livy 28.40; Plut. *Fab.* 25.

²¹ Livy 26.18-20; *MRR* 1.280; Lazenby 1978, 133, argues, however, that it is probable that the Senate decided to put forward Scipio's name and employed the traditional assembly for electing consuls to confirm this appointment.

²² *MRR* 1.209-10; Polyb. 1.31-34.

auctoritas through their political and military achievements, as well as, presumably, some ability and experience in public speaking. Fabius, for instance, in 205 had been: consul five times, dictator, and censor; and, as well as being augur and pontiff, he possessed pre-eminent military achievements, including his famous delaying tactics against Hannibal and his recapture of Tarentum in 209 which gained him a triumph.²³ All this would have given his arguments gravitas and credibility amongst his senatorial peers. Compare the situation today in the House of Commons, where good speakers with long parliamentary records are often given a respectful hearing.²⁴

In addition, seniority was important in senatorial debates as it dictated when individual senators could speak. The presiding magistrate would usually commence a debate with a brief introduction of the proposal and in some occasions a longer oration. He would then ask the ex-consuls present in order – traditionally starting with the *princeps senatus*.²⁵ Fabius, as *princeps senatus* in 205, therefore would have been given a prominent position during the senatorial debates over the designation of the upcoming *provinciae*. In the late Republic, though, the presiding magistrate was given a degree of discretion over the ranking order and consuls-elect were frequently given precedence.²⁶

During the late Republic criticisms of upcoming commands instigated by tribunician legislation also occurred. According to Cicero, in 67 BC the consulars Hortensius and Catulus spoke out against the *lex Gabinia*, the tribunician bill that gave Pompeius an extraordinary command against the pirates, with Hortensius' criticisms delivered in the Senate and Catulus'

²³ *MRR* 2.563; Livy 27.15-6; Plut. *Fab.* 21-3.

²⁴ For example, when Tony Benn spoke out against the British government's policy during the Kosovo crisis of April 1999, Benn's views were heard with respect by the house owing to his lengthy experience in government and parliament as well as his oratory skills, in spite of the fact that many MPs disagreed with his perspective. See the online Hansard record of the debate in the House of Commons on April 19th 1999, <<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199899/cmhansrd/vo990419/debindx/90419-x.htm>>, accessed 23rd November 2007.

²⁵ Lintott 1999, 78.

²⁶ Lintott 1999, 78.

to a *contio*.²⁷ As long as Cicero, a supporter of the bill, is not being wholly disingenuous, both speakers appear to have not directly criticised Pompeius: he states that Hortensius spoke out against Gabinius and his bill and that Catulus raised a concern over the command being given to one person.²⁸ We must be conscious of Powell's observation that invective at times was aimed at a proposal or a policy and not always against an individual.²⁹ In the main, during the period 219-19 BC, few direct criticisms of commanders appear in the sources prior to their campaigns and this is probably owing to a number of factors. The commands were decided by lot, so reducing the opportunity for debates over who should receive what *provincia*.³⁰ Another factor was that most magistrates taking up such commands had recently been elected by the *comitia centuriata* and, so, as well as *imperium*, in most cases they would have possessed tremendous *auctoritas* amongst their peers following their election victory, making them a daunting target for a potential detractor. Finally, in most of the cases cited within the chapter, a commander was denigrated for his *recent* military achievements and not his distant career which some of the speaker's audience might have forgotten. This is because the more contemporaneous the behaviour being cited the more impact the invective probably had against the target's martial ethos, unlike less topical events from a previous command. However, now and again, a commander's early career could provide an orator with useful

²⁷ Millar 1998, 80-1; *MRR* 2.85 & 131; Catulus had been consul in 78 BC and Hortensius was consul in 69.

²⁸ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 52: "for it was you yourself, Quintus Hortensius, who with your matchless fluency and unrivalled eloquence made a long, impressive, and highly wrought speech in the Senate opposing the valiant Aulus Gabinius, when he had published his bill to appoint a single commander against the pirates; and from this place too you spoke at length against the bill"; 59: "when he [Q. Catulus] asked you [the people] on whom you would place your hopes if you put everything into Gnaeus Pompeius' hands and something then happened to him.....". Cf Dio 36.31-6 provides the supposed oration delivered by Catulus.

²⁹ Powell 2007 (forthcoming).

³⁰ Lintott 1999, 101-2: before 123 BC *provinciae* (for senior magistrates) were nearly always selected by the Senate after their election and then allocated by lot; following legislation by C. Gracchus in 123 or 122 the two consular *provinciae* were chosen by the Senate prior to the elections and then distributed by lot.

details to establish his base nature and so support more recent allegations against his martial ethos, as will be later demonstrated by Cicero's criticisms of Verres.³¹

3. Criticisms during a command

Whilst a commander was in the field his current actions were more likely to be denigrated in public speeches back in Rome. This is exemplified by the criticisms that the proconsul M. Claudius Marcellus received in 209 BC during the Second Punic War. Marcellus had faced Hannibal in a couple of inconclusive engagements near Canusium in Apulia that year, the first of which saw a Roman withdrawal, the second of which saw Hannibal fall back.³² Following these actions according to Livy and Plutarch, the tribune C. Publicius Bibulus criticised Marcellus' actions before a number of *contiones* and in one of them he proposed a bill to terminate Marcellus' command, all of which caused the proconsul to return to Rome.³³ According to the Livian version it was during a *contio* in the Circus Flaminius that Bibulus made the following accusations:

The tribune [Bibulus] accused not only Marcellus but the nobility as a whole, maintaining that it was owing to their dishonesty and hesitation that Hannibal for the past nine years had been treating Italy as a *provincia* – a longer time than he had lived in Carthage. The Roman people, he said, were reaping the fruits of the prolongation of

³¹ See Section 6 of this chapter.

³² Livy 27.12 & 14.

³³ Vishnia 1996, 83; Livy 27.20: "the tribune of the plebs, C. Publicius Bibulus, was doing all he could to discredit Marcellus's name in public speeches and trying to rouse the commons against him ever since his first, unsuccessful, battle, and he was now beginning to urge the abrogation of his command".

Marcellus's command: his army, having twice been cut up, was now spending the summer in comfortable quarters at Venusia.³⁴

Though we have to be cautious, since Livy has possibly embellished this account of Bibulus' speech, it nonetheless demonstrates the opportunity and the ability of a tribune to challenge a field commander's actions and this included the claim that Marcellus was mollicodding his men. Plutarch briefly informs us of the proconsul's response upon returning to Rome and then how some others reacted.

Marcellus' own defence was short and simple, but a number of the most prominent and distinguished Romans paid glowing tributes to his generalship and upheld his actions in the most outspoken terms. They reminded the people that if they condemned Marcellus for cowardice, they would have to prove themselves to be far worse judges than Hannibal, for Marcellus was the one general whom the Carthaginian always sought to avoid, in fact he employed every trick he knew to elude him and engage the others.³⁵

The speeches of Marcellus' colleagues indicate not only their concern about Bibulus's proposal (which was subsequently voted down), but also their willingness to address the people on the commander's behalf to extol and re-emphasize his martial reputation. They cleverly play on the people's current fear of Hannibal, by claiming that Hannibal himself

³⁴ Livy 27.21.2-4: "accusavitque tribunus plebis non Marcellum modo, sed omnem nobilitatem: fraude eorum et cunctatione fieri ut Hannibal decimum iam annum Italiam provinciam habeat, diutius ibi quam Carthagine uixerit; habere fructum imperii prorogati Marcello populum Romanum; bis caesum exercitum eius aestiva Venusiae sub tectis agere".

³⁵ Plut. *Marc.* 27.3: ὁ δὲ Μάρκελλος ἀπελογεῖτο, βραχέα μὲν καὶ ἀπλᾶ δι' ἑαυτοῦ, πολλήν δὲ καὶ λαμπρὰν οἱ δοκιμώτατοι καὶ πρῶτοι τῶν πολιτῶν παρρησίαν ἤγον, παρακαλοῦντες μὴ χεῖρονας τοῦ πολεμίου κριτὰς φανῆναι δειλίαν Μαρκέλλου καταψηφισαμένους, ὃν μόνον φεύγει τῶν ἡγεμόνων ἐκεῖνος καὶ διατελεῖ τούτῳ μὴ μάχεσθαι στρατηγῶν, ὡς τοῖς ἄλλοις μάχεσθαι.

feared Marcellus.³⁶ These orations demonstrate how invective could induce speeches in response not only from the targeted general, but also from his friends and allies and, as later demonstrated by Cicero's *Philippics*, we must consider that these speeches were often part of a chain of claims and counter-claims between a number of aristocrats, not simply a one-on-one feud.³⁷

Plutarch provides an insightful example from the late Republic where a field commander's ongoing operations were criticised. This pertains to the younger Cato speaking out against Caesar's Gallic campaign. Unfortunately Plutarch does not state whether it was to a *contio* or a Senate meeting, but he does mention that the invective concerned Caesar's employment of a sneak attack on a German tribe during a truce in late 55 BC, an attack which Caesar himself mentions in his commentaries.³⁸ According to Plutarch, Cato proposed that Caesar should be handed over to the Germans and claimed that Rome would be polluted by this crime, unless expiatory sacrifices were made.³⁹ The latter statement was astute as these rites would directly undermine the *supplicationes* that had been voted in 57 and 55 BC for Caesar's Gallic successes.⁴⁰ Cato's attack caused Caesar to send a letter to the Senate, apparently denouncing and insulting Cato.⁴¹ Caesar's reaction indicates that he was conscious that his growing *auctoritas* in Rome might be undermined by an allegation that portrayed him as perfidious. His response also highlights the value that Caesar placed in dispatches as a

³⁶ If we consider the perspective of the people who made up the civil *contio* in the Circus Flaminius which Marcellus was addressing, many of them would have been acutely aware of Hannibal's actions on account of the personal losses as well as the economic disruption they had suffered through his depredations up and down the Italian peninsula.

³⁷ See Section 7 of this chapter.

³⁸ Plut. *Cat. Min.* 51.1; Caes. *B Gall.* 4.12-15; Caesar states that he launched a surprise attack against the German Ubii, whilst "leading citizens and elders" were away from their encampment parleying with the proconsul.

³⁹ Plut. *Cat. Min.* 51.1-2

⁴⁰ Caes. *B Gall.* 2.35; 4.37.

⁴¹ Plut. *Cat. Min.* 51.3-4.

means of not only projecting his achievements in Rome, but also defending them. The political role of dispatches is dealt with in chapter four.

Another reaction to the criticisms Roman commanders endured whilst they were on campaign comes from L. Aemilius Paullus in 168 in a speech he delivered to a *contio* in Rome prior to his departure to take command in the Third Macedonian War.⁴² This speech is reported in a number of sources, with Polybius' account probably being the most accurate, since Polybius had been part of Paullus' household as well as a close associate of Paullus' son Scipio Aemilianus after the Macedonian campaign.⁴³

For Aemilius said that the sole occupation of some people, whether at social gatherings or in their conversation when walking, was to sit quietly at Rome while they directed the war in Macedonia, sometimes finding fault with what the commanders did and at others dilating on all they had left undone, all which was never of any benefit to the public interest, but had frequently and in many respects been most harmful to it. And the commanders too are at times much injured by inopportune chit-chat; for as it is the invariable nature of slander to spread rapidly and stop at nothing, the people become thoroughly infected by this constant chatter, and the generals are consequently rendered contemptible in the eyes of the enemy.⁴⁴

⁴² Livy 44.22.1; after a senatorial vote on the make-up of the military forces for the war, Paullus addressed a *contio*.

⁴³ Polyb. 29.1.1-3; Walbank 1979, 361; Livy 44.22.1-15 provides an extended direct *oratio recta* of this speech. It is possible that Livy embellished the speech. Nonetheless, Paullus' criticism of armchair generals back in Rome is the prominent feature of this speech; Plut. *Aem.* 11 has a brief indirect account of Paullus' speech.

⁴⁴ Polyb. 29.1.1-3: Ἐφη γὰρ αὐτοὺς μίαν ἔχειν διατριβὴν καὶ παρὰ τὰς συνουσίας καὶ παρὰ τὰς ἐν τοῖς περιπάτοις ὁμιλίας διοικεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐν Ῥώμῃ καθημένους τὸν ἐν Μακεδονίᾳ πόλεμον, ποτὲ μὲν ἐπιτιμῶντας τοῖς ὑπὸ τῶν στρατηγῶν πραττομένοις, ποτὲ δὲ τὰ παραλειπόμενα διεξιόντας· ἐξ ὧν ὄνησιν μὲν οὐδέποτε γίνεσθαι τοῖς κοινοῖς πράγμασι, βλάβην δὲ πολλάκις καὶ ἐπὶ πολλῶν γεγονέναι· καὶ ποτὲ δὲ τοὺς ἄρχοντας μεγάλα βλάπτεσθαι διὰ τὰς ἀκαίρους εὐρησιλογίας· πάσης γὰρ διαβολῆς ἐχούσης ὅξυ τι καὶ κινητικόν, ὅταν προκαταληφθῆ τὸ πλῆθος ἐκ τῆς συνεχοῦς λαλιᾶς, εὐκαταφρονήτους γίνεσθαι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς.

This speech emphasizes that there could be, in addition to the public criticisms of ongoing operations, private mutterings and speculations by individuals who might nowadays be termed ‘armchair generals’. The chit-chat that Aemilius was referring to was also motivated by the recent setbacks suffered by the Roman forces.⁴⁵ These speculations were perhaps influenced by an expectation that Rome’s military forces should be able to overcome Perseus’ troops with some ease, an expectation born of Rome’s numerous successes, since the end of the Second Punic War.

In spite of Paullus’ concerns, not all private discussions about ongoing operations were detrimental; Cicero’s letters about Caesar’s expeditions to Britain point to a constructive attitude, although he does on occasion display a degree of anxiety.⁴⁶ On the other hand, when bad news or little information was reaching Rome about a major campaign, this could induce critical speculation and rumours, particularly from the commander’s rivals. This is highlighted in a letter from M. Caelius Rufus of May 51 to Cicero in Cilicia.

As regards Caesar, rumours arrive in plenty about him and they are not pretty – but only of the whispering sort. One says he has lost his cavalry (which I think is certainly a fabrication), another that the Seventh Legion has taken a beating and that Caesar himself is under siege in the country of the Bellovaci, cut off from the rest of his army. But nothing is confirmed as yet, and even these unconfirmed reports are not bandied about

⁴⁵ *MRR* 1.416; Livy 42.57-62; in 171 BC the consul P. Licinius Crassus was assigned Macedonia and after his forces advanced into Northern Thessaly, they suffered a major reverse at the hands of Perseus’ forces at Callinicus; *MRR* 1.420-1; Plut. *Aem.* 9.3; the consul assigned Macedonia in 170 was A. Hostilius Mancinus. His forces suffered a reverse at Elimiae whilst attempting to advance into Macedonia and he then decided to winter in Thessaly; *MRR* 1.423; Polyb. 28.13; Livy 44.1-9; the consul Q. Marcus Philippus was allotted the Macedonian campaign in 169 and he made some advances along the Macedonian coastline. He did not, however, force a major engagement on Perseus.

⁴⁶ For example, Cic. *Att.* 4.17, after receiving letters from his brother Quintus, Cicero still states to Atticus in October 54 that “the result of the war in Britain is looked forward to with anxiety. For it is proved that the approach to the island is guarded with astonishing masses of rock, and it has been ascertained too that there is not a scrap of silver in the island, nor any hope of booty except from slaves ...”.

generally but retailed as an open secret amongst a select few – you know who. But Domitius claps his hand to mouth before he speaks.⁴⁷

This description goes beyond Paullus' concern about idle and inopportune gossip, since Caelius states how one of Caesar's rivals, the consular L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, was actively playing on Caesar's recent difficulties in dealing with the aftermath of Vercingetorix's revolt by spreading rumours about specific losses and defeats.⁴⁸ In a society where a competitive elite was jockeying for opportunities to praise and blame, if aristocrats did not want to speak out openly against a rival because of concerns about *invidia*, or on account of their lack of oratorical ability, or simply because they did not have access to a public platform, then there were alternative word-of-mouth means of spreading allegations of questionable military leadership or rumours about Roman casualties. For instance, through conversations at private dinners or during a patron's *salutatio*, rumours and speculation might be initiated that consequently damaged a commander's *auctoritas*.⁴⁹ Although this chapter focuses primarily on the public criticisms against magistrates, it must be stressed that Republican Rome was a sophisticated society made up of a number of social groupings through which information could be informally disseminated. For instance, Laurence argues that during the late Republic political knowledge could be widely disseminated by means of the numerous patron-client relationships, partly because clients varied in status and lived in different locations around the city of Rome, but still regularly came to the patron's residence for the *salutatio* during which

⁴⁷ Cic. *Fam.* 8.1.4: "quod ad Caesarem, crebri et non belli de eo rumores, sed susurratores dumtaxat, veniunt: alius equitem perdidisse, quod, opinor, certe fictum est; alius septimam legionem vapulasse, ipsum apud Bellovacos circumsederi interclusum ab reliquo exercitu neque adhuc certi quidquam est, neque haec incerta tamen vulgo iactantur, sed inter paucos, quos tu nosti, palam secreto narrantur; at Domitius, cum manus ad os apposuit".

⁴⁸ Hirt. *B Gall.* 8.4-22 for the difficulties faced by Caesar's forces in the spring of 51 BC, most notably the revolt of the Bellovaci.

⁴⁹ Laurence 1994, 65-6.

information could be exchanged.⁵⁰ What Aemilius' and Caelius' comments demonstrate is not simply a concern about utterances between certain individuals, but that such furtive criticisms could gain momentum and become accepted by a wider audience. This all adds further depth to Epstein's remarks on criticism "at every stage of the campaign."⁵¹

4. Disputed triumphs

The Senate and *contiones* provided the rivals of *imperatores* with the opportunity to speak out against their triumphal claims. Although there are only indirect and frequently brief references to these speeches in the sources, they indicate that such challenges occurred and, more importantly, how and why rival Senators and magistrates raised such objections. In addition, the oratory employed must be seen against the background of the concerns and efforts of certain Senators and tribunes, particularly in the early second century BC, to introduce specific hurdles for returning *imperatores* and so regulate the increasing number of triumphal claims that they were hearing.⁵²

Now and again, senators might hear an *imperator* being denigrated before he had even returned from his campaign and requested a triumph. Though such criticisms fall under the rubric of the preceding section, one or two oral attacks were directly aimed at undermining a future triumphal claim. As already noted, the proconsul M. Fulvius Nobilior was criticised whilst he was campaigning in Aetolia (189-187 BC).⁵³ These attacks were instigated by M. Aemilius Lepidus, one of the consuls of 187, prior to Nobilior's return to Rome. To start with, Lepidus brought before the Senate some Ambracian envoys, whom Livy states that the consul "had primed with accusations", as he hoped the Senate would view them as reliable

⁵⁰ Laurence 1994, 65.

⁵¹ Epstein 1987, 78.

⁵² Richardson 1975, 50-63; see Chapter 2, Section 2.

⁵³ *MRR* 1.360, 366 & 369; Livy 37.50.5-8; 38.3-10; 38.35.3; Polyb. 21.25-32.

eyewitnesses to the recent events in Greece.⁵⁴ When the Ambracians cited their grievances, they claimed that Nobilior had led an unprovoked attack on a people who “had been at peace with Rome.”⁵⁵ They then emphasized the various ways in which they suffered:

... they had been blockaded, attacked, and subjected to every form of treatment meted out in war, with massacres, burning, and the destruction and plundering of the city. Their wives and children had been dragged off into slavery, their property had been taken away from them and – what distressed them more than anything else – their temples had, throughout the entire city, been stripped of their ornaments. The statues of the gods – no, the gods themselves – had been torn from their dwellings and carried off, and all the Ambracians had been left for their worship, and for their offerings of prayers and supplications, were bare walls and doorposts.⁵⁶

If Livy’s account is accurate, this is an astute piece of oratory, since alongside the claim of bad faith, the envoys were emphasising a series of plausible injuries and damage that stemmed from the customary plundering of Roman conquests.⁵⁷ For instance, some of the enslaved Ambracians and captured booty might have been transported to Rome. Then there is the focus on the loss of their statues and the consequential disruption of their religious practices, all of which makes Nobilior and his troops appear impious. This allegation was particularly

⁵⁴ Livy 38.43.2: “... subornatos criminibus ...”.

⁵⁵ Livy, 38.43.2.

⁵⁶ Livy, 38.43.4-5: “... obsessos deinde et oppugnatos se, et omnia exempla belli edita in se caedibus incendiis ruinis direptione urbis, coniuges liberos in seruitium abstractos, bona ademta, et, quod se ante omnia moueat, templa tota urbe spoliata ornamentis; simulacra deum, deos immo ipsos, convulsos ex sedibus suis ablatos esse; parietes postesque nudatos, quos adorent, ad quos precentur et supplicent, Ambraciensibus superesse”.

⁵⁷ *IG IX*², 2.241; Sherk, 1984, 2-3; the famous inscription from Thyrrheum in Acarnania, dated to 212 or 211, details the alliance between Rome and the Aetolians. It includes the stipulation that all moveable booty went to the Romans, thus demonstrating that plundering was not only accepted but endorsed by the Roman Senate.

damaging in light of the fact the triumph was a religious *pompa* aimed at thanking the gods.⁵⁸ Furthermore, the Ambracians' role as eyewitnesses against a magistrate might very well be seen as a precursor to the later trials before the *quaestio de repetundis* when disgruntled provincials might be asked, and possibly coached, by the prosecution to provide critical eyewitness statements against a Roman magistrate's activities.⁵⁹ As will be subsequently demonstrated, Roman governors did not always have full control of the information that reached Rome from their *provinciae*.

Following the accusations of the Ambracians, Lepidus exploited his consular authority within the Senate, in the absence of the other consul, to propose and pass two *senatus consulta* against Nobilior.⁶⁰ The first of these decrees included the stipulation that "the Ambracians should have all their property restored" and also that a decision on the return of their artworks should go before the *pontifices*.⁶¹ The second decree, according to Livy, was "a *senatus consultum* which stated that it did not appear that Ambracia had been taken by force."⁶² Lepidus would have proposed and then won support for these decrees, which were official statements that questioned Nobilior's capture and subsequent treatment of Ambracia. This would have entailed the consul delivering at least one if not two speeches, in which he doubtless employed rhetoric that questioned the primary claim of military success that

⁵⁸ Richardson 1975, 58, underscores how the religious nature of the triumph is implicit in the language of the commander's formal petition to the Senate to propitiate the gods; Cf Livy 28.9.7; 38.44.9; 39.4.2; Cic. *Pis.* 85; see Chapter 2, Section 2.

⁵⁹ Cic. *Font.* 22-29 & *Flacc.* 9-12; provincial eyewitnesses were key components in the prosecution cases against M. Fonteius in 70 or 69 BC and L. Valerius Flaccus in 59.

⁶⁰ Livy, 38.44.3: Lepidus' consular colleague, C. Flaminius, was an old friend of Nobilior, and he protested against the Ambracian accusations. However, when Flaminius became ill, Lepidus was able to make his proposals unchecked.

⁶¹ Livy, 38.44.4: "... et referente Aemilio senatus consultum factum est, ut Ambraciensibus suae res omnes redderentur"; Livy 38.44.5: on the issue of the statues and other artworks; Cic. *Dom.* 58; the college of *pontifices* gave advice to the Senate or magistrates on the religious legality of a course of action. This is demonstrated in 57 BC when the Senate asked the college for advice about the religious status of the ground, on which the shrine of Liberty was placed. It is possible that Lepidus raised the question of the religious status of the Ambracian artworks to the *pontifices*, as they were *manubiae*.

⁶² Livy, 38.44.6: "... senatus consultum Ambraciam vi captam esse non videri"; the description of the passing of the decrees might point to Livy employing a source biased against Fulvius Nobilior or the Fulvii in general.

Nobilior soon hoped to present personally to the Senate; and Lepidus' oratory surely portrayed the *imperator's* acquisition of booty as perfidious and sacrilegious. Although Nobilior went on to receive a triumph upon his return, in part through his oratory, these attacks very probably damaged his *auctoritas*; with the smearing of his military record probably a major reason in his failure to win the censorship in 184 BC.⁶³ Lepidus's motions must have had significant support amongst the other senators, as the house voted through both decrees and this probably reflects a general concern felt by certain senators in this period about the self-serving behaviour displayed by a number of their military commanders.⁶⁴

This concern about self-serving behaviour is highlighted again in 173 BC when a dispatch of the consul M. Popillius Laenas was read out to the Senate reporting that he had suppressed the Statelliates, a Ligurian tribe, who were supposedly allies of Rome.⁶⁵ As a result, according to Livy, the Senate decreed that Popillius should restore the Ligurians that he had enslaved as well as their property and arms.⁶⁶ Instead of *supplicationes* being voted, a consular dispatch, in this case, induced a magistrate to propose a decree that, like the one against Nobilior, targeted the physical representations of Popillius' military success, namely the captives and booty which he very probably had hoped to display in his triumphal parade. This decree again would have required persuasion of the attending senators to vote for an official statement that criticised an *imperator's* claims of military success, oratory which doubtless criticised Popillius' judgement and integrity.

Thus, the Senate through its decrees had the means to shame as well as glorify its members' martial endeavours, decrees that would have required a proposition speech and possibly subsequent orations for and against the proposal. Such senatorial statements appear

⁶³ Livy, 39.40; Gruen 1984, 229; see Chapter two, Section two on Nobilior's speech.

⁶⁴ Livy 38.44.6 states, however, that the second decree was passed in "a poorly attended session of the house".

⁶⁵ *MRR* 1.407-8; Livy 42.8.3.

⁶⁶ Livy 42.8.8.

to have changed in the late Republic. For instance, the *hostis* declarations, against Marius, Sulla and Antonius amongst others, were perhaps more concerned with targeting the individual's status as a means of damaging their military ethos rather than the physical representations of their military success.⁶⁷ The earlier decrees, during the early second century, reflect a period when the Senate was highly conscious of how military success was being reported and recognised back at Rome and it is probably no coincidence that these concerns were being raised when the Senate was establishing a number of additional triumphal parameters via various *ad hoc* decisions.⁶⁸

It was the senatorial debate outside the *pomerium* that followed a commander's return that probably saw the most direct face-to-face criticisms of an *imperator's* claims. In 193 BC the consul L. Cornelius Merula requested a triumph from the Senate for his campaign against the Boii.⁶⁹ This proposal caused the consular Q. Caecilius Metellus to challenge Merula's written and oral accounts of his success, citing letters from Merula's legate M. Claudius Marcellus, in which Marcellus told of heavy Roman losses and the escape of the enemy army during the campaign.⁷⁰ Both Metellus and Marcellus had substantial *auctoritas*, and Marcellus' recent triumph over the same Gallic tribesmen would have especially added strength to the oral and epistolary criticisms that this returning commander was now facing, all of which contributed to his triumphal petition being voted down.⁷¹ These criticisms point towards a practice that Merula and many other *imperatores* doubtless employed during the

⁶⁷ Bauman 1973, 282-3; Evans 1994, 136; Plut. *Mar.* 35.5; App. *BC* 1.60 mentions that Marius and his followers were declared *hostes* in 88 BC; App. *BC* 1.73; following his seizure of Rome in 87 Marius declared Sulla a *hostis*; Cic. *Ad Brut.* 1.3a; Livy *Per.* 119: after the engagements at Forum Gallorum and Mutina in 43 the Senate decreed that M. Antonius be declared a *hostis*.

⁶⁸ Richardson 1975, 62-3; Gruen 1995, 60.

⁶⁹ Livy 35.8.

⁷⁰ Livy 35.8.

⁷¹ *MRR* 1.298; Livy 28.10-11; Metellus cos. 206, dict. 205, during the latter magistracy he fought against Hannibal; *MRR* 1.335; Livy 33.37.9-12; Marcellus cos. 196 during which he campaigned in Northern Italy, winning triumph over the Boii; Livy 35.8.9; two tribunes of the plebs in 192, C. Titinius and M. Titinius, declared their intention to veto any *senatus consultum* in favour of Merula, which probably points to it being voted down in the Senate.

Republic whereby they *omitted* information that they knew would undermine their claims, such as Roman casualties and a failure to inflict a comprehensive defeat upon the enemy. These omissions frequently went unchallenged owing to commanders' dominance over how the events were reported back to Rome. Roman field commanders, however, rarely had a complete information monopoly, since disaffected legates and other officers, and foreign envoys, like the Ambracians in 187, could make communications to the Senate. Rumours might also be spread in Rome, like those by Ahenobarbus about Caesar.⁷² All of these elements could challenge and muddy the perception created by the commander's written and oral reports.

Fellow senators could, on occasion, provide eyewitness reports during these debates. After the proconsul Gnaeus Manlius Vulso had requested a triumph in 187 BC for his campaign in Asia against the Galatians, most of the senatorial commissioners, who had been dispatched to organize the settlement of Asia following the defeat of Antiochus, questioned Manlius' claims.⁷³ The *auctoritas* of these commissioners must have added weight to such criticism, since they included a number of consulars and ex-praetors, as well as members of prominent aristocratic families.⁷⁴ Of these commissioners, the consular L. Furius Purpureo and praetorian L. Aemilius Paullus were the most vocal according to Livy, and their criticisms included challenging the validity of Manlius' campaign and asking him whether war had been declared against the Galatians either by a senatorial decree or a vote of the Roman people.⁷⁵

⁷² Cic. *Fam.* 8.1: Caelius in a letter to Cicero in May 51 tells of rumours circulating in Rome about the losses and other setbacks supposedly suffered by Caesar in Gaul; "... these unconfirmed reports are not bandied about generally but retailed as an open secret among a small coterie – you know who. But Domitius claps hand to mouth before he speaks".

⁷³ *MRR* 1.369; Livy 38.44.9-11.

⁷⁴ Livy 38.44; *MRR* 1.363; the ten commissioners included: L. Furius Purpureo cos. 196; Q. Minucius Rufus cos. 197; L. Aemilius Paullus pr. 191; Ap. Claudius Nero pr. 195; M. Iunius Brutus pr. 191; L. Aurunculeius pr. 190; P. Cornelius Lentulus pr. 203; and P. Aelius Tubero pr. 201.

⁷⁵ Livy 38.44.11.

How much of these protocols was followed in your case, Gnaeus Manlius, so as to lead us to believe that this was an official war of the Roman people, and not a piece of private buccaneering on your part?⁷⁶

Although this is doubtless a Livian reworking, it raises the issue about whom the magistrate should be fighting. Manlius had been assigned the *provincia* of Asia when Rome was still at war with Antiochus.⁷⁷ With the Seleucid threat vanquished by the Scipiones, Manlius decided to campaign against the nearby Galatians, whom the Senate or Roman people had not assigned as an enemy.⁷⁸ Thus, members of the Senate were criticising a commander for seeking military success outside his *provincia* without prior instructions, an issue that continued to be raised during the late Republic and even into the early Principate.⁷⁹

The commissioners during this senatorial debate about Manlius' claim also emphasized the weakness of the Galatian opposition, including that "they flew off like a flock of birds at the first sound of our projectiles."⁸⁰ This account, though again probably embellished, indicates that a commander's peers could question the quality of the opposition faced, thus placing doubt in the minds of the listening senators about the *imperator's* previous or upcoming statements of success. Manlius, nonetheless, tried to challenge these criticisms in the Senate and this included associating the Galatians with the Gauls – one of Rome's most fearsome enemies. His political allies and relatives also lobbied senators on his behalf, which

⁷⁶ Livy 38.45.7: "quid eorum, Cn. Manli, factum est, ut istud publicum populi Romani bellum et non tuum privatum latrocinium ducamus?"

⁷⁷ *MRR* 1.360; Livy 37.50.

⁷⁸ *MRR* 1.356; Livy 37.1.7-10 & 37.33-44; Polyb. 21.4-5, 11 & 13-5.

⁷⁹ For example, Asc. 80C describes how the consular M. Silanus was prosecuted in 104 BC for waging an illegal war against the Cimbri; Dio 54.3.2-3 tells how the governor of Macedonia M. Primus, who had waged war against the Odrysae, a Thracian tribe situated at considerable distance from Macedonia, was prosecuted in the Senate in 22 BC for campaigning outside his *provincia*.

⁸⁰ Livy 38.46.5: "velut avium examina ad crepitum primum missilium avolavere."

indicates the employment of other persuasive tactics outside public speaking. As a result he eventually attained a favourable vote, as did Nobilior in the same year.⁸¹

Although Manlius had to deal with a prolonged debate in the Senate and Nobilior had to move his triumph to an earlier date in order to avoid his rival Lepidus causing further disruption, their powerful oratorical responses indicate that it was the commanders' reaction to these criticisms that often dictated whether or not they were granted their subsequent triumphs by their senatorial peers.⁸² In addition, these criticisms demonstrate that *imperatores* could be pushed into producing different and more nuanced promotion of their achievements and we should see the spectrum of criticisms that emanated in Rome as a fundamental driving force in the generation and development of the various transient and permanent media that *imperatores* and their associates were employing both to establish and maintain their military reputations.

Oral criticism of aspiring triumphators might occur at the pre-*comitia contiones* that followed the Senate's decree to bring a *rogatio* for a triumph. This is highlighted in 167 BC by a speech of the military tribune Ser. Sulpicius Galba against the triumphal claim of L. Aemilius Paullus, a speech in which he cited the sufferings of the soldiers under Paullus' command.⁸³ In contrast to the many critics cited so far who possessed considerable *auctoritas*, Galba was a military tribune with few achievements, yet he was willing to address a crowd on the Capitol. He was, of course, exploiting the opportunity, which the presiding magistrate of the *contio* had given to him, to make a name for himself. On the other hand, as demonstrated in later years, veterans could be a valuable political caucus, like when Scipio Aemilianus received support through letters home from the troops at Carthage in 148 and in 56 P. Crassus

⁸¹ Livy 38.47-9; 39.4-5.

⁸² Livy 38.50.1-3 tells how the debate went into a second day and that Manlius' friends and relatives were out canvassing the senators to agree to his request, which they eventually did; Livy 39.13-4 states that Nobilior originally planned to hold his triumph sometime in January 186, but that he moved it to the 23rd of December, "so as not to face more conflicts over the triumph than he had in the war."

⁸³ Livy 45.36.4.

brought veterans with him from Gaul in order to aid in the election campaigns of Pompeius and Crassus.⁸⁴ Thus, if the troops in 167 were genuinely disconcerted about their treatment during the Macedonian campaign, a three-year campaign involving no small number of casualties, harsh discipline, little booty and extended supply lines whilst wintering in the difficult terrain of North-eastern Greece, then Galba, an officer who served in the war, might very well have wished to represent them due to their esprit de corps, and not simply on account of personal ambition.⁸⁵ Chrissanthos, moreover, has emphasized that during the Republic a number of soldiers and junior officers seized the opportunity to speak out against their commanders, particularly on campaign.⁸⁶

Besides senior senators, the tribunes of the plebs appear to be the most active critics of triumphal claims. Their powers facilitated such criticisms through a variety of means and on at least eight occasions during our period of 219 to 19 BC tribunes opposed a triumphal claim.⁸⁷ Of these there is evidence that five delivered their criticisms through a public address before the Senate or to a *contio*. A tribunician challenge could occur prior to the vote of the *comitia tributa*, as demonstrated by C. Memmius' actions against Lucullus' claim in 66. Plutarch unfortunately provides no details of Memmius' oratory.⁸⁸ The threat of the veto in order to prevent the passing of a triumphal decree was the tribune's main weapon within the Senate. M. Aburius attempted this in 187 against Nobilior. Again we have little information

⁸⁴ App. *Lib.* 112; Dio 39.31.2.

⁸⁵ Polyb 27.8.1 & Livy 42.57-62 for the Roman losses suffered at Callinicus in 171 when under the command of the consul P. Licinius Crassus and how the troops wintered in Thessaly and Boeotia. Plut. *Aem.* 9.3 & Livy 43.17: the consul A. Hostilius Mancinus superseded Crassus in 170 and he made inroads into Macedonia, but was repelled at Elimiae (with no details of any losses) and wintered in Thessaly.

⁸⁶ Chrissanthos 2004, 341-367; for example, Plut. *Luc.* 32-34 during the Mithridatic campaign, some of Lucullus' soldiers started to hold unauthorised *contiones* in which they spoke out against the unfair division of their plunder.

⁸⁷ Livy 32.7: P. Porcius Laeca in 199; Livy 33.22: C. Atinius Labeo & C. Afranius in 197; Livy 35.8.9: M. Titinius and C. Titinius in 192; Livy 36.39: P. Sempronius Blaesus in 191; Livy 39.4: M. Aburius in 187; Val.Max. 5.4.6 & Cic. *Cael.* 34.: anonymous tribune in 143; Plut. *Luc.* 37: C. Memmius in 66; Cic. *Att.* 4.18.4 & Dio 39.65.2: Q. Mucius in 54.

⁸⁸ Plut. *Luc.* 37.

on such oratory except that Aburius, according to Livy, stated that the absent consul Lepidus should be given the opportunity to speak against Nobilior.⁸⁹ Similarly, Cicero says that the tribune Q. Mucius, as well as the praetor M. Porcius Cato, spoke out against Pomptinus' triumphal claim in 54 BC.⁹⁰ Again we have few details of the oratory, except that they threatened to block any triumphal entrance. Whether any of the above tribunes delivered lengthy prepared speeches or simply gave brief public statements of intent is also impossible to tell.

One instance, nonetheless, illustrates the extent to which tribunes could denigrate returning *imperatores*. In late 197 BC, the consuls C. Cornelius Cethagus and Q. Minucius Rufus returned from their campaigns in Northern Italy, intending to request a triumph. The tribunes C. Afranius and C. Atinius, however, demanded that separate senatorial debates should be held for their claim.⁹¹ Acknowledging Cethagus' achievements, they focused on Minucius' campaign, saying how:

Q. Minucius had fought some inconsequential battles, barely worth the mention, amongst the Ligurians, and in Gaul he had lost a large number of men. They also mentioned the military tribunes of the fourth legion, T. Iuventius and Cn. Ligurius. These, they said, had lost their lives in Minucius's defeat, along with many other brave men, both citizens and allies. As for the capitulation of the small number of towns and villages, this was all concocted and fabricated on the spot, and without corroboration.⁹²

⁸⁹ Livy 39.4.

⁹⁰ Cic. *Att.* 4.18.4.

⁹¹ Livy 33.22.

⁹² Livy 33.22: "Q. Minucium in Liguribus levia proelia vix digna dictu fecisse, in Gallia magnum numerum militum amisisse; nominabant etiam tribunos militum T. Iuventium Cn. Ligurium legionis quartae: adversa pugna cum multis aliis viris fortibus, civibus ac sociis, cecidisse. oppidorum paucorum ac vicorum falsas et in tempus simulatas sine ullo pignore deditiones factas esse".

As with the criticisms of Merula in 193, the Senate was being informed of the losses and setbacks suffered by Roman troops, information which the commander had no doubt deliberately suppressed or passed over in both his dispatch and oration.⁹³ The tribunes in this instance actually named two of the officers killed in order to personalise the negative picture they were painting and amongst the sitting Senators there might well have been relatives or friends of the deceased tribunes, whom Afranius or Atinius were hoping to provoke. Furthermore, the branding of Minucius' claim of the captured enemy settlements as fictitious is important, since it points towards the recognition by certain senators of creative triumphal claims and how these claims could be openly contradicted in order to accentuate their mendaciousness.

Although the majority of the evidence concerning disputed triumphs cited above comes from the second century, the Roman aristocracy of the late Republic still actively disputed triumphal claims, as demonstrated by Memmius' challenge against Lucullus and Cato's opposition to Pomptinus. The preceding analysis highlights, above all, the means by which an *imperator's* rivals in Rome, in particular senior senators and tribunes, could challenge the content of the victorious picture being disseminated, and then, as a consequence, tarnish his *auctoritas* amongst his peers and the people assembled at *contiones*.

5. Political criticisms after a command

After the completion both of his command and any triumphal claim, an *imperator's* record might still be targeted by his rivals in Rome. The elder Cato provides us with two early cases.

⁹³ Livy 32.31 for the victorious dispatches Minucius and Cethagus sent to Rome.

First of all, Gellius tells of a speech entitled ‘Against M. Fulvius Nobilior’, which Astin believes was an attack on Nobilior’s censorship of 179 BC.⁹⁴

Marcus Cato charged Marcus Fulvius Nobilior with having awarded crowns to his soldiers for the most trifling reasons possible for the sake of popularity. On that subject I now give you Cato’s own words. ‘Now to begin with, who ever saw anyone presented with a crown, when a town had not been taken or an enemy camp not burnt?’ But Fulvius, against whom Cato brought that charge, had bestowed crowns on his soldiers for industry in building a rampart or in digging a hole.⁹⁵

Whilst we do not know the specific context in which this speech was delivered, Cato is undoubtedly referring to Nobilior’s successful siege of Ambracia. The city, however, was not stormed or sacked, since Nobilior had accepted the conditional surrender of the Ambracians.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, literary accounts and topographical studies point towards considerable Roman endeavour, since there were at least three fortified encampments with adjoining ramparts and ditches as part of their circumvallation of the city, a blockade which was critical in the final surrender.⁹⁷ In addition, Polybius emphasizes Nobilior’s employment of mining, which was

⁹⁴ Astin 1978, 110.

⁹⁵ Gell. 5.6.24-6: “Marcus Cato obicit M. Fulvio Nobiliori, quod milites per ambitum coronis de levissimis causis donasset. de qua re verba ipsa apposui Catonis. ‘iam principio quis vidit corona donari quemquam, cum oppidum captum non esset aut castra hostium non incensa essent?’ Fulvius autem, in quem hoc a Catone dictum est, coronis donaverat milites, quia vallum curaverant, aut qui puteum strenue foderant”.

⁹⁶ Livy 38.9.9-14 details the Ambracian acceptance of Nobilior’s conditions of 500 talents and the relinquishing of Roman captives and deserters. The Ambracians, moreover, gave Nobilior a golden crown and the bronze and marble statues and paintings which adorned the city, “but nothing else was touched or damaged.”

⁹⁷ Livy, 38.4 describes the establishment of three Roman encampments, and how Nobilior “was preparing to join all three with a rampart and a ditch to prevent those shut in the city from coming out and to render it impossible to bring in any assistance”; Hammond 1967, 146, through topographical studies, marked out the locations of the siege camps.

then countermined by the Ambracians.⁹⁸ Nobilior, without a soldier who had been first into Ambracia or the other customary feats of heroism, probably adapted the traditional awarding of crowns by giving them to those men who had been in the forefront of both constructing the fortifications and also digging the mine, so explaining Gellius's comments about ramparts and holes.⁹⁹ Thus, Cato, who had been sent as legate to Nobilior during the Ambracian campaign and whose report perhaps had an air of truthfulness, alongside his established *auctoritas*, was depicting Nobilior as someone who, in the process of promoting his own martial ethos, was subverting these traditional Roman military honours.¹⁰⁰

During his censorship Cato delivered another invective against the consular L. Quinctius Flaminius, as part of justifying his expulsion from the Senate. This concerns Flaminius' behaviour as consul in 192 when campaigning against the Ligurians. Though there are differing accounts of this speech, the Livian version is probably the most accurate, since Livy implies that he himself had consulted the speech.¹⁰¹

Amongst the charges made against Quinctius by Cato was one of having induced the Carthaginian Philippus, a famous male prostitute and a favourite of Quinctius, to come from Rome to his province of Gaul, by holding out to him the hope of substantial gifts.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Polyb. 21.28 details the Ambracian counter-mine involving a barrel of burning feathers to smoke out the Romans sappers. Mining was an effective tactic in the recent sieges on the Greek mainland, as demonstrated by Philip V against Thebes in 217 BC (Polyb. 5.100).

⁹⁹ See Maxfield 1981, 61-66 on the origins and the awarding of crowns; 76-79 on the *corona muralis* which was awarded for the first man over a city wall.

¹⁰⁰ *ORF*³, Cato Fr.130; Fest. 196; Frontin. *Strat.* 2.7.14.

¹⁰¹ Astin 1978, 79; Livy 39.43 states: "not having read Cato's speech, and since he had accepted uncorroborated hearsay, Valerius Antias presents another version", which implies that he had read a version of the speech.

¹⁰² Livy 39.42.8: "inter cetera obiecit ei Philippum Poenum, carum ac nobile scortum, ab Roma in Galliam provinciam spe ingentium donorum perductum".

Then Cato claimed that whilst the two were having dinner, a Boian nobleman who desired the consul's protection, was brought to Flamininus's tent and the consul asked Philippus if he wanted to see the Gaul die:

... and at the nod of a catamite the consul drew his sword, which was hanging above his head, and first of all landed a blow on the head of the Gaul while he was still talking. Then, as the man fled, all the time begging for the protection of the Roman people and of those who were present, Quinctius thrust his sword into his side.¹⁰³

Braund demonstrates how Livy's account of Cato's speech criticises Flamininus' character in a number of ways. First of all, "Lucius had brought into disrepute the good faith (*fides*)" of himself, his entourage and most importantly the Roman people by killing a suppliant.¹⁰⁴ One can believe that Cato added the dramatic detail of the Gaul pleading "for the protection of the Roman people" in order to emphasize this treachery. Secondly Braund highlights the inappropriate behaviour of such violence. "In committing the murder Lucius sought to turn his provincial campaign into a gladiatorial show, and in so doing debased another traditional field for the Roman expression of virtue, war itself."¹⁰⁵ Thus, Cato paints a picture of a consul behaving in a tyrannical manner "without regard for the dignity and responsibility of consular position."¹⁰⁶ Finally, we should see the speech as criticism of Flamininus' inclusion of Philippus within his *cohors*, a wholly inappropriate member of a commander's entourage, just as Cato had criticised Nobilior for including the poet Ennius in his retinue during his Aetolian

¹⁰³ Livy 39.42.12: "... et cum is vixdum serio adnuisset, ad nutem scorti consulem stricto gladio, qui super caput pendebat, loquenti Gallo caput primum percussisse, deinde, fugienti fidemque populi Romani atque eorum, qui aderant, imploranti latus transfodisse".

¹⁰⁴ Braund 1995, 14.

¹⁰⁵ Braund 1995, 15.

¹⁰⁶ Braund 1995, 15.

campaign.¹⁰⁷ Cato demonstrates how an orator back in Rome could publicly shame magistrates with good military records by highlighting their supposedly disreputable un-Roman behaviour away from the battlefield.¹⁰⁸

A key problem of analysing such invective is that it frequently involves the use of fragmentary and indirect evidence from sources which often embellish or enhance their accounts for dramatic effect and so we must be careful when dealing with such small and indirect fragments of oratory. Nonetheless, following Corbeill's and Craig's definitions of invective, we should consider that invective like Cato's possibly involved a range of examples in which various aspects of the victim's public and private life were denigrated.¹⁰⁹

Fortunately we do have one near complete speech that involves post-campaign political invective which was delivered by Cicero in 55 BC against L. Calpurnius Piso. In the summer of 56 during the debate on the upcoming consular provinces, Cicero, when speaking on behalf of Caesar's continued tenure of the Gallic provinces, had denigrated Piso's ongoing command of Macedonia (57-55). This criticism was motivated in part by Piso's role in Cicero's exile in 58.¹¹⁰ On account of this (and doubtless other Ciceronian statements) Piso complained to the Senate, following his return to Rome in late 55. In the subsequent senatorial debate Cicero delivered the *In Pisonem*, a speech which he later wrote up for publication and probably expanded. Within this oration Cicero inveighed against Piso on a variety of topics: his Epicureanism, his role in Cicero's exile, his ancestors and, above all, his administration of Macedonia. It is within this latter context that Piso's military reputation takes a battering, with three areas of invective standing out.

¹⁰⁷ *ORF*³, Cato Fr.149; Cic. *Tusc.* 1.3.

¹⁰⁸ Flamininus' military record: *MRR* 1.332; Livy 32.16-23 & 39-40; naval commander during the Second Macedonian War; *MRR* 1; Livy 35.22 & 40; successful consular campaign against the Ligurians; *MRR* 1.355; Livy 36.1; legate during the Thermopylae campaign.

¹⁰⁹ Corbeill 2002, 200-1; Craig 2004, 190-1; see Sec. 1 of this chapter.

¹¹⁰ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 4-5, 15-7; *MRR* 2.193; Piso when consul in 58 had supported Clodius; as well as Cicero's exile this was also a factor in Piso receiving the *provincia* of Macedonia through a piece of Clodius' legislation.

First of all, in a number of ways Cicero raises the expectation in his audience's mind – that is the Senate and the readers of the published speech – that Piso should have easily achieved victories in Macedonia and consequently a triumph on account of the province's strategic importance and its opportunities for military action. For instance, he cites Piso's lack of dispatches to the Senate when there were “such formidable barbarian tribes” upon Macedonia's borders.¹¹¹ Then later Cicero makes this sarcastic description of Piso's supposed entry across the *pomerium* of Rome:

At the gate short togas were provided for the lictors; these they took, laying aside their military cloaks, and thus furnished an unusual crowd for their *imperator*. And in this guise, after three years' administration of so great a province and so great an army, the Macedonian *imperator* made his way into the city, so meanly that not even the humblest trader ever had a more unnoticed return.....and if it was my business to know, or anyone of you had heard, or that it was a matter of the slightest interest by what gate you entered, so long as it was not the triumphal one, which has always stood open for the Macedonian consuls before you. You are the first on record who, who endowed with consular *imperium*, did not triumph from Macedonia.¹¹²

Cicero's generalisation about Macedonian triumphs is a fundamental part of his invective against Piso's martial ethos and it is a claim that he had already employed in a previous part of

¹¹¹ Cic. *Pis.* 38-9: “And did you even then, O second Paullus, not dare to send laurelled dispatches to Rome?”

¹¹² Cic. *Pis.* 55: “togulae lictoribus ad portam praesto fuerunt; quibus illi acceptis sagula reiecerunt, catervam imperatori suo novam praebuerunt. sic iste a tanto exercitu tantae provinciae triennio post Macedonicus imperator in urbem se intulit ut nullius negotiatoris obscurissimi reditus umquam fuerit desertior ... quasi vero id aut, ego scire debuerim aut vestrum quisquam audierit aut ad rem pertineat qua tu porta introieris, modo ne triumphali, quae porta Macedonicis semper pro consulibus ante te patuit; tu inventus es qui consulari imperio praeditus ex Macedonia non triumphares”.

the speech.¹¹³ As Nisbet points out, Cicero's claim was mendacious, since there were at least five proconsuls who did not win triumphs after governing the province.¹¹⁴ In the *De Oratore*, Cicero advises that an orator should sprinkle *mendaciuncula* in stories against one's enemy, which can be translated as fibs or little lies, and Nisbet highlights numerous examples of their use throughout *In Pisonem*.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, by providing his Senatorial audience with a detailed image of Piso ingloriously crossing the *pomerium* through a non-triumphal gate, Cicero was heightening the proconsul's failure to achieve conspicuous military success. Earlier, Cicero even sarcastically plays on the fact that Piso was hailed *imperator* by his men.¹¹⁶ Through these various denigrations Cicero was playing on the notion – following the Macedonian triumphs of Titus Flamininus, Aemilius Paullus, Metellus Macedonicus and Livius Drusus amongst others – that Macedonia was an easy *provincia* for a competent commander to win a triumph. He even labels Piso the *Macedonicus imperator*. All of this together portrays Piso's tenure as distinctly substandard.

Secondly, Cicero creates a picture of Piso consistently behaving in a corrupt and tyrannical manner whilst in charge of Macedonia, the antithesis of a good Roman governor. To achieve this, Cicero cites a number of supposed cases of treachery by Piso towards Rome's allies. In one tale, he tells how the proconsul supposedly executed a friendly Thracian chieftain:

You also, having sold yourself for the purpose for three hundred talents to King Cotys, beheaded Rabocentus, a chieftain of the Bessic tribe, when he had come as a delegate to

¹¹³ Cic. *Pis.* 38 for the generalisation that: “no-one of consular rank who had returned safe and sound has been without a triumph.”

¹¹⁴ Nisbet 1961, 100; Cn. Cornelius Sisenna in 118, Q. Fabius Maximus Eburnus in 115, Memmius in 103, L. Iulius Caesar in 94 and L. Manlius Torquatus in 64-3.

¹¹⁵ Nisbet 1961, 196; Cic. *De Orat.* 2.241; Cic. *Pis.* 13, 22, 53, 61, 67, 89 & 92.

¹¹⁶ Cic. *Pis.* 38.

your camp to promise you strong garrisons and auxiliaries of horse and foot from the Bessi.¹¹⁷

In the same vein as Flamininus' case, we see the submission of a Roman governor to the whim of a barbarian. Furthermore, Cicero portrays the execution as undermining the security on the north-eastern Macedonian border, since Rabocentus had promised considerable military support to Piso. Cicero, of course, omits the fact that Roman commanders frequently employed a policy of divide and conquer during their campaigns, by making alliances with one tribe against a rival one, as demonstrated during Caesar's Gallic campaign.¹¹⁸ Hence, Piso's probable employment of a ruthless but pragmatic policy, against the troublesome Thracian tribes, is depicted here as a perfidious contract killing.

Thirdly, Cicero creates a picture of Piso illicitly plundering Macedonia, specifically citing the treatment of one temple in order to commence an image of divine retribution for Piso's behaviour.

You it was who sacked the temple of Jupiter Orius, most ancient and most venerated of all the barbarian shrines. Yours are the crimes which the immortal gods have expiated upon our troops ... no one had any doubt that it was the violation of hospitality, the murders of delegates, the war wantonly and wickedly waged against peaceable allies, and the plundering of temples, which were responsible for this devastating pestilence.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Cic. *Pis.* 84: "idemque tu Rabocentum, Bessicae gentis principem, cum te trecentis talentis regi Cotyi vendidisses, securi percussisti, cum ille ad te legatus in castra venisset et tibi magna praesidia et auxilia a Bessis peditum equitumque polliceretur".

¹¹⁸ Caes. *B Gall.* 5.58; 6.44; 8.38; Caesar executed a number of Gallic leaders as part of his 'divide and conquer' policy, including Indutiomarus the Treverian in 54, Acco the Senonian in 53 and Gutruater the Carnutean in 51.

¹¹⁹ Cic. *Pis.* 85: "a te Iovis Vrii fanum antiquissimum barbarorum sanctissimumque direptum est. tua scelera di immortales in nostros milites expiaverunt; ... dubitabat nemo quin violati hospites, legati necati, pacati atque socii nefario bello laccessiti, fana vexata hanc tantam efficerent vastitatem".

Cicero plays on the belief that desecration of gods' sanctuaries brought pestilence upon the perpetrators, a concept that explained the Roman troop losses under Piso's command, since his avarice causes their deaths. In so doing he plants an image in the mind of the listening senators of divine ill-favour towards the holder of a magisterial office who has failed to look after his troops. In addition, in the promotion of their victories, Roman commanders frequently emphasized the idea that the gods had been instrumental in their military success; Cicero claims the opposite had occurred in Piso's case.

As demonstrated by Mancina's powerful invective against Pompeius at the start of this chapter, even after a magistrate had returned, his past military activities could be employed against him within a political context. When analysing the political criticisms of Nobilior, Flamininus and Piso, what comes to the fore is the fact that a magistrate's activities *away* from the battlefield could be powerful subject-matter for an effective orator back in Rome to tarnish his rival's military record, a tactic that was a prominent feature in a number of the prosecution speeches against ex-governors.

6. Prosecution speeches

The military records of field commanders and governors were often denigrated in prosecution speeches in our period. First of all, the specific charges of the case might directly relate to the defendant's military record, and secondly, the martial ethos of a defendant could be employed as a digression by prosecutors, in the same way as by advocates, as argued within section four of the previous chapter. This latter practice is promoted within a number of Roman rhetorical handbooks: Quintilian states how both defence and prosecution aimed to present the defendant's character in a way that is advantageous to his case; and Cicero argues in his *De inventione* that a prosecutor must show that the defendant possessed the appropriate vices for

the case.¹²⁰ Additionally, as argued by Vasaly, the one characteristic that a prosecutor feared most from an aristocrat's defence team was the promotion of heroic military service.¹²¹ As a consequence of this anticipation, or at least the fear of some reference to a good military record, prosecuting speakers probably put considerable effort into creating a negative martial portrayal for the listening jurors, an approach markedly demonstrated in the *Verrines*.

Regarding prosecutions during the Republic, Brunt makes an important general point. Young men might hope to establish their oratorical reputation through a successful prosecution, but if they frequently pursued them it could result in lasting enmity and as a result harm their personal reputations.¹²² For example, M. Iunius Brutus was an able second century jurist who, according to Cicero, "made a regular profession of prosecution" and as a consequence was a disgrace to his family.¹²³ Brunt argues that during the late Republic "no less notable is the reluctance and infrequency with which leading members of the ruling class undertook such prosecutions" as demonstrated by the careers of Cicero and Hortensius.¹²⁴ Then, when a prosecution was pursued, it was frequently organized and portrayed with care. In Cicero's case, he represented his prosecution of Verres as a defence of the Sicilians.¹²⁵

Prior to the establishment of the *quaestiones perpetuae* there is modest information about the nature of such prosecution oratory before the *iudicia populi*. Fortunately there is one early insightful example. In 212 BC the praetor Cn. Fulvius Flaccus had his force routed by Hannibal near Herdonia in Apulia. According to Livy, Flaccus did not display strong leadership, being unable to maintain the discipline of his troops whilst they were taking up

¹²⁰ Quint. *Inst.* 7.1.10-11; Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 2.32; Alexander 2002, 10-13.

¹²¹ Cf. Ch. 2, Sec. 4; Vasaly, 2002, 99-100.

¹²² Brunt 1988, 372-3; Cic. *Off.* 2.50-51 recommends that prosecutions should be rarely undertaken, pointing out their potential for harming one's reputation.

¹²³ Cic. *Brut.* 130.

¹²⁴ Brunt 1988, 372.

¹²⁵ Cic. *Off.* 2.50.

their positions. As a consequence, of 18,000 men barely 2000 escaped including the praetor.¹²⁶

At the start of the following year Livy states:

The tribune Sempronius Blaesus had issued a summons against Gnaeus Fulvius, charging him with a loss of his army in Apulia. He continually attacked him at *contiones*, saying that though many generals through rashness or incompetence had brought their troops into a position of danger not one except Fulvius had ever ruined the morale of his men by encouraging them to every vice before actually betraying them. It would be no exaggeration, he declared, to say they were dead before they even saw the enemy, beaten not by Hannibal but by their own commander.¹²⁷

Blaesus goes on, according to Livy, to contrast this picture of Fulvius' conduct with those commanders who had fallen fighting the Carthaginians such as C. Flaminius, L. Paullus, L. Postumius and Gnaeus and Publius Scipio.¹²⁸ This citing of more virtuous and dutiful commanders, as a means of shaming prosecuted magistrates, was a rhetorical tactic repeated in forensic cases during the late Republic.¹²⁹ In addition, the tribune accentuates the Roman losses by claiming that they were dead men prior to meeting the Carthaginians, so placing the blame squarely on Fulvius' shoulders and ignoring the other main reason for these casualties: the skilful way in which Hannibal enveloped the Roman position with light-infantry and cavalry.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ Livy 25.21.

¹²⁷ Livy 26.2.7-8: "C. Sempronius Blaesus die dicta Cn. Fulvium ob exercitum in Apulia amissum in contionibus vexabat, multos imperatores temeritate atque inscitia exercitum in locum praecipitem duxisse dicitans, neminem praeter Cn. Fulvium ante corrupisse omnibus vitiis legiones suas quam proderet. itaque vere dici posse prius eos perisse quam viderent hostem, nec ab Hannibale, sed ab imperatore suo victos esse".

¹²⁸ Livy 26.2.13.

¹²⁹ Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.82; for Verres being indirectly contrasted to P. Scipio Aemilianus.

¹³⁰ Livy 25.21.3-5.

Livy then describes the prosecution process with a description of the prosecution of Fulvius through the *iudicium populi*:

He was twice accused, each time with the proposed penalty of a fine. At the third hearing witnesses were produced, and in addition to loading him with every sort of reproach, a large number declared on oath that it was Fulvius himself who started the panic, and that the soldiers, abandoned by their leader, and supposing that his fear was not without foundation, had then turned tail. At this, indignation was fanned to so hot a flame that the assembly loudly demanded the death penalty.¹³¹

As demonstrated by the active participation of people at *contiones* during the late Republic in response to the oratory of tribunes and other speakers, it is credible that the assembled citizens could target an individual with their collective opinions. Also, the important role of witnesses in creating a plausible picture for the prosecution case comes to the fore and how their statements before these *anquisitiones* could influence the audience. This is because alongside documents like letters and financial records witnesses were a key element for prosecutors pursuing their case. One presumes the witnesses against Fulvius were surviving Roman or allied troops brought before the crowd by Blaesus, witnesses who were willing to speak out against a magistrate.¹³² In the end Fulvius suffered the ignominy of exile, but not execution, probably through the intervention of the Senate.¹³³ Nonetheless, through the prosecution process of the *iudicia populi*, as well as the preceding tribunician invective, Fulvius would

¹³¹ Livy 26.3.5-6: “bis est accusatus pecuniaque anquisitum. tertio testibus datis cum, praeterquam quod omnibus probis onerabatur, iurati permulti dicerent fugae pavorisque initium a praetore ortum, ab eo desertos milites cum haud vanum timorem ducis crederent terga dedisse, tanta ira accensa est ut capite anquirendum contio succlamaret”.

¹³² Vishnia 1996, 76 states that: “during the third hearing some of Fulvius’ soldiers testified”. In Livy’s account (26.3.5), however, it is not clear who exactly the witnesses were, as they could have been tribunes, centurions, or legionaries, or even allied soldiers.

¹³³ Livy 26.3.

always be remembered as the incompetent commander who permitted his men to be massacred by Hannibal.

Rosenstein highlights how military failure could lead to a prosecution during the Republic; between 219 and 49 BC at least eleven commanders were prosecuted following their defeat.¹³⁴ These cases, however, provide little information on the speeches, although a few details emerge from Asconius' account of the prosecution of M. Iunius Silanus. As consul in 109 Silanus had been defeated by the Cimbri and four years later he was prosecuted by the tribune of the plebs Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus on the charge of *perduellio* through the *iudium populi*.¹³⁵ According to Asconius:

The charges were that he had waged war on the Cimbri without instructions from the people, and that this had been the start of the catastrophes which the people had suffered in that war – and he [Domitius] also issued a written memorandum [*tabella*] about him.¹³⁶

By emphasising the other disasters recently inflicted on Rome, Domitius was in part referring to the horrendous defeat suffered the previous year by two consular armies at the hands of the Cimbri and Teutones at Arausio in Narbonese Gaul.¹³⁷ The tribune was attempting to exploit

¹³⁴ Rosenstein 1990, 12; this statistic is adapted from Rosenstein's figure of between 14 and 12 over the period of 390 to 49 BC: Livy 26.3; Cn. Fulvius Flaccus in 212; Diod. 33.2 & App. *Iber.* 64; C. Plautius Hypsaeus in 146; App. *Iber.* 78-9 & Cic. *Font.* 23; Q. Pompeius in 140; App. *Iber.* 83; M. Aemilius Lepidus Porcina in 136; Livy *Per.* 63, Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.184 & Vell. *Pat.* 2.8.1; C. Porcius Cato in 114; Cic. *Brut.* 128 & Sall. *Iug.* 39-44; Sp. Postumius Albinus after 109 following his defeat by Jugurtha; Asc. 80C; M. Iunius Silanus after his defeat in 109; *Rhet. Her.* 124 & Cic. *Balb.* 28; Q. Servilius Caepio after his defeat in 105; Diod. 36.8 & Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.147; L. Licinius Lucullus after suffering losses in 103 in Sicily; Diod. 36.9.1; C. Servilius after defeat in 102 in Sicily; Dio 38.10; Cic. *Cael.* 74 & *Flacc.* 5; C. Antonius after his defeat in Macedonia in 62-1.

¹³⁵ Lewis 2006, 288, states that as this prosecution was "before any law of *maiestas* existed, the indictment would have been for *perduellio* ...".

¹³⁶ Asc. 80C: "criminabatur rem cum Cimbris iniussu populi gessisse, idque principium fuisse calamitatum quas eo bello populus accepisset; ac de eo tabellam quoque eddidit".

¹³⁷ *MRR* 2.555 & 557; Livy *Per.* 67; the proconsul Q. Servilius Caepio failed to cooperate with the consul Cn. Mallius Maximus; this apparently resulted in both consular armies being defeated with heavy losses.

a climate of bad news and popular recrimination to denigrate a military commander and possibly find a scapegoat by implying that Silanus had started this series of defeats.¹³⁸ In addition, Asconius mentions that Domitius published a memorandum (*tabella*) about Silanus. This might have been some sort of placard or pamphlet that circulated derogatory rhetoric about the commander in order to widen the audience for these negative portrayals.¹³⁹ Ultimately these tactics were unsuccessful as when the tribes came to vote only two voted for Silanus' condemnation.¹⁴⁰ Whether this was owing to Domitius' failure to persuade the members of the tribes present at the preceding *contiones*, or as a result of other factors such as the ability of Silanus' advocate, we just do not know.

Military engagements were not always central to the prosecution cases against Roman commanders and their military behaviour outside the context of the battlefield became increasingly an issue during the second and first centuries, particularly allegations of improbities concerning plunder and financial exactions.¹⁴¹ This development is markedly demonstrated by the prosecution of M' Acilius Glabrio following his successful campaign of 191 against Antiochus. In 189 two tribunes P. Sempronius Gracchus and G. Sempronius Rutilius:

¹³⁸ Rosenstein 1990, 47: "only after the spectacular disaster at Arausio in 105 had enraged public opinion did a tribune, Cn. Domitius, bring charges against Silanus. Patently the prosecutor sought to play upon that anger".

¹³⁹ Lewis 2006, 288, stresses that: "the Latin is highly obscure", but that the circulation of some sort of leaflet is more likely than the issuing of rigged voting tablets or a declaration of the verdict; Marshall 1985, 279-80, provides three explanations for Domitius issuing a *tabella*: 1. he was trying to fix the outcome by issuing pre-marked voting tablets, 2. he published a deposition about Silanus, 3. he prepared a written verdict before the final vote, in the same way that the presiding magistrate would read out the final verdict, "as an indication of how he wanted the tribes to vote."

¹⁴⁰ Asc. 80C.

¹⁴¹ Cf. previous section for similiar allegations against Piso.

... laid a charge against him [Glabrio] for not carrying in his triumph, or depositing in the treasury, a portion of the king's money and the booty that had been taken in Antiochus' camp.¹⁴²

One of the prosecution witnesses was the elder Cato and he stated that "he had not seen in the triumph the gold and silver vessels that he had seen with the rest of the royal plunder" when Antiochus' camp was captured.¹⁴³ This eyewitness statement would have been enhanced by Cato's eloquence and, above all, his considerable *auctoritas*, which had recently been augmented through his recent personal performance as military tribune during the Thermopylae campaign.¹⁴⁴ As Shatzman emphasizes, this tribunician charge was politically motivated to force Glabrio to give up his candidature for the censorship.¹⁴⁵ Shatzman also states that, though there were no strict rules concerning plunder, a general's political opponents could stir up public opinion "by the manner in which he disposed of his booty" and lay "other charges connected with his administration."¹⁴⁶ Although we cannot assess the specific charges against Glabrio we can assume that the prosecutors were smearing his reputation by painting a picture of financial improbity linked to the corrupting wealth of a Hellenistic monarch, a theme re-iterated in speeches during the late Republic.¹⁴⁷ Such allegations about the financial dealings of magistrates are significant precursors to those brought before the *quaestio de repetundis* and the other *quaestiones perpetuae* during this period.

¹⁴² Livy 37.57.12: "... quod pecuniae regiae praedaeque aliquantum captae in Antiochi castris neque in triumpho tulisset, neque in aerarium rettulisset."

¹⁴³ Livy 37.57.13-4: "is testis, quae uasa aurea atque argentea castris captis inter aliam praedam regiam vidisset, ea se in triumpho negabat vidisse."

¹⁴⁴ Livy 36.17-19, 21; Plut. *Cato Mai.* 13-14; Cic. *Sen.* 32; *MRR* 1.354; Astin 1978, 57-9.

¹⁴⁵ Shatzman 1972, 192.

¹⁴⁶ Shatzman 1972, 204-5.

¹⁴⁷ See Cic. *Leg. Man.* 22 for where Lucullus' pursuit of Mithridates was supposedly disrupted by the corrupting wealth and luxuries of the Pontic King.

The ravaging and ill-treatment of allies and provincials, above all, became one of the most prominent of prosecution allegations. Prior to the establishment of the *quaestiones perpetuae* a few prosecutions citing such behaviour occurred before the *iudicium populi*.¹⁴⁸ In 171 and 170 BC the praetor L. Lucretius Gallus and his successor L. Hortensius inflicted various exactions and violence on a number of Greek city states allied to Rome. One of these cities, Chalcis, sent envoys to Rome and their chief Micythion informed the Senate of the Chalcidean sufferings, saying how:

In Chalcis, temples had been stripped of their adornments and the loot of these profanations C. Lucretius had transported in his ships to Antium; free persons had been rushed away to slavery; the possessions of allies of the Roman people had been plundered and continued to be plundered on a daily basis.¹⁴⁹

Then he reports that Lucretius and Hortensius had quartered their men at Chalcis and these sailors had mistreated Chalcidean women and children.¹⁵⁰ This report again highlights the looting practices of a Roman commander and the ill-discipline of his men, allegations that resulted in Lucretius, now a *privatus*, being called before the Senate and then brought to trial before the *iudicium populi*. Unfortunately we know nothing of the prosecution oratory and Livy only mentions that “the tribunes accused him before the people and proposed a fine of one million asses”, for which all thirty-five tribes voted.¹⁵¹ Livy’s version of Micythion’s witness statement, however, probably points us towards the type of invective that the tribunes

¹⁴⁸ The few references to prosecutions during the mid to late second century are partly owing to the paucity of the sources for this period, particularly the loss of Livy for events beyond 167.

¹⁴⁹ Livy 43.7.10: “apud se templa omnibus ornamentis spoliata; compilataque sacrilegiis C. Lucretium navibus Antium devexisse; libera corpora in servitutem abrepta; fortunas sociorum populi Romani direptas esse et cotidie diripi”.

¹⁵⁰ Livy 43.7.11.

¹⁵¹ Livy 43.8.10: “... tribuni ad populum accusarunt multamque deciens centum milium aeris dixerunt”.

employed, emphasising that the Chalcideans were *socii populi Romani*, a tactic employed in the later cases before the *quaestio de repetundis*.¹⁵² The case brought against Lucretius, above all, indicates that the Senate and magistrates could react to misbehaviour of their military forces and hold their commanders responsible. As Vishnia indicates, such tribunician prosecutions were, however, inconsistent.¹⁵³ For instance, in the same year as Lucretius' prosecution, some Alpine tribes allied to Rome complained that their lands had been ravaged and their people enslaved by the consul C. Cassius Longus, a complaint that resulted in no prosecution.¹⁵⁴

Such financial exactions, ravaging and violence against allies and provincials were a major factor in the establishment of the *quaestio de repetundis*. This court aimed to provide financial redress to provincials for the damages they had suffered at the hands of Roman magistrates.¹⁵⁵ Through the surviving speeches delivered within it and the other permanent *quaestiones*, we can construct a model of how Roman prosecutors presented the evidence supporting the charges and how they attempted to blacken the reputation of the accused. We rely, above all, on Cicero's *Verrines* when attempting to construct a methodology. Nevertheless, Alexander through his in-depth analysis of Cicero's defence speeches provides some glimpses of the rhetoric employed by Roman prosecutors.¹⁵⁶

The five-part second *actio* against Verres was never delivered, and published only after having been written up. As a consequence, its primary aim was not to persuade a jury, but to impress a literary audience with Cicero's rhetorical and legal abilities in organising and

¹⁵² For example, throughout the *Verrines* Cicero frequently stresses that the Sicilians were allies, friends as well as citizens of Rome, as demonstrated by Cic. *Verr.* 1.13: "... our most loyal allies were treated as if they were national enemies ...".

¹⁵³ Vishnia 1996, 136-7.

¹⁵⁴ Livy 43.5.1-10.

¹⁵⁵ Richardson 1987, 1-12; Cloud 1994, 505-514; Lintott 2004, 70-74; the *quaestio de repetundis* was established in 149 BC to provide Roman citizens and allies with a means of redress from unscrupulous Roman governors; C. Gracchus extended its parameters in 123 or 122 to include provincials.

¹⁵⁶ Alexander 2002, 51-2.

presenting such a powerful case. Nonetheless, as Innocenti points out, Cicero published the *Verrines* as orations rather than historical monographs and adopted “the pretence of actual delivery, both by referring to people such as Verres and Apronius as if they were actually present and by mentioning possible lines of defence for them”.¹⁵⁷ Hence they should be considered as evidence of the mechanisms employed by late Republican prosecutors.

On top of the evidence directly related to the charges, what comes across in the Ciceronian corpus is that prosecutors liked to portray a broad spectrum of delinquent behaviour, within which various aspects of a magistrate’s behaviour, in both public and private life, could be denigrated, an approach, as already demonstrated (see section 5), that Cicero also employed in his political invective against Piso in 55 BC. This reflects Beard and Crawford’s model that we should see Roman magistrates as all-rounders; multi-skilled individuals who performed a number of functions.¹⁵⁸ The five parts of the second *actio* against Verres mirror this model, since Cicero focused on: Verres’ pre-Sicilian career, the administration of justice, the management of the Sicilian grain tithe, his art-work confiscations and then finally his military record in Sicily.¹⁵⁹ Although we have to be cautious in adopting the *Verrines* as a typical prosecution case against a magistrate, it is significant that Cicero spends considerable effort denigrating Verres’ martial ethos not only in the fifth part of the second *actio*, but also intermittently in the first *actio* and the remaining four parts of the second *actio*.¹⁶⁰ In order to highlight the spectrum of invective employed, three examples from the *Verrines* will be analysed.

¹⁵⁷ Innocenti 1994, 364.

¹⁵⁸ Beard & Crawford 1999, 56.

¹⁵⁹ Alexander 2002, 26-7.

¹⁶⁰ Cic. *Verr.* 1.13: for a general picture of military incompetence; 2.1.34-40: cites Verres’ quaestorship in 84 BC; 2.3.186; for the devastation of the Syracusean hinterland by pirates; 2.4.116: for the famous allegation that Syracuse’s harbour was left free and open “to a Cilician galley and its pirate crew.”

In the section on Verres' early career, Cicero constructs a distinctive portrayal of Verres' quaestorship whilst serving the consul Carbo in 84 BC.¹⁶¹ Verres' duties included the personal charge of Carbo's military finances, part of which went missing in the confusion of the ensuing civil war. Cicero creates a picture of disloyalty and corruption by claiming that Verres deserted his superior and purloined 600,000 sesterces from funds deposited at Ariminum, saying amongst an array of invective how "this precious quaestor embezzled the public money, and deserted his consul's army and his sacred duty" and sarcastically stating that all Verres did was "openly fleece consul, army, and province, and then take to his heels in consequence of this impudent robbery."¹⁶² Cicero was establishing Verres' base character here, as someone who selfishly exploited his office at the expense of Roman soldiers; a notion on which he later expanded with his claims of how Verres' avarice resulted in the reduction of manpower and supplies for the Roman naval forces in Sicily, and as a consequence led to their defeat and destruction at the hands of pirates.¹⁶³ It is little wonder that the extant defence speeches frequently promote good early career behaviour to counter such potentially harmful denigration.¹⁶⁴

Another rhetorical mechanism repeatedly employed in the *Verrines* was comparing the defendant with past martial heroes, a typical prosecution trick as seen in the case against Flaccus in 211 BC.¹⁶⁵ For example, in the section of the second *actio* dealing with Verres' art thefts, Cicero tells of the seizure of the statue of Diana, an artwork which P. Scipio

¹⁶¹ *MRR* 2.61 & 64.

¹⁶² Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.34: "... aversa pecunia publica quaestor consulem, exercitum, sortem, provinciamque deseruit"; 2.1.35: "... ac non apertissime consulem, exercitum, provinciamque compilarit et propter impudentissimum furtum aufugerit".

¹⁶³ Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.60-1 & 86: "a fine fleet to look at, but weak and helpless because so many marines and rowers had been exempted from serving".

¹⁶⁴ Cic. *Mur.* 12 for Murena's military service under his father during the Second Mithridatic War; Cic. *Sest.* 9 for Sestius' good military service during the Catilinarian revolt. Cf. Chapter 2, Section 4.

¹⁶⁵ Livy 26.2-3.

Aemilianus had restored to the Sicilian city of Segesta from Carthage following the Third Punic War. Cicero portrays this theft as Verres erasing Scipio's reputation.

... after this deed had been perpetrated, the sight of the bare pedestal, with the name of Africanus carved upon it, roused fierce resentment in every heart, not only because of the sacrilege, but because this man Verres had done away with the glory of deeds, the memory of the valour, the record of the triumph of our gallant Publius Africanus.¹⁶⁶

Cicero astutely plays on the Roman aristocratic practice of erecting dedicatory inscriptions that cited the name and deeds of successful magistrates, inscriptions frequently placed below statues or on altars or within temples.¹⁶⁷ In a similar way to the imperial practice of *damnatio memoriae*, where the names of individuals were erased from public monuments upon being deemed enemies of the state, Cicero states that this theft has erased the *gloria*, *memoria* and *monumentum* of one of Rome's most pre-eminent *imperatores*.¹⁶⁸ Innocenti, moreover, highlights Cicero's employment of the rhetorical mechanism of 'vivid description' in the *Verrines*, whereby the vivacity of the argument is enhanced visually for the audience by noting particular features of specific actions and objects.¹⁶⁹ Thus, Cicero evokes the statue's removal in the mind of the jury by his emphasis on the bare pedestal.

Another way Cicero enhances his allegation of Verres' theft of the statue of Diana is by turning the theft into a direct attack on the Scipionic family, a family boasting many renowned

¹⁶⁶ Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.78: "... quo quidem scelere suscepto cum inanis esset basis et in ea P. Africani nomen incisum, res indigna atque intoleranda videbatur omnibus non solum religiones esse violatas, verum etiam P. Africani, viri fortissimi, rerum gestarum gloriam, memoriam virtutis, monumenta victoriae C. Verrem sustulisse".

¹⁶⁷ For example, *CIL* 1².615: a pedestal inscription of M. Fulvius Nobilior found at Rome which cites his Ambracian success; Livy 41.28.8-10: for the dedicatory tablet Tiberius Gracchus set up in the Temple of Mater Matuta that detailed his victorious Sardinian campaign of 176 BC; *CIL* 1². 626: an inscription in Saturnian verse that details L. Mummius' achievements in Achaea and against Corinth.

¹⁶⁸ Bodel 2001, 23; Keppie 1991, 22; Suet. *Dom.* 23; after the death of the Emperor Domitian in AD 96 the Senate "decreed that his names were to be everywhere erased".

¹⁶⁹ Innocenti 1994, 370.

imperatores. He even addresses a living Scipio, P. Scipio Nasica, who would have been a member of the jury hearing the case, imploring him to protect his family from this “ravisher and despoiler.”¹⁷⁰ A little later Cicero addresses another jury member P. Servilius Vatia, someone whose recent successes against Cicilian pirates the orator had promoted earlier.¹⁷¹ Via his open reference to Servilius, Cicero was pointing to a magistrate who had dutifully served Rome against a pirate threat, which was in stark contrast to Cicero’s later portrayal of Verres. The orator was, therefore, employing living as well as deceased Roman heroes to diminish Verres’ character. Furthermore, by targeting specific members of the jury in this complimentary fashion Cicero was attempting to break down their group unity and so persuade them to accept his arguments.¹⁷²

This constant comparison of past and present heroes prior to and at the start of the fifth part of the second *actio* creates an expectation within the jury’s mind. What exactly were Verres’ actual military achievements whilst governor of Sicily? Cicero plays on this expectation by twisting typical symbols of military endeavour to lampoon Verres’ supposed un-Roman habits. For instance, he cites Manius Aquillius’ famous display of scars and then questions Hortensius about Verres’ supposed wounds.

Will you [Hortensius] bring Verres forward, bare his breast, let the Roman people gaze on his scars – scars made by women’s teeth, the evidence of his wickedness and sexual

¹⁷⁰ Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.79-80: “... spoliatorem vexatoremque ...”.

¹⁷¹ Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.82 & 2.1.56; *MRR* 2.90-1.

¹⁷² Lee 1960, 154-8, in her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, we see the breaking down of a group’s unity when a mob of farmers approach an Alabama court-house to lynch a black prisoner accused of raping a white woman; a child character, Scout Finch, recognises one of the farmers in the mob, approaches him, calls his name and warmly asks how he and his son are doing, thus breaking down the group dynamic.

excess? I beg the gods that you actually will have the gall to bring up his military service, his service in war!¹⁷³

Cicero plays on the *topos* of advocates asking magisterial clients to display their battle-scars in court, probably knowing that Verres had no such wounds.¹⁷⁴ In so doing Cicero turns the marks of honourable military service on behalf of Rome into the marks of shameful debauchery. Thus, he transforms Verres from a Roman magistrate who should be actively commanding troops into one who remains in bed, a theme he reiterates later when Verres is famously described as being in the middle of fiery bedroom antics, whilst Rome's Sicilian fleet was being burnt.¹⁷⁵

If one considers that these three examples of invective were against a magistrate with modest military responsibilities, in comparison with others who had more active military records, then the *Verrines*, I believe, point to an established culture of denigrating the martial ethos of accused magistrates in court. This is further supported by comments in a number of Cicero's defence speeches that point to such invective in the preceding prosecution speeches. For instance, Cicero in defending L. Licinius Murena in 63 BC states that the younger Cato asserts that "the whole of that war against Mithridates was only fought against a load of little women."¹⁷⁶ By feminizing the enemy Murena had fought, Cato was debasing Murena's most prominent achievement and so questioning the reality and quality of his *virtus*. Later in his defence of L. Valerius Flaccus in 59, Cicero provides a lengthy explanation of Flaccus'

¹⁷³ Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.32 "... ne excitetur Verres, ne denudetur a pectore, ne cicatrices populus Romanus aspiciat, ex mulierum morsu vestigia libidinis atque nequitiae. di faciant ut rei militaris, ut belli mentionem facere audeas!"

¹⁷⁴ There is the other possibility that Verres did possess some scars, which Hortensius or one of the other advocates hoped to display or refer to during the subsequent defence speeches. Cicero, therefore, might be preempting this tactic with a misrepresentation of their origin.

¹⁷⁵ Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.92: "on one and the same night we see the Roman governor burning with the vile fires of lust, and the Roman fleet with the flames that those pirates kindled."

¹⁷⁶ Cic. *Mur.* 31: "... bellum illud omne Mithridaticum cum mulierculis esse gestum"; Alexander 2002, 125.

levying of a naval tax in Asia and this stems from the prosecution claims that such a tax was being collected under false pretences to fill Flaccus' own purse.¹⁷⁷ Hence, like Verres, Flaccus was being depicted by the prosecution as a governor extorting monies earmarked for military requirements. Again we see a spectrum of forensic invective against the martial ethos of Roman magistrates, not from Cicero, but other prosecutors, demonstrating that the examples from the *Verrines* are not unique. If we consider Alexander's calculation of over 200 criminal prosecutions between 149 and 50 BC, cases that included a considerable number of past magistrates, then it is certainly plausible that the *res militaris* was a frequent target for prosecution orators.¹⁷⁸

7. The 'rhetoric of crisis' during the late Republic

The final context that involved criticism of the Roman martial ethos arose during the crises of the late Republic. The various civil wars and internal revolts of the period generated various speeches in the Senate and before *contiones*. This oratory would have frequently involved the promotion and discussion of senatorial decrees or tribunician bills that focused on the military threat posed by the individuals at the centre of the current civil or domestic conflict. For instance, there were the *hostis* declarations of 88 and 87 BC against Marius and Sulla respectively (as well as their key supporters), which must have involved proposition speeches and votes, even in the context of a partisan Senate and the presence of armed intimidation.¹⁷⁹

Then there were a number of prominent internal revolts, including those of: M. Aemilius

¹⁷⁷ Cic. *Flacc.* 27-31; Alexander 2002, 88.

¹⁷⁸ Alexander 2002, 5 n9.

¹⁷⁹ App. *BC* 1.60 & 73; Bauman 1973, 282-3 argues that Sulla initiated a *hostis* declaration in 88 against Marius and eleven other Roman leaders through the Senate in order to legitimise his marching on the city of Rome. "If the twelve were declared *hostes* they would be seen to have been *hostes* at all relevant times, and the march on Rome would retrospectively become the rescue of the city from its enemies". Although we do not know who and what was debated in 88, if one looks at the later *Philippics* when Cicero wanted Antonius declared a *hostis*, this involved strong denigration of Antonius' martial ethos in order to support this proposal and Marius' long military record would have provided Sulla and his allies with considerable ammunition.

Lepidus in 78-77, Spartacus in 73-1, and L. Sergius Catilina in 63.¹⁸⁰ These revolts again would have involved proposition speeches and votes on how best to deal with these insurrections. The Social and Sertorian Wars were also seen as civil conflicts or rebellions against Rome; in the ensuing senatorial debates Vettius Scato and a number of the Italian leaders, as well as Sertorius, might very well have been vilified.¹⁸¹

Of course there is little or no evidence of the speeches delivered at the Senate meetings and before *contiones*. However, analysis of the two sets of Ciceronian speeches that dealt with such crises and revolts, the *Catilinarians* and the *Philippics*, I think, provide invaluable insights into some of the ways in which these rebel leaders were being denigrated. Cicero was in a unique and pivotal position during these two different crises, but he was not the only incumbent magistrate or leading senator who spoke out against an internal military or civil threat during the first century BC. If we step back and consider the fact that military leaders were being dispatched, like Pompeius against Lepidus and Sertorius and Crassus against Spartacus, then any related speeches delivered before the Senate or *comitia* would have probably included the same fundamental dilemma that Cicero faced when he spoke against Catiline and Antonius. How best to acknowledge both the seriousness of the military threat and at the same time challenge its legitimacy? I contend that this dilemma in many cases would have resulted in the individual military ethos of these enemy leaders being criticised in

¹⁸⁰ *MRR* 2.90; Plut. *Pomp.* 17.4; Pompeius received a special grant of *imperium*, probably *pro praetore*, to deal with Lepidus and his supporters in Italy. Unfortunately we do not have any details about the Senate meeting that issued this *imperium* to Pompeius; *MRR* 2.1661; Marshall 1973, 109-121; Plut. *Crass.* 10; following Spartacus' defeat of the consular armies led by L. Gellius Publicola and Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Clodianus in 72, a senatorial decree was passed, according to Plutarch, which saw Crassus take over the command. Plutarch provides no details of who proposed this bill and any of the speakers in the debate. However, considering that one magistrate was replacing the consuls to fight this substantial slave insurrection, it would be a fair assumption that the military ethos of both Spartacus and Crassus were topics raised in some of the delivered speeches.

¹⁸¹ *MRR* 2.25-53; during the Social War of 91-87 BC the consuls and numerous promagistrates were given commands against the forces of the *socii* in Italy.

one form or another and that we should see these criticisms as part of the ‘rhetoric of crisis’ that Jon Hall emphasizes in his study of Cicero’s *Philippics*.¹⁸²

Initially, there is Cicero’s denigration of Catiline in 63 BC. Cicero as consul delivered the four *Catilinarians*, two before the Senate and two to the people, speeches that were later written up for publication when Cicero was politically threatened by Clodius and others, and so not a wholly accurate version of the original speeches. Nonetheless, they provide us with a specific sort of invective against a Roman’s martial ethos, since according to our sources Catiline had little, if any, military record of note prior to 63.¹⁸³ Catiline was, however, the leader of a revolt, which had a degree of political support in Rome, a camp of Sullan veterans and other supporters in Etruria, as well as the potential for further recruits from a number of disaffected Italian rural areas.¹⁸⁴ In addition, it was only eight years since Spartacus’ revolt, which had demonstrated that an irregular military force, when well led and organized, could defeat regular units of the Roman army.¹⁸⁵ It is the potential for such armed insurrection that is of prominent significance, particularly in first two *Catilinarians*.

As well as promoting his own *auctoritas*, Cicero had a critical dilemma when speaking against this menace. On the one hand, he had to inform the Senate and people of Rome of the veracity of the threat facing Rome in order to bring it out in the open and so enable the state under his leadership to crush it. On the other hand he did not want to legitimise Catiline as Cicero knew the ex-praetor had supporters inside and outside the Senate. As a consequence Cicero aimed to alienate Catiline and the Sullan veterans from the Roman citizen body and make them appear, as Konstan argues, as enemies and outsiders.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸² Hall 2002, 283.

¹⁸³ *MRR* 2.138; Asc. 85 & 89C; Catiline was elected praetor in 68 and governed the *provincia* of Africa for 67-6, where his exactions caused envoys to be sent to Rome and as a result he was prosecuted for *repetundae*.

¹⁸⁴ Cic. *Cat.* 2.20; Sall. *Cat.* 14.5.

¹⁸⁵ App. *BC* 1.116-120

¹⁸⁶ Konstan 1993, 12.

To start with, Cicero constantly employs military language to describe Catiline and the veterans, as demonstrated at the start of the first oration.

There exists in Italy a military camp (*castra*), hostile to the Roman people, in the mountain passes of Etruria. Each and every day the number of the enemy increases. The *imperator* of that camp, and the leader of those enemies, you can see within the city walls and even in the Senate, plotting the destruction of the state each day from within.¹⁸⁷

As well as being full of plans to destroy Rome, Cicero also depicts Catiline as an active and durable leader, claiming he had a “famous ability to endure hunger, cold and deprivation of every necessity.”¹⁸⁸ Cicero was creating an image of Catiline as a highly dangerous and durable bandit leader, someone who organized night attacks and had forest hideaways, yet someone who also wielded various military emblems, including “arms, axes, the fasces, the trumpets, the military standards, [and] that silver eagle” according to the Second *Catilinarian*.¹⁸⁹ Thus, Catiline is given the ethos of a paramilitary robber, an antithesis of the traditional Roman *imperator* who displayed his *virtus* honestly and openly on the battlefield on behalf of the Roman people. If Sallust’s account of Catiline’s final stand near Pistoia in early 62 is credible, Catiline’s exemplary exhibition of personal *virtus* in the vanguard of the battle was in marked contrast with Cicero’s denigration of Catiline’s military reputation.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Cic. *Cat.* 1.5: “castra sunt in Italia contra populum Romanum in Etruriae faucibus conlocata, crescit in dies singulos hostium numerus; eorum autem castrorum imperatorem ducemque hostium intra moenia atque adeo in senatu videmus intestinam aliquam cotidie perniciem rei publicae molientem”.

¹⁸⁸ Cic. *Cat.* 1.26: “... illam praeclaram patientiam famis, frigoris, inopiae rerum omnium ...”.

¹⁸⁹ Habinek 1998, 75; Cic. *Cat.* 2.13: “... cum arma, cum secures, cum fasces, cum tubas, cum signa militaria, cum aquilam illam argenteam ...”; Sall. *Cat.* 59.3 states that the eagle was said to have belonged to the army of Marius during his Cimbric campaign.

¹⁹⁰ Sall. *Cat.* 61 describes how: “Catiline was found far in advance of his men amid a heap of slain enemy, still breathing slightly, and showing in his face the indomitable spirit which had animated him when alive”.

The *Philippics* were a more complex set of fourteen Ciceronian orations that dealt with a whole variety of political and military issues related to the tumultuous period of 44-43. Eleven of these were given to the Senate, two in the Forum to the people, and one, the Second *Philippic*, though not orally delivered, was still published and circulated as a pamphlet. Cicero, moreover, delivered and circulated other speeches in this period of crisis, which have not come down to us.¹⁹¹ Additionally, as Hall points out, most of the *Philippics* were delivered in frequently heated senatorial debates on account of the highly fluid political and military situation inside and outside Rome.¹⁹² It must be stressed that the *Philippics* not only concerned the dispute between Cicero and Antonius, but other issues as well; including praise of individuals like Decimus Brutus, Octavian and Servius Sulpicius Rufus, and the question of which magistrates should be governing certain *provinciae*.¹⁹³

Nonetheless, the continuous theme throughout nearly all the *Philippics* was Cicero's opposition to Antonius' attempts to increase his already considerable military and political power, a fundamental part of which involved the denigration of Antonius' martial reputation. Unlike Catiline, Antonius had an impressive military record. He had distinguished himself as a cavalry commander during Gabinius' eastern campaign of 57-54 BC in Palestine and Egypt.¹⁹⁴ He had then served as quaestor or legate to Caesar during the last three years of the Gallic War, playing a prominent role in the critical battle at Alesia.¹⁹⁵ In the subsequent civil war he was an active Caesarian leader during the engagements at Dyrrachium and

¹⁹¹ Hall 2002, 281.

¹⁹² Hall 2002, 283; this tension was owing in part to the presence of Antonians, one of whom was Q. Fufius Calenus, consul in 47 BC, who was frequently granted the privilege of speaking first in these debates. There were also the differing stances of Antonius' opponents in Rome; some were willing to negotiate with him, whilst others like Cicero wanted to exclude any possibility of compromise. Thus, Cicero was challenging Antonius and his supporters as well as republicans both inside and outside Rome.

¹⁹³ Cic. *Phil.* 3.1-10; 5.36-45; 10.9-14; the Third and Fifth *Philippics* give considerable praise to Decimus Brutus and Octavian, whilst a predominant feature of the Tenth *Philippic* is the issue of who out of M. Iunius Brutus and C. Antonius was the rightful governor of Macedonia.

¹⁹⁴ *MRR* 2.205; Plut. *Ant.* 3; Joseph *AJ* 14.84, 86 & 92.

¹⁹⁵ *MRR* 2.236; Cic. *Att.* 6.6.4 & 7.8.5; *Fam* 2.1.5.4; *Phil.* 2.49-50 & 71; Caes. *B Gall.* 2.81.

Pharsalus.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, he had held the tribunate in 49 BC, been Master of Horse in 48-47 BC and finally held the consulship in 44.¹⁹⁷ Thus, following the death of Caesar, Antonius had considerable *auctoritas* as well as controlling significant political and military resources including of course, as Hall puts it, “an intimidating force of Caesar’s veterans.”¹⁹⁸

Despite this, Cicero endeavoured to undermine Antonius’ *auctoritas* with a variety of invective that above all involved blackening his military reputation. To start with, Cicero frequently depicted Antonius as a *hostis*, an enemy of the state.¹⁹⁹ This was part of Cicero’s efforts to persuade the Senate to pass a decree declaring Antonius a *hostis* and so officially challenge the legitimacy of Antonius’ position. For instance, on a number of occasions in the Fifth to the Eighth *Philippics* Cicero emotively refers to Antonius’ besiegement of D. Brutus at Mutina.²⁰⁰

... he is besieging Mutina, a most steadfast and splendid colony of the Roman people, he is attacking Decimus Brutus, a citizen born to serve, not himself, but us and the state. Is Hannibal then an enemy, Antonius a citizen? What did he do as an enemy that this man has not either done, or is doing, or striving for and designing?²⁰¹

Antonius is being depicted here as an instigator of civil conflict and an attacker of Roman citizens, unlike the loyal Brutus. Furthermore, Antonius is being compared to Hannibal, the

¹⁹⁶ MRR 2.280; Caes. *B Civ.* 3.46; Plut. *Ant.* 8; Antonius was commander of one of Caesar’s legions at Dyrrachium; Caes. *B Civ.* 3.89; Plut. *Caes.* 44.1; Antonius commanded the Caesar’s left wing at Pharsalus.

¹⁹⁷ MRR 2.258; Hirt. *B Gall.* 8.50; Plut. *Ant.* 5; MRR 2.286-7; Cic. *Phil.* 2.62-3; Plut. *Ant.* 8; MRR 2.315-6; Plin. *HN* 2.99; Joseph *AJ* 14.217.

¹⁹⁸ Hall 2002, 274.

¹⁹⁹ Hall 2002, 286; Cic. *Phil.* 3.14 & 21; 4.1-5; 5.21; 7.10-13; 8.6; 14.6-10 & 22.

²⁰⁰ Cic. *Phil.* 6.2; 7.15 & 21-2; 8.5 & 17.

²⁰¹ Cic. *Phil.* 5.24 -5: “... circumsedet Mutinam, firmissimam et splendidissimam populi Romani coloniam, oppugnat D.Brutum imperatorem, consulem designatum, civem non sibi, sed nobis et rei publicae natum. ergo Hannibal hostis, civis Antonius? quid ille fecit hostiliter, quod hic non aut fecerit aut faciat aut molitur et cogitet?”

ultimate enemy of Rome and not one protecting it like a dutiful Roman magistrate. Finally, it must be stressed that Cicero was not the first orator to label a Roman *imperator* as a *hostis*; the *hostis* declarations of 88 and 87 BC must have seen Sulla and then Marius being portrayed as enemies of the state.²⁰²

Secondly, Cicero paints a detailed image of Antonius as a tyrant bent on ruling Rome. For example, Antonius' actions are assessed in the Third *Philippic* as being even more tyrannical than Tarquinius Superbus, the last King of Rome.²⁰³ Dunkle highlights how a number of Roman orators applied the "stereotype of the tragedy-tyrant" to their political enemies.²⁰⁴ Just like a Greek tyrant Antonius employed an armed bodyguard, a practice which, Cicero claims, not even Sulla or Caesar followed.²⁰⁵ This tyrannical image also included dramatic tales of *ad hoc* executions, such as Antonius' supposed treacherous killings of veterans at Brundisium, as described in the Fifth *Philippic*.

When the legions had with great bravery repudiated his promises with shouts, he ordered those centurions to attend at his house whom he had recognised were well affected to the state, and caused them to be murdered before his feet, and those of his wife whom the august general had brought with him to the army.²⁰⁶

²⁰² App. *BC* 1.60 & 73; Bauman 1973, 282-3.

²⁰³ Cic. *Phil.* 3.9-11; Hall 2002, 284.

²⁰⁴ Dunkle 1967, 156-9; during his censorship of 184 BC, Cato delivered a speech against the consular Q. Minucius Thermus in which according to one of its surviving fragments (*ORF*³, Cato Fr. 58) Cato depicted Thermus as tyrant on account of his execution of ten men without trial who were allied to Rome; later in 133 Scipio Nasica called Tiberius Gracchus a tyrant (Plut. *Tib.* 19.3).

²⁰⁵ Dunkle 1967, 164; Cic. *Phil.* 2.8, 15 & 19; 5.17-18: "... Marcus Antonius alone in this city since the founding of the city had openly with him an armed guard."

²⁰⁶ Cic. *Phil.* 5.22: "cum eius promissis legiones fortissimae reclamassent, domum ad se venire iussit centuriones, quos bene sentire de re publica cognoverat, eosque ante pedes suos uxorisque suae, quam secum gravis imperator ad exercitum duxerat, iugulari coegit".

Unlike the invective against Piso, Antonius' executions were not of barbarian allies, nor like Verres of Roman citizens, but of centurions, the respected backbone of the Roman army. If we consider that Cicero was circulating some of these texts in a period when leaders like Antonius, Octavian, and M. Brutus amongst others were actively recruiting considerable numbers of troops, then the allegations of perfidious executions of centurions might have caused Antonius serious embarrassment and hindrance during his recruitment drives.²⁰⁷

Thirdly, a major reason for Cicero's complex portrayal of Antonius within the *Philippics* was another Greek stereotype, namely the *miles gloriosus*. Sussman stresses its profound influence on the Second *Philippic*: for instance, a typical trait of the *miles gloriosus* was his boastful vanity and Cicero provides a fictitious comic speech of Antonius which not only highlights this characteristic, but also paints him again as an enemy of Rome. This speech was a supposed reply to Caesar's demand that Antonius pay for his purchase of the house of Pompeius Magnus.²⁰⁸

Caesar demand money from me? Why not I from him? Did he win without me? He couldn't. I gave him his pretext for civil war; I proposed pernicious laws; I bore arms against consuls and commanders of the Roman people, against the Senate and people of Rome, against the ancestral gods and altars and hearths, against our country. Did he conquer for himself alone? Why shouldn't those who share the guilt share the loot?²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ The circulation of defamatory texts to troops during the civil war was an important issue; App. *BC* 3.44, for instance, states that Octavian's agents in 44 BC at Antonius' camp near Brundisium "seized the moment to scatter quantities of leaflets around the camp, urging the troops to exchange Antonius' meanness and cruelty, for the memory of Caesar and the protection and lavish gifts of the heir." The effectiveness, however, of these leaflets at Brundisium would have depended on the literacy levels amongst Antonius' troops and, moreover, on the ways in which Octavian's agents disseminated them. Such actions did cause a reaction as Appian mentions that Antonius tried to curtail their distribution by carrying out a search for Octavian's agents.

²⁰⁸ Sussman 1994, 64-5.

²⁰⁹ Cic. *Phil.* 2.72: "a me C. Caesar pecuniam? cur potius quam ego ab illo? an sine me ille vicit? at ne potuit quidem. ego ad illum belli civilis causam attuli, ego leges perniciosas rogavi, ego arma contra consules

Like Helvius' damning of Pompeius, Antonius is made to look like a key protagonist in a Roman civil war. Throughout the *Philippics* Cicero frequently depicts Antonius as a soldier who not only brags about his achievements, but also someone who is lustful and easily duped, as well as other characteristics typical to the *miles gloriosus*. Via such continual ridicule, Cicero was attempting to persuade his audience that Antonius, though he was a magistrate with established military achievements, was someone wholly unworthy of leading Roman legions, on account of his impiety and rapacity. In addition, Cicero was creating a caricature that was easily recognised by the readers and listeners of the *Philippics*, a character they had laughed at when attending the numerous festivals of the late Republic in which Latin versions of new comedy were staged. For example, Terence's *The Eunuch*, in which the *miles gloriosus* named Thraso was a main character, was performed during the late Republic.²¹⁰

Although we have only two sets of speeches concerned with denigrating the martial ethos during the crises of the late Republic, they demonstrate the extent to which the military record could be a fundamental aspect of the debates in the Senate and *contiones* when the *res publica* looked to deal with its potential and ongoing internal military threats. Some of the leaders were, of course, non-Roman like Spartacus and Italian leaders like Vettius Scato and so more straightforward reputations to denigrate and emphasize their threat. Criticising Roman aristocrats, though, would have been a much more difficult task, particularly those with long and distinguished military records like Marius, Sulla and Antonius. However, if a speaker had considerable military or political *auctoritas* as well as a degree of rhetorical skill, as Cicero

imperatoresque populi Romani, contra senatum populumque Romanum, contra deos patrios arasque et focos, contra patriam tuli. num sibi soli vicit? quorum facinus est commune, cur non sit eorum praeda communis?"

²¹⁰ Sussman 1994, 57 & 61-2 points out that the *ludi Romani*, in which dramas were performed, occurred in September 44 just after Cicero had delivered the First *Philippic*. He also points out that Cicero in his correspondence often refers to Terence, of whose plays it seems that he was especially fond of the *Eunuch*.

demonstrates with his ‘rhetoric of crisis’, there were ways to blacken these commanders, although the subsequent impact of this oratory was not always beneficial to the speaker.

8. Conclusion

Whether it was by disputing triumphal claims, through prosecution speeches, political lambasting or other contexts, Roman society provided a number of public oratorical platforms through which the military record of Roman leaders could be denigrated with a depth and diversity of rhetorical mechanisms. The employment of informal gatherings and the issuing of leaflets or other documentation to further spread the impact of such criticisms should also not be dismissed. Although we do not know the details of the actual engagements, the title of the elder Cato’s speech *de falsis pugnis*, delivered against Q. Minucius Thermus in 190 BC, demonstrates that existing representations of military achievements on the battlefield might be challenged.²¹¹ Such challenges could include questioning the legitimacy of the commander’s aggressive actions, the highlighting of Roman casualties, and even the naming of individuals amongst the dead, in order to bring home to their audience that the commander had failed his men and his officers and, moreover, the Senate and people of Rome.

It is the negative portrayal of these commanders’ activities outside the context of the battlefield that stands out most of all. These frequently involved allegations of tyrannical, incompetent and corrupt behaviour that was detrimental to the military forces, security and reputation of Rome. They might include: an emphasis on inappropriate individuals in the commander’s *cohors*, the plundering of Roman allies, and treacherous *ad hoc* executions. Then during the crises of the late Republic the rhetoric could see Roman leaders being

²¹¹ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 58 = Gell. 10.3.14; the one surviving fragment mentions Minucius’ ill-treatment of provincial magistrates.

depicted as bandit leaders or *milites gloriosi* in order to acknowledge their martial threat and at the same time alienate them from the stereotype of the dutiful and selfless Roman magistrate.

Of course not every magistrate endured public denigration of his military activities during and after his tenure of office and the sources probably reflect the most sensational cases of such criticism. Thus, the numerous Roman magistrates, who had gone out and dutifully performed their various military responsibilities, on the whole avoided such public criticisms. However, in a period when military success was consistently being reported and recognised back in Rome, the various types of criticism cited throughout this chapter demonstrate that Roman society had a significant degree of cynicism towards this incoming information and, moreover, a willingness, usually expressed by senior senators with substantial *auctoritas*, to target military reputations with a spectrum of overt and subtle criticisms.

There is one final question that needs to be raised: to what extent did this spectrum of criticism back in Rome influence the development of the media employed by commanders to establish and maintain a military ethos? The fact that this denigration could commence, before, during and after a campaign or governorship points to the fact that ephemeral media, such as letters and oratory as well as more permanent media like autobiographical literature and monuments, were all part of the arsenal of publicity available to commanders both during and after a campaign. When considering all these types of media, it must be stressed that they were not only a means of promoting a military ethos, but also a way of countering existing as well as potential criticisms.

4. Military achievements via public and private letters

I have made war on the most warlike men in the world, taken many strong places, laid many areas waste. My dispatch to the Senate is not unwarranted. Support me with your voice in the House. In so doing you will be serving the common cause in no small measure.¹

This is part of a brief letter written by the proconsul Decimus Junius Brutus in September 44 BC and it was sent from Cisalpine Gaul to Cicero in Rome. It exemplifies how Roman Republican commanders disseminated their martial deeds via both public and private correspondence. Within recent scholarship, however, letters conveying military reports during the Republic are frequently overlooked, mentioned in a cursory fashion, or simply seen as a precursor to the military correspondence employed during the imperial period.² This chapter investigates the key role this medium played in both the promotion and exploitation of military achievements within Republican Rome through a three part analysis: first of all, the evidence and nature of letters; secondly, dispatches to the Senate; and thirdly, private letters. Through this approach the content, dissemination and audience of these letters will be addressed as well as their benefits and drawbacks, and, in particular, the significant role that they played in the award of a triumph. Their multi-functional nature will also be emphasized, since they could

¹ Cic. *Fam.* 11.4.2: “cum omnium bellicosissimis bellum gessi; multa castella cepi, multa vastavi: non sine causa ad senatum litteras misi. adiuva nos tua sententia; quod cum facies, ex magna parte communi commodo inservieris”.

² For example, Goldsworthy 1996a, 152-3 & 352-3, mentions messengers, but in relation to the communications between detached units in the field; and in a later section concerning the behaviour of Roman commanders after an engagement, Goldsworthy cites the visiting of the wounded and the awarding of decorations, but not the sending off of dispatches; Hopkins 1978, 26, when analysing how continuous war impacted on Roman society, briefly mentions that after a successful campaign a Roman general “wrote to the Senate detailing his achievements”; this behaviour, though, is portrayed as a stepping-stone to the award of a triumph and not itself as a means of martial self-advertisement; Millar 1977, 352; Campbell 1984, 148; both see the dispatches sent to the Senate by governors and commanders during the Republic as a custom that was continued by the Emperors and their legates.

convey an extensive range of military information. Finally, as Brutus' final sentence indicates, dispatches frequently exhibited a significant political dimension, as field commanders exploited them to project their *auctoritas* and name within the heart of the *res publica*.

1. The evidence and nature of Roman letters

Terminology and perception

The two primary Latin terms for a written dispatch are *litterae* and *epistula*, as exemplified by Cicero's comments to Curio about the different epistolary categories employed by aristocrats.³ *Litterae* can mean, more generally, documents or literature. The two main Greek terms are ἐπιστολή and γράμματα: γράμματα can also in general mean document(s), with the context usually indicating the writer's meaning. On occasion, however, it is difficult to tell. In 48 BC, when Caesar escaped by swimming to a boat in the harbour of Alexandria, the historian Dio describes how Caesar achieved this "without wetting one of the γράμματα of which he held up a large number in his left hand as he swam".⁴ γράμματα could mean documents or letters here, since there is no contextual reference to their contents or nature.

We must also consider the ancient literary attitudes towards letters. Lewis, in her analysis of news in the Greek *polis*, argues that Greek commentators frequently saw letters, particularly in military contexts, as a means of hiding information and providing false or

³ Cic. *Fam.* 2.4: "that there are many different categories of letters (*epistulae*) you are aware. But the most authentic, the purpose in fact for which letter-writing was invented, is to inform the absent of what it is desirable for them to know, whether in our interest or their own. Letters (*litterae*) of this kind I suppose you do not expect from me"; Cic. *Fam.* 11.13a: on occasion, some magistrates sent joint letters, Cicero in June 43 reproduces a joint dispatch to the Senate from D. Brutus and L. Plancus.

⁴ Dio 42.40.5: μηδὲν τῶν γραμμάτων βρέξας ἃ πολλὰ ἐν τῇ ἀριστερᾷ χειρὶ ἀνέχων ἐνήξατο; Cary's 1916 Loeb edition translates γράμματα as documents, but in light of Dio's frequent references to the magisterial practice of preserving key letters, he could very well be referring to letters.

misleading information.⁵ As a result, many commentators adopted a negative view of epistles, regarding oral accounts as a more accurate and reliable means of communication.⁶ On the other hand, covert or false information in some letters does point to a belief on the part of the letter-writer that they would be taken seriously. Roman commentators, on occasion, recognised the covert capacity of letters as well. For instance, Julius Caesar employed an alphabetical cipher in some letters, and during his Gallic campaign, he sent a message composed in Greek to the besieged Quintus Cicero so that the Gauls could not read it if it was intercepted.⁷

In contrast to Greek writers, there appears to be a more positive attitude on the part of Latin commentators, in that they saw letters as an invaluable means for sending and preserving information. Cicero's comments about the different categories of letters point towards this.⁸ In addition, there are the numerous upbeat descriptions of victorious dispatches, such as those announcing the Roman victory at the Metaurus in 207 BC (DS 24 and 25).⁹ Whether or not Livy had access to such documents, he undoubtedly viewed them as a common practice by which Roman magistrates conveyed and preserved their achievements, thus serving his aim of highlighting exemplary behaviour.¹⁰ This positive perception, above all, is influenced by Roman aristocratic writers, who employed letters themselves on a near daily basis, as demonstrated by the Ciceronian corpus of over 800 letters and the 126 attested dispatches from magistrates to the Senate during the period of 219-19 BC (see Table 3). We have to be

⁵ Lewis 1996, 143: "for the Greeks, the letter had a definite connotation, that of secrecy"; Dem. 23.161: when speaking in 352 against Aristocrates' proposal to give the mercenary leader Charidemus inviolability, Demosthenes questioned the mercenary's integrity by claiming that Charidemus employed letters as a means of disinformation; Polyb. 8.17: Antiochus III broke the letter cipher of the rebel leader Achaeus in 213, so enabling Achaeus' capture and execution.

⁶ Lewis 1996, 143, makes the important point that a "letter sometimes functioned as a mnemonic aid, supporting rather than replacing an oral message" thus making a messenger's oral report appear more reliable than a commander's written report.

⁷ Suet. *Iul.* 56.6; Caes. *B Civ.* 5.48.

⁸ Cic. *Fam.* 2.4.

⁹ Livy 27.50.8-10 & 51.5-8; DS = dispatch to the Senate.

¹⁰ Livy *Praef.* 9.

cautious, however, because the majority of the details concerning this epistolary culture derive from the Ciceronian corpus with our perception considerably influenced by the attitudes and terminology adopted by Cicero and his correspondents.

Materials, handwriting, seals and format

Roman aristocrats primarily employed papyrus (*papyri* or *chartae*) and wax tablets (*tabulae*) as their means of written correspondence.¹¹ As Culham points out, the majority of our extant *tabulae* “could never have held more than two hundred or so words on one side” and they could also be heavy and bulky.¹² In contrast, papyrus, though more expensive, was a lightweight material that would have efficiently conveyed lengthy magisterial reports, like those sent to the Senate from Cicero in Cilicia.¹³ We should not dismiss the employment of *tabulae*, however, as they could carry the cursory requests and reports from magistrates; overall supply and current tastes probably dictated the material selected.

Roman aristocrats wrote their dispatches themselves or dictated them to a scribe.¹⁴ For example, Cicero in a letter of 59 BC states how he normally wrote his own letters, but was forced for once to dictate owing to his current heavy workload; and during the Gallic campaign Julius Caesar is said to have dictated his letters whilst in the saddle, keeping two secretaries busy at once.¹⁵ McDonnell points out that in the later Republic “letters to close relatives, intimate friends, social superiors and persons one wanted to flatter were customarily

¹¹ Cf. *OCD*³, 847-8; *DNP* 7.436-440; Bowman 1994, 15; other media such as leather or wood were also employed; Butler 2002, 89, note 15, believes that *tabulae* were the norm. He gives no support for his generalisation though and the idea that papyrus was a better and lighter medium for conveying written reports is not addressed; Meyer 2004, 1 & 245 highlights how *tabulae* were the preferred means of preserving public documents within Rome, but she does not address the specific issue of dispatches, concentrating primarily on legal, financial and religious documents.

¹² Culham 1996, 175.

¹³ Cic. *Fam.* 15.1 is over 500 words and 15.2 is nearer 800.

¹⁴ Horsfall 1995, 54, argues that *scribae*, *lectores* and the like had a prominent role in the public and private affairs of Roman aristocrats.

¹⁵ Cic. *Att.* 2.23.1; Plut. *Caes.* 17.

written in one's own hand".¹⁶ He, moreover, argues that writing *sua manu* had a number of practical advantages: it gave the letter a means of recognition and thus authenticity as well as confidentiality and added security.¹⁷ Even when the main text of the letter was dictated, as Millar points out, the subscribing of the formulaic introductory greeting seems to be done by hand by leading men.¹⁸

After being written, these letters were given a wax imprint from the aristocrat's signet ring (*anulus*), and the imprints at the bottom right of a number of the wax tablet loan agreements found at Pompeii provide a rough idea of their format (figure 1).¹⁹ It was then rolled if papyrus, or folded if *tabulae*, and then securely tied with a thread that passed through the seal.²⁰ From the references within the Ciceronian corpus we can assume that this epistolary process, with some variations, was widely employed by the Roman elite during the late Republic.²¹ How far back this practice goes though is difficult to ascertain.²²

The seal (*signum*) gave the dispatch security, authority, and prominence, particularly if that commander's seal was well-known. For example, Pompeius' seal motif involved a lion with a sword, and Sulla's ring displayed his famous acceptance of the bound Jugurtha from Bocchus. This latter image is probably similar to the three figure motif on the reverse of

¹⁶ McDonnell 1996, 474; Cic. *Q Fr.* 2.2; *Att.* 5.19; *Fam.* 3.6; *Nep. Att.* 10.4.

¹⁷ McDonnell 1996, 475.

¹⁸ Millar 1977, 221; Plut. *Caes.* 63.4; this was what Caesar was probably doing on the night prior to his death when he was at Marcus Lepidus' house for dinner, as Plutarch states that he was said "to be signing letters as was his custom (ἔτυχε μὲν ἐπιστολαῖς ὑπογράφων, ὥσπερ εἰώθει, κατακείμενος)".

¹⁹ Cic. *Att.* 11.2 mentions that this letter lacks his seal (*signum*); Plin. *HN* 33.23 jokes how the luxurious use of gems on rings had prevented "anybody imagining that people's signet-rings (*anuli*) were intended for sealing documents", indicating the accepted use of signet-rings; Camodeca 1999, *TPSulp.*, 45 & 78; several *tabulae* uncovered at Pompeii have a wax imprint from one or more signet rings at the bottom right of the text; Derks & Roymans 2002, 87-134, highlight the role of seal-boxes as containers for wax imprints from signet rings and they suggest that these imprints were for private letters.

²⁰ Derks & Roymans 2002, 90.

²¹ Cic. *Cat.* 3.10 cites a letter by C. Cornelius Cethegus and how "I cut the string and read the letter"; Meyer 2004, 126-32, provides detailed explanations and illustrations of how *tabulae* were sealed and tied.

²² Hutchinson 1998, 16, points out that "our knowledge of letter-writing before this time [the late Republic] is slender and indirect". Nonetheless, he cites references to letters within Plautus, which indicate that some basic facets of this epistolary culture were well-established. (Plaut. *Pers.* 501-12 & 520-7).

denarii issued by Faustus Sulla in 56 BC (see figure 2).²³ Plutarch, moreover, mentions that Sulla's "constant use of this seal ... irritated Marius", since it diminished the *gloria* that Marius had gained during the Jugurthine War, thereby illustrating that such seals could have significant political resonance.²⁴ According to Suetonius, Augustus employed a number of seals including a sphinx motif, then the head of Alexander the Great, and finally an image of himself.²⁵ These images indicate that an aristocrat's seal might develop or change over time and that it also frequently reflected a leader's image and military reputation, with the sphinx probably representing Augustus' capture of Egypt. These seals, above all, demonstrate that late Republican leaders were consciously marking their letters with distinctive iconography, thus emphasising the value they placed on their written correspondence.

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**Figure 1. photograph & sketch of wax tablet
from Pompeii mid-1st cent AD *TPSulp. 78*.**

²³ Plut. *Pomp.* 79; *Sull.* 3; Dio 42.18.3; *RRC* 426/1.

²⁴ Plut. *Mar.* 10: τὰύτη χρώμενος ἀεὶ διετέλει ... ἐρεθίζων τὸν Μάριον.

²⁵ Suet. *Aug.* 50.

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Figure 2. denarius issued in 56 BC by Faustus Cornelius Sulla

Lewis views the seal in Classical Greece as the authoritative symbol of monarchs, which gave the correspondence as much weight as its contents.²⁶ The seals of prominent Republican magistrates should be seen in a similar light and, more significantly, as a precursor to the imperial seal that Augustus and his successors employed.²⁷ A distinctive wax imprint on a written report also endowed it with a means of recognition and authenticity. This is highlighted by the references to the seals on the incriminating letters during the Catilinarian Conspiracy.²⁸ Later, in April 43 BC, Cicero's comment to the proconsul M. Junius Brutus, about the reception in the Senate to his despatch from Macedonia (DS 116), provides further significant detail:

Our friend Labeo remarked that your seal was not on the letter, that it was not dated, and that you had not written to your own people as you usually do. He drew the conclusion that the letter was forged, and, if you wish to know, the House agreed with him.²⁹

²⁶ Lewis 1996, 147; Thuc. 1.129 for the display of the seal on a letter from the Persian King Xerxes.

²⁷ Suet. *Aug.* 50.

²⁸ Cic. *Cat.* 3.10 the letters of C. Cornelius Cethegus and L. Statilius were identified through both their seals and handwriting; Cf. Butler 2002, 88-90.

²⁹ Cic. *Ad Brut.* 2.5.4: "Labeo vero noster nec signum tuum in epistula nec diem adpositum nec te scripsisse ad tuos, ut soleres. hoc cogere volebat falsas litteras esse et, si quaeris, probabat".

Although Cicero admits on another occasion to omitting his seal on a letter, indicating that seals were not always employed, their frequent use undoubtedly facilitated a letter's recognition and legitimacy, and thus the subsequent dissemination of its contents.³⁰

On occasion, a commander's signet-ring might be used by one of his lieutenants or associates. This is demonstrated by the letters sent by either Antonius or his lieutenants in 35 BC, which ordered Titius in Bithynia to execute the recently captured Sextus Pompeius. When commenting on the differing accounts, Appian states that:

There are those who say that Plancus, the governor of Syria, and not Antonius, gave the orders, because he had been authorized in urgent cases to sign letters for Antonius and use his seal.³¹

How did this occur? Was Plancus part of Antonius' *consilium* when such letters were dispatched, temporarily borrowing the triumvir's signet-ring? Or did Plancus have a duplicate ring with which he could seal key orders or dispatches when out of contact with Antonius? In any case, it would appear that Plancus was composing letters in the name of Antonius, and in the late Republic, when prominent leaders, like Caesar, dealt with considerable amounts of correspondence, there was probably a frequent need to delegate some of this essential yet time-consuming activity.³² There is a possibility that Appian's account derives from an Augustan source, which painted an unflattering image of Antonius in that a traditional Roman magistrate should not allow others to make use of his signet-ring. In 60/59 BC, when Cicero

³⁰ Cic. *Att.* 11.2 explains to Atticus the lack of his *signum* on a letter; his justification probably points to its atypicality.

³¹ App. *BC* 5.144: εἰσὶ δ' οἱ Πλάγκον, οὐκ Αντώνιον λέγοντες ἐπιστεῖλαι, καὶ νομίζουσιν ἄρχοντα Συρίας, καὶ ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς ἐπιτετραμμένον ἐς τὰ ἐπείγοντα ἐπιγράφειν τὸν Αντώνιον καὶ τῇ σφραγίδι χρῆσθαι.

³² Suet. *Aug.* 45 for Caesar engrossed in his numerous correspondence.

advised his brother about being a good provincial governor, he stated “let your signet-ring be no mere instrument but like your own person, not the tool of other men’s wills but the witness of your own”, illustrating the individual authority that a magistrate’s seal ring symbolised.³³ On top of concerns about the exploitation of a signet-ring, Cicero’s comment also reflects the increasing administrative responsibilities with its associated documentation that fell to Roman governors when overseeing their provinces’ judiciary, taxation, and public works, as well as their diplomatic and military duties.

A *signum* could also, on occasion, be exploited by an enemy. After the consul Marcellus was killed through a Carthaginian ambush in 208 BC, Hannibal employed Marcellus’ signet-ring to send false orders and dispatches to the neighbouring towns. Marcellus’ consular colleague, Crispinus, aware that Hannibal might use the deceased’s signet-ring for such purposes, warned local allies “not to trust letters purporting to come from Marcellus”.³⁴ This story not only demonstrates that an enemy commander recognised the *auctoritas* and legitimacy that such sealed Roman dispatches possessed and thus their potential military value, but also that Roman magistrates were conscious that official dispatches could be misused and exploited.

Additional symbolism could also be added to a magistrate’s letters. Livy mentions that the victorious dispatch of Aemilius Paullus in 168 BC reached Rome “wreathed in laurel” (DS 70).³⁵ It is unclear who added the decoration, but it gave the dispatch a positive aura due to the triumphal association of laurel, as stated by Pliny:

³³ Cic. *Q Fr.* 1.1.13: “sit anulus tuus non ut vas aliquod, sed tamquam ipse tu, non minister alienae voluntatis, sed testis tuae”.

³⁴ Livy 27.28: “ne quibus litteris crederent nomine Marcelli compositis”.

³⁵ Livy 45.1: “... laureatas litteras ...”; see Versnel 1970, 71.

For the Romans in particular the laurel is a messenger of rejoicing and victory; it accompanies dispatches and decorates soldiers' spears and javelins and generals' fasces.³⁶

It is difficult to assess how far back this practice goes. Livy does state that Spurius Postumius Albinus in 394 BC sent back a laurelled dispatch after defeating an Aequi army, but the historian might be predicating the contemporary ceremonial custom of his own period upon fourth-century Rome.³⁷ Nonetheless, it would appear that by the late Republic, following Appian's description of Lucullus' dispatch in 73 and Cicero's comment about Piso's lack of laurelled dispatches, that there was an expectation that victorious dispatches were 'laurelled'.³⁸ However, as Beard points out, where "did the laurel come from? Or did every general pack some in his luggage, just in case?"³⁹ Thus it is difficult to assess how regular or permanent a feature this symbolic decor had become.

The actual format of the letters employed during the Republic is difficult to assess as no extant examples have survived. Moreover, the official dispatches recorded within the Ciceronian corpus were copied up for publication and then further transcribed, thus losing their original format.⁴⁰ Fortunately, in describing Julius Caesar's dispatches, Suetonius provides an invaluable insight into past magisterial practices:

There are some letters which he wrote to the Senate. He seems to have been the first to send these written in columns (*paginae*) to form a short book of record (*libellus*

³⁶ Pliny *HN* 15.133: "Romanis praecipue laetitiae victoriarumque nuntia additur litteris et militum lanceis pilisque, fasces imperatorum decorat".

³⁷ Livy 5.28.13.

³⁸ App. *Mith.* 77; Cic. *Pis.* 39.

³⁹ Beard 2007, 203.

⁴⁰ Shackleton Bailey 1965, 77.

memorialis), for previously consuls and generals had always written straight across the scroll.⁴¹

Suetonius, through his secretarial posts in the imperial government, as well as his personal correspondence, had considerable practical experience of the epistolary methodology of the early second century AD; and, furthermore, in light of his numerous references to letters from earlier periods, he might very well have come across archived epistles on which he based his descriptions.⁴² The exact nature of Caesar's new format, though, is not wholly clear and scholars provide two main interpretations of the description: either that Caesar simply wrote in columns across the scroll or that this entailed a small columned note-book formed from a roll of papyrus.⁴³ In any case, Suetonius' description indicates that Caesar adapted the traditional format of official dispatches, presenting his achievements in an original and eye-catching manner. Again we find a magistrate attempting to exploit this communication mechanism for his own benefit, and Butler and Cary go so far as interpreting *libellus memorialis* as not "an ephemeral letter, but as a more or less permanent record", which if correct makes Caesar's innovation appear as an attempt to monumentalize this valuable mechanism of martial display.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Suet. *Iul.* 56.6: "epistulae quoque eius ad senatum extant, quas primum uidetur ad paginas et formam memorialis libelli conuertisse, cum antea consules et duces non nisi transuersa charta scriptas mitterent".

⁴² Wallace-Hadrill 1983, 5-6; Edwards 2000, viii; *AE* 1953.73; Suetonius held three imperial positions: *a studiis* probably involving responsibility for the emperor's archives; *a bibliothecis*, responsibility for Rome's libraries; and *ab epistulis*, charge of the emperor's correspondence; Plin. *Ep.* 3.8; Suet. *Iul.* 29.2; 56.6; *Aug.* 50; 67.2; 71.2-4; 76.1-2; Suetonius provides detailed knowledge of the epistolary practices employed by Caesar and Augustus, suggesting first hand experience of their letters. Wallace-Hadrill 1983, 62-63, points out that, in contrast to the later biographies, the lives of *Julius* and *Augustus* have an "abundance documentation and liberal citation of sources".

⁴³ Butler & Cary 1927, 120.

⁴⁴ Butler & Cary 1927, 120.

Headings

When analysing ancient letters, modern historians primarily focus on their contents and context, and, as a consequence, their headings are frequently overlooked.⁴⁵ This is understandable when dealing with the numerous indirect citations of letters within the sources, as demonstrated by Livy's frequent mention of the arrival of a dispatch and a cursory account of its contents.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, the headings of a letter are of considerable significance, since they could influence a letter's presentation and subsequent reception.

The titles, with which a magistrate headed his official dispatches and, sometimes, his private letters as well, gave the letter a distinctive authority and, what is more, displayed his competitive ethos. For example, Cicero, when writing to the Senate from Cilicia in September 51 (DS 96), commenced his dispatch with:

From Marcus Tullius Cicero, son of Marcus, Proconsul, to the Consuls, Praetors, Tribunes of the Plebs, and Senate, greetings. I trust that you are well. I and the army are well.⁴⁷

These formulaic abbreviations stated prominently that the magistrate's actions had been performed under the auspices of the *res publica*. In addition, in some dispatches the people of Rome were included, as demonstrated in the headings of a dispatch from the consul-elect L. Munatius Plancus in March 43 BC (DS 112).⁴⁸ This reference, alongside the tribunes of the

⁴⁵ For example, Hutchinson 1998, 2, states that the literary contents of Cicero's letters will be the main focus of his study.

⁴⁶ For example, Livy 27.21, on events in 208: "during the elections news of a revolt in Etruria brought a fresh cause of anxiety. C. Calpurnius in charge of affairs as propraetor there, had written to say that the trouble had started in Arretium, and Marcellus the consul-elect was accordingly sent there at once".

⁴⁷ Cic. *Fam.* 15.2: "M. TULLIUS M. F. CICERO PRO COS. S. D. COS. PR. TR. PL. SENATUI S. v. v. b.; e. e. q. v."

⁴⁸ Cic. *Fam.* 10.8: "PLANCUS IMP. COS. DESIG. S. D. COS. PR. TRIB. PLEB. SENATUI POPULO PLEBIQUE ROMANAE".

plebs, possibly indicates that Plancus was aware that his letter might not only be communicated to the Senate, but also by the magistrates to the people of Rome, usually through oral dissemination to a *contio*.⁴⁹ The final part of the greeting, which states that the army is well or wishes the recipient's children are well, was adapted from the formulaic health greetings of Hellenistic Kings, and Sherk points out that the extension of the phrase to include the army was a Roman innovation.⁵⁰ This standard formulaic titulature and greeting had been established by the late Republic and continued with slight variations in imperial letters to the Senate.⁵¹

Such use of magisterial titles could, on occasion, cause an adverse reaction. After the elder Scipios had been defeated and killed in Nearer Spain in 211 BC, Lucius Marcus, a military tribune, assumed the command, regrouped the remaining Roman forces, and made a successful attack against two major Punic encampments.⁵² Marcus then informed the Senate of his actions via a dispatch, which the house warmly recognised (DS 14).⁵³ According to Livy, Marcus entitled his letter "the Propraetor to the Senate", even though he had never been elected to the praetorship, causing disquiet among the senators since it set a bad precedent. As a result, the title propraetor was omitted from the Senate's subsequent reply to Marcus.⁵⁴ This suggests that, even in the midst of the Second Punic War, many senators were still concerned about of improper use of magisterial offices. On the other hand, if one takes Marcus' perspective, commanding the remnants of the Roman forces hundreds of miles away

⁴⁹ Livy 33.24 states how Flaminius' dispatch to the Senate, announcing his victory at Cynoscephalae in 197, was subsequently read out to a *contio* by the urban praetor M. Sergius Silus.

⁵⁰ Sherk 1969, 189-190.

⁵¹ Millar 1977, 353; Dio 72.15.5: the start of one of Commodus' letters: "To the consuls, praetors, tribunes, and Fortunate Commodian Senate, greetings".

⁵² Livy 25.37-39; *MRR* 1.275.

⁵³ Livy 26.2; Val. Max. 2.7.15a.

⁵⁴ Livy 26.2.1-2: "but how he styled himself caused widespread offence amongst the members, because he had written 'From the Propraetor' to the Senate when his command had been neither mandated by the people, nor authorized by the Senate (titulus honoris, quod imperio non populi iussu, non ex auctoritate patrum dato 'propraetor senatui' scripserat, magnam partem hominum offendebat)"; Lintott 1999, 113-114; there being no such magistrate title of propraetor, presumably Marcus wrote *pro praetore* in his *superscriptio*.

across the Western Mediterranean in Nearer Spain, he probably employed the title *propraetor*, not as a means for self-glorification, but to give his letter a legitimate appearance and so ensure its dissemination in Rome. The fact that the Senate replied demonstrates that the dispatch was successful at least in regard to this latter aim.

Cicero provides a more direct perspective on a senatorial reaction to such magisterial titles. In the aftermath of Caesar's assassination, Marcus Brutus and Gaius Antonius disputed the command of the province of Macedonia, with Brutus eventually capturing Antonius at Apollonia in March 43 and then holding him in honourable custody.⁵⁵ Both subsequently sent dispatches to the Senate (DS 115 and 116). Most senators, however, knew that Antonius had been defeated. Cicero describes in a letter to Brutus the subsequent reception of Antonius' dispatch:

Two letters he [Celer Pius] brings, one in your name, the other from Antonius, and delivers them to the tribune Servilius, who hands them to Cornutus [urban praetor].

They are read out in the Senate. 'Antonius Proconsul!' that produced a sensation, as though it had been 'Dolabella, Imperator'.⁵⁶

If Cicero's account is not wholly distorted, it demonstrates how senators were aware of the political significance of these epistolary titles, giving the dispatch legitimacy and *auctoritas*. Perhaps Brutus was attempting to demonstrate his respect for the institutions of the *res publica* by allowing his prisoner, who was still a magistrate, to send a letter to the Senate.

Cicero's mention of the title *Imperator* highlights the most distinctive element of a commander's titulature. Magistrates from the early second century onwards began to be

⁵⁵ App. *BC* 3.79.

⁵⁶ Cic. *Ad Brut.* 2.5.3: "hic epistulas adfert duas, unam tuo nomine, alteram Antoni; dat Servilio tribuno plebis, ille Cornuto. recitantur in senatu. 'ANTONIVS PROCOS.' magna admiratio, ut si esset recitatum 'DOLABELLA IMPERATOR'".

hailed *Imperator* by their troops after a successful engagement, and they retained this title until they crossed the *pomerium* of Rome.⁵⁷ L. Aemilius Paulus in 189 BC is the earliest attested magistrate to receive this honour, and by the late Republic it was widely employed by magistrates within their despatches following a victory.⁵⁸ For example, during his Cilician campaign Cicero was hailed *Imperator* by his troops in October 51 BC following a successful engagement against Cilician tribes, and his many private letters in the next few months included the title.⁵⁹ The inclusion of *Imperator* in a dispatch was the initial means by which a magistrate informed the Senate that his military leadership had been recognised by his troops and thus a powerful endorsement when publicising his martial endeavours back home. Furthermore, the title *Imperator* was an important part of the process that led to the award of a triumph, a process that will be dealt with in section three.

In addition, the formulaic dating and the citation of the location where the letter was written should not be underestimated. These gave the recipients specific chronological and geographical information, sometimes at the conclusion of the letter. The proconsul P. Vatinius, whilst campaigning in Dalmatia in July 45 BC, wrote a private letter to Cicero that finished with “11th of July, from camp at Narona”, and M. Lepidus in a dispatch to the Senate from Narbonese Gaul in 43 ended with “dispatched 30th of May from Pons Argenteus” (DS 120).⁶⁰ Thus, recipients were being given a marked sense of space and time by these field commanders. If we assume this practice for all the victorious dispatches sent to Rome, like Lucullus’s dispatch on his victory in 69 BC over Tigranes II in Armenia (DS 84), it would have enhanced each document’s martial achievements with a measure of where and when that

⁵⁷ Syme 1958, 177-8 & 181, points out though that by the late Republic commanders like Pompeius and Caesar started to retain the title *Imperator* even after they had entered the city. Syme discusses Octavian’s use of *Imperator* in his name to symbolise his pre-eminent military leadership.

⁵⁸ *CIL* I², 2, 614; Combès 1966, 68; *Cic. Fam.* 10.8 & 10.35: Plancus and Lepidus include it within their dispatches in 43 BC with Lepidus stating that he was *Imperator* for the second time.

⁵⁹ *Cic. Att.* 5.20: Oct 51; *Cic. Fam.* 2.7: Dec 51; 9.25: March 50; 2.18: May 50.

⁶⁰ *Cic. Fam.* 5.9.2: “A. d v Id. Quint. ex castris Narona”; 10.35.2: “D III Kal. Iun a Ponte Argenteo”.

commander had fought, maintained, or even extended the Roman Empire.⁶¹ As Nicolet points out in relation to Augustus's *Res Gestae*, new place names gave military achievements a distinct sense of the exotic and hence pre-eminence.⁶²

Couriers and transportation hazards

Couriers and the hazards they faced were important factors in the dissemination of these dispatches.⁶³ Upon being sealed, the magistrate entrusted the completed dispatch to one of his personal attendants, sometimes a private messenger (*tabellarius*), or, when the dispatch was of considerable importance, to a personal legate, and they would ensure that the document reached Rome. For instance, in 168 BC three personal legates carried Paullus' victorious dispatch from Pydna, and in December 51 Cicero informed Curio that: "I shall be sending couriers of my own household" with his Pindenissum dispatch.⁶⁴ This latter convenience might involve various means of land and sea transportation depending upon the route, whilst the personal legates would have probably been given assistance en route on account of their rank and status.⁶⁵

The letters of Cicero and his associates highlight the transportation hazards facing couriers: the long distances involved, the timing relative to the sailing season, and bad weather could all delay, disorder, or even damage the documents en route.⁶⁶ This last problem is demonstrated when Cicero mentions that Caesar, in a letter to Balbus from Gaul, had reported how "the parcel containing Balbus' letter and mine was delivered to him completely

⁶¹ Plut. *Luc.* 26.6.

⁶² Nicolet 1991, 21.

⁶³ Ramsay 1920, 79-86, provides a brief account of the couriers employed during the Republic.

⁶⁴ Livy 45.1.6-9; Cic. *Fam.* 2.7: "eram missurus domesticos tabellarios"; *Att.* 11.6.7 refers to a freedman of Caesar's called Diochares who carried letters from Alexandria to Rome in late 48; Millar 1977, 214.

⁶⁵ Cic. *Q Fr.* 2.9; Quintus Cicero, as a legate to Pompeius in Sardinia in 56, employed a sea-captain to deliver a letter to Marcus in Rome.

⁶⁶ Cic. *Q Fr.* 3.1 for Quintus' letters reaching Cicero sporadically and out of order.

waterlogged so that he doesn't even know that a letter from me was inside".⁶⁷ In addition, when commanders employed *tabulae* extreme temperatures might very well have warped the wax.

Letters to Cicero from the proconsul Asinius Pollio in Further Spain detail another type of transportation difficulty. First of all, in March 43 he wrote from Corduba saying:

You must not think it at all strange that I have written nothing on public affairs since war broke out. The pass of Castulo, which has always held up my couriers, has become more dangerous than ever with increasing banditry. Even so, that does not cause nearly so much delay as the pickets posted everywhere by both sides, which examine couriers and stop them proceeding. Had not letters got through by sea, I should be totally ignorant of affairs in Rome. But now that the opening of navigation gives me the chance, I shall write to you most eagerly and as often as I can.⁶⁸

Later, in May 43, Pollio states that Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, proconsul in Narbonese Gaul, had held up Pollio's couriers for nine days, thus preventing him receiving the news about the siege of Mutina in Italy.⁶⁹ These comments indicate that both bandits and the sailing season could hinder a magistrate's couriers reaching Rome, and that the flow of information could

⁶⁷ Cic. *Q Fr.* 2.11: "fasciculum illum epistularum, in quo fuerat et mea et Balbi, totum sibi aqua madidum redditum esse, ut ne illud quidem sciat, meam fuisse aliquam epistulam".

⁶⁸ Cic. *Fam.* 10.31: "minime mirum tibi debet videri nihil me scripsisse de re publica, posteaquam itum est ad arma; nam saltus Castulonensis, qui semper tenuit nostros tabellarios, etsi nunc frequentioribus latrociniiis infestior factus est, tamen nequaquam tanta in mora est, quanta qui locis omnibus dispositi ab utraque parte scrutantur tabellarios et retinent; itaque, nisi nave perlatae litterae essent, omnino nescirem, quid istic fieret. nunc vero nactus occasionem, posteaquam navigari coeptum est, cupidissime et quam creberrime potero scribam ad te".

⁶⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 10.33.

also be blocked or delayed by an opponent; all of which emphasizes the heavy reliance governors placed on these couriers for their external communications.⁷⁰

Magisterial chanceries⁷¹

A number of Roman commanders, at least during the late Republic, kept copies of their dispatches as well as the correspondence that they had received. There are a number of references to chests or collections of letters, particularly in the stories about the seizure and destruction of such document caches: at the end of the Sertorian War Pompeius was given Sertorius' letters by Perperna and after Pharsalus Caesar seized and destroyed Pompeius' chest of letters.⁷² Octavian's reaction in Egypt to Antonius' death in 30 BC demonstrates this type of chancery best, when Plutarch describes how Octavian withdrew to his tent:

Then he took out their correspondence (ἐπιστολάς), called in his friends, and read the letters out to them, to show that while he had written politely and fairly, Antonius and had always been rude and arrogant in his replies.⁷³

Although probably stemming from an Augustan source highlighting Octavian's honourable behaviour, this anecdote indicates that a Roman field commander maintained in his tent copies of the letters he had received and sent out, a practice also followed by Hellenistic kings whilst

⁷⁰ Rougé 1981, 15-16, argues for a winter standstill in the Mediterranean; Horden & Purcell 2000, 142, point out that early medieval legislation, which attempted to enforce winter standstills, suggests that some boats were sailing all year round. Though how far back this habit goes is difficult to tell.

⁷¹ The word chancery is employed here to describe the epistolary and documentary conventions that Roman commanders and their scribes practised, and covers the practice of sending, receiving and preserving dispatches, military orders, personal letters, recommendations, letters guaranteeing an allied city's autonomy and so forth.

⁷² Plut. *Pomp.* 20; *Ser.* 27.2; Dio 41.63.5.

⁷³ Plut. *Ant.* 78: εἶτα τὰς ἐπιστολάς λαβὼν καὶ τοὺς φίλους καλέσας ἀνεγίνωσκεν ὡς εὐγνώμονα γράφοντος αὐτοῦ καὶ δίκαια φορτικὸς ἦν καὶ ὑπερήφανος ἀεὶ περὶ τὰς ἀποκρίσεις ἐκεῖνος.

on campaign.⁷⁴ In addition, there was the Roman aristocratic practice of preserving key family documents, such as letters and speeches, within the *tablina* of their houses, and these mobile caches point towards an adaptation or even an extension of this customary aristocratic practice.⁷⁵

However, owing to the small number of references and the cursory descriptions of these letter chests, it is difficult to assess how many documents a Roman magistrate would preserve whilst on campaign and for how long. We also do not know how far back this practice went. Nonetheless, it is evident, during the late Republic at least, that a number of prominent commanders were holding onto their letters for various political, military, literary and personal motives. In light of this, Caesar's behaviour in the harbour of Alexandria becomes more understandable, since the documents that he held above the water probably included letters of military and political importance.⁷⁶ Furthermore, if we attribute this epistolary habit to other prominent commanders such as Flamininus and Sulla, who we know, through epigraphic and literary evidence, sent out a variety of letters to Greek city-states as well as to the Senate, then we can better appreciate the potential extent of this epistolary practice.⁷⁷ We must see the consistent use of letters in our period, as represented by the 126 dispatches cited in Table 3, as a fundamental part of the increasing bureaucratisation of the *res publica*, as its leaders increasingly relied on letters and other documents for their communications and other administrative requirements.

⁷⁴ Posner, 1972, 127; Hammond 1988, 134, employs the term 'archive'. Plut. *Eum.* 2.2-3, after the tent of Eumenes of Cardia, Alexander the Great's secretary (γρομμιατεύς), was burnt destroying all the stored documents. Alexander subsequently ordered that copies of all the relevant documents from cities and generals should be sent to him.

⁷⁵ Flower 1996, 203-5; Culham 1989, 104; Festus 490.28L: "in the old days magistrates during their exercise of high office had there a place designed for public documents to store their ledgers of records (antiqui magistratus in suo imperio tabulis rationum ibi habebant publicarum rationum causa factum locum)"; Plin. *HN* 35.7: "the *tablina* were filled with ledgers of records and accounts of deeds done by office-holders (tablina codicibus et monumentis rerum in magistratu gestarum)."

⁷⁶ Dio 42.40.5.

⁷⁷ For example, *RDGE* 33 is a copy of a letter from Flamininus to the Chyretians c.197-194; *RDGE* 49 is a copy of two letters from Sulla to Dionysiac artists.

2. Dispatches to the Senate

Definition and dissemination

I can assure you that everything is vouched for in public dispatches (*publicae litterae*).

In these dispatches Lucius Lucullus is far more generous in his praise of Murena than any commander who was either self-seeking (*ambitiosus*) or jealous would have needed to be when writing about the contributions made by the officers under him.⁷⁸

Cicero, in citing Lucullus' dispatches in a defence speech from 63 BC, indicates that these written reports constituted a respected and recognised means by which Roman Republican commanders disseminated details of their campaigns back in Rome.⁷⁹ The orator, moreover, through the adjective *ambitiosus*, alludes to magistrates frequently exploiting this medium for their own personal aims. He also demonstrates that a commander could, on occasion, publicise the endeavours of his officers and men. In describing Lucullus' dispatches as *publicae litterae*, Cicero also specifically highlights their typology; there was a clearly understood difference between public and private letters. This is illustrated at the end of a letter, which Cicero wrote to the consul Gaius Marcellus in 51:

I still do not think I should write officially on the reports reaching me about the Parthians, and for that reason I prefer not to write to you on the subject either, even as a

⁷⁸ Cic. *Mur.* 20: "publicis litteris testata sunt omnia, quibus L. Lucullus tantum laudis impertiit quantum neque ambitiosus imperator neque invidus tribuere alteri in communicanda gloria debuit".

⁷⁹ Although we do not know to which ones Cicero is specifically referring, during his Eastern campaign Lucullus sent back at least three separate dispatches (DS 80, 81 and 84).

close personal friend, for fear that a letter to the Consul might be interpreted as an official communication.⁸⁰

Yet in making this observation Cicero also indicates that this demarcation could become blurred at times, since private letters could be interpreted as official communiqués, particularly if they were between magistrates. In addition, private letters could become public, such as when they were read out within the Senate.⁸¹ This spectrum of privacy within letters is given further analysis in a later section of this chapter, whilst the dispatches specifically sent to the Senate will be the focus of the current section.

Rome was not the only ancient city-state that saw her commanders send dispatches to their executive councils or assemblies: Thucydides reproduces a letter sent to Athens in 414 BC from Nicias in Sicily; Livy refers to a dispatch that Hasdrubal sent to the Carthaginian Senate in 216; and after a Rhodian-Pergamene fleet defeated a Macedonian naval force in 201, Polybius states that the Rhodian admiral Theophiliscus died of his wounds “after writing a dispatch to his country about the battle”.⁸² Hornblower suggests their employment was more widespread in Greek states than the sources report.⁸³

Fortunately, in analysing Roman dispatches over the period 219-19 BC, there are at least 126 attestations of dispatches to the Senate within the literary sources (see Table 3). These provide an unparalleled insight into how an ancient city-state received reports from its

⁸⁰ Cic. *Fam.* 15.9.3: “quae mihi de Parthis nuntiata sunt, quia non putabam a me etiam nunc scribenda esse publice, propterea ne pro familiaritate quidem nostra volui ad te scribere, ne, cum ad consulem scripsissem, publice viderer scripsisse”.

⁸¹ For example, Cic. *Ad Brut.* 2.2.3; in April 43 when Cicero received a private letter from P. Lentulus Spinther, he states how “a letter was delivered to me in the Senate from our friend Lentulus about Cassius and the legions and Syria. I read it out at once”. Lentulus might have instructed Cicero to read out the letter; *MRR* 2.344-5; Lentulus was proquaestor pro praetore in Asia.

⁸² Thuc. 7.10-15; Livy 23.27.14-28.1; Polyb. 16.9.1: “καὶ τῆ πατρίδι γράψας ὑπὲρ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ναυμαχίαν”; Lewis 1996, 149.

⁸³ Hornblower 1987, 39: “This, naturally, is a genre of writing we know little about since only the most celebrated, because unusual, examples have been preserved”.

commanders. The vast majority of these are cursory indirect references; there are, however, six extant versions from the late Republic (DS 96, 97, 112, 119, 120 and 121).⁸⁴ Altogether these show that dispatches were regularly employed by Rome's commanders for a whole range of needs, since as well as military successes, they communicated amongst other things: defeats, enemy movements, supply needs, prodigies, an inability to return to Rome to oversee elections and even a request from a field commander to return home to organize his daughter's dowry.⁸⁵

We must not perceive dispatches purely as single-issue documents, a perception easily obtained from the numerous cursory indirect references. This is demonstrated by Sallust's version of Pompeius' dispatch of 74 BC during the Sertorian War (DS 78), in which he listed his Alpine and Spanish achievements, reported his current difficulties, demanded money and supplies, and finally warned Rome that the war might reach Italy.⁸⁶ This contrasts with Plutarch's description of the letter, which only cites Pompeius' logistical needs and the threat of the war escalating.⁸⁷ Hence, the magisterial dispatch to the Senate was a multi-functional mechanism that frequently conveyed a variety of achievements and concerns in a single text.

The route which a dispatch took from the battlefield to the Senate involved a number of steps that could significantly influence how and even whether it was disseminated. Figure 3 provides a generalised flow chart marking out these key steps.

⁸⁴ Pompeius' dispatch from Spain (DS 79), as reproduced in Sallust's *Histories* 2.98, will not be regarded as extant on account of the possibility that Sallust edited the original.

⁸⁵ DS 4: the Roman defeat at Cannae; DS 7: supply problems in Sardinia; DS 33 two animal prodigies; DS 47: inability to return from Cisalpine Gaul for elections; DS 10: Cn. Scipio requests for a furlough from or a replacement for his *provincia* of Nearer Spain.

⁸⁶ Sall. *Hist.* 2.98; following the Maurenbrecher 1891-3 edition.

⁸⁷ Plut. *Pomp.* 20.

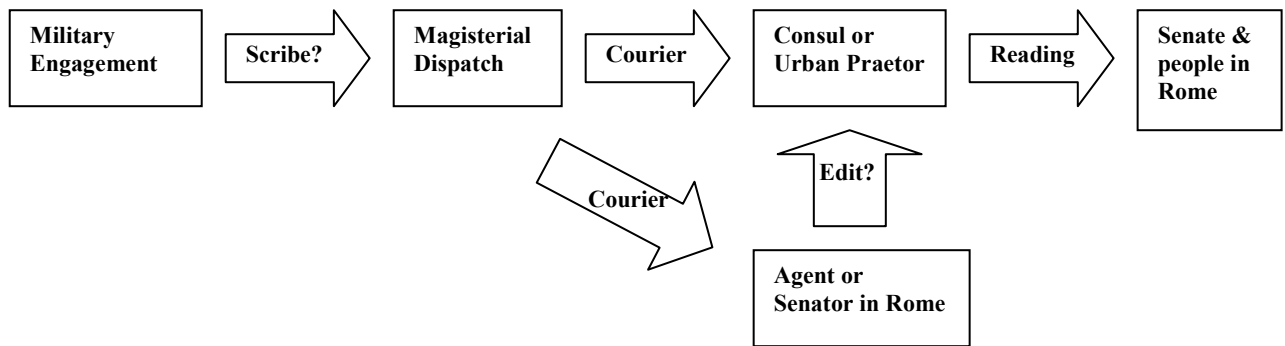


Figure 3. Dispatches from the Battlefield to Rome

The preceding section looked at the writing, sealing and couriering of dispatches; the latter part of this process (their dissemination in Rome) will now be dealt with.

After being couriered to Rome, a dispatch might be handed directly to a consul or urban praetor, as shown in 168 BC when Paullus' Pydna dispatch (DS 70) was delivered by his personal legates to the consul C. Licinius, who consequently called a meeting of the Senate.⁸⁸ On other occasions the dispatch might be given over to an agent or associate of the field commander prior to it reaching the senior resident magistrate. This is demonstrated in April 43 by Cicero's actions in relation to correspondence from the proconsul Plancus in Transalpine Gaul.

... Munatius gave me the letter you had sent him together with your official dispatch for me to read. We decided to lay the dispatch immediately before Cornutus, the Urban Praetor, who in the absence of the Consuls is discharging consular functions according to

⁸⁸ Livy 45.1.7-8.

traditional practice. The Senate was convoked at once and met in large numbers, attracted by the report of your dispatch and their eagerness to hear it.⁸⁹

In a similar way it is probable that Caesar's epistolary agents in Rome, Oppius and Balbus, were responsible not only for the delivery of Caesar's Gallic dispatches to the resident magistrate, but also for spreading the word to senators in Rome that an official report had arrived from Gaul (DS 88, 91 and 92).⁹⁰ The efforts and concerns that preceded a dispatch's reading are highlighted in May 43 when Decimus Brutus sent in a dispatch (DS 118); in an accompanying private letter to Cicero, Brutus states that:

Will you be good enough to read beforehand the dispatch I am sending to the Senate and make any alterations you think proper?⁹¹

This is probably an unusual case as Brutus recognised both Cicero's current prominence within the Senate and his literary skills. Nonetheless, one wonders what these alterations entailed. Did Cicero make corrections to the original copy prior to delivering it to the resident magistrate? It is unlikely that Cicero wrote up a fresh dispatch based on the original, since this would have seen the loss of Brutus' *signum* and possibly his handwriting, diminishing the dispatch's authenticity and legitimacy. Regardless, these examples indicate that certain commanders, at least during the late Republic, were relying on associates in Rome to assess the quality of their report and, above all, that they were very conscious about how their reports would impact on the assembled senators.

⁸⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 10.12.2-3: "... mihi Munatius eas litteras legendas dedit, quas ipsi miserat, et eas, quas publice placuit nobis, ut statim ad Cornutum praetorem urbanum litteras deferremus, qui, quod consules aberant, consulare munus sustinebat more maiorum: senatus est continuo convocatus frequensque convenit propter famam atque expectationem tuarum litterarum".

⁹⁰ Cic. *Q Fr.* 2.11.4; 3.1.8; see Wiseman 1998, 4.

⁹¹ Cic. *Fam.* 11.19.1: "ad senatum quas litteras misi, velim prius perlegas et, si qua tibi videbuntur, commutes".

How many senators actually assembled for these reports would have been a major factor in their primary dissemination; in his later letters, Cicero reassures a number of commanders that their dispatches were read out to well-attended sittings of the Senate (*frequens senatus*).⁹² Such comments indicate that the numbers attending each Senate sitting could vary. (As discussed in section two of the second chapter, before Sulla's reforms, the total number of senators was around 300 with attested quorums of 100 or 150 senators, pointing to variable attendance numbers.⁹³ After Sulla's reforms, the total membership was around 600 with maximum attendances of over 400).⁹⁴ Thus, the timing of a dispatch's delivery could significantly influence the size of its senatorial audience and *frequens*, as used by Cicero, would appear to be a relative term indicating a good turnout for that time of year.

The effort these commanders and their agents put into the writing and delivery of these dispatches was not simply about self-publicity. The Senate was the body that oversaw the state's foreign policy, including the power to extend a commander's *imperium*; it also awarded Rome's most prestigious military honours such as the triumph. It was an audience of the commander's aristocratic peers, including his friends and family as well as his rivals and political enemies. A number of these senators had already commanded legions and sent dispatches or served as junior officers, so they understood military campaigning as well as the various mechanisms available for publicising martial deeds. In addition, Austin and Rankov highlight how the Senate was heavily dependent on the written intelligence they received from their overseas commanders, as this influenced their foreign policy decisions and the allocation

⁹² Cic. *Fam.* 10.16.1 in May 43 Cicero tells Plancus of his dispatch, "it was delivered to Cornutus during a well-attended meeting of the Senate (redditae sunt enim frequenti senatu Cornuto)"; Cf. Cic. *Fam.* 10.12.3 & 12.25.1 for *frequens senatus* in this context; Ryan 1998, 19-22, argues that the term *frequens senatus* might refer to a specific category of senatorial meeting in which magisterial *litterae* were read out during the civil wars. This theory, however, rests primarily on Cicero's colloquial comments and these include positive descriptions of the atmosphere at these senatorial assemblies, all of which probably points to *frequens senatus* being part of Cicero's attempts to reassure the magistrates who sent the *litterae*.

⁹³ Lintott 1999, 70; *CIL* 1² 581; Livy 42.28.9.

⁹⁴ Lintott 1999, 70; Cic. *Att.* 1.14.15 for a total of 415 senators in 61; *Red. Sen.* 26 for a total of 417 in 57.

of consular *provinciae*.⁹⁵ Finally, it must be stressed that the Senate on the whole benefited politically from Rome's overseas successes and, as Eckstein points out, the relationship between Senate and general was frequently that of trust, understanding, and co-operation.⁹⁶

The relationship between the commander and the senior resident magistrate responsible for reading the dispatch to the Senate is significant, since if the consul or urban praetor was a political rival he could affect the transmission of the commander's martial achievement.⁹⁷ This happened in 173 when the consul M. Popilius Laenas sent a dispatch to Rome about his victory over the Ligurian Statelliates (DS 68).⁹⁸ Livy states that A. Atilius the praetor read this out to the Senate, which caused outrage because the Statelliates, far from being aggressors, were *dediticii*.⁹⁹ As a result, the assembled senators passed a decree instructing Popilius to restore the liberty and property of the Statelliates.¹⁰⁰ This caused Popilius to return to Rome and summon the Senate:

He assailed at great length the praetor who, although by reason of the success in the war he ought to have put to the Senate a motion that honour be paid to the immortal gods, had proposed a decree of the Senate directed against Popilius and in favour of the enemy.¹⁰¹

This indicates that the senior resident magistrate who read out a commander's dispatch could significantly influence its reception. Although the subsequent decree against Popilius was a

⁹⁵ Austin & Rankov 1995, 104: "until the Senate received an official dispatch from one of its governors, it had to rely for its information about a province on rumour, on letters sent privately to individual members or their friends, or on reports sent by neighbouring client princes".

⁹⁶ Eckstein 1987, 323.

⁹⁷ Brennan 2000, 101, states that this task was frequently performed by the urban praetor. He does not, however, emphasize the political significance of this duty.

⁹⁸ Livy 42.8.3.

⁹⁹ Livy 42.8.5: "... deditos in fidem populi Romani ..."; Sherwin-White 1973, 60-1.

¹⁰⁰ Livy 42.8.8.

¹⁰¹ Livy 42.9.3: "multis uerbis inuectus in praetorem, qui, cum ob rem bello bene gestam uti diis immortalibus honos haberetur referre ad senatum debuisset, aduersus se pro hostibus senatus consultum fecisset".

separate action, the convening magistrate had considerable powers during a meeting and, moreover, was responsible for initiating some of the proposals that followed these military reports, as demonstrated here. Popilius' case shows that the Senate could react adversely to a dispatch, and we must not discount the possibility that Atilius, a more junior magistrate than Popilius, had been urged on by one of the consul's more politically substantial rivals. Cicero was conscious of the resident magistrate's influence over a dispatch's dissemination and, as part of his efforts to gain recognition for his Cilician campaign, he wrote warm and encouraging letters to both consuls in Rome, C. Marcellus and L. Paullus, in late 51 BC about the reading of his Pindenissum dispatch as well as the subsequent decrees.¹⁰²

Similar concerns were probably a significant factor in explaining why some commanders employed a trusted lieutenant to carry the dispatch to Rome, as when Scipio Africanus sent C. Laelius to Rome.¹⁰³ Laelius' presence would have given the incoming news added prominence and also enabled the Senate to question someone close to the events described. For instance, according to Livy, Laelius, upon returning to Rome in 203, gave the Senate "a full and careful account of the operations in Africa".¹⁰⁴ During his African command especially, Scipio wanted to maintain a good relationship with many of the senators in Rome to ensure the prorogation of his command, and so prevent his supersession, since certain rival magistrates had demonstrated their eagerness to take over.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Cic. *Fam.* 15.10.1, to the consul Marcellus; "allow me to request you to ensure that, when my dispatch has been read to the Senate, a decree follows in terms as handsome as possible"; Cf. 15.13 to the other consul Paullus.

¹⁰³ Livy 27.7; 30.16.

¹⁰⁴ Livy 30.17.1: "quaeque in Africa gesta essent omnia ordine exposuit patribus".

¹⁰⁵ *MRR* 1.308; 310-2; 315; 317; Livy 29.13.3 & 30.1.10-11 Scipio's command was prorogued in 204 and 203; Livy 30.24.1-4; 27.1-5; 38.6-7; 39.1-3; of these rival magistrates the most notable were the consul Cn. Servilius Caepio in 203 and the consul Ti. Claudius Nero in 202; apparently the dictator P. Sulpicius Galba restrained Servilius from crossing to Africa; whilst Claudius had expressed a strong wish for the command and was assigned Africa in 202, but delays due to preparations and storms prevented him from sailing before the campaign had been finished.

In extreme cases the senior resident magistrate could even prevent a commander's dispatch from being read out to the Senate. This is demonstrated in events surrounding a dispatch from Julius Caesar concerning his current Gallic command, which was carried by the tribune Curio for the Senate meeting of 1st January 49 (DS 102). According to Caesar himself and Dio, Curio gave it to the consuls, C. Claudius Marcellus and L. Cornelius Lentulus Crus, as they reached the curia, but they refused to deliver it, until the tribunes Q. Cassius Longinus and M. Antonius compelled them to do so.¹⁰⁶ Plutarch gives another version where the consuls and Senate did not want the dispatch disseminated, but Antonius read it out to a *contio*.¹⁰⁷ These accounts highlight how the consuls appreciated the political value that the oral dissemination of a dispatch entailed, since its reading to the Senate would have acknowledged Caesar as the legitimate commander of Gaul. Their failure in suppressing it was probably an important factor, alongside the other letters that Caesar sent out to the Italian towns, in the high level of support that Caesar subsequently received in Rome and Italy when he headed south across the Rubicon.¹⁰⁸

In most cases, however, if the Senate or presiding magistrate agreed, a commander's dispatch, particularly if it bore victorious news, would be read out to a *contio* in Rome. The consular dispatches reporting the victory over Hasdrubal in 207 were subsequently read out to a *contio* (DS 25), as was Aemilius Paullus' dispatch in 168 (DS 70).¹⁰⁹ Such additional oral dissemination to the urban *plebs* was politically significant, especially if the victorious commander stood for later magisterial office, as when the consuls Nero and Livius, who

¹⁰⁶ Caes. *B Civ.* 1.1; Dio 41.1.2; App. *BC* 2.32.

¹⁰⁷ Plut. *Caes.* 30 & *Ant.* 5; Gelzer 1968, 190.

¹⁰⁸ Dio 41.10.2: "And he [Caesar] sent letters throughout Italy in which he challenged Pompeius to some kind of trial and encouraged the others to be of good cheer, bade them remain in their places, and made them many promises".

¹⁰⁹ Livy 27.50; 45.1

commanded the Roman forces at the Metaurus, successfully stood for the censorship in 204.¹¹⁰ This is because, even in the timocratic electoral assembly of the *comitia centuriata*, the votes of the lower voting classes were of some value.¹¹¹ How and why commanders and their allies targeted non-senators with their letters will be analysed in the subsequent section of this chapter.

A significant change to the dispatch process came during the consulship of Julius Caesar in 59 BC, in which he passed legislation to publish the *acta diurna*, which according to Suetonius meant: “the proceedings, both of the Senate and of the people should be published on a daily basis”.¹¹² Exactly where and how this information was displayed in Rome is difficult to say; how widely it was disseminated would have been partly dependant on the literacy levels of its readers. This publication of public business would have doubtless included some sort of reference to any magisterial dispatches that had been read out in the Senate as well as the related decrees, and thus this would have given these reports additional promotion. Suetonius unfortunately does not indicate Caesar’s motives for this legislation. Was it simply a *popularis* policy to gain the political support of the *plebs* by making sure the Senate did not withhold information about its proceedings?¹¹³ It is also conceivable that Caesar was planning ahead for his military campaigns and wanted to ensure his future achievements reached a wider audience in Rome. Under Augustus it would appear that the *acta diurna* were curtailed. This assumption, however, relies primarily on a brief note in Suetonius that the publication of senatorial records was now forbidden and on Dio’s generalised description of how political decision-making in Rome had now developed a covert

¹¹⁰ Livy 29.37.

¹¹¹ Lintott 1999, 61; Yakobson 1999, 48-49 & 59-64.

¹¹² Suet. *Iul.* 20.1: “tam senatus quam populi diurna acta confierent et publicarentur”.

¹¹³ Baldwin 1979, 191.

nature within the imperial household.¹¹⁴ Nonetheless, the customary habit of sending dispatches to the Senate from field commanders continued, including those from the Emperor when he was on campaign.¹¹⁵

Military success¹¹⁶

Publicae litterae were an excellent conduit by which Roman commanders could inform the Senate and people of Rome of their military successes, and at least 45 of the 126 attested dispatches reported victory in one form or another (see Table 3).¹¹⁷ The extant dispatch of the quaestor P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther from 43 exemplifies this when reporting his naval operations against the Caesarian leader Dolabella (DS 119).

Accordingly, when I arrived in Lycia from Rhodes with the squadron I already had, I took over the freighters [which Dolabella has commandeered] and returned them to their owners. My principal fear, that Dolabella and his ruffians might get to Italy, was thus at an end. I pursued the fleet as far as Side, which district forms the border of my province.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Suet. *Aug.* 36 lists a number of Augustan innovations including “that the proceedings of the Senate should not be published”; Dio 53.19.2-3 following the constitutional reforms of 27 BC Dio states that “formerly all business was transacted by the Senate and people, even when it concerned remote territories ... From that time most matters began to be dealt with in secret and behind closed doors”.

¹¹⁵ Talbert 1984, 230; Millar 1975, 352; Tac. *Ann.* 3.47, following the suppression of the Gallic revolt of Iulius Florus and Iulius Sacrovir in AD 21: “Tiberius wrote informing the Senate about both the outbreak and completion of the war”; Tac. *Agr.* 39 cites a dispatch from Agricola in AD 84; Dio 78.22.3 cites a dispatch from Caracalla in AD 215. However, since the magistrates who now governed frontier *provinciae* came under the *imperium* of the *princeps*, it is likely that these letters now went through him and the imperial household prior to any subsequent dissemination, as demonstrated by Pliny’s set of letters to Trajan from Bithynia. The phenomenon of dispatches during the Imperial period, though outside the period of this study, is an area requiring further research.

¹¹⁶ This sub-section encompasses a broad look at the dispatches that conveyed military success. Their specific role in winning triumphs and *supplicationes* are treated in the subsequent sub-section.

¹¹⁷ We do not know whether the sending of dispatches was mandatory. Table 3, though, strongly suggests that it was customary practice for our period of 219-19 BC.

¹¹⁸ Cic. *Fam.* 12.15: “itaque, cum ab Rhodo cum iis, quas habueramus, navibus in Lyciam venissemus, naves onerarias recepimus dominisque restituimus, idemque, quod maxime verebatur, ne posset Dolabella cum suis

This is a subtle piece of self-promotion, because although Lentulus did not participate in any direct fighting, he portrays his seizure of Dolabella's transport vessels and his subsequent pursuit of the Caesarians as if he has saved Italy, which coincidentally is the destination of the letter. Additionally, the labelling of Dolabella's men as *latrones* robs them of their military legitimacy.

If a junior magistrate was able and willing to exploit his written report for this subtle piece of self-promotion, what might more senior magistrates report when successfully leading numerous legions? Consider Flaminius' dispatches from Greece during the 190s (DS 38 and 42) and Caesar's from Gaul in the 50s (DS 88, 92 and 93). These letters would have ensured that, in the midst of their lengthy overseas campaigns, their names were being speedily publicised in Rome alongside details of their outstanding achievements.¹¹⁹ Such promotion was a product of the competitive environment of the Roman elite, where aristocrats needed to maintain their name and military reputation within the political heart of Republic: the Senate and Forum of Rome. This ephemeral, yet efficient medium, enabled commanders, who were on extended campaign hundreds of miles from Rome, to achieve this goal. For example, in 73 Lucullus, though over 900 hundred miles away from Rome at Lampsacus, was able to report through his dispatch that he had cleared Mithridates' forces out of Asia (DS 81).¹²⁰

On occasion, a wholly exaggerated picture of a commander's actions could be presented in a dispatch. After an inconclusive battle near Gereonium in late 217 BC between the forces of Hannibal and those of the Master of Horse M. Minucius Rufus, the latter still claimed a victory, with Livy stating that "though the losses were nearly equal, a report reached Rome,

latronibus in Italiam venire, timere desuimus: classem fugientem persecuti sumus usque Sidam, quae extrema regio est provinciae meae".

¹¹⁹ For example, Livy 33.24; 34.42; Caes. *B Gall.* 2.35; 4.38; 7.90.

¹²⁰ App. *Mith.* 77.

together with a letter full of braggadocio from Minucius” (DS 2).¹²¹ This report appears to have been responsible in part for Minucius being decreed equal *imperium* with the dictator Fabius Maximus through a tribunician bill.¹²² Thus, the contents of his dispatch were a key factor in increasing a magistrate’s *auctoritas* and consequently his *imperium*.¹²³

There is even the odd case where one commander utilised his successes in a dispatch to belittle another’s military achievements. This appears to occur in 71 after Crassus had defeated Spartacus’ main army in south-eastern Italy near Brundisium, and Pompeius, returning to Italy after the Sertorian War, had overwhelmed a separate group of around 5000 slaves who had fled north.¹²⁴ Pompeius subsequently sent a dispatch to Rome (DS 82). According to Plutarch, Pompeius claimed that he had completed the suppression of the revolt; and Plutarch interpreted this as a deliberate attempt to take away from Crassus’ *gloria*.¹²⁵ This account highlights a tension magistrates faced: between their responsibility to report events to the Senate and their desire for self-advertisement. On the one hand, Pompeius had good cause to report his actions against this slave revolt, an insurrection which had caused substantial Roman troop losses as well as considerable damage to the Roman property and prestige.¹²⁶ On the other hand, Pompeius was doubtless aware that such a dispatch could also take the shine off Crassus’ recent achievements. Alongside his Spanish successes, this report would have enhanced Pompeius’ reputation for completing military campaigns.

¹²¹ Livy 22.24: “tamen in tam pari prope clade vanam famam egregiae victoriae cum vanioribus litteris magistri equitum Romam perlatam”.

¹²² Livy 22.25; Goldsworthy 2000, 195.

¹²³ Walsh 1961, 89 & 117; Livy drew on Fabius Pictor’s history as a source for his narrative of the Second Punic War. Therefore, if Livy employed a source that frequently favoured the Fabii for the earlier Gereonium engagement, it is very possible that Fabius Maximus was depicted in a much better light than Minucius, so explaining the negative image that Minucius’ receives.

¹²⁴ App. *BC* 1.120; Plut. *Pomp.* 21.

¹²⁵ Plut. *Cras.* 11 & *Pomp.* 21: “he [Pompeius] completely annihilated them and then stole a march on Crassus by writing a letter to the Senate to the effect that although Crassus had defeated the gladiators in pitched battle, he had eradicated every last trace of war”.

¹²⁶ For example Plut. *Cras.* 9 for the slaughter of the praetor L. Cossinius and his men by Spartacus in 73.

This tension between duty and self-praise in a dispatch is further emphasized in Polybius' account of A. Postumius' behaviour in 146 during the Achaean War, when Postumius was in Greece as an ambassador (DS 75).¹²⁷

... when the battle in Phocis took place, he feigned indisposition and retired to Thebes so as not to have to take part in the fight, and when it was over he was the first to write to the Senate about the victory, adding abundance of detail as if he had himself taken part in the engagement.¹²⁸

Polybius' perception is that the cowardly Postumius exploited the Roman victory over the Achaeans at the Battle of Chaeronea for undeserved self-promotion.¹²⁹ Polybius' negative portrayal of Postumius was probably influenced by his personal dislike of him.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, as Walbank points out, why should Postumius not report the Chaeronea engagement to Rome, especially seeing that Postumius was the highest ranking senator in Greece prior to the arrival of the consul L. Mummius?¹³¹ In addition, on account of Postumius' presence at Thebes at the time of the battle, less than 30 miles from Chaeronea, he was probably provided with the "abundance of detail" soon after the engagement which Polybius states was included in this dispatch.¹³² Thus, due to his seniority and the fact that he

¹²⁷ *MRR* 1.467-8.

¹²⁸ Polyb. 39.1.11-2: ... καθ' ὃν καιρὸν συνέβαινε γίνεσθαι τὴν ἐν Φωκίδι μάχην, σκηψάμενος ἀσθένειαν εἰς Θήβας ἀνεχώρησεν χάριν τοῦ μὴ μετασχεῖν τοῦ κινδύνου· συντελεσθείσης δὲ τῆς μάχης πρῶτος ἔγραψε τῇ συγκλήτῳ περὶ τοῦ κατορθώματος, προσδιασαφῶν τὰ κατὰ μέρος, ὡς μετεσχηκῶς αὐτὸς τῶν ἀγώνων.

¹²⁹ Paus. 7.15.3; Cf. Chapter 5, Section 1 on L. Verus' exploitation of others' military achievements during the Parthian War of AD 161-6.

¹³⁰ Walbank 1979, 726; Polyb. 33.1.3-8; this dislike was owed in part to Postumius being the urban praetor who presided over a meeting of the Senate in 155 that decreed the continued detention of the Achaean hostages.

¹³¹ Walbank 1979, 728; *MRR* 1.454-5; Degrassi 1947, 52; Livy *Per.* 48; Postumius had held the consulship in 151 BC.

¹³² Polyb. 39.1.12.

had this important news to hand, Postumius was possibly under an obligation to report this successful military action.

Triumphs and *supplicationes*

The most prominent manifestation of an individual aristocrat's success was the triumph, where a victorious commander, standing conspicuously attired in his triumphal *quadriga*, led his army and a display of booty and prisoners through the streets of Rome to the Capitol.¹³³ The sources frequently detail the efforts that aristocrats undertook in order to win a triumph: first of all, through military success on campaign, and then secondly, by ensuring that it was recognised back in Rome. As analysed in chapter two, an *imperator* upon reaching Rome could assemble the Senate and request a triumph with an account of his victorious campaign. Prior to his return he could still target the Senate through his official dispatches; these will be the focus of this section. Private letters to key magistrates and senators also played a significant role in a triumphal canvas, and they will be looked at in the subsequent section.

First of all, following the reception of a victorious dispatch from a commander the Senate frequently voted for a congratulatory *supplicatio*, a ceremony that rendered thanks to the gods; this rite commonly, but not always, preceded a triumph and so was a significant step.¹³⁴ For instance, Cicero was voted a *supplicatio*, but did not receive a triumph; whilst the proconsul P. Vatinius following his Illyrian and Dalmatian campaign of 45 received both honours, and in an earlier letter to Cicero, Vatinius states that a lack of *supplicationes* would

¹³³ See Künzl 1988, 30-44 & 65-108, for the triumphal procession; see Beard 2007, 107-142, on the role of the captives in the procession, and 143-186, for the diversity of the booty displayed in the parade.

¹³⁴ Richardson 1975, 59; Halkin 1953, 9-13; there were three sorts of *supplicationes*: expiatory (usually decreed following a calamity), propitiatory (intended to gain the future good-will of the god), and congratulatory (usually following the report of military victory).

hurt his claim.¹³⁵ Furthermore, of the 45 dispatches that reported victories, the sources state that 20 *supplicationes* were subsequently decreed, and there were probably more unreported *supplicationes*.¹³⁶

The *supplicatio* ceremony in itself was an excellent means of publicity for the commander, since the rite required the men and women of Rome to participate in public sacrifices of wine and incense at all the city's temples in order to thank the gods for the victory.¹³⁷ This high level of participation by the people of Rome appears not to have occurred for other rites. Thus, the victorious campaign, and presumably the magistrate's name as well, would have been part of this extensive public thanksgiving ritual. Furthermore, its proficient means for publicising a *fama militaris* was doubtless a major factor in the increasing length of the *supplicationes* awarded during the late Republic.¹³⁸

As with triumphal oratory, it was the content of the public dispatches that primarily influenced the listening senators. However, one must not dismiss its epiphenomena; in particular the laurels, the title *imperator*, and the person responsible for delivering the dispatch. Unfortunately there is no extant official dispatch reporting a victory that went on to win a triumph. Nonetheless, through the analysis of the contents of the extant private letters as

¹³⁵ Hutchinson 1998, 87; Versnel 1970, 172; Cic. *Fam.* 15.11.1; mentions Cicero's *supplicatio* of May 50 BC; *Fam.* 5.10B mentions the *supplicationes* decreed in honour of Vatinius' effort in 45; Cic. *Fam.* 5.10C: "One might think that I had not done fully enough in Dalmatia to entitle me to a triumph. Or am I supposed to wait until I have finished the whole war? Dalmatia has 20 towns of ancient foundation, more than 60 adopted later into the confederacy. If no *supplicationes* are decreed me until I take them all, then I am on a very different footing from other *imperatores*"; Degraasi 1947, 567-8; according to the Capitoline *fasti* Vatinius eventually triumphed in 42.

¹³⁶ See table 3: DS 25, 32, 35, 36, 38, 40, 42, 43, 49, 58, 66, 70, 85, 88, 92, 93, 99, 100, 103, 110.

¹³⁷ Halkin 1953, 100-1; Turcan 2000, 89 & 100; Scheid 2003, 109; Livy 45.2.6-7, following the arrival of Paullus' Pydna dispatch, Livy describes the subsequent *supplicatio* thus: "Rejoicing started afresh when the consul proclaimed that all sacred buildings should be opened; and from this meeting individual citizens went off on their own account to offer thanks to the gods, and throughout the city the temples of the immortal gods were filled with a huge throng, not only of men, but of women too".

¹³⁸ Halkin, 1953, 38-61; Cic. *Prov. cons.* 27; Caes. *B Gall.* 2.35; 4.37; 7.90; Dio 43.14.3; 43.42.2; *supplicationes* originally lasted for one day, yet Pompeius' in 63 and 62 lasted 10 and 12 days respectively, and Julius Caesar's five *supplicationes* in 57, 55, 52, 46 and 45 were 15, 20, 20, 40 and 50 days respectively.

well as the references to victorious dispatches, we can catch a glimpse of some of their persuasive traits.

One of the major themes of these victorious dispatches was the quality and nature of the writer's generalship, not so much in the sense of grand strategy, but more his personal participation in the successful action. For instance, in a private letter to Cicero, Vatinius emphasizes his personal participation in his Illyrian campaign through the use of the first person and the mention of the difficult weather conditions he had to endure:

Six towns I stormed by force and captured. This single town, the largest of them all, I have taken four times; for I took four towers and four walls, and their whole citadel as well, from which I was forcibly dislodged by snow, cold and rain.¹³⁹

Like the contents of triumphal oratory, we see a commander enumerate his military successes in such a way as to demonstrate that he is a master of detail. In the subsequent direct and indirect references to victorious dispatches, we will see a constant employment of numbers by commanders to give scope and scale to their documented achievements. Additionally, the *imperator's* individual participation might not necessarily involve him actually fighting, but frequently his orchestration of the victorious engagement. In a letter to Cato about his siege of Pindenissum, Cicero gives us an idea of such a performance.

... I marched my army off to Pindenissum, a town of the Free Cilicians on a very elevated and strongly fortified position ... I surrounded the town with a stockade and trench; I fenced it in with six forts and extensive encampments; I attacked it with earthworks,

¹³⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 5.10B: "sex oppida vi oppugnando cepi, unum horum, quod erat maximum, quater a me iam captum; quattuor enim turris et quattuor muros cepi at arcem eorum totam. ex qua me nives, frigora, imbres detruserunt ...".

mantlets, and towers, and by means of a large number of catapults and a strong force of bowmen, with no little personal exertion ... I completed the operation in fifty-seven days, so that when every quarter of the city had been either dismantled or burnt, they were driven to extremities and surrendered to me unconditionally.¹⁴⁰

Again we see selected details: the considerable siege-works that circumvallated the town as well as the use of numbers to give Cato a specific assessment of Cicero's achievement. Again there is the frequent use of the first person as well as other details by Cicero to convince Cato of his individual military skill and effort, such as "with no little personal exertion".

If we look at the account of the same engagement that Cicero provides to his close friend Atticus, we catch a glimpse of the type of details that a commander might omit from his official dispatch.

I was at Pindenissum, the most strongly fortified town in Eleutherocilicia and engaged in war as long as men can remember. The inhabitants were keen warriors, thoroughly prepared to withstand a siege. We encompassed it with a stockade and ditch, with big entrenchments, penthouses, a tall tower, a large supply of artillery and a number of archers. With a great deal of labour and apparatus and many of our men wounded but none killed, we settled the business. The Saturnalia was certainly a merry time, for men as well as officers. I gave them the whole plunder excepting the captives, who are being sold off today, the third day of the Saturnalia. At the time of writing, the sum realized at the auction has reached about 120,000 sesterces.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Cic. *Fam.* 15.4.10-11: "... ad oppidum Eleutherocilicum Pindenissum exercitum adduxi. quod cum esset altissimo et munitissimo loco ... vallo et fossa circumdedi, sex castellis castrisque maximis saepsi, aggere, vineis, turribus oppugnavi usque tormentis multis, multis sagittariis magno labore meo ... septimo quinquagesimo die rem confeci, ut omnibus partibus urbis disturbatis aut incensis compulsi in potestatem meam pervenirent".

¹⁴¹ Cic. *Att.* 5.20.5: "nos ad Pindenissum, quod oppidum munitissimum Eleutherocilicum omnium memoria in armis fuit; feri homines et acres et omnibus rebus ad defendendum parati. cinximus vallo et fossa; aggere maximo, vineis, turre altissima, magna tormentorum copia, multis sagittariis, magno labore, apparatu multis

In this more intimate letter to Atticus, Cicero still shows careful composition, including a mention of Pindenissum's long established warlike nature as well as an asyndetic catalogue of his tactics. This contrasts to some extent with the account he sent Cato; above all, by the omission of the enslavements and the subsequent profit, the post-siege enjoyment of the troops during the Saturnalia, or the many Roman wounded. The letter to Cato was possibly more in the vein of his official dispatch, because Cicero appears to have edited out details that would distract from the positive picture he was presenting to Cato and the Senate.

The seizure of a city or the defeat of a state or people, particularly if they were well-known, would have provided excellent justification for an eventual triumph within a victorious dispatch. This was probably one of the initial means whereby commanders became closely associated with a specific city or region or people, some of them even taking soubriquets from their conquests.¹⁴² Cicero alludes to the practice of being associated with one's conquest when he tells Atticus about the difficulty of promoting Pindenissum, since it and its inhabitants were unknown back in Rome.

'What' you'll say, 'Who are those Pindenissitae? I have never heard of the name.' Well that's no fault of mine. I couldn't make Cilicia into Aetolia or Macedonia.¹⁴³

In addition, by reporting the fall of the key enemy city within a dispatch, a commander was frequently implying that the military campaign had been completed. For instance, Scipio

sauciis nostris, incolumi exercitu, negotium confecimus. hilara sane Saturnalia militibus quoque quibus exceptis <captivis> reliquam praedam concessimus. mancipia venibant Saturnalibus tertiis; cum haec scribebam, in tribunali res erat ad HS CXX".

¹⁴² Hopkins 1978, 25; Harris 1985, 21; Degrassi 1947, 468; for instance, there was Marcellus' link to Syracuse and Mummius' to Corinth; in relation to soubriquets the Scipiones to Africa, and in the 130s BC D. Iunius Brutus acquired the agnomen Callaicus after his defeat of the Iberian Callaeci.

¹⁴³ Cic. *Att.* 5.20.1. "quid, malum? isti Pindenissitae qui sunt?" inquires; 'nomen audivi numquam.' quid ego faciam? num potui Ciliciam Aetoliam aut Macedoniam reddere?"; Cic. *Fam.* 2.10.3, in an earlier letter to Caelius, whilst the siege was ongoing, Cicero again points to Pindenissum's lack of recognition.

Aemilianus informed the Senate by dispatch in 146 that he had taken Carthage, apparently in a cursory manner (DS 74).¹⁴⁴ In assessing this dispatch's impact on the Senate we should take into account not only that Carthage was one of Rome's most fearsome rivals, but also the context of the Third Punic War: a difficult three year campaign involving numerous setbacks and considerable Roman casualties.¹⁴⁵ Scipio was thus reporting the end of a long and arduous campaign in a straightforward lapidary manner with little if any embellishment.

Another prominent piece of news that demonstrated the completion of a campaign was the capture or death of the enemy leader, and this, I believe, was a common piece of information conveyed in a number of victorious dispatches. For example, upon the capture of King Perseus and his sons, Paullus sent a dispatch informing the Senate of this news (DS 71).¹⁴⁶ Within the sources, Perseus' treacherous behaviour is presented as the primary reason for the Third Macedonian War, including his alleged assassination plot against Rome's ally King Eumenes II of Pergamum.¹⁴⁷ As a consequence, Perseus himself was a key symbol of what the Romans were campaigning against. Thus, it is little wonder that his seizure was announced via a dispatch.¹⁴⁸ When one compares this Roman practice with the United States' exploitation of Saddam Hussein's capture in December 2004, when Paul Bremer (the then US administrator of Iraq) announced the seizure at a press conference with the sound-bite: "Ladies and Gentlemen, we got him", and then providing photographic and video pictures of the Iraqi

¹⁴⁴ Zonaras 9.30 "and he [Scipio] sent to the Senate the following message: "Carthage is taken. What are your orders now?" When these words had been read, they took counsel as to what should be done". Both Dio's narrative and consequently Zonaras' epitome possibly involved the editing and reduction of the earlier sources that cited Scipio's dispatch; Gelzer 1968, 260; Plut. *Caes.* 50.3; on the other hand, like Caesar's famous line of "*veni, vidi, vici*" in a letter to a friend C. Matius, we must not discount the possibility that Scipio also wrote an extremely cursory report.

¹⁴⁵ App. *Pun.* 118: tells of Hasdrubal's torture and execution of Roman prisoners of war; 124: mentions the destruction of Roman siege weapons by a Carthaginian night attack in 147. The consuls of 149 L. Marcus Censorinus and M'. Manilius were initially given the campaign, in 148 the consul L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus assumed the command, and then in 147 he was superseded by Scipio Aemilianus.

¹⁴⁶ Livy 45.13: "dispatches from Macedonia were then introduced, calculated to redouble the rejoicing over the victory; they reported that King Perseus was a prisoner of the consul".

¹⁴⁷ Polyb. 22.18.

¹⁴⁸ Plut. *Aem.* 33-4.

leader, we can see a similar attempt to exploit the capture of an enemy leader, through oral and visual reportage, as a symbolic end to a war.¹⁴⁹

Unfortunately the extant dispatches and secondary references do not provide substantial direct support for such an argument, since only Perseus' capture is specifically cited as being in a dispatch. Nonetheless, Cicero states in speech how:

... during my consulship [63 BC] and on my proposal a *supplicatio* for ten days was voted for the first time to Gnaeus Pompeius after Mithridates had been slain and the Mithridatic War concluded.¹⁵⁰

This strongly suggests that Pompeius sent a dispatch in 63 reporting the death of Mithridates, which would explain the subsequent *supplicatio*. In addition, Caesar describes in his commentaries the surrender of Vercingetorix shortly before citing his subsequent dispatches to Rome about the Gallic revolt of 52, suggesting that the chieftain's capture was included within these letters.¹⁵¹ The demise of both of these enemy leaders would have undoubtedly given these *imperatores'* dispatches added potency, and thus the promotion of similar information within other commanders' correspondence should not be dismissed.

One of the most prominent means of persuasion within these victorious dispatches was the enumeration of enemy dead. The sources on Roman warfare frequently give the number of enemy losses after an engagement, and some of these figures undoubtedly stem from commanders providing body-counts in their dispatches and other publicity media in Rome.

¹⁴⁹ *BBC News* 24, December 14th 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3317429.stm>, accessed 24th October 2007; Plut. *Aem.* 34.1; Livy 45.40.6; during Paullus' triumph, Perseus and his two sons were paraded, providing the people of Rome with a flesh and blood representation of the end of the Macedonian campaign.

¹⁵⁰ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 27: "... quo consule referente primum decem dierum est supplicatio decreta Cn. Pompeio Mithridate interfecto et confecto Mithridatico bello ...".

¹⁵¹ Caes. *B Gall.* 7.89-90.

Unlike the Egyptians, with the surviving illustrations of their body counts, we do not know how the Roman commanders made their calculations, but as demonstrated by their statements, Roman commanders frequently cited the enemy numbers that they had killed and captured.¹⁵²

Again we have to rely considerably on circumstantial evidence to support the argument that this type of information was being regularly included within their victorious dispatches. Fortunately, there were two pieces of legislation that directly support this argument. These laws have been given detailed analysis already in the oratory chapter and will not be revisited except for one feature from the second law of 62, since it deals directly with dispatches. According to Valerius Maximus, this law threatened generals with a penalty if they reported in their dispatches to the Senate “a false number of enemies killed in battle or of citizens lost.”¹⁵³ The later stipulation about the falsification of Roman losses is significant. The numbers of Roman dead cited in the literary sources after successful engagements are frequently low. Livy states that in 193 BC Cn. Cornelius Scipio lost only 73 men during an engagement in which 12,000 Lusitanians were cut down, and also that during the Battle of Pydna in 168 a mere 100 Romans were killed.¹⁵⁴ Cicero’s letter to Cato omits the number of Romans wounded, possibly a detail he also edited from his official dispatch.¹⁵⁵ This frequent lack of Roman casualties within the sources suggests the omission of such figures was a common practice, as demonstrated by Caesar’s failure to enumerate the Roman dead after his

¹⁵² Gutgesell 1998, 368; the Egyptians enumerated their enemy dead by cutting off the phallus and right hand of each corpse and then checking that both heaps of body parts matched, as illustrated by the reliefs on the twelfth century BC mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu; Livy 41.28.8-10 for the inscription Ti. Gracchus placed in his temple of Mater Matua that detailed his Sardinian campaign of 176, including: “in this *provincia* more than 80,000 of the enemy were slain or captured; Plin. *HN* 7.97: cites a statement Pompeius deposited in the temple of Minerva in 62, in which he claimed that he had routed, scattered, slain or received the surrender of 12,183,000 people.

¹⁵³ Val. Max. 2.8.1: “... poenam enim imperatoribus minatur qui aut hostium occisorum in proelio aut amissorum civium falsum numerum litteris senatui ausi essent referre ...”.

¹⁵⁴ Livy 35.1; 44.42.8: “Of the victors not more than one hundred fell and by far the greater part of them were Paeligni; somewhat more were wounded”; the Paeligni were Italian allied troops.

¹⁵⁵ Cic. *Att.* 5.20.5; *Fam.* 15.4.10-11.

successful, yet intensive, engagements against the Helvetii in 58 and at Alesia in 52.¹⁵⁶ The technological and organisational superiority of Roman armed forces, in comparison to the Hellenistic and especially the Celtic tribes of Spain and Gaul, meant that Roman casualties might be relatively small. Yet it is difficult to believe they were as low as the Livian statements suggest, particularly when one considers the frequent hand-to-hand combat involved in ancient warfare alongside the able, yet basic, nature of the Roman army medical service.¹⁵⁷

This all adds further support to the concern that Roman casualties were being played down by many commanders in their dispatches. This is not surprising since the Roman elite were conscious of the negative impact that dead troops could cause, as indicated by a decree of 90 BC that ordered Roman dead be buried where they fell and not returned to Rome.¹⁵⁸ Again we can look to the recent comparable behaviour of the United States' government over Iraq with their close control and manipulation of how American casualties are reported and perceived.¹⁵⁹ It also appears that some commanders were actively suppressing this information, as they knew it would harm their chances of being voted a triumph. This is highlighted in 193 when the triumphal request of the consul L. Cornelius Merula was

¹⁵⁶ Caes. *B Gall.* 1.26: in his description of his battle with the Helvetii, Caesar provides only a small hint of the Roman casualties, simply saying "because of the legionaries' wounds and the need to bury the dead, our men had been delayed for a period of three days"; *B Gall.* 7.68-90: in his account of the siege of Alesia he provides no details of Roman casualties. We have to be cautious in assuming that Caesar's dispatches closely mirrored his commentaries, but his practice there is suggestive.

¹⁵⁷ Goldsworthy 1996a, 41: "in the study of the armies of Rome's opponents it immediately becomes clear that these were markedly inferior in discipline, organisation, and tactics to the Roman army"; Davies 1970, 87-91, highlights the role and variety of *medici* in the Roman imperial army and argues, on the basis of sources like Celsus and the quality of recovered medical instruments, that these *medici* had the skills and means to perform difficult operations like missile extractions and limb amputations. Without modern day antibiotics and anaesthetics, however, the immediate and subsequent Roman casualty rates from close engagements would not have been negligible.

¹⁵⁸ App. *BC* 1.43.

¹⁵⁹ For instance, there is the deliberate minimizing of American wounded. In November 2004 *The Editor and Publisher* reported how 15,000 supposed non-battle injuries and diseases were not included within the official casualty lists being posted by the Pentagon, as a result only 9,300 wounded were officially counted, <http://www.editorandpublisher.com/eandp/search/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1000727180>, accessed January 15th 2005; on the 4th of November 2003, *BBC News 24* reported that the Pentagon since 1991 had banned any media photographing the return of American war dead, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/3239659.stm>>, accessed December 14th 2007.

successfully disputed in the Senate by the consular Q. Caecilius Metellus; Metellus' challenge included the citation of the heavy Roman losses that Merula had suffered when fighting the Gallic Boii, information that Metellus had received in a letter from one of Merula's legates, M. Claudius Marcellus.¹⁶⁰ This strongly suggests that Merula had either omitted or downplayed his losses in his epistolary and oral statements to the Senate.

Death and defeat

When Rome suffered setbacks, one wonders to what extent commanders and their legates were obliged to keep the Senate informed of events in the field. The sources do cite a number of dispatches that communicated the defeat and death of magistrates. Marcellus wrote to the Senate in 210 BC about the death of proconsul Cn. Fulvius Centumalus and two years later Marcellus' death was similarly reported by his consular colleague T. Quinctius Crispinus (DS 16 and 20).¹⁶¹ Livy, moreover, describes how the surviving consul C. Terentius Varro informed the Senate about the defeat at Cannae in 216 (DS 4).

... a letter from Terentius arrived, with the information that the consul Aemilius had perished with his army, and that he himself was at Canusium engaged in salvaging what he could from the wreck. He had with him about 10,000 men – bits and pieces from various units, and nothing like a coherent force.¹⁶²

It is difficult to assess to what extent Livy, or his source, has enhanced this report as part of the dramatic account of Cannae; nonetheless, it demonstrates a commander directly reporting

¹⁶⁰ Livy 35.8

¹⁶¹ Livy 27.2; Plut. *Marc.* 24; Livy 27.29.

¹⁶² Livy 22.56: "tum demum litterae a C. Terentio consule allatae sunt: L. Aemilium consulem exercitumque caesum; sese Canusi esse, reliquias tantae cladis uelut ex naufragio colligentem; ad decem milia militum ferme esse incompitorum inordinatorumque".

a defeat. As Rosenstein argues, military disaster was a hazard that the Roman aristocracy accepted, and as long as a commander behaved honourably, then a defeat was not something in most cases that needed to be concealed. As Rosenstein states: “what counted above all else in the eyes of the Romans was not generalship in a technical sense but leadership in a moral one”.¹⁶³ In some cases, though, by reporting the death of a fellow magistrate, a commander could be placing the cause of the defeat at the feet of his deceased rival. As highlighted in chapter five, Caesar, when describing the loss of one or more of his legions, liked to portray the decisions made by his deceased legates as the reasons why the disasters came about.¹⁶⁴

There were occasions when magistrates attempted to gloss over their failures. After the defeat at the river Trebia in 218, the surviving consul Ti. Sempronius Longus, according to Plutarch, wrote to the Senate stating that it was “a disputed and uncertain victory” (DS 1).¹⁶⁵ From one perspective, Longus’ behaviour could be interpreted as trying not to panic Rome with calamitous news. On the other hand, one could also understand how, in light of the confused engagement at the Trebia, with its bad weather and poor visibility, Longus might have seen the opportunity to conceal his incompetent generalship.¹⁶⁶ Another significant example of such misinformation is attributed to M. Antonius, after his disastrous campaign against the Parthians in 36 BC, in which there were an estimated 24,000 Roman and allied casualties. According to Dio, Antonius attempted to hide this defeat in his official letters to Rome (DS 125).¹⁶⁷ Unfortunately this story possibly derives from an Augustan source that

¹⁶³ Rosenstein 1990, 114.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Chapter 5, Section 4; Caes. *B Gall.* 5.26-38 for the loss of a legion commanded by Q. Sabinus in 54 and *B Civ.* 2.23-44 for the loss of three legions in Africa by C. Scribonius Curio in 49.

¹⁶⁵ Plut. *Fab.* 3: ἐψεύσατο τὴν νίκην ἐπίδικον αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀμφίδοξον γενέσθαι; Polyb. 3.75 states that Longus reported through messengers “that a battle had taken place and that the storm had deprived him of the victory”.

¹⁶⁶ Livy 21.56 tells how on the day of the battle there was rain, sleet and cold.

¹⁶⁷ Plut. *Ant.* 50: “there [in Armenia], Antonius conducted a review of his troops, and found that 20,000 foot soldiers and 4,000 horsemen had died; Dio 49.32.1: “The Romans at home were not ignorant of anything that had taken place, not because he told them the truth in his dispatches, for he concealed all his reverses and in fact described some of them as just the opposite, making it appear that he was meeting with success”; one wonders

discredited Antonius' image by presenting an example of how a traditional Roman commander should not behave, in that he was actively hiding his military failures, particularly the heavy loss in Roman lives. As mentioned earlier, the falsification of Roman casualty figures within dispatches was a practice that legislation in 62 attempted to curb.

Finally, one must consider the audience for such bad news. A dispatch that reported the death of a general or a heavy defeat would have been read initially to a sitting of the Senate. They then decided whether or not it was to be further disseminated. There is no evidence of any dispatches reporting a defeat actually being suppressed, but in 72 the Senate did apparently order the consuls "to keep quiet" following their failures against the Spartacus revolt.¹⁶⁸ One wonders though, if Plutarch's tale is accepted, how exactly the senatorial decree for such a 'gagging order' was worded. In any case, there was always a real possibility that information concerning a defeat might reach Rome through unofficial sources and it does appear in a number of cases that the Senate or consuls passed on the bad news to the people, such as after the disaster at Trasimene.¹⁶⁹ In performing this further dissemination, the Senate doubtlessly recognised that it was better for the people to receive an official line about a defeat rather than be influenced by private reports. Such recognition is highlighted in 193 BC when a number of senior senators, according to Livy, raised concerns that how unofficial reports about recent Roman setbacks in Spain were being manipulated by certain magistrates and their

how the people of Rome knew about Antonius' losses. Was Octavian or his allies keeping them informed through official announcements or were rumours being spread in a similar way to Domitius Ahenobarbus' actions in 51 during Caesar's Gallic campaign (Cic. *Fam.* 8.1.4)?

¹⁶⁸ Rosenstein 1990, 38; App. *BC* 1.43; Plut. *Cras.* 10: "On learning of this, the Senate angrily ordered the consuls to keep quiet (ταῦθ' ἡ βουλὴ πυθομένη τοὺς μὲν ὑπάτους πρὸς ὀργὴν ἐκέλευσεν ἡσυχίαν ἄγειν)". Perrin's 1916 Loeb edition translates ἡσυχίαν ἄγειν as 'to keep quiet', but, it can also mean 'to stay still'.

¹⁶⁹ Livy 22.7; after the news of the defeat at Lake Trasimene arrived at Rome, the urban praetor M. Pomponius announced the disaster to a *contio*.

associates in Rome for their own political ends.¹⁷⁰ This issue will be analysed in depth within the subsequent section on private letters.

Logistical difficulties

Roman commanders sometimes sent dispatches that cited a lack of supplies.¹⁷¹ In 216 BC the propraetors T. Otracilius Crassus and A. Cornelius Mammula, stationed in Sicily and Sardinia respectively, both informed the Senate about their forces' lack of grain and pay (DS 6 and 7).¹⁷² Later, in 169, the consul Q. Marcius Philippus combined in his written report details of his successful invasion of Macedonia with a request for horses and clothing from the Senate, an astute combination of good news alongside his current logistical needs (DS 69).¹⁷³

The nature of ancient warfare, in particular the hazards of overseas campaigns, which frequently involved stretched lines of communication and over-wintering in arduous and hostile territory, meant that supply difficulties were common, as demonstrated by the food shortages Caesar's legions suffered in Gaul during the winter of 54-53 BC.¹⁷⁴ Pompeius sent a dispatch in 75 from Spain of which Sallust provides a rewritten version (DS 79).¹⁷⁵ If Sallust has not wholly transformed the original document, Pompeius not only detailed his logistical problems, but also emphasized the personal cost Roman commanders faced when maintaining their armies in the field.

¹⁷⁰ Livy 35.2.6.

¹⁷¹ Table 3 contains six dispatches that cite logistical requirements: DS 6, 7, 8, 14, 69 & 79.

¹⁷² Livy 23.21; Val. Max. 7.6.1c.

¹⁷³ Livy 44.16.

¹⁷⁴ Caes. *B Gall.* 5.24; Goldsworthy 1996a, 287-296, gives a brief over-view of the logistical requirements of campaigning Roman armies; Roth 1999, 244-278, addresses various issues in his study on Roman army logistics including administration and responsibilities for maintaining the supplies of overseas forces.

¹⁷⁵ Sall. *Hist.* 2.98.1-10; McGushin 1992, 242; Spann 1987, 120-1 & 206; there is a question over the dispatch's authenticity as it appears in Sallust's *Histories*, a work that puts Pompeius in a negative light, since Sallust saw the actions of Pompeius and other prominent commanders as part of the decline of the Republic. Therefore, Sallust very probably tampered with the original dispatch.

For after having exposed me, in spite of my youth, to a most cruel war, you have, so far as in you lay, destroyed me and a faithful army by starvation, the most wretched of all deaths. Was it with such expectations that the Roman people sent its sons to war? Are these the rewards for wounds and for so often shedding our blood for our country? Wearied with writing letters and sending envoys, I have exhausted my personal resources and even my expectations, and in the meantime for three years you have barely given me the means of meeting a year's expenses. By the immortal gods! Do you think that I can play the part of a treasury or maintain an army without food and pay?¹⁷⁶

Prior to a campaign, the Senate allocated a financial budget for a magistrate's *provincia* (*ornare provinciam*) to pay for his staff, troops, and necessary supplies.¹⁷⁷ Roth, however, convincingly argues that “much of the authority over, and administration of, logistics was kept in the hands of the Senate”, citing Polybius' account of the constitution.¹⁷⁸ Nonetheless, during a number of campaigns when large concentrations of Roman troops were stationed in hostile territory, a magistrate frequently had to draw on his own or local resources to maintain his force, as Pompeius states above. Such logistical needs are further emphasized by Sulla's extensive exactions during his siege of Athens during 87-86.¹⁷⁹ On the other hand, a commander, on occasion, might not want to upset his allies through such extensive local exactions and so looked to the Senate for logistical support. Pompeius' dispatch also demonstrates that a magistrate could cleverly place the responsibility for Roman casualties on the Senate's shoulders by citing his supply difficulties. As part of this he refers back to his

¹⁷⁶ Sall. *Hist.* 2.98.1-3: “quem contra aetatem proiectum ad bellum saevissimum cum exercitu optume merito, quantum est in vobis, fame, miserruma omnium morte, confecistis. hacine spe populus Romanus liberos suos ad bellum misit? haec sunt praemia pro volneribus et totiens ob rem publicam fuso sanguine? fessus scribundo mittundoque legatos omnis opes et spes privatas meas consumpsi, cum interim a vobis per triennium vix annuus sumptus datus est. per deos immortalis, utrum censetis me vicem aerari praestare an exercitum sine frumento et stipendio habere posse?”

¹⁷⁷ Lintott 1993, 48 & 203; Polyb. 6.12.8; Cic. *Att.* 3.24.1.

¹⁷⁸ Roth 1999, 246; Polyb. 6.15.2-5.

¹⁷⁹ App. *Mith.* 30; Plut. *Sulla* 12.1-3.

previous requests via dispatches and legates to demonstrate his following of customary practice when asking Rome for support. Thus, even the representation of logistical problems might be manipulated by commanders in the epistolary representations of their campaigns.

A catalogue of military achievements

In addition to emphasising his supply difficulties, Pompeius also listed his recent military achievements within his Spanish dispatch (DS 79).

For within forty days of the time when I received from you the empty title of commander I had raised and equipped an army and driven the enemy, who were already at the throat of Italy, from the Alps into Spain; and over those mountains I had opened for you another and more convenient route than Hannibal had taken. I recovered Gaul, the Pyrenees, Lacetania, and the Indigetes; with raw soldiers and far inferior numbers I withstood the first onslaught of triumphant Sertorius.¹⁸⁰

Pompeius' punchy catalogue of achievements alongside the frequent use of the first person stresses how he wants his pre-eminent successes reciprocated by having his difficulties addressed by the Senate.¹⁸¹ He also included a warning that unless the Senate sent supplies and reinforcements "this army will pass over into Italy, bringing with it all the war in Spain".¹⁸² In light of the recent civil war that had engulfed Italy, Pompeius' threat had some

¹⁸⁰ Sall. *Hist.* 2.98.4-5: "quippe qui nomine modo imperi a vobis accepto, diebus quadraginta exercitum paravi hostisque in cervicibus iam Italiae agentis ab Alpibus in Hispaniam submovi; per eas iter aliud atque Hannibal, nobis opportunius, pate feci. Recepi Galliam, Pyrenaeum, Lacetanium, Indigetis et primum impetum Sertori victoris novis militibus et multo paucioribus sustinui".

¹⁸¹ McGushin 1992, 242: "the language in which these demands are couched, the barely concealed threats they contain are in keeping with the vanity and arrogance which were undoubtedly real traits of Pompeius' personality".

¹⁸² Sall. *Hist.* 2.98.10: "exercitus hinc et cum eo omne bellum Hispaniae in Italiam transgredientur".

weight, and he was not the first *imperator* to project his military achievements in a threatening manner to the Senate via a dispatch.

This behaviour is especially prominent during the civil wars of the late Republic, when certain commanders, who had won the loyalty of their troops, threatened the state by listing their military records. For instance, Sulla sent an aggressive dispatch in 84 (DS 77), which Appian details thus:

Sulla wrote arrogantly to the Senate with a catalogue of his achievements, against Jugurtha in Numidia when he was quaestor, in the Cimbric war when he was deputy commander, in Cilicia when he was governor, in the Social War, and as consul, but boasted above all about the recent Mithridatic campaign, listing for them all the many peoples which Mithridates had annexed but which he himself had won back for Rome.¹⁸³

Sulla was employing his martial deeds within this letter as part of his efforts to intimidate and threaten the Senate, stating that he would soon be in Rome to exact vengeance.¹⁸⁴ His martial achievements and offices signalled the strength and legitimate pre-eminence that his enemies in Rome were up against. The traditional Roman mechanisms of dispatches and aristocratic *elogia* have been combined by Sulla to form a powerful psychological weapon. This behaviour, above all, was a reflection of how late Republican Rome, through its recognition of the considerable achievements of men like Sulla, Pompeius and Caesar, was producing

¹⁸³ App. *BC* 1.77: Σύλλας δ' ἐπὶ φρονήματος ἐπέστειλε τῇ βουλῇ περὶ τε αὐτοῦ καταλέγων, ὅσα περὶ Λιβύην ἐξ Ἰογόρθαν τὸν Νομάδα ἔτι ταμιεύων ἢ ἐπὶ τοῖς Κιμβρικοῖς πρεσβεύων ἢ Κιλικίας ἡγούμενος ἢ ἐν τοῖς συμμαχικοῖς ἢ ὑπατεύων ἔπραξε, τὰ δ' ἑναγχος ἐς Μιθριδάτην ὑπερεπαίρων τε μάλιστα καὶ καταλογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς ἀθρόως ἔθνη πολλά, ὅσα Μιθριδάτου γενόμενά Ρωμαίοις ἀναλάβοι.

¹⁸⁴ App. *BC* 1.77.

commanders with such considerable *auctoritas* and *dignitas* that they were willing to threaten the state with one of the customary mechanisms that facilitated their ascendancy.

Julius Caesar's dispatch of early January 49 BC adopts a similar approach. This, according to Appian, "contained a solemn catalogue of Caesar's achievements from the beginning of his career" which undoubtedly included his military achievements in Gaul and Spain (DS 102).¹⁸⁵ Like Sulla, Caesar was writing to give his position an appearance of legitimacy. Additionally this dispatch should be seen as part of Caesar's canvassing efforts to win a second consulship, as he was disseminating his *res gestae* to the Senate and hopefully to the people of Rome.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, like Sulla, Caesar was sending these dispatches whilst in command of a number of loyal and battle-hardened legions that were within striking distance of Italy and Rome.¹⁸⁷ Thus, the Senate was being threatened in the clear knowledge that these generals commanded armies of considerable experience and size, who were more loyal to their leader than the state.

Pompeius took this habit one stage further. According to Appian, when apparently ill outside Rome in late 50 (DS 101):

¹⁸⁵ App. *BC* 2.32: τους περιείχε δ' ἡ γραφή κατάλογόν τε σεμνὸν ὧν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁ Καῖσαρ ἐπεπράχει ... ; Caes. *B Civ.* 1.1 cites the delivery of the dispatch to the Senate, but does not include its contents; Dio 41.1.3: "As to the letter, it contained a list of all the benefits which Caesar had ever conferred upon the state and a defence of the charges which were brought against him".

¹⁸⁶ Plut. *Caes.* 29 cites a dispatch from Caesar in 51 in which he asked to stand for the consulship *in absentia*.

¹⁸⁷ App. *BC* 1.79 states that Sulla, after he landed at Brundisium in 83, was in command of 5 legions and 6,000 cavalry; Brunt 1971, 467-8 argues for the 10 legions under Caesar's command in the winter of 50-49 by adding the V *Alaudae* legion to Hirtius' reference of 9 legions, Hirt. *B Gall.* 8.54; Cic. *Att.* 7.7.6: states there were 11 legions; Plut. *Pomp.* 58.6: cites 10 legions.

Pompeius ... sent a clever letter to the Senate, in which he praised Caesar's achievements and listed his own from the beginning, making the point that he had not deliberately sought his third consulship and the resulting provinces and army.¹⁸⁸

If Appian's chronology is correct, Pompeius' action was probably a reaction to one of Caesar's earlier letters in which he had already cited his military record.¹⁸⁹ This was a multi-faceted statement by Pompeius, since he recognised that Caesar's achievements were going to be one of the key means through which he would pressurise the Senate and gain support in Italy. By placing Caesar's *res gestae* alongside his own, Pompeius was informing the senators present in Rome that it was not only Caesar who had pre-eminent *auctoritas*, but also Pompeius Magnus.

¹⁸⁸ App. *BC* 2.28: Ο δὲ Πομπήιος ... ἐπέστελλε τῇ βουλῇ σὺν τέχνῃ, τὰ τε ἔργα τοῦ Καίσαρος ἐπαινῶν καὶ τὰ ἴδια ἐξ ἀρχῆς καταλέγων ὅτι τε τῆς τρίτης ὑπατείας καὶ ἐθνῶν τῶν ἐπ' αὐτῇ καὶ στρατοῦ δοθέντος.

¹⁸⁹ For example Plut. *Caes.* 29, as previously mentioned in note 186.

Table 3 Dispatches to the Senate 219-19 BC

DS	Date	Magistrate	Provincia	Achievements/details	Reference
1	218	Ti. Sempronius Longus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Claims the Battle of Trebbia was an inconclusive engagement.	Polyb. 3.75; Plut. <i>Fab.</i> 3.
2	217	M. Minucius Rufus, magister equitum	Samnium	Claims victory after an inconclusive engagement near Gereonium with Hannibal.	Livy 22.24.14; Plut. <i>Fab.</i> 8.
3	217	Q. Fabius Maximus, dictator & M. Minucius Rufus, magister equitum	Samnium	Report the rescue of Minucius' army by Fabius following its rout by Hannibal.	Livy 22.30.7.
4	216	C. Terentius Varro, consul	Apulia	Reports defeat at Cannae, the death of consul L. Paullus & his own withdrawal with 10,000 men.	Livy 22.56.1; Zonar. 9.3.
5	216	T. Otracilius Crassus, propraetor	Sicily	Reports that a Punic fleet has raided the lands of King Hiero of Syracuse.	Livy 22.56.6.
6	216	T. Otracilius Crassus, propraetor	Sicily	Reports successful naval raid of praetor P. Furius on African coast & his lack of pay & supplies.	Livy 23.21.1-3; Val. Max. 7.6.1c.
7	216	A. Cornelius Mammula, propraetor	Sardinia	Reports a lack of pay & supplies.	Livy 23.21.4; Val. Max. 7.6.1c.
8	216	P. Cornelius Scipio & Cn. Cornelius Scipio, proconsuls	Nearer Spain & Further Spain	Report their defeat of Hasdrubal's forces near Ibera, South of the Ebro & their need for pay & supplies.	Livy 23.29.16 & 23.48.5-6.
9	215	Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, consul	Campania	Reports his fleet's capture of diplomatic letters between Hannibal & Philip of Macedon, and he sends them under seal (<i>consignata</i>).	Livy 23.38.3.
10	214	Cn. Cornelius Scipio, proconsul	Nearer Spain	Requests either furlough or replacement to return home and organize his daughter's dowry.	Val. Max. 4.4.10; Zonar. 9.3.
11	214	A. Claudius Pulcher, propraetor or legate	Sicily	Reports the establishment of a pro-Carthaginian regime at Syracuse.	Livy 24.7.8.
12	214	Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, proconsul	Samnium	Conveys his slave-volunteer troops' demand for freedom.	Livy 24.14.4.
13	214	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Sicily	Conveys the complaints of ex-Cannae troops serving in Sicily.	Livy 25.5.10; Plut. <i>Marc.</i> 13.
14	211	L. Marcus, military tribune	Nearer Spain	Reports his command of defeated Roman troops, his raids on Punic camps, & requests supplies.	Livy 26.2.1-5; Val. Max. 2.7.15a.

15	211	Q. Fulvius Flaccus, proconsul	Campania	Reports Hannibal's aim to march on Rome.	Livy 26.8.1.
16	210	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Samnium	Reports the death of proconsul Cn. Fulvius Centumalus & the loss of Fulvius' army at Herdonia.	Livy 27.2.1-3; Plut. <i>Marc.</i> 24.
17	210	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Samnium	Reports that he is currently shadowing Hannibal's army.	Livy 27.4.1-3.
18	210	M. Valerius Messala, praefectus classis	Sicily	Reports his successful naval raid on Utica & the intelligence gathered about the Punic reinforcements for Hasdrubal in Spain.	Livy 27.5.14.
19	209	C. Calpurnius Piso, propraetor	Etruria	Reports that a revolt has broken out at Arretium.	Livy 27.21.6.
20	208	T. Quinctius Crispinus, consul	Apulia	Reports the death of the consul Marcellus & his own wounding through an ambush of Hannibal.	Livy 27.29.2-4.
21	208	P. Sulpicius Galba, proconsul	Greece	Advises against a truce in the war between Philip V of Macedon & the Roman-Aetolian League.	App. <i>Mac.</i> 3.
22	207	L. Porcius Licinus, praetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports Hasdrubal's crossing of the Alps.	Livy 27.39.1-3.
23	207	C. Claudius Nero, consul	Apulia	Reports the capture of Hasdrubal's letter to Hannibal.	Livy 27.43.8.
24	207	L. Manlius Acidinus, propraetor	Picenum	Reports the victory over Hasdrubal at the Metaurus.	Livy 27.50.8-10.
25	207	C. Claudius Nero & M. Livius Salinator consuls	Picenum	Report the victory over Hasdrubal at the Metaurus. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 27.51.5-8.
26	207	C. Claudius Nero & M. Livius Salinator, consuls	Apulia & Cisalpine Gaul.	Report their imminent return to Rome.	Livy 28.9.4.
27	205	Sp. Lucretius, praetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports the landing of Mago in Liguria & the Punic leader's subsequent recruitment of Ligurian tribesmen.	Livy 28.46.12.
28	205	P. Licinius Crassus, consul	Bruttium	Reports an outbreak of plague amongst his own men & also the nearby Punic troops.	Livy 29.10.1-3.
29	201	M. Valerius Laevinus, praetor & M. Aurelius Cotta, legate	Greece	Report that Philip V of Macedon mobilizing troops & ships.	Livy 31.5.6.
30	200	L. Furius Purpureo, praetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports widespread Celtic revolt, the sack of Placentia & the siege of the Roman <i>colonia</i> of Cremona. He warns that the colonists & his force risk being slaughtered.	Livy 31.10.6-7.
31	200	Q. Minucius Rufus, praetor	Bruttium	Reports the theft of treasury from temple of Proserpina at Locri.	Livy 31.12.1.

32	200	L. Furius Purpureo, praetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his victory over the Gauls & Ligurians near Cremona. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 31.22.1.
33	199	Q. Minucius Rufus, praetor	Bruttium	Reports two animal prodigies.	Livy 32.1.11.
34	199	P. Sulpicius Galba, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports a laurel tree prodigy.	Livy 32.1.12.
35	197	C. Cornelius Cethegus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his victory over the Cenomani & Insubres. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 32.31.6.
36	197	Q. Minucius Rufus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his victory over the Boii & Ligurians. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 32.31.6.
37	197	M. Helvius, praetor	Further Spain	Reports an uprising of various Spanish tribes.	Livy 33.21.7-9.
38	197	T. Quinctius Flaminius, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his victory at Cynoscephalae over Philip V of Macedon. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 33.24.3-4.
39	196	Unknown source	Nearer Spain	Reports the defeat & death of procos. C. Sempronius Tuditanus.	Livy 33.25.8-9.
40	196	M. Claudius Marcellus & L. Furius Purpureo, consuls	Cisalpine Gaul	Report their successful campaign over the Boii & Ligurians. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 33.37.9.
41	195	Q. Minucius Thermus, propraeator	Nearer Spain	Reports his victory over the Celtiberians near Turda.	Livy 33.44.4-5.
42	195	T. Quinctius Flaminius, proconsul	Greece	Reports his successful campaign against the Spartan tyrant Nabis. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 34.42.1.
43	195	M. Porcius Cato, consul	Nearer Spain	Reports his successful campaign against the Celtiberians. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 34.42.1.
44	194	T. Sempronius Longus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports that the Ligurians & Boii are in revolt.	Livy 34.56.9-11.
45	193	M. Cincius Alimentus, praefectus	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports the outbreak of a Ligurian revolt.	Livy 34.56.1.
46	193	L. Cornelius Merula, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his victory over the Boii.	Livy 35.6.1.
47	193	Q. Minucius Thermus, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports that he cannot return to Rome for the elections due to the ongoing Ligurian revolt	Livy 35.6.2-4.
48	191	Q. Minucius Thermus, proconsul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports the successful completion of his Ligurian campaign.	Livy 37.2.5.
49	190	L. Aemilius Regillus, praefectus classis	Aegean	Reports his naval victory over a Seleucid fleet off Myonnesus in Ionia & that the consul L. Cornelius Scipio has transported his army over to Asia. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 37.47.3-5.
50	187	C. Atinius, propraeator	Further Spain	Reports a Lusitanian uprising.	Livy 39.7.6-7.

51	187	L. Manlius Acidinus, propraetor	Nearer Spain	Reports a Celtiberian uprising.	Livy 39.7.6-7.
52	186	Unknown source	Further Spain	Reports a victory over the Lusitanians, the capture of the town of Hasta & the death of the propraetor C. Atinius.	Livy 39.21.1-4.
53	183	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Liguria	Requests permission to lead his forces into Istria	Livy 39.55.4.
54	183	Q. Fabius Labeo, consul	Liguria	Reports that the Ligurian Apuani are about to revolt.	Livy 40.1.3.
55	182	A. Terentius Varro, propraetor	Further Spain	Reports the death of propraetor P. Sempronius Longus from illness.	Livy 40.2.6.
56	182	M. Claudius Marcellus, proconsul	Liguria	Requests advice on whether he should accept the charge, but not the surrender of 2,000 Ligurians.	Livy 40.16.5-6.
57	181	Cn. Baebius Tamphilus, proconsul	Liguria	Reports that the proconsul L. Aemilius Paullus is under siege by the Ligurians.	Livy 40.25.8.
58	181	L. Aemilius Paullus, proconsul	Liguria	Reports his victory over the Ligurians & their subsequent capitulation. He also requests permission to discharge his army. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 40.28.7-9.
59	180	P. Cornelius Cethegus & M. Baebius Tamphilus, proconsuls	Liguria	Request advice over their settlement of the Ligurians who had surrendered to them.	Livy 40.38.2-8.
60	180	C. Maenius, praetor	Latium	Reports on his investigation into the poisonings in the hinterland of Rome & that he has condemned 3,000 people.	Livy 40.43.
61	179	Q. Fulvius Flaccus consul	Liguria	Reports his successful Ligurian campaign.	Livy 40.53.
62	178	M. Junius Brutus, consul	Istria	Reports he has reached Aquileia to deal with an Istrian revolt.	Livy 41.5.
63	178	T. Aebutius Parrus, praetor	Sardinia	Reports that the Sardinian tribes are in revolt & his troops are weakened due to an epidemic.	Livy 41.6.
64	177	M. Junius Brutus & A. Manlius Vulso proconsuls	Istria	Report their successful Istrian campaign.	Livy 41.10.
65	177	T. Claudius Nero, propraetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports on the Ligurian preparations for war.	Livy 41.12.
66	177	C. Claudius Pulcher, consul	Istria	Reports successful completion of his Istrian campaign. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 41.12.4.
67	176	C. Claudius Pulcher, proconsul	Liguria	Reports that the Ligurians are in revolt.	Livy 41.17.6.
68	173	M. Popilius Laenas, consul	Liguria	Reports on the surrender of the Ligurian Statelliates, their subsequent enslavement & his destruction of their town.	Livy 42.8.3-4.

69	169	Q. Marcius Philippus, consul	Macedonia	Reports that he has invaded Macedonia, that his army has a good supply of food & fodder, but needs clothes & horses.	Livy 44.16.1-4.
70	168	L. Aemilius Paullus, consul	Macedonia	Laurelled dispatch on his victory over King Perseus of Macedon at Pydna. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Livy 44.45.3 & 45.1.6-9.
71	168	L. Aemilius Paullus, consul	Macedonia	Reports the capture of King Perseus.	Livy 45.13.9.
72	152	M. Claudius Marcellus, consul	Further Spain	Recommends that Rome seeks peace with the Celtiberian tribes.	App. <i>Hisp.</i> 49.
73	146	Q. Caecilius Metellus, propraetor	Greece	Reports that the Achaean League at war with Sparta.	Paus. 7.15.1.
74	146	P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, proconsul	Africa	Reports the capture of Carthage & requests subsequent orders.	Zonar. 9.30.
75	146	A. Postumius Albinus, legate	Achaea	Reports the Roman victories over the Achaeans at Phocis.	Polyb. 39.1.11.
76	140	Q. Servilius Caepio, consul	Hispania	Advices against the truce agreed between his predecessor Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus & the Lusitanian leader Viriathus.	App. <i>Hisp.</i> 70.
77	84	L. Cornelius Sulla, proconsul	Asia	Lists his military achievements, highlighting his recent successes over Mithridates.	App. <i>BC</i> 1.77 & <i>Mith.</i> 60.
78	77	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his victory over the forces of M. Junius Brutus, legate to proconsul Aemilius Lepidus.	Plut. <i>Pomp.</i> 16.4.
79	74	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Nearer Spain	Requests money & supplies for his campaign against Sertorius; lists his achievements & claims that the war might reach Rome.	Sall. <i>Hist.</i> 2.98; Plut. <i>Pomp.</i> 20 & <i>Sert.</i> 21.
80	73	L. Licinius Lucullus, proconsul	Asia & Pontus	States that he does not require funds for a naval force, as he will employ allied ships.	Plut. <i>Luc.</i> 13.4.
81	73	L. Licinius Lucullus, proconsul	Asia & Pontus	Laurelled dispatch reporting his clearance of Mithridates' forces from Asia.	App. <i>Mith.</i> 77.
82	71	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Italy	Claims victory over the final group of slaves from the Spartacus revolt.	Plut. <i>Pomp.</i> 21.2 & <i>Crass.</i> 11.4.
83	70	L. Caecilius Metellus, propraetor	Sicily	Lists the corn tithes he has recently collected in Sicily.	Cic. <i>Verr.</i> 2.3.123.
84	69	L. Licinius Lucullus, proconsul	Asia & Pontus	Reports his victory over Tigranes II of Armenia near Tigranocerta & his capture of the city.	Plut. <i>Luc.</i> 26.6.
85	63	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Asia Minor	Reports the termination of the Mithridatic War. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Cic. <i>Prov. cons.</i> 27.
86	62	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Asia Minor	Reports his imminent return to Rome & the disbanding of his army.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 5.7.1.

87	60	C. Julius Caesar propraetor	Further Spain	Requests leave to stand for the consulship <i>in absentia</i> .	Plut. <i>Caes.</i> 13; App. <i>BC</i> 2.8.
88	57	C. Julius Caesar, proconsul	Gaul	Reports his successes over the Belgae & also possibly Ariovistus. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	<i>Caes. B Gall.</i> 2.35.
89	56	A. Gabinius, proconsul	Syria	Reports his suppression of a Jewish revolt led by the Maccabean prince Alexander.	<i>Cic. Prov.</i> <i>cons.</i> 14; <i>Pis.</i> 44 & 49.
90	56	L. Calpurnius Piso, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his military successes against tribes in Northern Macedonia.	<i>Cic. Pis.</i> 39- 41.
91	56?	C. Julius Caesar proconsul	Gaul	Denounces Cato's criticism of his Gallic campaign.	Plut. <i>Cat.</i> <i>Min.</i> 51.
92	55	C. Julius Caesar, proconsul	Gaul	Reports his expedition to Britain, the crossing of the Rhine, the defeat of the Germanic Usipetes & Tenctheri tribes. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	<i>Caes. B Gall.</i> 4.38.
93	52	C. Julius Caesar, proconsul	Gaul	Reports his victory over Vercingetorix & the suppression of the Gallic revolt. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	<i>Caes. B Gall.</i> 7.90.
94	51	Ap. Claudius Pulcher, proconsul	Cilicia	Reports the discharge of his troops.	<i>Cic. Fam.</i> 3.3.
95	51	C. Cassius Longinus, proquaestor	Syria	Reports his successful ambush upon a Parthian force near Antioch.	<i>Cic. Att.</i> 5.21.1-2 & <i>Fam.</i> 8.10.1.
96*	51	M. Tullius Cicero, proconsul	Cilicia	Reports on the political & military situation in Asia, particularly the movements of the Parthians.	<i>Cic. Fam.</i> 15.1.
97*	51	M. Tullius Cicero, proconsul	Cilicia	Reports his diplomatic & military activities against the Parthian threat.	<i>Cic. Fam.</i> 15.2 & <i>Att.</i> 5.18.1.
98	51	C. Julius Caesar, proconsul	Gaul	Requests leave to stand for the consulship <i>in absentia</i> .	Plut. <i>Caes.</i> 29.
99	Dec 51	M. Tullius Cicero, proconsul	Cilicia	Reports his campaign against the Cilician hill tribes including the capture of Pindenissum. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	<i>Cic. Fam.</i> 2.7; 15.4, 10- 11, 13 & <i>Att.</i> 5.20.
100	50	M. Calpurnius Bibulus, proconsul	Syria	Reports his successful engagement against the Parthians. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	<i>Cic. Fam.</i> 2.17.7 & <i>Att.</i> 7.2.3.
101	50	Cn. Pompeius Magnus, proconsul	Italy	Praises Caesar's achievements, lists his own & then offers to relinquish his powers.	App. <i>BC</i> 2.28.
102	Jan 49	C. Julius Caesar proconsul	Gaul	Lists his achievements & requests that all parties relinquish their forces.	<i>Cic. Fam.</i> 16.11; <i>Caes.</i> <i>B Civ.</i> 1.1; Dio 41.1-3.

103	47	C. Julius Caesar, dictator	Egypt	Reports on the situation at Alexandria & possibly his settlement of Egypt.	Cic. <i>Phil.</i> 23.
104	47	C. Julius Caesar, dictator	Syria	Reports his successful campaign against Pontic King Pharnaces.	Cic. <i>Phil.</i> 23.
105	45	P. Vatinius, proconsul	Illyricum	Reports his successful Illyrian campaign, including the capture of six towns. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Cic. <i>Fam</i> 5.9-11.
106	44	C. Iulius Caesar	Brundisium	States he has the allegiance of two legions.	App. <i>BC</i> 3.47-8.
107	Sept 44	D. Junius Brutus, proconsul	Cisalpine Gaul	Reports his successful campaign against the Alpine tribes.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 11.4.2 & 11.6.
108	44	M. Antonius, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	States that the <i>provincia</i> of Cisalpine Gaul was granted to him by the people.	App. <i>BC</i> 3.63.
109	43	C. Iulius Caesar, propraetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Claims D. Brutus has prevented his pursuit of M. Antonius.	App. <i>BC</i> 3.73.
110	43	C. Vibius Pansa, consul	Cisalpine Gaul	Claims D. Brutus has prevented Octavianius' pursuit of M. Antonius.	App. <i>BC</i> 3.73.
111	Mar 43	M. Junius Brutus, proconsul	Macedonia	States that C. Antonius is at Apollonia with 7 legions.	Cic. <i>Phil.</i> 10.1.
112*	Mar 43	L. Munatius Plancus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	States his desire for peace & lists his troop numbers.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 10.8 & 10.12.
113	Apr 43	C. Vibius Pansa & A. Hirtius, consuls. & C. Iulius Caesar, propraetor	Cisalpine Gaul	Report their victory against M. Antonius' forces at Forum Gallorum. <i>Supplicationes</i> decreed.	Cic. <i>Phil.</i> 14.6-7.
114	Apr 43	M. Aemilius Lepidus, proconsul	Narbonese Gaul	Reports his success against the forces of M. Antonius.	Cic. <i>Ad Brut.</i> 1.12 & Dio 46.51.1.
115	Apr 43	C. Antonius, proconsul	Macedonia	Probably states that Macedonia was legitimately his province.	Cic. <i>Ad Brut.</i> 2.5.3-4.
116	Apr 43	M. Junius Brutus, proconsul	Macedonia	Reports his Macedonian achievements & puts his troops at the Senate's disposal.	Cic. <i>Ad Brut.</i> 2.5.1-2 & Dio 47.22.1.
117	May 43	L. Munatius Plancus, proconsul	Transalpine Gaul	Reports his latest moves against M. Antonius.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 10.19 & 10.16
118	May 43	D. Junius Brutus, proconsul	Cisalpine Gaul	States his intention to pursue M. Antonius.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 11.19 & App. <i>BC</i> 3.81.
119*	May 43	P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther, proquaestor	Asia	Reports his capture of Dolabella's transport vessels at Lycia.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 12.15.
120*	May 43	M. Aemilius Lepidus, proconsul	Narbonese Gaul	Claims his troops are about to mutiny & his desire for peace.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 10.35; Dio 46.51.1.
121*	June 43	D. Junius Brutus & L. Munatius Plancus, proconsuls	Transalpine Gaul	Report their current military situation against the forces of M. Antonius & Lepidus.	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 11.13a; 11.15 & 10.26.

122	43	C. Cassius Longinus, proconsul	Syria	Reports on his control of the <i>provincia</i> of Syria.	Dio 47.28.5.
123	36	M. Antonius, triumvir	Syria & Egypt	Reports his recent Parthian campaign.	Dio 49.32.1.
124	34	M. Antonius, triumvir	Egypt	Offers to give up his powers.	Dio 49.41.6.
125	29	Imperator Caesar, triumvir	Syria	Reports his diplomatic treaty with Parthian King Phraates IV.	Dio 51.20.1.
126	20	Caesar Augustus	Syria	Reports on his settlement of the Eastern <i>provinciae</i> , confirming their rights as allies of Rome.	Dio 54.9.1.

* = extant dispatch

Criteria for Table 3

Table 3 details the dispatches sent to the Senate (DS) by commanders or their legates during the period of 219 to 19 BC. One main criterion dictates its contents: when a source specifically cites a letter being sent, delivered, or reported to the Senate it is included, unless there is a serious doubt over its reliability.¹⁹⁰ On occasion, some pieces of narrative can be interpreted as suggesting a dispatch, but without corroboration they are not included.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ One specific report stands out where there is serious doubt: Plut. *Cras.* 11.2; following the proconsul M. Licinius Crassus's victory over Spartacus' main force in Lucania, Plutarch states that: "Crassus now regretted that he had previously written to the Senate to ask them to send for Lucullus from Thrace and Pompeius from Spain"; Seager 1994b, 222; it is possible that the Senate or another magistrate in Rome sent out these requests, but, as Seager argues, it is highly improbable that Crassus asked for the recall of these two *imperatores*.

¹⁹¹ For example, Cic. *Prov. cons.* 15, in the context of teasing A. Gabinius about his dispatch of 56, Cicero mentions that the propraetor T. Albucius, who governed Sardinia in around 104, had a request for *supplicationes* refused by the Senate. Unfortunately, there is no mention that Albucius' request came in the form of a dispatch, since it could have been made orally through a legate or another means.

3. Private letters

The senior members replied that the decrees of the Senate should not be passed in response to rumours foolishly concocted by private citizens to suit the purposes of magistrates, and insisted that no news could be considered official without written statements from praetors in the provinces, or reports from their legates.¹⁹²

This Livian passage indicates that private communications, possibly letters or other media, were being manipulated upon their receipt in Rome for political purposes. This debate in 193 BC was specifically concerned with the incoming news about the difficult military campaign in Nearer Spain, including heavy Roman casualties.¹⁹³ These elder senators, by reacting to this exploitation, were not only highlighting its political significance, but also indicating that they saw a clear difference between official and private communications. This case also demonstrates that in times of defeat some individuals still saw opportunities for personal advantage, as will be subsequently argued in relation to the Third Punic War and the Jugurthine War. Unfortunately, in this case, Livy does not specify which private citizens (*privati*) were concocting and manipulating these rumours, as this might have pointed to how they were receiving and disseminating them. Nonetheless, as previously mentioned, Cicero specifically distinguishes between public and private letters when writing to the consul

¹⁹² Livy 35.2.6: “seniores negare ad rumores a privatis temere in gratiam magistratuum confictos senatus consulta facienda esse; nisi quod aut praetores ex provinciis scriberent aut legati renuntiarent, nihil ratum haberi debere”.

¹⁹³ Livy 35.1-2 states that in 193 the propraetor Sex. Digitius “passed on to his successor barely half the men he had himself been given” after numerous engagements. As a result the praetor succeeding Digitius in Nearer Spain, C. Flaminius, was apparently exploiting these reported failures to get more legions assigned to his upcoming command.

Marcellus; and the context in which each correspondence is described and employed enables us, in most cases, to differentiate between these two types.¹⁹⁴

Within private correspondence one can at times perceive a spectrum of intimacy, since some were meant solely for the addressee, whilst others were often intended to, and did, receive further dissemination beyond the primary recipient. For instance, Cicero's letters to Atticus were on the whole primarily personal communications between two close friends, whilst some of those between Cicero and his other associates indicate a wider audience. In a letter M'. Curius sent Cicero in 45, Curius says "please don't show Atticus this letter", so implying the expectation that Cicero might display or forward it.¹⁹⁵ Then, on occasion, Cicero copied all or part of one letter into another: as in March 49 when he included a letter written by Caesar into one he was sending to Atticus.¹⁹⁶ Such secondary dissemination is extremely important when analysing the ways commanders and their associates employed private letters to promote their military achievements in Rome. This additional dissemination widened their potential audience and thus the probability that such correspondence would increase or maintain the commander's *auctoritas*, especially when we consider the interest that many Romans had about their military campaigns, as markedly demonstrated by Cicero's appetite for news about Caesar's operations in and beyond Gaul.¹⁹⁷

The role of private letters in winning a triumph

The private correspondence of a commander, alongside his dispatches to the Senate, could play a significant role in a triumphal canvas. Even though nearly all the evidence derives from

¹⁹⁴ Cic. *Fam.* 15.9.3: "I still do not think I should write officially on the reports reaching me about the Parthians, and for that reason I prefer not to write to you on the subject either, even as a close personal friend, for fear that a letter to the Consul might be interpreted as an official communication".

¹⁹⁵ Cic. *Fam.* 7.29.2: "... noli hanc epistulam Attico ostendere."

¹⁹⁶ Hutchinson 1998, 18; Cic. *Att.* 9.16; Caesar's letter was a reply to an earlier letter of Cicero which applauded Caesar's clemency at Corfinium.

¹⁹⁷ For example, Cic. *Att.* 4.14.2, where Cicero asks Atticus in May 54 if he had "any news, from my brother Quintus in the first place and from Gaius Caesar in the second".

Cicero's and his associates' letters, it still indicates private letters were a valuable means of targeting the presiding magistrates and key senators, as well as organising their agents in Rome.

The consul or urban praetor, who presided over the Senate's reception of a victorious dispatch, influenced not only its oral delivery, but also the senatorial decrees that followed, since they were either responsible for them or they at least oversaw how the proposals were worded. Recognising this, Cicero sent letters in late 51 BC to the presiding consuls C. Marcellus and L. Paullus about his victorious dispatch. He asked Marcellus "to ensure that when my dispatch has been read out in the Senate, a decree follows in terms as handsome as possible" and then in a very similar way he requested Paullus that "you ensure the passage of a decree concerning my successes in the most complimentary terms".¹⁹⁸ As well as targeting the presiding magistrates, these epistolary requests should be seen as part of the reciprocal behaviour that frequently arose between aristocrats in their endeavours to win high office and other honours like the triumph.

As well as magistrates, commanders also targeted influential senators as part of their triumphal canvass; a number of the private letters between Cicero and his friends show some of the persuasive techniques adopted. For example, after his successful Alpine campaign in 44, D. Brutus informed Cicero in a letter that:

¹⁹⁸ Cic. *Fam.* 15.10.1: "... ut confido, senatu, ut quam honorificentissimum senatus consultum litteris meis litteris faciendum cures"; 15.13: "... ut quam honorificentissimum senatus consultum de meis rebus gestis faciendum cures".

I have made war on the most warlike men in the world, taken many strong places, laid many areas waste. My dispatch to the Senate is not unwarranted. Support me with your voice in the House.¹⁹⁹

Brutus employs the superlative *bellicosissimus* to heighten his victory as it portrays his barbarian opposition in the toughest terms. Additionally, by giving concise details of his campaign, he informs Cicero of his achievements in a similar vein to the boastful *elogia* inscriptions favoured by Roman aristocrats. In the same year, P. Vatinius also sent a private letter to Cicero requesting help in winning a triumph for his successes in Illyricum; and, like Brutus, he included pre-eminent statements about his martial achievements.²⁰⁰ Brutus' and Vatinius' letters to Cicero are understandable, since the orator was a senior senator with considerable political influence in Rome. To start with, he was on reasonable terms with Caesar, although this was mostly of a non-political nature. Then after Caesar's assassination, he became a powerful political voice in Rome, as demonstrated by his role in the early ascendancy of Octavian.²⁰¹ Thus, Brutus and Vatinius were hoping that Cicero would employ his political influence on their behalf within the house.

Cicero himself targeted key senators with private letters as part of his canvass to get his Cilician successes recognised, and in October 50 BC, he even claimed that he had written to every senator bar two.²⁰² This assertion is doubtless an exaggeration, since it would have involved Cicero sending around 600 letters, although it is credible that he did dispatch a

¹⁹⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 11.4.2: "cum omnium bellicosissimis bellum gessi; multa castella cepi, multa vastavi: non sine causa ad senatum litteras misi. Adiuva nos tua sententia; quod cum facies, ex magna parte communi commodo inservieris".

²⁰⁰ Cic. *Fam.* 5.10B.

²⁰¹ Rawson 1983, 254-5; Cic. *Att.* 13.52 describes a meal and literary evening Cicero had with Caesar in Campania in December 45; *Phil.* 4.4: in the Fourth *Philippic*, delivered in the Forum in December 44, Cicero eulogised Octavian.

²⁰² Cic. *Att.* 7.1.8: "Hirrus added that I had omitted to write to him, though I sent letters to everyone else. It was only to him and Crassipes that I did not write"; Rawson 1975, 170.

number of letters. One of the most important to the younger Cato comes down to us, and, as cited earlier, it includes carefully selected details of his siege of Pindenissum.²⁰³ Hutchinson, by comparing Cato's letter to the more candid narratives of the campaign that Cicero sent to Caelius and Atticus, identifies a number of ways, besides overt martial detail, that Cicero was attempting to persuade Cato.²⁰⁴

Of most significance is the way Cicero accentuates the various consequential benefits of his military endeavours, in particular the claim that he was enhancing the security and image of the Roman Empire. For example, prior to describing his siege operations against Pindenissum, he gives this reason for besieging the town:

They were harbouring deserters and eagerly looking forward to the arrival of the Parthians, so that I considered it a matter of imperial prestige to curb their presumption, whereby others not well affected to the rule of Rome would be more easily discouraged.²⁰⁵

This multifaceted justification was part of Cicero's efforts to persuade Cato that he was a selfless commander.²⁰⁶ For instance, Cicero cites the presence of Roman deserters, thus painting himself as a disciplinarian. He also alleges that the Pindenissians wanted the Parthians to enter Cilicia. In light of the fact that the Parthians had destroyed Crassus' eight legions three years earlier and that they were again threatening Rome's Eastern provinces and client-kingdoms, Cicero was cleverly associating this Cilician stronghold with one of Rome's

²⁰³ Cic. *Fam.* 15.4.10-11.

²⁰⁴ Hutchinson 1998, 88; 99.

²⁰⁵ Cic. *Fam.* 15.4.10: "... cum et fugitivos reciperent et Parthorum adventum acerrime exspectarent, ad existimationem imperii pertinere arbitratus sum comprimere eorum audaciam, quo facilius etiam ceterorum animi, qui alieni essent ab imperio nostro frangerentur".

²⁰⁶ Hutchinson 1998, 97: "Cicero adopts the fierce and uncompromising patriotism suited to a Roman general. ... The ethos glorifies and justifies; this is no frivolous indulgence of cruelty or conceit".

most recent and fearsome enemies.²⁰⁷ He also claims it was a matter of imperial prestige to fight them, so portraying himself as selfless defender of Rome's dominions. Finally, Cicero states that their destruction would discourage other potential revolts, so pointing to the strategic and intimidatory benefits of the siege.

Overall, we see in this letter conspicuous martial promotion through the details of the siege alongside this more subtle justification. Cicero, however, failed in his attempt to convince Cato, and this failure, in combination with the outbreak of civil war between Caesar and Pompeius (as well as some additional factors no doubt), was why he was not awarded a triumph. Furthermore, we have to be cautious about perceiving Cicero's triumphal canvas as typical, since he was someone who heavily exploited letters in his official, political, social, and personal life, whilst other magistrates with triumphal claims might not have been as communicative or lengthy in their dispatches. Nevertheless, if a commander like Cicero with considerable epistolary and rhetorical skills managed to portray the capture of a bandit hill-fort as an achievement worthy of conspicuous praise, one wonders how other commanders, with much more credible military success, such as the Scipio Africanus, Paullus, and Caesar, described in their letters their victories over such enemies as Hannibal, Perseus and Vercingetorix. It is perhaps more the case that commanders like Caesar and Scipio Aemilianus composed more straightforward and cursory letters (like the approach adopted in epigraphic *elogia*), as they relied on their deeds more than their literary talents to impress their peers.²⁰⁸

As well as targeting key senators and magistrates, victorious commanders might also organize and encourage their friends and agents in Rome to facilitate the delivery of these

²⁰⁷ Plut. *Cras.* 23-31.

²⁰⁸ See Section 3 of this chapter; Zonaras 9.30 on Scipio Aemilianus' cursory dispatch; Plut. *Caes.* 50.3 for the line "veni, vidi, vici" within a private letter to C. Matius.

official and private correspondences. In a letter to M. Caelius Rufus in November 51 BC, Cicero points to this type of behaviour concerning his imminent triumphal canvass.

... I am laying siege to the very well fortified town of Pindenissum ... the siege is now in its twenty-fifth day; judged by scale and difficulty it is a major operation, one to bring me great glory in everything but the name of the town. If I take it, as I hope to do, then I shall send an official report. *I am telling you all this now, so that you may be hopeful that you are getting what you prayed for.*²⁰⁹

There was a reciprocal relationship between Caelius, an upcoming magistrate, in Rome, and Cicero, a proconsul in Cilicia. On the one hand, Cicero looked to Caelius to provide him with the news of Rome, whether it was political business or general gossip. On the other hand, Caelius hoped that Cicero's governorship would provide military reports and other information that he could publicise in Rome, such as events in the surrounding *provinciae*.²¹⁰ Cicero's final sentence (in italics) is an allusion to Caelius' wish in an earlier letter that Cicero should achieve "as much as requisite for glory and a triumph".²¹¹ This statement should be interpreted as a signal to Caelius of Cicero's imminent triumphal canvass, thus preparing his friend in Rome for the deluge of letters that he would subsequently send.

If we compare this concept of epistolary agents in Rome aiding other triumphal campaigns, such as Oppius and Balbus' efforts on behalf of Caesar, we can see how Republican commanders employed these publicity agents to ensure their official and private

²⁰⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 2.10.3: "ibi quintum et vicesimum iam diem ... oppugnabam oppidum munitissimum, Pindenissum, tantis opibus tantoque negotio ut mihi ad summam gloriam nihil desit nisi nomen oppidi. quod si, ut spero, cepero, tum vero litteras publice mittam. haec ad te in praesentia scripsi ut sperares te adsequi id quod optasses".

²¹⁰ Cic. *Fam.* 8.9.3; 2.11.2.

²¹¹ Cic. *Fam.* 8.5.1: "... quantum gloriae triumphoque ..."; Wistrand 1979, 4.

letters were being efficiently circulated prior to a triumphal request.²¹² As a result, we should see the numerous successful votes for a triumph during the Republic *not only* as the result of the oral requests given by returning commanders, but *also* frequently as the crescendo of organized lobbying campaigns, during which official and private letters were constantly being employed.

Private letters from commanders seeking political support

Private letters were also an efficient means of maintaining and increasing a commander's political *auctoritas* in Rome prior to, or in addition to, any triumphal canvass. Caesar recognised their potential advantage, alongside his official dispatches, and he heavily exploited them to ensure his peers in Rome were kept informed of his Gallic campaign of 58-50 BC. In a letter to Atticus in October 54, Cicero states that he had just received letters from his brother Quintus and Caesar about the second expedition to Britain, and that:

Britain is settled, hostages have been taken, though no booty, but a tribute has been imposed; and they are bringing back the army from the place.²¹³

These comments, alongside references in his other letters, indicate that both Quintus and Caesar were providing Cicero with details about Caesar's campaigns, details that Cicero was then forwarding to others such as Atticus.²¹⁴ Thus, Caesar's achievements were being given secondary dissemination by Cicero, a process doubtlessly being carried by other recipients in

²¹² Cic. *Q Fr.* 2.11.4; 3.1.8; Wiseman 1998, 4.

²¹³ Cic. *Att.* 4.18.5: "confecta Britannia, obsidibus acceptis, nulla praeda, imperata tamen pecunia exercitum ex Britannia reportabant"; again we see an asyndetic catalogue.

²¹⁴ Wiseman 1998, 4; Cic. *Fam.* 7.8: in a letter of 54 to C. Trebatius Testa, one of Caesar's officers, Cicero states that Caesar had recently written to him about the campaign; Cic. *Q Fr.* 2.16.4, on the British expedition: "You evidently have some splendid literary material: the places, the natural phenomena and scenes, the customs, the peoples, the fight, and last but not least the *imperator*"; this strongly suggests that Cicero had received letters about Caesar's recent achievement.

Rome; and so Caesar, whilst campaigning hundreds of miles away, was ensuring that influential senators back in Rome were kept informed of his extraordinary successes.

Later, in early 49, Caesar demonstrated another way in which a commander could project his *auctoritas* through private letters. According to Dio, Caesar “sent letters throughout all Italy in which he challenged Pompeius to some kind of trial and encouraged the others to be of good cheer, bade them remain in their places, and made them many promises”.²¹⁵ Although we only have this description of these letters and not their exact contents, Caesar, by ensuring his letters were correctly titled and sealed to ensure their authenticity, was intimidating leading individuals like Cicero, as well as the people of Italy, with the knowledge that this pre-eminent *imperator* was advancing down the Italian peninsula. In a letter to Cicero in March 49, when he had nearly reached Brundisium, Caesar entitled the letter “Caesar Imperator to Cicero Imperator” in order to flatter Cicero.²¹⁶ He also stated that, though in haste whilst on the march, he still sought Cicero’s “advice, influence, standing, and help in all matters”.²¹⁷ Now a letter between Caesar and Cicero doubtless had certain differences from those he sent throughout Italy, but this letter emphasizes how an *imperator* could effectively project his military *auctoritas*, and the letters, which he sent out throughout Italy, were probably a significant factor not only in increasing Caesar’s support, but, moreover, stifling Pompeius’ efforts to recruit troops and prevent key strategic towns like Auximum and Cingulum going over to Caesar.²¹⁸

Now and again, a private letter could provide a detailed straightforward picture of military achievement that had nuanced political intentions. This is demonstrated by the legate S. Sulpicius Galba when he sent Cicero a dramatic eye-witness report of the engagement,

²¹⁵ Dio 41.10.2.

²¹⁶ Cic. *Att.* 9.6A: “CAESAR IMP. S. D. CICERONI IMP.”

²¹⁷ Cic. *Att.* 9.6A: “... consilio, gratia, dignitate, ope omnium rerum ...”.

²¹⁸ Caes. *B Civ.* 1.13-15; Gelzer 1968, 200.

which took place at Forum Gallorum near Mutina on 15th April 43 BC. Within this private letter Galba detailed his and the consul Hirtius' endeavours.

Meanwhile I found myself in the thick of the Antonians, with Antonius some distance behind me. All at once I rode at a gallop towards a legion of recruits which was on its way up from our camp, throwing my shield over my shoulders. The Antonians chased me, while our men were about to hurl their javelins. In this predicament some providence came to my rescue – I was quickly recognised by our men ... having heard what happened, Hirtius with twenty veteran cohorts met Antonius on his way back to his camp and completely destroyed or routed his forces ... So Antonius has lost the greater part of his veteran forces; but this result was achieved at the cost of some losses in the praetorian cohorts and the Martian Legion. Two eagles and sixty standards of Antonius's have been brought in. It is a victory.²¹⁹

These victorious details must have been music to Cicero's ears, especially since he was in the midst of writing the *Philippics*; and as result of this letter, as well as other reports on Forum Gallorum, the orator cited the engagement in the Fourteenth *Philippic* as a means of disparaging Antonius and praising Hirtius, a speech delivered during a Senate meeting of the 21st April, in which the house was debating whether a *supplicatio* should be decreed for the republican victory.²²⁰ Thus, this private report to a fellow aristocrat in Rome provided the means to enhance Hirtius' reputation and possibly also Galba's, although the latter is not

²¹⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 10.30.3 & 5: "interim video me esse inter Antonianos Antoniumque post me esse aliquanto. repente equum immisi ad eam legionem tironum quae veniebat ex castris, scuto reiecto. Antoniani me insequi; nostri pila conicere velle. ita nescio quo fato sum servatus, quod sum a nostris cognitus ... audita re Hirtius cum cohortibus XX veteranis redeunti Antonio in sua castra occurrit copiasque eius omnes delevit fugavit ... sic partem maiorem suarum copiarum Antonius amisit veteranarum; nec id tamen sine aliqua iactura cohortium praetoriarum nostrarum et legionis Martiae fieri potuit. aquilae duae, signa LX sunt relata Antoni: res bene gesta est".

²²⁰ Cic. *Phil.* 14.27: "... with these twenty cohorts, but with no cavalry, Hirtius, himself carrying the eagle of the Fourth legion – no more glorious figure of any general is there in history – came in conflict with the three legions and the cavalry of Antonius, and overthrew, routed, and slew the nefarious enemies ...".

mentioned in the Fourteenth *Philippic*. Hutchinson argues that Galba's straightforward dispatch was not that of a humble soldier, but of an experienced politician, and makes the significant point that "a simple style in a Roman military letter is no indication of either inability or innocence".²²¹ What Galba is doing is astutely providing Cicero with dramatic and eye-catching details that could be easily passed on and exploited through secondary dissemination, such as the penultimate sentence's mention of the two eagles and sixty standards, highly symbolic numerical representations of the damage inflicted upon Antonius' forces. The heavy losses, however, taken by the republican forces, and Galba galloping away from the battle, are pieces of information that Galba probably did not want publicised, pointing to the intimate nature of this eye-witness report. Though we cannot be certain whether Galba's *auctoritas* increased, this letter with its invaluable information would have aided Cicero and the other republicans in Rome, information which, above all, could help them undermine Antonius' political and military support.

On other occasions, private letters, although not reporting actual military success, could still be aimed at increasing a commander's *auctoritas*. For example, in May 43 the proconsul Plancus wrote to Cicero about his operations in Southern Gaul against Marcus Antonius's forces, including the following details:

I constructed in one day a bridge across the great river Isara on the border of the Allobrogian territory, and led my army across on 9th May. On 11th May, receiving a report that Lucius Antonius had been sent ahead with some cavalry and cohorts and had reached Forum Julii, I dispatched my brother with 4,000 horse to block him. I shall follow myself by forced marches with four legions without baggage and my remaining

²²¹ Hutchinson 1998, 81: "Galba was not a humble soldier, but a prominent political and military figure" and "he was sending an account of it to a central personality in the Republican cause".

horse. Aided, even to a moderate degree, by the Fortune of the State, we shall here find an end to the audacity of the desperados and our own anxiety.²²²

By presenting Cicero with an account of his determined and organized military activity, Plancus was projecting a picture of control and authority to an influential voice in Rome and hence providing a demonstration of loyalty to the *res publica* in a time of civil war. Plancus' claims of assiduousness were perhaps intended to cover his real intentions, since a few months later he joined forces with Antonius and Lepidus.²²³ If the above information, alongside his other statements of steadfastness, was consequently disseminated, it could have enhanced Plancus' appearance of loyalty, particularly if Cicero read it out to a sitting of the Senate.²²⁴

Private letters from a commander's allies

Private letters also demonstrate their political value in publicising the military record when associates of a commander employed them. Even though non-magistrates could not write directly to the Senate and people of Rome and so exploit their symbolic authority and potential for wide dissemination, there was the odd occasion when they composed private letters containing details of a commander's military achievements that markedly influenced key elections. Of these, two examples involving consular elections stand out.

First of all, Sallust tells how during the Jugurthine War Gaius Marius, then legate to the incumbent Roman commander Metellus, intended to stand for the consulship of 107.

²²² Cic. *Fam.* 10.15.3-4 "itaque in Isara, flumine maximo quod in finibus est Allobrogum, ponte uno die facto exercitum a. d. VII. Id. Mai. traduxi. cum vero mihi nuntiatum esset L. Antonium praemissum cum equitibus et cohortibus ad Forum Iulii venisse, fratrem cum equitum quattuor milibus, ut occurreret ei, misi a. d. V. Id. Mai. ipse maximis itineribus cum IIII legionibus expeditis et reliquo equitatu subsequar. si nos mediocris modo fortuna rei publicae adiuverit, et audaciae perditorum et nostrae sollicitudinis hic finem reperiemus".

²²³ Livy *Per.* 120; *MRR* 2.348.

²²⁴ For instance, Cic. *Fam.* 10.23 in a letter from Cularo in Southern Gaul in June 43, Plancus again portrays his steadfast loyalty to the state, claiming in one: "as for me, if you at home do not fail me, I need hardly say that I shall do my duty to the state to the very uttermost".

Marius induced this man [Gauda] and the Roman knights, both those who were in the army and those who were doing business in the town [Utica], some by his personal influence, the most part by the hope of peace, to write to their friends in Rome in criticism of Metellus' conduct of the war and to call for Marius as a commander. As a result many men supported Marius' canvass for the consulship in a highly flattering fashion.²²⁵

Again we see the multifunctional nature of letters as these ones both denigrated Metellus and praised Marius. They were a consequence of Marius courting the equestrians who were serving and trading with the Roman army in North Africa. Additionally, the *negotiatores*, through their dependence on the shipping routes between Africa and Italy, most probably had good access to vessels and couriers to ensure their letters were conveyed back to Rome, and they possibly also hoped for a speedy end to the war in order to re-establish their disrupted markets.²²⁶ Most importantly, these men, though not senators, were a powerful section of the Roman electorate, and Marius' subsequent election to consulship appears to have been influenced in part by the support that he received from many equestrians.²²⁷

Consuls were elected by the *comitia centuriata*, a timocratic electoral body whose voting allocation and procedure favoured the wealthier classes. With their eighteen centuries, equestrians could play a significant part in consular elections, particularly in a close campaign, and the political pamphlet, *Commentariolum Petitionis*, recommends that consular candidates should win over "senators, Roman knights, active and influential men of all other ranks".²²⁸ In

²²⁵ Sall. *Iug.* 65.4-5: "itaque et illum et equites Romanos, milites et negotiatores, alios ipse, plerosque pacis spes impellit uti Romam ad suos necessarios aspere in Metellum de bello scribant, Marium imperatorem poscant. sic illi a multis mortalibus honestissima suffragatione consulatus petebatur".

²²⁶ Evans 1994, 67, cites the trading concerns of the *negotiatores*.

²²⁷ Plut. *Mar.* 8-9.

²²⁸ *Com. Pet.* 29; Paterson 1985, 29, emphasizes how the *equites* during the late Republic had become a powerful political grouping; Yakobson 1999, 74-5; there is a question about the authenticity and dating of the *Commentariolum Petitionis*. It was originally assigned to Quintus Cicero, but some scholars believe it was

addition, as Yakobson states, “the *fama* of a candidate in a certain social class could evidently spread to other classes and affect his standing among them” and so “one should probably not think in terms of rigid distinctions between different social strata”.²²⁹ Hence, we should also seriously consider that the other voting classes were influenced by these written reports.

Laurence, in analysing the role of rumour and communication in late Republican politics, states that “at Rome an individual’s knowledge of politics was gained through personal observation or via hearsay and rumour”, and he argues that members of the elite through their membership of the Senate and good communication links with other aristocrats were better-informed of events and thus more able to exploit other classes.²³⁰ Linked to this information monopoly, he argues that patron-client networks were an important “factor in the formation of public opinion at Rome”.²³¹ This supports Yakobson’s view that one should not look at Roman politics in terms of stratified classes, but that there was information exchange between the different social levels.²³² Laurence, however, does not reference the significant role of letters within his model, particularly the part they played in spreading the *fama militaris* of Scipio and Marius. Furthermore, it was not just the political leaders present within Rome such as the Gracchi, Cicero, and Clodius, who could exploit these dissemination networks, but also overseas commanders, such as Scipio Aemilianus, Marius, and Caesar, via their allies and agents both in the *provinciae* and Rome. Private letters containing eye-catching information would have been an excellent means of initiating stories, which these networks could subsequently disseminate amongst the people of Rome, so adding to the gossip and

written during the early principate. Yakobson though makes the important point that much of its testimony is confirmed by the electoral practices cited in Cicero’s *Pro Murena*.

²²⁹ Yakobson 1999, 14.

²³⁰ Laurence 1994, 62-4; for example, in Cic. *Fam.* 8.1.5, whilst Cicero was on his way to Cilicia, Caelius informed him that on 24th May 51 a rumour was started from the rostra that Cicero was dead and this developed into tale “that Q. Pompeius had murdered you on the road”; Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 13; 18; *C. Gracch.* 1; incidents surrounding the Gracchi are also cited by Laurence as indications of rumours and hearsay in Republican politics, as when Gaius’ speech in defence of his friend Vettius soon spread throughout the city.

²³¹ Laurence 1994, 64-5; see previous discussion in Chapter 3, 132-3.

²³² Yakobson 1999, 14.

hearsay circulating about the ongoing military campaigns. This might have a detrimental effect though, because once information was in public circulation it was difficult for commanders to control it. As Laurence points out, every time a rumour is passed on it frequently changes as part of its original contents are lost and new aspects are added.²³³

The second example of electoral canvassing through private letters occurs in Appian's narrative of the Third Punic War. He describes how some of the Roman troops at Carthage in 148 BC wanted Scipio Aemilianus, then a military tribune, to be elected consul following the failures of their current commander L. Calpurnius Piso.

... and [they] prayed that he might return to Africa as consul, because they thought that he alone could take Carthage, for the opinion had sprung up among them, as by divine inspiration, that only Scipio would take Carthage, and many of them wrote to this effect to their relatives in Rome.²³⁴

Later Appian describes the impact that this correspondence had on the people of Rome, stating:

When the ill-success of Piso and the preparations of the Carthaginians were reported at Rome, the people were chagrined and anxious about this great and implacable war ... Remembering the recent exploits of Scipio, while still a military tribune, and comparing them with the present blunders and recalling the letters written to them by friends and

²³³ Laurence 1994, 63: much of the information in an original oral communication is lost “due to a failure of human memory”; Rosnow & Fine 1976, 36; once the information of an original communication has been passed via four people about only 40% of this information can be reliably produced.

²³⁴ App. *Pun.* 109: ... καὶ ἠύχοντο ὑπατον ἐς Λιβύην ἐπανελθεῖν ὡς μόνον αἰρήσοντα Καρχηδόνα. θεόληπτος γάρ τις αὐτοῖς ἦδε ἡ δόξα ἐνέπιπτε, Σκιπίωνα μόνον αἰρήσειν Καρχηδόνα. καὶ πολλοὶ ταῦτα τοῖς οἰκειοῖς ἐς Ρώμην ἐπέστελλον.

relatives from the army on that subject, there was an intense desire that Scipio should be sent to Carthage as consul.²³⁵

It would appear that these letters through their use of both praise and blame, as in Marius' case, were a major factor in Scipio's election to the consulship.²³⁶ We must not overlook the possibility that these letters were written not only by ordinary soldiers, but also by officers (who were more likely to be literate), since this would have resulted in Scipio's deeds reaching members of the wealthier classes whose votes, as stated earlier, had more worth in the consular elections.

Appian, unfortunately, does not provide us with the detailed contents of the letters, so we do not know the manner and language in which they informed Rome of Scipio's military record, although he had performed some heroics as military tribune during the campaign. One exploit involved his leadership of a rescue mission to save some stranded cohorts, and was so famous that it was later told on his *elogium* in the Forum of Augustus.²³⁷ It is certainly conceivable that some of the rescued soldiers were among those promoting Scipio in their letters home, and thereby providing Rome with eyewitness reports of this aristocrat's *virtus*.

In his defence speech of Murena in 63 BC, Cicero emphasizes this type of canvassing when mentioning the slogans that surrounded a prospective consular candidate with a good military record:

²³⁵ App. *Pun.* 112: Ἐς δὲ Ρώμην ἐξαγγελλομένης τῆς τε Πίσωνος ἀπραξίας καὶ Καρχηδονίων παρασκευῆς, ὁ δῆμος ἤχθετο καὶ ἐδεδοίκει ἀύξομένου πολέμου μεγάλου...τῶν δ οὐ πρὸ πολλοῦ Σκιπίωνος ἔργων, ἐν Λιβύῃ χιλιαρχοῦντος ἔτι, μεμνημένοι, καὶ παραβάλλοντες αὐτὰ τοῖς παροῦσι, τῶν τε ἐπεσταλμένων σφίσιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκ στρατοπέδου φίλων καὶ οἰκείων ἀναφέροντες, ὥρμητο ὑπατον ἐς Καρχηδόνα πέμπειν Σκιπίωνα.

²³⁶ Astin 1967, 5; Appian drew on Polybius' account of the Third Punic War, directly or possibly through an intermediate source.

²³⁷ App. *Pun.* 103; Plin. *HN* 22.13; Appian mentions four cohorts being rescued, whilst Pliny says there were three.

Imperatores, not interpreters of words, are chosen at consular elections. Hence, talk like this is important: ‘He saved my life when I was wounded; he gave me a share of the booty; he was our leader when he took the camp and engaged the enemy; he never asked a soldier to endure more hardship than himself; he was lucky as well as brave.’ How important do you think that this sort of talk is for securing a reputation and backing?²³⁸

On account of the ongoing Catilinarian revolt during Murena’s trial and, as a consequence, Cicero’s belief that the *res publica* needed a military able consul, he might have exaggerated how important a military reputation was for prospective candidates in the late Republic. Nonetheless, he still provides a significant insight into the various tales that soldiers might peddle to promote their commander’s individual *virtus* during an election campaign. Cicero’s comments also support the idea that the letters promoting Scipio Aemilianus’ candidature might very well have included accounts of his heroic rescuing of Roman troops.

The elections of Scipio and Marius, it must be stressed, did take place under exceptional circumstances when the Roman state was involved in lengthy military campaigns in North Africa and in need of *homines militares*. On the one hand, the campaign against Carthage involved an intensive land and naval blockade of the city: in which the commanders L. Marcius Censorinus and M’. Manilius in 149 BC, and then L. Calpurnius Piso in 148, all faced the immense task of subduing the Carthaginian hinterland as well as besieging one of the most fortified cities in the ancient world.²³⁹ On the other hand, Marius’ superior Metellus was involved in a low-intensity conflict against Jugurtha, which, even though it was proceeding

²³⁸ Cic. *Mur.* 38: “imperatores enim comitiis consularibus, non verborum interpretes deliguntur. qua re gravis est illa oratio: ‘me saucium recreavit, me praeda donavit; hoc duce castra cepimus, signa contulimus; numquam iste plus militi laboris imposuit quam sibi sumpsit, ipse cum fortis tum etiam felix.’ hoc quanti putas esse ad famam hominum ac voluntatem?”

²³⁹ *MRR* 1.458 & 461; App. *Pun.* 95; Lancel 1995, 262-73 both detail the immense complex of fortifications that surrounded Carthage.

reasonably well, was difficult to complete.²⁴⁰ The letters no doubt took advantage of the concerns that many felt back home in Rome about the setbacks and casualties that had occurred during these two campaigns, thus providing the opportunity for these ambitious aristocrats with their eye-catching military records.²⁴¹

We can also see that private letters could be a doubled-edged sword for Roman commanders, since as well as being a vehicle for promotion, they could also provide rivals and disillusioned troops with a means of denigrating a commander's military reputation, and thus undermine his political *auctoritas*. Within his private correspondence Cicero himself criticises Roman field commanders. For instance, he details the losses Bibulus, proconsul in Syria, had suffered at the hands of the Parthians, even naming some of the Roman officers killed. Then in 49 BC, he makes stinging criticism of Pompeius' military strategy against Caesar.²⁴² Cicero's letters to Atticus, however, were either not circulated or intended at best for a small audience, unlike those supporting Marius and Scipio. It is this that makes the letters that the soldiers and equestrians sent back home in 148 and 108 so powerful, since their contents were deliberately targeting and subsequently influencing large sections of the Roman people.

²⁴⁰ *MRR* 1.545, 549 & 551; Metellus held the Jugurthine command for 109-107 BC; Sall. *Iug.* 55.8 describes how Jugurtha pursued a scorched earth policy in order to counter Metellus.

²⁴¹ For instance, App. *Pun.* 98-99 & 110 describes the major damage inflicted on the Roman siege weapons and warships in 149 and then the setbacks suffered by Piso in 148 when he attempted to seize the strategically important cities of Aspis and Hippagreta; Sall. *Iug.* 59-60 details the Roman siege of Zama in 109 when Metellus' troops were ambushed and suffered significant casualties.

²⁴² Cic. *Att.* 5.20 in Dec 51 Cicero tells of Bibulus' casualties near Mount Amanus, "the whole of his first cohort was lost as well as Asinius Dento, a centurion of the first line and of noble blood, and other centurions of the same squadron, and a military tribune, Sex. Lucilius son of T. Gavius Caepio, who had wealth and position. It was really a mortifying reverse and inopportune"; *Att.* 7.13 in January 49 after Caesar crossed the Rubicon and seized Picenum Cicero describes Pompeius' actions thus: "you, too, remark how poor a soldier our leader is; why, he did not even know how poor things were in Picenum; and the crisis shows his lack of policy".

4. Conclusion

That there are many different categories of letters you are aware. But the most authentic, the purpose in fact for which letter-writing was invented, is to inform the absent of what it is desirable for them to know, whether in our own interest or their own.²⁴³

When writing to his friend C. Curio in 53, Cicero provides us with his perception of Roman letter-writing, in that it enabled the knowledgeable to inform the uninformed and that it was a process that benefited both sender and recipient. Alongside oral reports, letters were the key multifunctional mechanism by which Roman commanders kept the Senate and people of Rome informed of their activities. In a world without today's twenty-four hour media coverage and its 'on the ground' reporting of military conflicts, these official and private correspondences gave aristocrats extraordinary power over the information and the resultant perceptions that were being projected back home about their campaigns.

Although we have only a modest amount of direct and indirect evidence concerning the nature of magisterial *litterae*, a diverse and complex picture still emerges. There is the key role of *signa*, titling, and textual format in establishing the authenticity and perception of a dispatch's information, as well as the hazards and benefits conferred on it by its secondary handlers, including the senior resident magistrate and the commander's associates in Rome. The practice of storing received and copied letters within some sort of chancery or document cache is especially significant, since it demonstrates a conscious effort by certain commanders to preserve their incoming and outgoing communications as well as other documents. No doubt this practice was primarily influenced in the short term by ongoing military and political

²⁴³ Cic. *Fam.* 2.4.1: "epistalarum genera multa esse non ignoras sed unum illud certissimum, cuius causa inventa res ipsa est, ut certiores faceremus absentis si quid esset quod eos scire aut nosti aut ipsorum interesset".

issues as well as by the increasingly bureaucratic nature of administrating the *res publica*. Nevertheless, a concern for posterity might also have been influential, since the commander or a literary associate might draw on these records at a later date (a factor that will be dealt with more thoroughly in the autobiographical chapter of this thesis).

The second section highlighted how and why dispatches enabled Roman field commanders to convey a range of significant information to the Senate. Of most prominence is the consistent reporting of military success, its influential role in attaining *supplicationes*, and subsequently the award of triumphs. Although there are no extant dispatches reporting pre-eminent victories, indirect references, private letters, and triumphal legislation give us an idea of their typical traits: the active participation of the *imperator* in the reported military success; the death or capture of enemy leaders; the close association between the *imperator* and the conquered region or city; the enumeration of enemy losses; and the omission or downplaying of Roman casualties. The inclusion of these various types of information demonstrates that commanders were not only endeavouring to attain martial success in the field, but also ensuring that a positive picture of it was recognised and accepted back in Rome by their peers. The frequent lapidary fashion of this information also strongly suggests that the aristocratic habit of inscriptional *elogia* influenced their composition.

These dispatches did not solely publicise success though. They enabled commanders to raise their logistical difficulties before the Senate, the body primarily responsible for administrating military supplies. Dispatches also provided commanders with a means of exercising some control over how bad news was reported back home. The publicity value of the dispatch, above all, is demonstrated by the behaviour of Sulla, Pompeius, and Caesar when they chose it as a vehicle for promoting their past service to the *res publica* alongside their political demands in order to intimidate their rivals in Rome.

The third section argued that private letters were an important means of self-promotion as well. They allowed campaigning commanders to target key magistrates and senators with more personalised accounts, and they could play a significant factor within an *imperator's* triumphal canvass. These private letters were frequently given secondary dissemination to other aristocrats, so widening those in the know about a commander's recent endeavours. In addition, the role of private letters in initiating more widespread rumours and hearsay about an *imperator's* achievements through patron-client networks should not be dismissed, and, on the odd occasion, private letters from equestrians and soldiers appear to have been influential in promoting the *fama militaris* of prospective consular candidates. Private correspondences could also be employed by rivals and disillusioned troops to denigrate a field commander, so demonstrating that magistrates, even with their unique authority to employ official dispatches, did not have complete control of the information that emanated from their *provinciae*.

Overall, the large body of evidence on dispatches, although heavily weighted to the Ciceronian period, points to the consistent employment of letters by Roman commanders for martial self-advertisement during the middle to late Republic, and thus a phenomenon that must not be underestimated. We should see these dispatches as part of a complex of publicity strategies, which these aristocrats employed to promote their names and achievements and so hopefully establish a pre-eminent *fama militaris*. The numerous temples, columns, and other triumphal buildings on the skyline of Rome were the permanent large-scale representations of these commanders' military victories, but these structures were at the end of a complex publicity path stretching back to a battle, siege, or campaign, frequently fought hundreds of miles from the capital, in which public and private letters played an integral part.

5. Autobiographical prose

Among the Roman ruling classes autobiography, though firmly rooted in political life and administrative practices, was multiform, and indeed of multiple ancestry. The ‘genetic material’ (so to speak) includes magistrates’ and commanders’ *commentarii*, family archives, a certain kind of historiography, forensic and political oratory in apologia or in claiming power and distinctions, and even, for certain purposes, epistolography.¹

Lewis, in his essay “Imperial Autobiography, Augustus to Hadrian”, cites some of the key resources and influences in the development of imperial autobiography; and later he includes a brief analysis of what he calls their ‘republican models’.² He does not, however, go into detail about how and why this ‘genetic material’ influenced these autobiographical works or how the writer’s military record played a central role in a number of them. Though these autobiographical works have received considerable scholarly attention, from Bömer, Momigliano, Bates, Marincola and Lewis amongst others, this chapter will shed new light on how and why they were written. It will also argue that there was a diverse link between the dispatches and speeches which promote the very campaigns described in these autobiographical works; in so doing, it will highlight the influence not only of panegyric, but also of *vituperatio*.

This chapter breaks down into four sections: the precursors and influences for these works; the pre-Sullan works of the elder Cato, M. Aemilius Scaurus and Q. Lutatius Catulus; Sulla’s *Memoirs*; and finally, Caesar’s *Commentaries*. In analysing these works, it is accepted

¹ Lewis 1991, 632-3.

² Lewis 1991, 658-69.

that there was a difference between the nature of ancient autobiography and historiography.³ However, barring Cato's *Origines*, all these works are either monographs which focused on a commander's role in a specific campaign or a *De Vita Sua* whose primary function was to promote the writer's achievements and genealogy. A detailed treatment of Augustus' *Memoirs* has been excluded from this analysis for reasons of space.⁴ Nevertheless, this important work will be referred to for comparative purposes and in the conclusion of this chapter, when assessing the development of these autobiographical works.

1. Precursors and influences

Following Lewis' catalogue of precursors, influences, and 'genetic material', this section provides an analysis of four key media, practices, and concepts that influenced republican autobiographical works which promoted military achievements. These are: their Greek predecessors, Alexander the Great, public and private letters, and finally the practice of oratory. In pursuing this approach, it is accepted that the political, military and literary contexts of each work were fundamental in their composition and they will be dealt with in the subsequent sections. Furthermore, we must not forget that the personal recollections of the commander were probably the primary information source for these contemporary works,

³ Kraus 2005, 241-256, makes distinctions between the two literary genres.

⁴ *HRR* 2.54-64, Augustus Fr. 1-24; Peter assigns 24 fragments or *reliquiae* to Augustus' *Memoirs*; Malcovati 1945, 84-97, assigns 23; Lewis 1991, 669-689, provides a broad treatment of the *Memoirs*, pointing out that a number of its traits appear to be similar to those in Sulla's *Memoirs* and to a lesser extent Caesar's *Commentarii*, of which three stand out. *HRR*, Augustus Fr. 4 = Plin. *HN* 2.93-4; Fr. 5 = Serv. *ecl.* 9.46; Fr. 10 = Plut. *Brut.* 41.5; a number of the surviving fragments, through the reporting of portents and warning dreams, appear to support the idea that Augustus was divinely ordained to save Rome from being destroyed by civil conflict. Fr. 6 = Plut. *Comp. Dem. Cic.* 3.1; Fr. 7 = Plut. *Cic.* 45.6; Fr. 8 = Plut. *Brut.* 27.1-3; Fr. 14 = Serv. *Aen.* 8.696; it was an apologia for marching on Rome and the subsequent proscriptions this included the denigration of the tyrannicides, M. Antonius and his other political rivals in order to shift the blame for Rome's turmoil and suffering away from Augustus. Thirdly, these *Memoirs* promoted Augustus' martial ethos: Fr. 5 = Serv. *ecl.* 9.46, on Philippi; Fr. 12 = App. *Ill.* 14-15 for his Illyrian campaigns of 35-33; Fr. 19 = Suet. *Aug.* 74, on Actium: "the dead numbered not more than five thousand, but three hundred ships were captured, as Caesar himself wrote"; Suet. *Aug.* 85.1, when listing Augustus' literary works, states "and thirteen books '*de vita sua*' which went down to the Cantabrian War and no further", which suggests that Augustus' final active campaign of 26 might have been included.

since these *imperatores*, through their leadership, tactics, orders and logistical organisation, amongst other actions, were personally responsible for instigating the many achievements being portrayed. Trusted personal lieutenants having participated in some of the narrated campaigns might have added their personal recollections as well; consider Lucullus, for instance, to whom Sulla's *Memoirs* were dedicated and likewise Agrippa for Augustus' autobiography.⁵

Greek predecessors

In antiquity individual wars were one of the most popular topics for literary composition as exemplified by Thucydides's *Peloponnesian War* and Sallust's *Jugurthine War*. Lucian's essay "How to write History" is a direct result of the historical literature then being written about Rome's recent conflict with Parthia (AD 161-6).⁶ In addition, biographical works began to develop and become popular in the Graeco-Roman World from the fifth century onwards, many of which included narratives of recent military conflicts.⁷ Prior to the works that narrated the campaigns of the Roman Republic, the Greek world was already producing historical and biographical literature that commemorated contemporary military achievements. Xenophon, for instance, composed an encomium of King Agesilaus of Sparta; within which he provided an eyewitness account of the Battle of Coronea of 394 BC, including this piece of narrative:

⁵ Plut. *Luc.* 1.3 & 4.4, for the dedication; 2-4, for Lucullus' service as legate to Sulla during the Social War and then as his proquaestor during the Mithridatic campaign; Plut. *Comp. Dem. cum Cic.* 3.1 for the dedication of Augustus' *Memoirs* to Agrippa and Maecenas.

⁶ MacLeod 1991, 289.

⁷ See Momigliano 1971, 23-100.

At this juncture one may say without fear of contradiction that Agesilaus showed courage; but the course that he adopted was not the safest. For he might have allowed the men, who were trying to break through, to pass, and then have followed them and annihilated those in the rear. Instead of doing that he made a furious frontal attack on the Thebans. Thrusting shield against shield, they shoved and fought and fell. There was no shouting nor was there silence, but the strange noise that wrath and battle together will produce. In the end some of the Thebans broke through and reached Helicon, but many fell during the retreat. The victory lay with Agesilaus; but he himself had been carried wounded from his battle-line ... though wounded in every part of the body with every sort of weapon, he did not forget his duty towards the gods, but gave orders that these men [eighty Thebans surrounded in a nearby temple] should be allowed to go wherever they wanted ...⁸

The emphasis on Agesilaus' military leadership, prowess and piety during and after the battle demonstrates how a Greek writer could craft a distinctive martial ethos for an individual within a literary narrative. By the fourth century BC the literary genre of biography had developed and broadened, with histories, monographs, and dialogues also being produced that celebrated the achievements of prominent individuals, as demonstrated by Isocrates' *Evagoras*, which eulogised the life of the Cypriot military leader.⁹ Furthermore, a number of

⁸ Xen. *Ages.* 2.12-13: Ἐνταῦθα δὴ Ἄγησίλαον ἀνδρείον μὲν ἕξεστιν εἰπεῖν ἀναμφιλόγως, οὐ μέντοι εἰλετό γε τὰ ἀσφαλέστατα· ἕξον γὰρ αὐτῷ παρέντι τοὺς διαπίπτοντας ἐπομένῳ χειροῦσθαι τοὺς ὀπισθεν οὐκ ἐποίησε τοῦτο, ἀλλ' ἀντιμέτωπος συνέρραξε τοῖς Θηβαίοις. καὶ συμβαλόντες τὰς ἀσπίδας ἔωθοῦντο, ἐμάχοντο, ἀπέκτεινον, ἀπέθνησκον. καὶ κραυγὴ μὲν οὐδεμία παρῆν, οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ σιγὴ, φωνὴ δὲ τις ἦν τοιαύτη οἷαν ὄργῃ τε καὶ μάχῃ παράσχοιτ' ἄν. τέλος δὲ τῶν Θηβαίων οἱ μὲν διαπίπτουσι πρὸς τὸν Ἑλικῶνα, πολλοὶ δ' ἀποχωροῦντες ἀπέθανον. ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἡ μὲν νίκη σὺν Ἄγησιλάῳ ἐγένετο, τετραμένος δ' αὐτὸς προσηνέχθη πρὸς τὴν φάλαγγα, ... ὁ δὲ καίπερ πολλὰ τραύματα ἔχων πάντοσε καὶ παντοίοις ὄπλοις ὁμῶς οὐκ ἐπελάθετο τοῦ θείου, ἀλλ' ἔἴην τε ἀπιέναι ὅποι βούλοιντο ἐκέλευε ...

⁹ Isoc. *Euag.*; Momigliano 1971, 49-50; Mellor 1999, 133; Marincola 1997, 180 identifies the earliest memoirs written in Greek as those of Demetrius of Phaleron in the late 4th century BC (*FGrH* 228).

these works were autobiographical in nature, particularly the commentaries and memoirs composed by Greek and Hellenistic commanders; these include Xenophon's *Anabasis*, the *Memoirs* of Aratos of Sicyon and the *Commentaries* of Pyrrhus.¹⁰

The extent to which these Greek works influenced their later counterparts in Republican Rome is of course difficult to ascertain in depth on account of the nature and paucity of the evidence. Nevertheless, taking a general perspective, from the third century onwards a broad spectrum of Greek literature was reaching and influencing Rome, as demonstrated by Livius Andronicus' Latin version of the *Odyssey*, Ennius' *Annals* and Plautus' and Terence's adaption of New Comedy.¹¹ A number of Roman aristocrats, particularly by the late Republic, were directly drawing on Greek literature and rhetoric when commissioning or writing laudatory literature. Cicero, for instance, openly acknowledges their impact on his Greek prose account of his consulship as well as on the proposed encomium that he hoped would be included within Lucceius' history of Rome.¹²

Mellor argues that a number of influential Greek historical and biographical works reached Rome in two ways.¹³ First of all, the Roman aristocracy had direct contact with Greek literature. This is strongly demonstrated by Cicero's corpus of letters, with their numerous references to various Greek works such as when he says to Paetus: "you have evidently perused the *Commentaries* of Pyrrhus" and in the famous letter to Lucceius he cites

¹⁰ Polyb. 2.40: "Aratus ... published an honest and lucid memoir of his own career"; Dion. Hal. *An.* 20.10.2: "... as Pyrrhus himself records in his memoirs."

¹¹ Rawson 1989, 429; Goldberg 1995, 89, points out how in the proemium of Book 1 (Enn. *Ann.* 1.3) Ennius states that he was inspired by Homer in a dream; Leigh 2004, 3-6, looks at the process of adapting Greek New Comedy for the Roman stage.

¹² Cic. *Att.* 2.1.1: "Now my book has used up Isocrates' entire perfume cabinet along with all the little scent boxes of his pupils, and some of Aristotle's rouge as well"; Cicero intended this work to be distributed by Atticus in Greece; *Fam.* 5.12.2: "would you prefer to weave my affairs along with those of the rest of the period into a single narrative, or might you not rather follow many Greek precedents, as Callisthenes with the Phocian War, Timaeus with the War of Pyrrhus, and Polybius with that of Numantia, all of whom detached their accounts of these particular wars from their continuous histories?"; Rawson 1983, 104; Steel 2005, 61.

¹³ Mellor 1999, 136.

Callisthenes' history of the Sacred War.¹⁴ Rome's eastern campaigns of the second and first centuries saw the purloining of books from various libraries in Greece and further East, particularly by Roman *imperatores*, books which were frequently re-organized and housed back in Italy within private houses.¹⁵ Plutarch mentions that Aemilius Paullus, following his defeat of King Perseus, "allowed his sons, who were devoted to literature, to pick and choose among the king's books" and he also states how Sulla, following his Mithridatic campaign, "appropriated for himself the library of Apellicon of Teos".¹⁶ It was probably during and after the Mithridatic Wars that the major influx of literature occurred, on account of Rome's more permanent hegemony of the East and the improved transport links between Greece and Rome. Additionally, many Roman aristocrats and their intellectual associates liked to share and send copies of literary works amongst themselves, which would have increased the circulation of these Greek texts within Rome and Italy.¹⁷ This practice not only indicates one of the primary routes by which this 'genetic material' permeated Roman aristocratic society, but also that there was an appreciation of Greek literature by certain *imperatores*, which upon reading or hearing subsequently influenced the works that they themselves later wrote or commissioned.

Mellor also believes these works reached Rome indirectly through the schools of rhetoric.¹⁸ These schools gave training in display oratory through rhetorical exercises; one of these exercises involved promoting the excellence of a character, with biographical traits such as the origins and achievements of an individual. Suetonius gives details of these practices

¹⁴ Cic. *Fam.* 5.12; 9.25: "Pyrrhi te libros ... video lectitasse".

¹⁵ Marshall 1976, 257-8; Rawson 1985, 40; Strabo 13. C609: Sulla carried off the library of Apellicon of Teos; Isidore of Seville 6.5.1, (a seventh century AD source), states that Lucullus' library was part of his booty from Pontus.

¹⁶ Plut. *Aem.* 28; Plut. *Sull.* 26.

¹⁷ Polyb. 31.23.4: Scipio Aemilianus and Polybius first got to know each other through the loan of books; Cic. *Q Fr.* 3.4.5 writing to Quintus in Oct 54: "As regards filling the gaps in your Greek library and exchanging books and acquiring Latin ones, I should very much like all this done ..."; Marshall 1976, 254-255; Rawson 1985, 40-41.

¹⁸ Mellor 1999, 136.

including the employment of Greek literature in these lessons, stating that “sometimes they would translate Greek works, or praise or censure distinguished men.”¹⁹ As mentioned in chapter 2.1, a number of leading Roman aristocrats from the second century BC onwards were educated in these schools.²⁰ In addition, it is plausible that the rhetoricians, and the other peripatetic academics who migrated west, brought modest amounts of Greek literature with them. During their eastern campaigns, moreover, a number of Roman commanders attended recitations of Greek literature. Plutarch describes how Pompeius listened to literary renditions in a number of Greek cities after the completion of his Mithridatic campaign, including lectures by the historian Posidonius at Rhodes.²¹ It would not be surprising that Pompeius, and other *imperatores* who attended similar oral renditions, heard citations to past as well as contemporary Greek literature.

Xenophon, whose works were much admired in Rome, exhibits a prominent martial ethos in his *Anabasis*, and some scholars, most notably Marincola and Lendon, argue that this work was a major influence on its later Roman counterparts, particularly Caesar’s *Commentaries*.²² The *Anabasis* is a vivid eyewitness account of the Greek expedition to Mesopotamia 401-400 BC, which Xenophon led back west after most of its leaders had been killed. Written in the third person like Caesar’s *Commentaries*, Xenophon frequently emphasizes his military leadership and prowess, such as when he urges his men up a hill when the Persian leader Tissaphernes was threatening their rear.

But Soteridas of Sicyon, said: “It’s not fair, Xenophon. You’re on horseback, while the weight of my shield has totally worn me out”. At this, Xenophon jumped off his horse,

¹⁹ Suet. *Rhet.* 1: “interdum Graecorum scripta convertere, ac viros illustres laudare vel vituperare”.

²⁰ Cf. Bonner 1977, 84-5; Clarke 1996, 20; Corbeill 2007, 70.

²¹ Plut. *Pomp.* 42.

²² Marincola 1997, 212; Lendon 1999, 296; Mellor 1999, 166.

pushed Soteridas out of the column, took his shield from him, marched on as quickly as he could with the shield – and since he was wearing his cavalryman’s breastplate, it was hard going for him. He kept urging the men in front of him to lead the way and the men behind to overtake him, because he was struggling to keep up.²³

This is very similar to the approach of Caesar’s *Commentaries*, in which he frequently describes his rapid decisions and personal leadership at key moments, like when his legions were fighting the Belgic tribes in 57 BC.

As the situation was critical and no reserves were available, Caesar snatched a shield from a soldier in the rear, as he had no shield of his own, made his way into the front line, addressed each centurion by name, and shouted encouragement to the rest of the troops, ordering them to push forward and open out their ranks, so that they could use their swords more easily.²⁴

In these two excerpts we see both leaders demonstrating their active participation in both the dangers and collective identity of their troops. (Xenophon’s men, though, retain their regional identities unlike Caesar’s). Furthermore, as Marincola points out, both Xenophon’s and Caesar’s monographs commemorate the endeavours of the campaigning army itself, not

²³ Xen. *An.* 3.4.47-48: Σωτηρίδας δὲ ὁ Σικυώνιος εἶπεν· οὐκ ἐξ ἴσου, ὦ Ξενοφῶν, ἐσμέν· σὺ μὲν γὰρ ἐφ’ ἵππου ὀχῆ, ἐγὼ δὲ χαλεπῶς κάμνω τὴν ἀσπίδα φέρων. καὶ ὅς ἀκούσας ταῦτα καταπηδήσας ἀπὸ τοῦ ἵππου ὠθεῖται αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς τάξεως καὶ τὴν ἀσπίδα ἀφελόμενος ὡς ἐδύνατο τάχιστα ἔχων ἐπορεύετο· ἐτύγγανε δὲ καὶ θώρακα ἔχων τὸν ἱππικόν· ὥστ’ ἐπιέζετο. καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἔμπροσθεν ὑπάγειν παρεκελεύετο, τοῖς δὲ ὀπισθεν παριέναι μόλις ἐπόμενος.

²⁴ Caes. *B Gall.* 2.25: “... rem esse in angusto vidit neque ullum esse subsidium, quod summitti posset, scuto ab novissimis uni militi detracto, quod ipse eo sine scuto venerat, in primam aciem processit centurionibusque nominatim appellatis reliquos cohortatus milites signa inferre et manipulos laxare iussit, quo facilius gladiis uti possent”.

simply the individual commander, and Marincola goes so far to suggest that the *Anabasis* “may be the real model behind Caesar’s Gallic War narrative”.²⁵

Cawkwell argues against the direct influence of Xenophon’s memoir saying that “as far as Republican Rome was concerned the popular book was not the *Anabasis*, but his *Education of Cyrus*...and it is doubtful whether Cicero...had even read the book”.²⁶ Cicero’s comment, however, in the *Brutus* that Q. Lutatius Catulus’s account of his consulship was “written in a smooth Xenophontean style,” very probably reflects, not only the influence of the *Education of Cyrus*, but an overall impact, both direct and indirect, of Xenophon’s others works including the *Anabasis*, particularly in light of the fact that Cicero in the *Brutus* is specifically commenting on a Roman autobiographical work.²⁷ Frontinus, in the references to the *Anabasis* in his *Strategemata*, indicates that this work was well known in Rome by the first century AD and consequently it would not be surprising that it had been circulating already for some decades amongst the Roman elite.²⁸

Alexander the Great

The myths and literature surrounding Alexander the Great influenced the autobiographical and historical works that promoted the achievements of Roman Republican commanders. Soon after his death the images and stories of Alexander started to reach Italy, as demonstrated by some late fourth century Apulian vases that appear to depict the famous scene of Alexander galloping in pursuit of Darius’ chariot.²⁹ From the second century onwards various Greek and Hellenistic artworks were being carried back from Rome’s eastern campaigns, including

²⁵ Marincola 1999, 317 & 1997, 197.

²⁶ Cawkwell 1972, 47.

²⁷ Cic. *Brut.* 132: “... ex eo libro quem de consulatu et de rebus gestis suis conscriptum molli et Xenophontio genere sermonis ...”; Mellor 1999, 168.

²⁸ Frontin. *Str.* 1.4.10, Cf. Xen. *An.* 4.3.20; *Str.* 4.2.8, Cf. *An.* 3.1; *Str.* 4.6.2, Cf *An.* 4.4.

²⁹ Poulsen 1993, 161.

material that portrayed Alexander.³⁰ During these campaigns, commanders like Sulla and Pompeius would have viewed a number of monuments and cities associated with Alexander's achievements. How much these sites inspired them and their publicists, like Theophanes of Mytilene, is difficult to ascertain. Augustus certainly seems to have viewed Alexander positively, since he employed a likeness of Alexander as his signet ring seal.³¹

In addition, a number of contemporary histories were written by Alexander's associates to commemorate his campaigns, including the works of Callisthenes, Nearchus, Aristobulus and Ptolemy.³² A generation later perhaps Cleitarchus also wrote an influential history of Alexander.³³ Although it is difficult to judge the extent with which these works were read and recognised within Republican Rome, Cicero, in talking about the literary promotion of military achievements, comments on these Hellenistic writers to a Roman jury when defending Archias in 62. "How many writers Alexander the Great is said to have kept with him to record his deeds!"³⁴ How many of the jury actually knew these works at first hand is impossible to tell, but it is clear from other Ciceronian references at the very least the works of Callisthenes and Cleitarchus were known to Cicero and his friends.³⁵ During his siege of Pindenissum, for instance, Cicero writing to Caelius states: "So in due recognition of a victorious campaign I was saluted *Imperator* at Issus, where as I have often heard you say, Cleitarchus told you that Darius was defeated by Alexander".³⁶ Whether Sulla, Caesar and Augustus were as well read as Cicero we cannot say, but as Green argues it would certainly

³⁰ Gruen 1992, 116; Vell. Pat. 1.11.3-4 for how the famous bronze statuary group sculpted by Lysippus, which depicted Alexander and the Companions who fell at the Granicus, was brought back from Macedonia by Q. Caecilius Metellus after his campaign of 148-146 BC.

³¹ Suet. *Aug.* 50.

³² Pearson 1960, 22-49 for Callisthenes; 112-149 for Nearchus; 150-187 for Aristobulus; 188-211 for Ptolemy; *FGrH* 124, 133, 139 & 138 for the fragments of these four respective Hellenistic historians.

³³ Pearson 1960, 212-242; *FGrH*, 137 for Cleitarchus.

³⁴ Cic. *Arch.* 24.

³⁵ Pearson 1960, 213; Cic. *Brut.* 42-3; Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.2.

³⁶ Cic. *Fam.* 2.10.3: "ita victoria iusta imperator appellatus apud Issum, quo in loco, saepe ut ex te audivi, Clitarchus tibi narravit Dareum ab Alexandro esse superatum".

appear that “by the mid first century BC all levels of the [Alexander] historiographic tradition were familiar to educated Romans”.³⁷

It is Alexander’s military reputation alongside the Hellenistic historiography that probably had the most impact on Republican *imperatores*, although of course the literature and his reputation are closely interlinked. This reputation is indicated by a Plautine and a later Ciceronian reference to Alexander’s generalship.³⁸ Pompeius, through his adoption of the cognomen Magnus as well as his *imitatio* of Alexander during his triumph of 61, demonstrated that some Roman aristocrats viewed Alexander in a positive manner and one wonders to what extent Theophanes of Mytilene within his history of Pompeius’ Eastern campaigns directly compared his patron with the Macedonian King.³⁹ Pompeius, however, was ridiculed at times for this association and, as Green and Isager argue, Alexander was perceived both positively and negatively in Rome.⁴⁰ Some recognised the Macedonian’s unprecedented achievements, whilst others viewed him as a luxurious and drunken Eastern tyrant.⁴¹

Livy, in his counterfactual on Alexander within book nine of his history, illustrates the profound impact of Alexander’s endeavours upon the Roman elite psyche.⁴² Following his narrative of the Second Samnite War, Livy raises the question of whether Alexander could have conquered Italy and Rome, arguing that the commanders and soldiers of Rome of fourth century Rome, on account of their virtues and discipline, would have withstood a Macedonian

³⁷ Green 1978, 6-7; Rawson 1985, 222-3.

³⁸ Plaut. *Mostell.* 775-7, the slave Tranio remarks: “they say Alexander the Great and Agathocles were a pair who did really big things. How about me for a third? Just look at the immortal deeds I perform single-handed”; Cic. *Att.* 5.20.3: “For a few days I pitched camp at the very spot near Issus, where Alexander had camped against Darius. He was rather a better general than you or I”.

³⁹ App. *Mith.* 117: Pompeius is said to have worn Alexander’s cloak during his triumph of 61 BC; Green 1978, 5; *FGrH*, 188 for Theophanes.

⁴⁰ Plut. *Pomp.* 2: during a court case the consular L. Phillipus made a joke about Pompeius’ *imitatio* of Alexander; Green 1978, 5; Isager 1993, 75.

⁴¹ For example, Green 1978, 12: points out that Cicero has various perceptions of Alexander – sometimes neutral, sometimes admiring and on other occasions with moral disapproval.

⁴² Livy 9.16.19-19.17.

invasion led by Alexander.⁴³ As part of his construct, Livy diminishes Alexander's achievements and abilities, citing Alexander's continual good fortune and the supposed poor quality of the opposition that he had faced. When comparing Alexander to the successful Roman commander L. Papirius Cursor, Livy even contends that:

Surely he [Cursor] would have said it was no Darius he [Alexander] had to deal with, trailing along with him a crowd of women and eunuchs, weighed down by the gold and purple trappings of his rank, an easy prey rather than an enemy, to be defeated without bloodshed, simply by daring to scorn enemy display.⁴⁴

In providing this range of comparative information Livy demonstrates not only an extensive knowledge of Alexander's campaigns, but also a profound recognition that Alexander was the most successful military commander yet seen in the Graeco-Roman World.⁴⁵ Now, although Green makes the important point that Alexander is not mentioned once in Caesar's *Commentaries*, he nevertheless argues that Caesar, through his actions and subsequent writings, was possibly emulating, not imitating, Alexander, particularly in the extent of his military conquests.⁴⁶ Amongst the competitive elite of the Roman Republic, it is of course

⁴³ Livy 9.17.10: "Any one of these [M. Valerius Corvus, C. Marcius Rutulus, C. Sulpicius, T. Manlius Torquatus, Q. Publilius Philo, L. Papirius Cursor, Q. Fabius Maximus, the Decii, L. Volumnius, and M'. Curius] were gifted with the same qualities as Alexander was, and, moreover, the military training which had been handed down from generation to generation ever since the early days of the City had now been developed into a systematic discipline based on a series of precepts".

⁴⁴ Livy 9.17.16: "non cum Dareo rem esse dixisset, quem mulierum ac spadonum agmen trahentem inter purpuram atque aurum oneratum fortunae apparatibus suae, praedam verius quam hostem, nihil aliud quam bene ausus vana contemnere, incruentus devicit".

⁴⁵ Livy 35.14.5-12; the first century historian Q. Claudius Quadrigarius, who himself drew on the second century historian C. Acilius, provides another example of comparing Alexander to other commanders, when he describes the supposed meeting of Scipio and Hannibal at Ephesus in 193 BC during which Hannibal gave his opinion on who was the greatest general.

⁴⁶ Green 1978, 2-3; Suet. *Iul.* 7.1; Plut. *Caes.* 11.3; Dio 37.52.2; Caesar, during his quaestorship of 69 in Spain, wept over the extent of Alexander's achievements in comparison to his own; Suetonius and Dio state that a statue of Alexander near Gades induced these tears, whilst Plutarch mentions that it arose when Caesar was reading one

their aristocratic peers with whom they were primarily contending, as demonstrated by Marius vying with Sulla and Pompeius with Lucullus; Welch argues that Caesar through his Gallic War *Commentaries* was primarily competing with the established military *auctoritas* of Pompeius.⁴⁷ This does not mean, however, that we have to dismiss non-Roman commanders as objects of emulation, particularly a Macedonian whose extensive conquests and images were known throughout the Graeco-Roman world by the late Republic. As demonstrated by Cornelius Nepos' biographies of eminent foreign leaders and generals, by the mid first century BC there was an interest in and recognition of the achievements of non-Roman commanders.⁴⁸

Public and private letters

As argued in chapter four, public and private letters were an integral means of martial self-advertisement during our period. I not only highlighted their frequent employment, but, also, the at times diverse and intricate nature of the information that they disseminated about magistrates' military activities. Although there are few references to their direct employment within later literary narratives, a number of scholars have argued that these letters were of fundamental importance; and their potential influence can be seen from a number of perspectives.⁴⁹

First of all, many of the commanders who produced autobiographical works had previously exploited dispatches as a means of martial self-advertisement. This is not simply a case of lifting the contents of letters for these later works, but also of the skills required in

of the histories about Alexander; Green points out that these tales are seen by many scholars as 'ex post facto propaganda' to enhance Caesar's reputation.

⁴⁷ Welch 1998, 85-6; Cf. Sec. 4 of this chapter.

⁴⁸ Wiseman 1979, 157, describes Nepos' lives as "a crash course to help the ordinary reader."

⁴⁹ Marincola 1997, 197, on Caesar's Gallic commentaries, states: "it seems likely that ... the original dispatches that Caesar sent from Gaul to the Senate were in the first person, and that Caesar used some of these dispatches, reworking them into his book, and changing first to third person"; Lewis 1991, 511: suggests that Sulla's *Memoirs* was a selection "of material culled from headquarters log-books and other administrative records (*commentarii*), dispatches and other correspondence"; Cf. Fornara 1983, 56; Scholz 2003, 174.

drafting these documents, since they dealt with subjects such as body-counts, eye-catching descriptions of the enemy, the capture or death of enemy leaders, logistical difficulties and so forth, subjects that frequently recurred in the later literary works.⁵⁰ We should see the epistolary abilities of these commanders as transferable skills. Sulla, Caesar and Octavian, for instance, when writing their memoirs or commentaries, had already composed dispatches that detailed their most prestigious military achievements, such as of their respective successes at Chaeronea, Alesia, and Forum Gallorum.⁵¹ Furthermore, though we only have a few extant examples, in light of the Ciceronian references to current epistolary practices as well as the chanceries that certain commanders employed to store and transport letters and other documents, it is very probable that many commanders' dispatches were being preserved and circulated at least by the late Republic when nearly all these autobiographical works were being written.⁵²

To support the argument that dispatches were employed as a direct source of information for subsequent autobiographical accounts, the correspondence between L. Verus and M. Cornelius Fronto is pertinent. In AD 163-6 the Roman forces in the Parthian War were led by Avidius Cassius and Statius Priscus; these commanders brought the war to a conclusion by defeating the Parthians at Dura Europus and then making a punitive raid against Media.⁵³ The co-emperor Verus was in nominal command of this campaign, staying behind in Syria. Nonetheless, he saw an opportunity to establish a military reputation for himself back in Rome

⁵⁰ For example, *HRR*, Augustus Fr. 15 = Plut. *Ant.* 68; in a reference to Augustus' *Memoirs* about the Battle of Actium, Augustus states: "The dead numbered not more than five thousand, but three hundred ships were captured, as Caesar himself wrote".

⁵¹ DS 84: Sulla's dispatch of 84 BC cited his Mithridatic achievements; DS 93: Caesar's dispatch of 52 informed the Senate of his defeat of the Gallic uprising; DS 113: the dispatch of April 43 from Pansa, Hirtius and Octavian reported the victory over the forces of M. Antonius at Forum Gallorum. One of the more senior magistrates, however, might have composed it, although Octavian could have contributed to the dispatch in one way or another.

⁵² Cf. Chapter 4, Section 1.

⁵³ Dio 71 provides some fragmentary details of this war.

and from 163 onwards, after Armenia was retaken, there are at least two letters between Fronto and Verus about the eulogistic work that Verus hoped his old tutor would write.⁵⁴ One of these from Verus in 165 includes the following details:

Indeed, what was done, after I had set out, you can learn from the despatches sent to me by the commanders entrusted with each business. Our friend Sallustius, now called Fulvianus, will provide you with copies of them. But that you may be able to give the reasons for my measures, I will also send you my own letters, in which all that had to be done is clearly set forth. But if you want some sort of descriptions as well, you can get them from Fulvianus. And to bring you into closer touch with reality, I have directed Avidius Cassius and Martius Verus to draw up some memoranda for me, which I will send to you, and you will be quite able from them to gauge the character of the men and their capacity, but if you wish me also to draw up a memorandum, instruct me as to the form of it, which you prefer, and I will follow your directions. I am ready to fall in with any suggestions as long as my exploits are set out in a bright light by you. Of course you will not overlook my speeches to the Senate and harangues to the army. I will send you my parleys with the enemy as well. These will be of great assistance to you.⁵⁵

The context of this letter is important: it was written over 140 years after Augustus' death, when the competitive politics of the Republic were a distant memory, and there was a better

⁵⁴ Fronto *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.1 & 2.3.

⁵⁵ Fronto *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.3: "ea vero, quae post meam profectionem gesta sunt, ex litteris ad me scriptis a negotio cuique praepositis ducibus cognosces. earum exemplaria Sallustius noster, nunc Fulvianus, dabit. ego vero, ut et consiliorum meorum rationes commemorare possis, meas quoque litteras, quibus quidquid gerendum esset, demonstratur mittam tibi. quodsi picturas quoque quasdam desideraveris, poteris a Fulviano accipere. equidem quo magis te quasi in rem praesentem inducerem, mandavi Cassio Avidio Martioque Vero commentarios quosdam mihi facerent, quos tibi mittam; ex quibus et mores hominum et sensum eorum cognosces. quodsi me quoque voles aliquem commentarium facere, designa mihi; qualem velis faciam et, ut jubes, faciam. quidvis enim subire paratus sum, dum a te res nostrae inlustrentur. plane non contempseris et orationes ad senatum et adlocutiones nostras ad exercitum. mittam tibi et sermones meos cum barbaris habitos: multum haec tibi conferent".

established communications system between Rome and the *provinciae*, probably resulting in more letters in circulation, although epistolary technology remained much the same. Taking these points into account, Verus, a Roman leader with considerable political and military powers, exhibits how dispatches could be directly exploited for a laudatory war monograph. To start with, the letters written by both his generals and himself are the first means of information he cites, not *commentarii* or speeches. He then tells Fronto where he can find copies of them: the secretary Fulvianus. We know that Sulla, Caesar and Augustus, amongst other leading republican commanders, had secretaries and attendants and, moreover, that these leaders, especially Caesar and Augustus, dealt with considerable amounts of correspondence.⁵⁶ Although we have no direct evidence that they employed letters within their later works, if we adopt the perspective of these commanders, when they decided to compose a memoir or monograph, any preserved dispatches, alongside any relevant written-up speeches or diaries (written both during and after the campaign), would have been the most direct and accessible information about their military achievements and so probably the first documents searched for by either the commander, his secretary or his literary publicist.

One issue in relation to dispatches remains: whether some of these autobiographical works evolved from dispatches. Marincola and Mellor cite the letter of P. Scipio Africanus to Philip V and the letter of P. Scipio Nasica to an unknown king as potential forerunners to the later Roman memoirs and *commentarii*.⁵⁷ According to Polybius, Africanus' letter dealt with "all his operations in Spain and particularly the siege of New Carthage".⁵⁸ Nasica's letter, on

⁵⁶ Suet. *Gram.* 12; Sulla had a freedman called Cornelius Epicadus who completed the last book of Sulla's Memoirs; Hall 1998b, 25, n.150; Justin. *Epit.* 43.5.12 mentions that the son of the historian Pompeius Trogus was the keeper of Caesar's military letters; Suet. *Aug.* 67; Augustus punished his secretary Thallus for revealing the contents of a letter; Suet. *Aug.* 45; Caesar had a habit of dealing with his numerous letters and reports during his attendance at public games.

⁵⁷ Marincola 1997, 181; Mellor 1999, 167.

⁵⁸ *FGrH*, 232 = Polyb. 10.9.3: "... Scipio himself in his letter to Philip explained clearly that it was after making the calculations which I have just recited that he undertook all his operations in Spain and particularly the siege

the other hand, detailed Aemilius Paullus' Pydna campaign against Perseus in 168, in which Nasica was a legate. Plutarch cites a few details from Nasica's epistle, including this account of a skirmish prior to the main battle:

Nasica says that a fierce and close-fought battle took place for possession of the heights, and tells how he brought down a Thracian mercenary, who had charged at him; by plunging his spear into his chest ...⁵⁹

This is a fine example of how a literary narrative could promote individual *virtus*, a technique that both Sulla and Caesar employ when they describe the individual achievements of some of their men.⁶⁰ Later in his account of the Pydna campaign Plutarch describes how Nasica provided a vivid account of the main battle including a description of Perseus' troops.

First came the Thracians who Nasica says were terrifying to see – tall men, with the armour of their shields and greaves gleaming white over the black tunics they wore, wielding in their right hands their heavy broadswords held vertically at shoulder height.⁶¹

of New Carthage (... διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τῆς πρὸς Φίλιππον αὐτοῦ τοῦ Ποπλίου σαφῶς ἐκτεθεικότος ὅτι τούτοις τοῖς ἐκλογισμοῖς χρησάμενος, οἷς ἡμεῖς ἀνώτερον ἐξελογισάμεθα, καθόλου τε τοῖς ἐν Ἰβηρίᾳ πράγμασιν ἐπιβάλοιτο καὶ κατὰ μέρος τῇ τῆς Καρχηδόνας πολιορκίᾳ)."

⁵⁹ *FGrH*, 233 = Plut. *Aem.* 16.2: ὁ δὲ Νασικᾶς ὁξὺν ἀγῶνα περὶ τοῖς ἄκροις γενέσθαι καὶ κίνδυνον, αὐτὸς δὲ Θρᾶκα μισθοφόρον εἰς χεῖρας συνδραμόντα τῷ ξυστῷ διὰ τοῦ στήθους παταξας καταβαλεῖν ...

⁶⁰ For example, *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 12 = Plut. *Sull.* 14; Sulla's description of how Marcus Ateius was the first man to scale the walls of Athens; Marincola 1997, 212-3 points out that Caesar in his *Commentaries* frequently highlights the individual *virtus* of his soldiers; Cf. Caes. *B Gall.* 2.25 for the endeavours of the centurion P. Sextius Baculus against the Belgae in 57 BC; Caes. *B Civ.* 3.53 for the endurance of the centurion Scaeva at Dyrrachium in 48.

⁶¹ Plut. *Aem.* 18.3: Πρῶτοι δ' οἱ Θρᾶκες ἐχώρου, ὧν μάλιστά φησιν ἐκπλαγῆναι τὴν ὄψηλοι τὰ σώματα, λευκῶ καὶ περιλάμποντι θυρεῶν καὶ περικνημίδων ὀπλισμῶ μέλανας ὑπενδεδυμένοι χιτῶνας, ὀρθὰς δὲ ῥομφαίας βαρυσιδήρους ἀπὸ τῶν δεξιῶν ὤμων ἐπισείοντες.

This technique of dramatically emphasising the prowess of the enemy to heighten your eventual victory is another literary technique employed in later works, such as when Caesar describes the tremendous Gallic efforts to penetrate the Roman circumvallation of Alesia.⁶²

Verus goes so far as saying in his letter to Fronto:

Furthermore, I think it essential to make quite clear the great superiority of the Parthians before my arrival, that the magnitude of my achievements may be manifest.⁶³

Verus again reinforces the idea of how the traits exhibited in dispatches could directly benefit a later autobiographical work.

I concur with Marincola that the letters of Scipio Nasica and Scipio Aemilianus display some typical traits whereby Roman commanders promoted their military achievements. This, however, does not mean that we have to exclude the more numerous letters that they sent to Rome. Why cannot the dispatches to the Senate go alongside the two Scipionic letters as the forerunners of the later biographies and histories? It is true that there are some significant differences between the Scipionic letters and the dispatches to the Senate. First of all, there is the audience. Instead of their peers in Rome, one letter was sent to a Macedonian King and the other to unknown monarch, an audience which strongly suggests that Greek was employed instead of the customary Latin of magisterial dispatches. Secondly, one could argue that Polybius' and Plutarch's description and citation of these documents makes them appear more like monographs or pamphlets than dispatches, particularly because both dealt with a whole campaign. This perception, though, possibly derives from the idea that dispatches and letters,

⁶² Caes. *B Gall.* 7.83-85.

⁶³ Fronto *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.3: "porro necessarium puto, quanto ante meum adventum superiores Parthi fuerint dilucere, ut quantum nos egerimus appareat"; Champlin 1980, 115-6.

when describing campaigns, were predominantly cursory reports, as demonstrated by Decimus Brutus's brief letter to Cicero in 44.⁶⁴ However, as illustrated by Galba's letter of 43 with its detailed description of the engagement at Forum Gallorum and Cicero's letter to Atticus about his Cilician endeavours, these epistles could contain lengthy narratives, including sophisticated accounts of military achievement.⁶⁵ Although we have no extant letter illustrating this, a magistrate when requesting a triumph, or reporting the completion of a campaign, might very well have composed a prolonged account to impress the Senate with the extent of his achievements.⁶⁶ Thus, the Scipionic letters should not be separated from the other dispatches written by Roman commanders, but perhaps seen as a product of two Roman commanders' willingness to disseminate their achievements beyond their usual audience back in Rome.

Oratory

Rhetoric influenced the composition of these Roman historical and biographical works in a number of ways. Roman Republican commanders, when writing such commemorative works, already had experience in the delivery of political and triumphal speeches. As argued in chapter two, a number of these speeches, just like dispatches, would have included common traits that might benefit a letter autobiographical work, including: the prowess of the enemy, the enumeration of casualties, the citing of individual and collective Roman *virtus* and so forth. Above all, we should take into account the numerous triumphal speeches that returning *imperatores* delivered to the Senate.⁶⁷ We must also remember that this rhetoric not only

⁶⁴ Cic. *Fam.* 11.4.

⁶⁵ Cic. *Fam.* 10.30; *Att.* 5.20.

⁶⁶ This does depend, though, on how long a letter the assembled senators would sit through; Suet. *Aug.* 89.2; Augustus apparently sometimes "read out texts in their entirety (*libros totos*) to the Senate" which indicates that they could sit through the rendition of lengthy documents, although of course Augustus did possess un-paralleled *auctoritas*.

⁶⁷ See Table 1, Chapter 2, Section 2 with its 165 probable orations to the Senate.

impacted on the *imperator* delivering the speech, but also the assembled senators listening to these triumphal claims, some of whom went on to write eulogistic works.

Another oratorical influence was the *laudatio funebris*, the public eulogy delivered by a relative at the funerals of Roman aristocrats. This public speech, according to both Polybius and also the version of the Metellan *laudatio* preserved by Pliny, involved listing the deceased's achievements.⁶⁸ This would have included the magisterial and religious offices held, his successful military and civic deeds, as well as some genealogical information. This speech was a major means of publicly commemorating the deceased's service both to the state and to his *gens*. Its structure and subject-matter, though lapidary in fashion, point towards the framework and contents of what might be described as a Roman *De vita sua*.

The preservation and publication of speeches, whether they were funerary, political or forensic, was another key factor influencing the composition of these historical and biographical works. If the commander or an associate was looking for information on a past or ongoing campaign, he might go to the household archive or mobile chancery to find a written up account of a speech that related to the campaign. Verus when writing to Fronto demonstrates such a practice. "Of course you will not overlook my speeches to the Senate and harangues to the army. I will send you also my parleys with the enemy. These will be of great assistance to you".⁶⁹ When considering the elder Cato's narrative of his Spanish campaign in his *Origines*, we know that he gave at least one speech that promoted his Spanish achievements; this would have been an accessible piece of information when he came to writing that section of the *Origines*.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Polyb. 6.53-4; Plin. *HN* 7.139.

⁶⁹ Fronto *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.3: "plane non contempseris et orationes ad senatum et adlocutiones nostras ad exercitum. mittam tibi et sermones meos cum barbaris habitos: multum haec tibi conferent".

⁷⁰ *ORF*³, Cato, Fr. 21-55 for the fragments of *De consulatu suo*; *HRR*, Cato Fr. 93; Badian 1966, 9; Astin 1978, 217 & 233-4.

Another important aspect was the training in public oratory that many Roman aristocrats followed in the late Republic (chapter 2.1). The practice of declamation, moreover, and other rhetorical exercises were core educational practices of the Roman aristocracy.⁷¹ The learning and appreciation of rhetorical techniques such as *laudatio* and *vituperatio*, the exploitation of historical *exempla*, as well as other specific skills, would have benefited a future commemorative work embarked on by an *imperator*.

There are various scholarly approaches to how rhetoric influenced ancient historiography. Woodman states that historiography was a branch of rhetoric, arguing for its pervasive influence, maintaining that “historiography, like poetry, employs the concepts associated with, and relies upon the expectations generated by, a rhetorical genre”.⁷² To support his argument Woodman points out that Cicero in the *Orator* brackets historiography and panegyrics under the heading of epideictic (or ‘display’ oratory), since both were primarily concerned with the detailing of men’s achievements.⁷³ In his conclusion Woodman goes further stating that “classical historians, like their modern namesakes, are indeed rhetorical in the sense that they manipulate factual truths for dramatic purposes”.⁷⁴ A number of the autobiographical works in this chapter employ dramatic license to heighten the impact of the past events within their respective narratives.⁷⁵ It must be remembered though, when scholars cite the influence of the rhetorical practice of *inventio*, we must not think of it in the modern sense of invention and fabrication, but that it involved the finding of material for one’s arguments and narrative.⁷⁶ In addition, there are clear differences between biographical-historical prose and the practice of oratory; nonetheless, as Marincola stresses, an important

⁷¹ Suet. *Gram.* 7 for the training of the young Julius Caesar in language, literature as well as declamations by the rhetorician Antonius Gniphio.

⁷² Woodman 1998, x.

⁷³ Woodman 1998, 95; Cic. *Orat.* 37.

⁷⁴ Woodman 1988, 199.

⁷⁵ See Caes. *B Gall.* 7.50 for a dramatic depiction of M. Petronius’ self-sacrifice at Gergovia.

⁷⁶ Kraus & Woodman 1997, 12; Bispham 2004, 48.

link between the two was that the ancient historian, like the ancient orator, had to persuade his audience “that his account is one that should be believed”.⁷⁷

One key distinction was the differing audiences for public oratory and historiography during the Roman Republic. Although these historical and biographical works were written down, most likely on rolls of papyri, their initial audience, on occasion, was probably not the individual reader, but a small gathering of the writer’s friends and associates at a dinner or another social event at which he would give a *recitatio* of some of his work.⁷⁸ Wiseman emphasizes this by stating how “ancient literature was intended to be read aloud”.⁷⁹ He argues that in the late Republic such literary presentations were becoming less exclusive and that they were not only being delivered to small groups of friends, but in more public places as well. His central piece of evidence for this theory comes from Cicero’s *De finibus*, in which one of the dialogue’s speakers, M. Piso, assesses the intellectual pursuit of the *summum bonum*, including the composition and purpose of history.

Why do we derive pleasure from history, which we are so fond of following up, to the remotest detail, turning back to parts we have omitted, and pushing on to the end of what we have begun? Not that I am unaware that history is useful as well as entertaining ... But what of the delight that is taken in history by men of humblest station, with no expectation of participating in public life, or even mere artisans?⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Marincola 1997, 128.

⁷⁸ Wiseman 1987, 254, highlights the important practice of *recitationes* by historians during the early Principate. He cites a passage of the elder Seneca (*Sen. Contr. iv pref. 2*) which he believes indicates that the historian “Asinius Pollio was the first Roman to recite his works to an invited audience”; Wiseman admits, though, that “there is no direct evidence for late-republican historians giving public recitals.”

⁷⁹ Wiseman 1987, 253.

⁸⁰ Cic. *Fin. 5.51-2*: “et quid historia delectet, quam solemus persequi usque ad extremum, praetermissa repetimus, inchoata persequimur. Nec vero sum nescius esse utilitatem in historia, non modo voluptatem. Quid, cum fictas fabulas, e quibus utilitas nulla elici potest, cum voluptate legimus? ... quid, quod homines infima fortuna, nulla spe rerum gerendarum, opifices denique delectantur historia?”

Barring this passage, however, the evidence for this argument is largely circumstantial. This passage could be interpreted as Cicero's perception of who *should* be receiving historical prose, rather than who in practice *was* receiving it.

The final area of oratory that significantly influenced these literary works was *vituperatio*.⁸¹ As argued in chapter three, oral invective was a major feature of Roman public life, whereby the reputation and record of leading aristocrats could be attacked through public speeches as well as other means; attacks that frequently involved allegations of immoral and financial improprieties. This culture saw a number of commanders and magistrates, particularly during and immediately following their campaigns or governorships, being denigrated for their behaviour in the field.

This culture of oral invective had a powerful resonance on the composition of these autobiographical works in two main ways. First of all, these literary works provided a means of promoting the commander's achievements on behalf of Rome and thus depict his behaviour in a good light to counter any past, ongoing or future criticisms. Secondly, these works themselves were excellent vehicles by which a commander could inveigh against his rivals, especially his *inimici*, the individuals who had previously denigrated his actions and so hurt his *dignitas*. For instance, Sulla's *Memoirs*, although fragmentary, on at least two occasions cast Marius in a bad light and a pervasive feature of Caesar's *Civil War* commentary was the blackening of nearly all the Pompeian leaders, barring Pompeius himself.⁸² Linked to this, Sulla, Caesar and Augustus could not escape the fact that they were key protagonists in civil wars that affected large numbers and various sections of Roman society through death, displacement and land confiscations. By blaming these conflicts through *vituperatio*

⁸¹ Ramage 1991, 95 highlights the double-sided nature of epideictic oratory whereby "censure or *vituperatio*, which is the opposite of eulogy or *laudatio*, is a legitimate part of it".

⁸² *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 4 = Plut. *Sull.* 4.5; *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 5 = Plut. *Mar.* 25.6-8; Ramage 1991, 99; Collins 1972, 946.

(alongside more subtle criticisms), on Marius, the Pompeians, the tyrannicides and Antonius amongst others, these pieces of literature were shifting the perception of blame away from their authors.

Conclusion

Unlike their modern counterparts, ancient historians have little if any first-hand material – archived dispatches, personal letters, written orders, original maps and so forth – to help them understand what influenced a general's military actions and perceptions, and, on occasion, his subsequent memoirs or monograph about a specific campaign. Nonetheless, the intellectual, political and administrative environment of the late Republic does suggest some fundamental precursory influences that instigated and shaped these autobiographical works. First of all, from a material perspective, preserved letters, written-up speeches and Greek works of literature played a key role. Secondly, from a conceptual perspective, there were their perceptions about preceding military achievements, such as those of Alexander the Great and their rivals, as well as concerns about the recent and future criticisms on their reputations.

2. Pre-Sullan works of Cato, Scaurus and Catulus

Ancient historical fragments

Prior to the analysis of these three historical and autobiographical works, a discussion of ancient historical fragments is required as all three, as well as Sulla's *Memoirs*, are known to us from a small number of fragments and indirect statements. Brunt emphasized the importance of approaching and employing historical fragments with care, since "every collection of 'fragments' abounds in mere allusions, paraphrases, and condensations, which are often very inadequate mirrors of what the lost historians actually wrote".⁸³ Brunt, moreover, raises the concern that modern scholars have evaluated and drawn conclusions from "lost histories on the basis of evidence that is irremediably insufficient" and that they take little account "of the relevant characteristics of the authors who preserve the '*reliquiae*', their reliability in quoting or summarizing, and their own interests and purposes".⁸⁴ Plutarch, writing in the early second century AD, is a case in point, being a major source for many of the fragments dealt with in this chapter: we must be conscious of Plutarch's core aim of detailing the virtues and vices of the Greek and Roman statesmen on whom he is writing as well as his frequent approach of shaping his narrative in terms of a conflict between elite and populace.⁸⁵ This does not mean, however, that we have to curtail all our speculations when dealing with these fragments, particularly when there is good circumstantial evidence for certain deductions.

⁸³ Brunt 1980, 477.

⁸⁴ Brunt 1980, 477-8; Bates 1983, in his thesis *Memoirs and the Perception of History in the Roman Republic*, which analyses the fragmentary works of the elder Cato, Scaurus, Catulus, Rutilius Rufus and Sulla, consistently fails to address Brunt's concerns.

⁸⁵ Plut. *Alex.* 1 states this openly; Stadter 1999, xxv.

Cato's *Origines*

He was already an old man when he began to write history, of which he left seven books. The first contains an account of the kings of the Roman people; the second and third, the origin of all the states of Italy – and it seems to be the reason that he called the entire work *The Origines*. Then in the fourth book we have the First Punic War, and in the fifth, the Second. All this is told in summary fashion, and he treated the other wars in the same manner down to the praetorship of Servius Galba [150 BC], who plundered the Lusitanians.⁸⁶

Cornelius Nepos provides this summary of the *Origines*. Of it at least 125 fragments have come down to us, the majority of which are very short in length.⁸⁷ These make an assessment of its character and size difficult, although their variety does suggest a history that encompassed a wide range of events and subject-matter.⁸⁸ It is also difficult to assess the intended Roman audience for this Latin work and we do not know whether it was dedicated to anyone. According to Plutarch “he [Cato] also says that he wrote out his history books in large letters, so that his son would profit, in his own home, from familiarity with the history of his ancestors”.⁸⁹ Astin, however, argues that this history was most likely a separate work from

⁸⁶ Nep. *Cato* 3.3-4: “senex historias scribere instituit. earum sunt libri septem. primus continet res gestas regum populi Romani: secundus et tertius, unde quaeque civitas orta sit Italica; ob quam rem omnes Origines videtur appellasse. in quarto autem bellum Poenicum est primum, in quinto secundum. atque haec omnia capitulatim sunt dicta. reliquaue bella pari modo persecutus est usque ad praeturam Servii Galbae, qui diripuit Lusitanos”.

⁸⁷ *HRR* 1.51-94, Cato Fr. 1-143; Peter provides 125 fragments alongside a further 18 possible testimonia or incerta.

⁸⁸ Astin 1978, 188, 216-217; Chassignet 1986, 1-56 provides 118 fragments.

⁸⁹ Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 20.5: καὶ τὰς ἱστορίας δὲ συγγράψαι φησὶν αὐτὸς ἰδίᾳ χειρὶ καὶ μεγάλοις γράμμασιν, ὅπως οἴκοθεν ὑπάχοι τῷ παιδί πρὸς ἐμπειρίαν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ πατριῶν ὠφελεῖσθαι.

the *Origines*.⁹⁰ Nonetheless, this behaviour at least indicates that Cato believed in the didactic purpose of historical writing.⁹¹

The *Origines* contain a number of features which are pertinent to this enquiry. Cato included sections from a number of his own speeches within the later books that dealt with events in his lifetime. Aulus Gellius, for instance, states that Cato's speech 'On behalf of the Rhodians', delivered in 167 BC, was both in circulation as a separate publication and also included in the fifth book of the *Origines*.⁹² This demonstrates that some Roman historical writers, like their Greek predecessors, included written-up orations within their narratives.⁹³

As well as numerous political, forensic and literary achievements, Cato had a good military record, some of which he promoted within the *Origines*.⁹⁴ His consular campaign of 195-194 in nearer Spain against a number of the recalcitrant tribes, including a victorious engagement near the coastal settlement of Emporiae, won him most acclaim, with the award of a triumph.⁹⁵ Unfortunately it appears that there is only one fragment of the *Origines* on this campaign. This is preserved by Aulus Gellius, discussing etymology of a certain Gallic wind.

... Marcus Cato in the *Origines* calls that wind, not *circius* but *cercius*. For writing about the Spaniards who dwell on this side of the Ebro, he set down these words: 'But in this district are the finest iron and silver mines, as well as a great mountain of pure salt; the

⁹⁰ Astin 1978, 182-3; Marincola 1997, 55, n.84.

⁹¹ Badian 1966, 8-9; *contra* Astin, Badian interprets Plutarch's reference as evidence that the *Origines* were in part intended to educate Cato's son.

⁹² *HRR*, Cato Fr. 95 = Gell. 6.3.7: "... et seorsum fertur inscriptaque est pro Rhodiensibus et in quintae originis libro scripta est".

⁹³ For example, Thucydides included a number of speeches in his history, such as a version of Pericles' funeral oration (2.34-64).

⁹⁴ Nepos *Cato* 1.2: "... he won high praise in the battle at Sena [by the River Metaurus in 207 BC], in which Hasdrubal, the brother of Hannibal fell". As well as serving in the latter half of the Hannibalic War and leading a successful consular campaign in Spain, Cato also served as a military tribune in the 191 campaign against Antiochus, during which he played a major part in the victory at Thermopylae (Livy 36.17-8 & Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 13-4).

⁹⁵ Livy 34.8-21 & 46.

more you take from it, the more it grows. The *cercius* wind, when you speak, fills your mouth; it overturns an armed man or a loaded wagon'.⁹⁶

At first glance, this does not appear to promote any military achievements. However, if we consider Caesar's decision to include ethnographic and geographical information within *The Gallic War*, such as his description of Britain and the customs of the Gallic and Germanic peoples, then this fragment of Cato could be interpreted as an attempt to provide some exotic information about the campaigning region for his Roman audience.⁹⁷ As Kraus and Woodman point out, conventional ethnographic details like rivers and climate in contemporary histories were a reflection of Roman conquests.⁹⁸ In addition, Cato's highlighting of the rich mineral resources of nearer Spain might have been part of an attempt to demonstrate the need to maintain firm control of this valuable *provincia*.

Livy, in his the thirty-fourth book, provides the most detailed narrative of Cato's campaign.⁹⁹ Following Tränkle's and Astin's arguments, it would appear that this Livian account, in the main, derives in part from Cato's *De consulatu suo*, which detailed his Spanish achievements, and in part from an account in the *Origines*.¹⁰⁰ Livy employed other sources as well, such as Valerius Antias. All of this makes it difficult to ascertain whether Livy used Cato's writings at first or second hand. Yet, as Astin states, "if Cato wrote about the campaign

⁹⁶ *HRR*, Cato Fr. 93 = Gell. 2.22.28-9: "M. Cato in libris originum eum ventum "cercium" dicit, non "circium". nam cum de Hispanis scriberet, qui citra Hiberum colunt, verba haec posuit: "set in his regionibus ferrariae, argentifodinae pulcherrimae, mons ex sale mero magnus; quantum demas, tantum ad crescit. ventus cercius, cum loquare, buccam implet, armatum hominem, plaustrum oneratum percellit".

⁹⁷ *Caes. B Gall.* 5.12-4 & 6.11-28.

⁹⁸ Kraus & Woodman 1997, 40.

⁹⁹ Livy 34.8-21.

¹⁰⁰ Tränkle 1971, 27-8; Astin 1978, 302-7, appendix 2; *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 21-55, a speech which Astin argues was delivered at around 189 BC.

several times there would inevitably have been close factual correspondences and very probably verbal correspondences between his various versions”.¹⁰¹

Within the Livian account one passage involving martial self-advertisement stands out; this concerns the enemy casualties in the battle near Emporiae.

Valerius Antias reports enemy dead that day to be in excess of 40,000, but Cato himself, who certainly does not underestimate his own achievements, says that many were killed, but does not specify a number.¹⁰²

Although it is an assumption that Cato included such a detail within the *Origines*, it is interesting that Cato did not specify the number of enemy casualties, particularly in light of the legislation which required potential *triumphatores* to kill at least 5,000 of the enemy in a single engagement.¹⁰³ Richardson attributes this law to the 180s BC, a period with a number of disputed triumphs and only a few decades before the *Origines*, (although after Cato’s Spanish campaign).¹⁰⁴ Perhaps Cato was attempting to promote his military reputation not by the standard enumeration of enemy casualties, but through descriptions of his active and correct generalship, a characteristic that appears to come across in the *De consulatu suo*, and was possibly reiterated in the *Origines*.¹⁰⁵

One distinctive characteristic of the *Origines* was cited by Nepos: “In his account of all these wars he did not name the leaders, but related the events without mentioning names”.¹⁰⁶ Why did Cato adopt this approach in his history? Following the Hannibalic War, the period of

¹⁰¹ Astin 1978, 302.

¹⁰² Livy 34.15.9.

¹⁰³ Val. Max. 2.8.1.

¹⁰⁴ Richardson 1975, 62.

¹⁰⁵ *ORF*³, Cato Fr. 28 promotes his logistical efforts; Fr. 35 details how Cato, following an engagement, praised his men at a military *contio*. Cf. Chapter 2, Section 4.

¹⁰⁶ Nep. *Cato*. 2.3.4: “atque horum bellorum duces non nominavit, sed sine nominibus res notavit”.

200-167 BC had seen Rome engage in numerous overseas campaigns around the Mediterranean basin and this resulted in a large number of triumphal claims, with at least 39 triumphs being subsequently awarded.¹⁰⁷ Related to these claims, we must consider the oral, epistolary, ceremonial and monumental publicity that leading commanders, like T. Quinctius Flaminius, M. Fulvius Nobilior and L. Aemilius Paullus, employed. Thus the names of numerous *imperatores* were being promulgated via various media in Rome and consequently positively associated with these overseas campaigns. It is very possible that Cato, a *novus homo*, was reacting to the glorification of these individuals by means of these omissions. One should also remember that the *Origines* was an innovative piece of literature, in that he was a pioneer in Latin historiography. As a result he probably saw the opportunity to counter the increasing competition amongst the elite and, above all, the dominance that these leading aristocratic families had over the previous oral and literary accounts of Rome's past.

A final important aspect that is closely linked to this urge for glorification is the competitive environment of Roman politics in Cato's lifetime, in which he played a prominent role for over fifty years. Cato had many political rivals and a number of prominent *inimici*. These *inimicitiae* were manifested most prominently in invective against individual aristocrats in both the political and forensic arenas of Rome (chapter 3). As well as criticizing a number of rivals, Cato was also a target, as demonstrated by the numerous prosecutions made against him. Plutarch even states that "it is said that he [Cato] was the defendant in just under fifty cases, the last of which took place when he was 86 years old".¹⁰⁸ This culture of invective was possibly a factor in the deliberate blurring of these magistrates' identities, as Cato strove to promote his own name and identity within his work. Furthermore, the omission and even the

¹⁰⁷ Rich 1993, 50.

¹⁰⁸ Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 15.4: λέγεται γὰρ ὀλίγον ἀπολιπούσας τῶν πεντήκοντα φυγεῖν δίκας, μίαν δὲ τὴν τελευταίαν ἐξ ἑτῆ καὶ ὀγδοήκοντα γεγονώς.

erasure of rivals' names was a prominent feature of the imperial period, as demonstrated by Augustus' treatment of Antonius and Sextus Pompeius in his *Res Gestae* and perhaps the elder Cato's omission of names in the *Origines* was a precursor to these later practices.¹⁰⁹

M. Aemilius Scaurus' *De vita sua*

It [Scaurus' oratory] conveyed the impression not only of experience and wisdom, but of that quality which holds the secret of success, trustworthiness. Thus, he possessed by nature that which art could not easily lend, although as you know the books give precepts for that too. We have orations of his and the three books about his own life addressed to Lucius Fufidius; very well worth reading, though no one reads them. They prefer nowadays to read the life and training of Cyrus, a splendid book no doubt, but not so suited to our conditions and not deserving to be preferred to Scaurus's encomium of himself.¹¹⁰

Cicero's perception of both M. Aemilius Scaurus's oratory and his three-book *De Vita Sua* is reasonably positive, particularly when contrasted with Sallust's more negative portrayal of the consular; Cicero's perception might very well have been influenced by his reading of Scaurus' autobiography.¹¹¹ Cicero also mentions that the work was dedicated to L. Fufidius, who was perhaps an equestrian, but there is confusion over Fufidius' origins and, barring the dedication,

¹⁰⁹ *RG* 24.1 & 25.1.

¹¹⁰ Cic. *Brut.* 29.112: "significabat enim non prudentiam solum, sed, quod maxime rem continebat, fidem. habebat hoc a natura ipsa, quod a doctrina non facile posset; quamquam huius quoque ipsius rei, quemadmodum scis, praecepta sunt. huius et orationes sunt et tres ad L. Fufidium libri scripti de vita ipsius acta sane utiles, quos nemo legit; at Cyri vitam et disciplinam legunt, praeclaram illam quidem, sed neque tam nostris rebus aptam nec tamen Scauri laudibus anteponendam".

¹¹¹ Sall. *Jug.* 15.4: when discussing the senators who were critical of the Senate's dealings with Jugurtha Sallust describes Scaurus thus: "conspicuous among these was Aemilius Scaurus, a noble full of energy, a partisan, greedy for power, fame, and riches, but clever in concealing his faults".

no solid information on his relationship with Scaurus.¹¹² Unfortunately, only seven definite fragments survive from this work according to Peter, making it difficult to assess its nature and scope, although Pais and Bates argue that a number of stories in later sources might originate from it.¹¹³

Scaurus had extensive achievements to his name: as well as attaining the consulship in 115 BC, Scaurus was also appointed *princeps senatus* that year.¹¹⁴ As Cicero states he was renowned for his oratory, which he practised in both political and forensic contexts, such as his speech against Saturninus' tribunate in 100.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, as censor in 109 Scaurus was responsible for commencing the construction of the Via Aemilia Scauri and also the restoration of the Mulvian bridge.¹¹⁶ On the military side, according to the *De viris illustribus*, Scaurus was awarded the *corniculum* for a conspicuous endeavour in Spain; then during his consulship he led a successful Ligurian campaign, on account of which he was awarded a triumph.¹¹⁷ Thus, Scaurus had a number of notable civic and military accomplishments to his name, and if he composed his *De vita sua* towards the end of his career, like Sulla, he would have had a number of achievements worthy of literary commemoration.

Scaurus, like the Elder Cato, had been the target for prosecution cases. According to Asconius, Scaurus was prosecuted by Q. Servilius Caepio under *repetundae* legislation having been an envoy to Asia in 92; soon after this he was prosecuted by the tribune Q. Varius in 90

¹¹² Oros. 5.21.3 states that Fufidius was a chief centurion (*primus pilus*) who later attained equestrian rank; Wiseman 1971, 75-6 & 232; Bates 1983, 146; Nicolet 1967, 297-304, for the numerous difficulties in identifying Fufidius.

¹¹³ *HRR* 1.185-186, Scaurus Fr. 1-7; Pais 1901, 50-60; Bates 1983, 121-62; both argue that the autobiography was a substantial work, covering Scaurus' whole life.

¹¹⁴ Cic. *Brut.* 29.112; Sall. *Iug.* 25.4; Val. Max. 3.2.18; *MRR* 2.531-3 no.2.

¹¹⁵ Val. Max. 3.2.18; Bates 1986, 269.

¹¹⁶ *De vir. ill.* 72.8; *MRR* 2.545.

¹¹⁷ *De vir. ill.* 72.3: "At first in Spain he earned the *corniculum* ... (primo in Hispania corniculum meruit ...)"; Maxfield 1981, 97-9: the *corniculum* was an obscure sort of military decoration, either a small horn or maybe a small javelin made of cherry wood; *De vir. ill.* 72.7; *ILLRP* 1.84.

for *proditio*.¹¹⁸ It might have been on account of the invective delivered during these cases, which included allegations of rapacity in Asia and disloyal assistance to the *socii* against Rome, that Scaurus decided to compose a literary apologia to repair the damage inflicted on his *dignitas* by means of a portrayal of a magistrate loyally serving Rome in a number of civic and military contexts.¹¹⁹

The first fragment tells of the modesty of Scaurus' inheritance from his father, which like later Latin biographies demonstrates a concern with ancestral and domestic information, as well as those of a political and military nature.¹²⁰ Fragments three, six and seven deal with military events; the first two are very brief: "I did not allow a battle to take place" and then "I entered the enemy's territory; I led the army in close order", whilst the third deals with the disciplined behaviour of the troops under Scaurus's command.¹²¹ Bates argues that is impossible to conclude which campaigns these fragments describe.¹²² However, we are aware of only three campaigns in which Scaurus took part. There was some sort of military activity in Spain, but unfortunately all we know is that he was awarded the *corniculum*. He also served in Sardinia under the consul L. Aurelius Orestes in 126-5 BC.¹²³ Then, there was his successful Ligurian campaign, and a Roman aristocrat who was writing up his career was hardly going to omit details of an expedition which led to his triumphal parade through the streets of Rome. Thus it is possible that these fragments come from a narrative of his Ligurian campaign, particularly as two of them deal with leadership of an army. The two brief

¹¹⁸ Ascon. 21-22C; Bates 1986, 273-6; Cloud 1994, 518-9.

¹¹⁹ Ascon. 21-22C.

¹²⁰ *HRR*, Scaurus Fr. 1 = Val. Max. 4.4.11: "M. Scaurus tells us in the first of the three Books of his autobiography how little he inherited from his father. He says he was left only six slaves and that the entire estate amounted to 35,000 sesterces"; Suet. *Aug.* 1-5; *Tib.* 1-4 & *Cal.* 1-7, for instance, frequently provides details about the origins and early family life of his imperial subjects.

¹²¹ *HRR*, Scaurus Fr. 3 = Diom. 1.385: "Scaurus de vita sua tertio: proelium non siui fieri"; *HRR*, Scaurus Fr. 6 = Serv. *ad Aen.* 12.121: "Scaurus de vita sua: in agrum hostium veni, pilatim exercitum duxi"; *HRR*, Scaurus Fr. 7 = Front. *Str.* 4.3.13.

¹²² Bates 1983, 132.

¹²³ *De vir. ill.* 72.3; Bates 1986, 252.

fragments also indicate that Latin autobiographers could employ the first person within their narratives in order to emphasize their personal role and authority in the events that they are describing, especially if they themselves were presenting the work to their friends and peers. Finally, Bates suggests that Scaurus might have been taking advantage of the dearth of Roman victories in the late second century and the number of serious defeats, most notably at Noreia in 113 and Arausio in 105.¹²⁴

Frontinus, when listing examples of military restraint, cites the largest fragment of Scaurus' autobiography.

The restraint of an entire army was also often noteworthy, as for example of the troops which served under Marcus Scaurus. For Scaurus has left it on record that a tree laden with fruit, at the far end of the fortified enclosure of the camp, was found, the day after the withdrawal of the army, with the fruit undisturbed.¹²⁵

A number of scholars, such as Harris and Ziolkowski, have highlighted the perception that many ancient commentators had of Roman troops being opportunistic plunderers.¹²⁶ This is famously exemplified by Appian's account of Roman troops hacking away at the gold-leaf statue of Apollo during the final stages of the siege of Carthage.¹²⁷ In the plays of Plautus, Roman soldiers are also frequently portrayed as being eager for booty.¹²⁸ In addition, when troops were in the field and under army rations there must have been a very strong urge to supplement their diet with local produce. Thus Scaurus was playing on this negative

¹²⁴ Bates 1983, 132.

¹²⁵ *HRR*, Scaurus Fr. 7 = Front. *Str.* 4.3.13: "universi quoque exercitus notabilis saepe fuit continentia, sicut eius qui sub M. Scauro meruit. namque memoriae tradidit Scaurus pomiferam arborem, quam in pede castrorum fuerat complexa metatio, postero die abeunte exercitu intactis fructibus relictam".

¹²⁶ Harris 1985, 102-3; Ziolkowski, 1993, 80-90.

¹²⁷ Ziolkowski 1993, 82; App. *Pun.* 127, an account that possibly derives from Polybius.

¹²⁸ For example, Plaut. *Poen.* 802-3 & *Pseud.* 583-9; Harris 1985, 103; Ziolkowski 1993, 82.

stereotype of the Roman soldiery, by highlighting this unusual occurrence of restraint to his audience to demonstrate that the troops under *his* command were so disciplined that they would not even take the apples or whatever fruit was adjacent to their camp. Through this image of an effective disciplinarian Scaurus was perhaps trying to set himself apart from the other commanders of the period who exhibited poor control of their men and, moreover, those magistrates who made rapacious exactions from provincials.¹²⁹

Q. Lutatius Catulus

I come now to Quintus Catulus, a man trained not in the old Roman style, but in our modern fashion, or if possible even more perfectly. He possessed wide reading, a natural courtesy, which showed itself in his style as well as in his life, an untainted purity of Latin diction. It can be seen in his orations, and especially in the book on his consulship and his own deeds, written in a smooth Xenophontean style and dedicated to his friend, the poet Aulus Furius ...¹³⁰

Cicero provides this brief, yet positive, assessment of both the rhetorical ability and the historical monograph of Q. Lutatius Catulus. From this description and the surviving fragments it would appear that this piece of literature was not an autobiography, but a monograph that gave an account of his consulship of 102 and his military command of 102-1.

¹²⁹ Sall. *Iug.* 38.3; *MRR* 1.544; in 109 during the Jugurthine War, troops under the legate A. Postumius Albinus accepted bribes from the Numidians, resulting in their ill-disciplined defeat; Plut. *C. Gracch.* 6.2; *MRR* 1.514; Q. Fabius Maximus, during or following his propraetorship in Spain in 123, was censured by the Senate for exacting grain from the provincials.

¹³⁰ Cic. *Brut.* 35.132: “iam Q. Catulus non antiquo illo more sed hoc nostro, nisi quid fieri potest perfectius, eruditus. multae litterae, summa non vitae solum atque naturae sed orationis etiam comitas, incorrupta quaedam Latini sermonis integritas; quae perspicui cum ex orationibus eius potest tum facillime ex eo libro, quem de consulatu et de rebus gestis suis conscriptum molli et Xenophonteo genere sermonis misit ad A. Furium poetam familiarem suum ...”.

There is also its dedication to the poet A. Furius Antias, but all we know of Antias is that he composed a now lost historical poem called the *Annales*.¹³¹ This dedication, however, does indicate that Catulus had a relationship with Furius and perhaps Catulus saw him as a means of disseminating this work through the poet's literary circles, especially in light of Wiseman's reminder that it was customary for Roman literature to be frequently orally delivered, and we know that Catulus either patronised or was associated with other prominent poets of the period, notably Archias of Antioch and Antipater of Sidon.¹³² Furthermore, Catulus' personal interests in philosophy, art, and literature, should be seen as a general factor influencing the composition of this Latin monograph, particularly in light of Cicero's comment that Catulus was trained in "our modern fashion", in that he was someone who was willing to draw on his literary proclivities to produce an innovative means of preserving and celebrating his consular achievements.¹³³

Only three fragments of Catulus' work survive: Bates, however, makes a number of speculations about other possible fragments, particularly from Plutarch's *Life of Marius* – the main source for the northern campaigns of 102-1 BC.¹³⁴ Yet it must be stressed that Plutarch cites both Catulus' monograph and Sulla's *Memoirs* in his narrative of the northern wars. Sulla was a legate of Catulus during the campaign and so, like Catulus, an eyewitness to many of the events described.¹³⁵ Evans, moreover, suggests that Sulla quoted Catulus' monograph in his *Memoirs* and this is where Plutarch derived his knowledge of Catulus' work from.¹³⁶ Thus, without direct citation it is extremely difficult to assign certain details from the campaign to the original sources.

¹³¹ Gell. 18.11; Courtney 1993, 97-8: of Antias' *Annales* only six lines survive in a quotation by Gellius.

¹³² Bates 1983, 217-281, speculates that Catulus might have wanted Furius to incorporate his monograph in these *Annales*, but there is no evidence for such a purpose; Wiseman 1987, 253; Cic. *Arch.* 5; *De Orat.* 3.194.

¹³³ Cic. *Brut.* 35.132.

¹³⁴ *HRR* 1.191-194, Catulus Fr. 1-3; Bates 1983, 211-3.

¹³⁵ *MRR* 2.569 & 573; Plut. *Sull.* 4.2-4 & *Mar.* 25.4.

¹³⁶ Evans 2003, 34.

The first we know of Catulus concerns his defeats in three consecutive consular campaigns prior to his election to the consulship of 102 BC alongside Marius.¹³⁷ Then in 102 and 101 Catulus and Marius were assigned *provinciae* against the Germanic tribes threatening Northern Italy. Whilst Marius campaigned in the Rhône valley in 102 attaining a victory at Aquae Sextiae, Catulus commanded a separate consular army in Cisalpine Gaul.¹³⁸ Catulus decided to defend a fortified position somewhere along the river Adige to the east of Lake Garda. Unfortunately this position was turned by the Cimbri, forcing Catulus to withdraw his army south into Cisalpine Gaul for the winter, a retreat that was probably perceived as a major setback in Rome.¹³⁹ Marius then returned to Rome, being re-elected consul in late 102. He then headed back north in 101 and combined his army with that of Catulus. This force subsequently defeated the Cimbri at the Battle of Vercellae, which is probably situated near the city of Rovigo close to the mouth of the River Po, after which Marius and Catulus were awarded a joint triumph.¹⁴⁰

Following the campaign a bitter animosity arose between Marius and Catulus. The exact timing and specific reasons for this cannot be established with certainty.¹⁴¹ A dispute over the claims of victory at Vercellae appears to have been a major cause. Due in part to his earlier success at Aquae Sextiae and also the fact that Marius was the senior commander during the engagement, according to Plutarch, he was seen as the main hand behind the Roman victory over the Cimbri.¹⁴² If we consider Catulus' arduous campaign in 102 and his

¹³⁷ Cic. *Planc.* 12; Broughton 1991, 13-4; Evans 1994, 83-4.

¹³⁸ Plut. *Mar.* 14-23.

¹³⁹ Plut. *Mar.* 23-4; Liv. *Per.* 68; Front. *Str.* 1.5.3; Lewis 1974, 98-107, highlights the conflicting nature of the sources on Catulus' campaign against the Cimbri in 102, arguing that Catulus organized an orderly withdrawal from the river Adige, during which some troops panicked, including the son of M. Aemilius Scaurus.

¹⁴⁰ Cic. *Tusc.* 5.56; Liv. *Per.* 68.

¹⁴¹ Bates, 1983, 216.

¹⁴² Plut. *Mar.* 27.5; Marius was consul in 101 and therefore had superior *imperium* to Catulus, who held the lower rank of proconsul.

troops' active participation at Vercellae, it is understandable that he was indignant over this pre-eminent praise for Marius.¹⁴³

However, we must not dismiss other factors that might have induced this anti-Marian invective, especially the political situation in Rome that followed the military campaigns of 102-1 BC. There were serious civil disturbances in Rome in 100 over Saturninus' legislation and consequently major concerns over the Senate's authority and Marius' role in protecting the state. These disputes might well have been a factor in causing or at least exacerbating the rift between Marius and Catulus.¹⁴⁴

The first citation by Plutarch of Catulus' monograph concerns the deployment of the Roman forces at Vercellae.

On the appointed day, the Romans drew up their forces opposite the Cimbri, Catulus with 20,300 men under his command, and Marius with 32,000. Marius' troops were divided between the two wings, with Catulus in between them in the middle, as Sulla, who fought in this battle, reports. He also accuses Marius of deploying the forces in this way because he hoped that the main brunt of fighting would take place at the ends of the line, on the wings, so that he might claim victory for his own troops and prevent Catulus from playing any part in the battle or even engaging the enemy at all, since the middle of a greatly extended battle-line usually forms a recess. And it is also recorded that Catulus himself produced the same argument when he was asked to explain his conduct in this battle, and accused Marius of acting with extreme malice towards him.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Lewis, 1974, 90-109, provides a sympathetic account of Catulus' campaign against the Cimbri in 102.

¹⁴⁴ App. *BC* 1.28-33; Plut. *Mar.* 28-30; Lintott 1994b, 97-102.

¹⁴⁵ *HRR*, Catulus Fr. 1 = Plut. *Mar.* 25.4-6: Τηρήσαντες οὖν τὸν ὀρισμένον χρόνον ἀντιπαπετάσσοντο, Κάτλος μὲν ἔχων δισμυρίους καὶ τριακοσίους στρατιώτας, οἱ δὲ Μαρίου δισχίλιοι μὲν ἐπὶ τρισμυρίοις ἐγένοντο, περιέσχον δὲ τὸν Κάτλον ἐν μέσῳ νεμηθέντες εἰς ἐκάτερον κέρασ, ὡς Σύλλας, ἠγωνισμένος ἐκείνην τὴν μάχην, γέγραφε. Καὶ φησι τὸν Μάριον ἐλπίσαντα τοῖς ἄκροις μάλιστα καὶ κατὰ κέρασ συμπεσεῖν τὰς φαλαγγας, ὅπως ἴδιος ἢ νίκη τῶν ἐκείνου

Both Catulus and Sulla, writing with hindsight, depict this strategy as a deliberate ploy by Marius to gain all the *gloria*. If we look beyond the anti-Marian bias, this deployment was a sensible strategy: the Romans, having combined two consular armies, were posting one commander's units in the centre, thus allowing the other's forces to move round the enemy's flanks, which in the case of the Germanic tribes was probably a long line of infantry.¹⁴⁶ In this scenario with a central gap between the two lines, the Roman centre would have probably still seen as much fighting as the troops on the flanks, owing to the use of missiles as well as hand-to-hand combat, as indicated by Catulus' later emphasis on his troops' effective use of their javelins.

The second fragment concerns the physical fitness of Catulus' men during the hot and dusty weather conditions at Vercellae in August 101.

And, as Catulus himself is said to have reported in commendation of his men, they were physically so fit and tough that not a single Roman was seen sweating or short of breath, despite the heat and the fact that they ran into the attack.¹⁴⁷

As demonstrated in Xenophon's *Anabasis* and later in Caesar's *Commentaries*, collective praise of a commander's army was a subtle, yet effective literary technique, since this moved the audience's focus away from the commander to the physical prowess of the frontline

στρατιωτῶν γένοιτο καὶ μὴ μετὰσχοι τοῦ ἀγῶνος ὁ Κάτλος μὴδὲ προσμίξειε τοῖς πολεμίοις, κόλπωμα τῶν μέσων, ὥσπερ εἶωθεν ἐν μεγάλοις μετώποις, λαμβανόντων, οὕτω διαστήσαι τὰς δυνάμεις. ὅμοια δὲ καὶ τὸν Κάτλον αὐτὸν ἀπολογεῖσθαι περὶ τούτων ἱστοροῦσι, πολλὴν κατηγοροῦντα τοῦ Μαρίου κακοήθειαν πρὸς αὐτόν.

¹⁴⁶ Bates 1983, 214, likens Marius' strategy to that employed by Hannibal at Cannae.

¹⁴⁷ *HRR*, Catulus Fr. 2 = Plut. *Mar.* 26.5: οὕτω δ' ἦσαν διάπονοι τὰ σώματα καὶ κατηθληκότες ὡς μήτε ἰδροῦντά τινα μήτε ἀσθμαίνοντα Ρωμαίων ὀφθῆναι διὰ πνίγους τοσοῦτου καὶ μετὰ δρόμου τῆς συρράξεως γενομένης, ὡς τὸν Κάτλον αὐτὸν ἱστορεῖν λέγουσι μεγαλύνοντα τοὺς στρατιώτας.

troops.¹⁴⁸ Although indirectly, the general could still be portrayed in a positive manner as his training or actions would be perceived as behind this collective display of endurance. It would not be surprising if somewhere in his earlier narrative of 102 or early 101 Catulus had informed his audience of how he trained his men or perhaps how they had endured the tough physical conditions when fighting the Cimbri the previous year.¹⁴⁹

The final fragment concerns the aftermath of Vercellae and it directly challenges the perception of Marius' pre-eminence.

Marius' men seized the valuables for themselves, but the spoils of war, the standards, and the trumpets are said to have been taken to Catulus' camp, and this was the most important piece of evidence supporting Catulus' argument that the victory was due to him. Moreover, a dispute apparently arose among the soldiers too about who was responsible for the victory, and the members of a delegation from Parma who happened to be there were chosen to act as arbitrators. Catulus' men took them on a tour of the battlefield and showed them all the enemy bodies with their javelins sticking in them – the javelins could be identified by the fact that the shafts had been inscribed, at Catulus' orders, with his name.¹⁵⁰

Catulus makes an issue out of the differing sorts of plunder won at Vercellae, claiming that the true representations of victory were the Cimbric standards and trumpets that his men had

¹⁴⁸ Xen. *An.* 3.4.47-8; Caes. *B Gall.* 2.25; Marincola 1997, 212; Lendon 1999, 296.

¹⁴⁹ Plut. *Mar.* 23 for Catulus' supposed orderly withdrawal from river Adige in 102, which might derive from Catulus' attempts to promote the disciplined nature of his army and leadership.

¹⁵⁰ *HRR*, Catulus Fr. 3 = Plut. *Mar.* 27. 4: Τὰ μὲν οὖν χρήματα διήρπασαν οἱ Μαρίου στρατιῶται, τὰ δὲ λάφυρα καὶ τὰς σημαίας καὶ τὰς σάλπιγγας εἰς τὸ Κάτλου στρατόπεδον ἀνενεχθῆναι λέγουσιν· ὦ καὶ μάλιστα τεκμηρίῳ χρῆσθαι τὸν Κάτλον ὡς κατ' αὐτὸν ἡ νίκη γένοιτο. καὶ μέντοι καὶ τοῖς στρατιώταις, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐμπειροσύνης ἔριδος, ἠρέθησαν οἷον διαιτηταὶ πρέσβεις Παρμιτῶν παρόντες, οὓς οἱ Κάτλου διὰ τῶν πολεμίων νεκρῶν ἄγοντες ἐπεδείκνυντο τοῖς ἑαυτῶν ὑσσοῖς διαπεπαρμένους· γνῶριμοι δ' ἦσαν ὑπὸ γραμμῶν, τοῦνομα τοῦ Κάτλου παρὰ τὸ ξύλον αὐτῶν ἐγχαράξαντος.

gathered. This again raises the question about who bore the brunt of the fighting; Catulus pushes the idea that Marius' men were only interested in the camp booty and not the armour, standards and other traditional representations of the vanquished enemy. On the reverse of quinarii, issued by C. Fundanius in 101 BC, there is, beside the figure of victory, a kneeling captive and a *carnyx* (a Gallic war-trumpet), which points to both the captive and the musical instrument being seen by the moneyer as the major symbols of the recent successes over the Cimbri and Teutoni. (See figure 4).¹⁵¹ Additionally, in citing the differing behaviour of the troops, Catulus is perhaps alluding to the lowly origins of some of Marius' troops, as some were probably recruited from the *capite censi*, implying that they sought out the more lucrative Cimbric booty on account of their ill-discipline and rapaciousness.¹⁵²

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**Figure 4. quinarius issued
in 101 BC by C. Fundanius**

¹⁵¹ *RRC* 326/2.

¹⁵² Sall. *Iug.* 86.2-4; Plut. *Mar.* 9.1; Flor. 1.36.13; in 107 Marius recruited from the *capite censi* to augment his army for his Numidian campaign; Rich 1983, 323-330; Evans 1994, 75; Lintott 1994a, 36; this step was a small change in the developing recruitment practices of the later second century; as Lintott argues, Marius would be doing nothing abnormal if he continued this process during the crisis of 104-101; Rich, moreover, points out that the heavy losses sustained during the crisis, particularly the four legions at Arausio, would have probably led to emergency levies.

In the latter part of the fragment, Catulus creates the perception that his men were responsible for the majority of the Cimbri killed, a perception that plays on the Roman military custom of enumerating the enemy dead. He achieves this by stating that his men had inscribed their javelins with his name; he then provides his audience with supposedly neutral verification of this claim in the form of some citizens from the nearby *colonia* of Parma, who were allegedly given a tour of the battlefield. From a cynical perspective, one can imagine that Catulus' men only led these supposedly impartial gentlemen to areas of the battlefield where they had fought, avoiding the locations frequented by Marius' troop. Nevertheless, we have examples of personally inscribed Roman arms and armour from later periods; during the siege of Perugia in 41 BC both sides put inscriptions on their sling-bullets, including the names of their legions and coarse comments about the enemy leaders.¹⁵³ Therefore, it is highly plausible that Catulus was playing on a contemporary Roman military practice, whereby some troops marked their weapons.

Conclusion

Prior to Sulla's *Memoirs* and Caesar's *Commentaries*, a few Roman commanders had exploited autobiographical or historical literature as a means of martial self-promotion. It should be stressed though that these works also contained events and descriptions of a non-military nature, such as political and ancestral information. Additionally we do not know what proportions of their contents were given over to these different subjects. Yet, some of the fragments and a few cautiously derived suppositions indicate that by the early first century BC some of the techniques employed by Sulla, Caesar, and in the later imperial autobiographies were already being practised, including the enumeration of enemy casualties, an emphasis on

¹⁵³ Bishop & Coulston 1993, 46-7; Keppie 1984, 122-5.

distinctive leadership traits, and the criticisms, sometimes marked sometimes more nuanced, of rival *imperatores*.

3. Sulla's *Memoirs*

... Sulla says that in Silvium a slave belonging to Pontius obtained an audience with him, went into a trance, and said that he brought from Bellona assurances of military success and victory, but added that he would have to hurry, otherwise he would find that the Capitol had been burnt. And this actually happened, Sulla says, on the day the man foretold – on the sixth day of Quintilis, or July as it is now known.¹⁵⁴

This is one of the many supernatural phenomena that Plutarch cites from Sulla's *Memoirs*; it supposedly occurred soon after Sulla's crossing to Italy from Greece in 84 BC and involved a warning from the Roman war goddess Bellona, whose temple frequently echoed to triumphal orations of returning commanders.¹⁵⁵ This passage demonstrates two of the main themes of the dictator's autobiography as they appear in the sources: personal military success and divine favour. According to Peter, there are twenty-one fragments or citations of this work; these give us some idea of its structure and contents, although not of its size and what proportions of the narrative were assigned to each campaign and issue.¹⁵⁶ We know that it was made up of a least 22 books and in it Sulla went into considerable detail about his

¹⁵⁴ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 18 = Plut. *Sull.* 27.6: ἐν δὲ Σιλβίῳ φησὶν οἰκέτην Ποντίου θεοφόρητον ἐντυχεῖν αὐτῷ λέγοντα παρὰ τῆς Ἐννοῦς κράτος πολέμου καὶ νίκην ἀπαγγέλλειν· εἰ δὲ μὴ σπεύσειν, ἐμπεπρήσεσθαι τὸ Καπιτώλιον· ὃ καὶ συμβῆναι τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἧς ὁ ἄνθρωπος προηγόρευσεν· ἦν δὲ αὕτη πρὸ μιᾶς νωνῶν Κυντιλίων, ἃς νῦν Ἰουλίας καλοῦμεν; Silvium was in Apulia.

¹⁵⁵ Livy 26.21; 28.9 & 38; 31.47; 33.22; 36.39; 38.44; 39.29; 41.6; 42.9, 21 & 28; Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.41; for triumphal requests or military reports delivered in the Temple of Bellona, see Chapter 2, Section 3.

¹⁵⁶ *HRR* 1.195-204, Sulla Fr. 1-21.

achievements.¹⁵⁷ This discussion of the *Memoirs* will fall into six parts: its historical context; its structure and the prominent role of military achievements; Sulla's early career up to the Social War; the Mithridatic War; the Civil War of 83-1 and its aftermath; and finally, the role of divine fate. This work was a key prototype of the later imperial autobiographies, starting with that of Augustus, and it demonstrates the diversity of ways in which a Roman commander could promote his military achievements, justify his controversial acts and censure his rivals.

The context of the *Memoirs*

According to the sources, Sulla wrote his *Memoirs* after he had withdrawn from public life to Campania in early 79; the final books of the work were completed by his freedman Cornelius Epicadus after his master's death in 78.¹⁵⁸ By 79 Sulla had defeated most of his enemies and he had also instigated substantial changes to Rome's constitutional and legal framework. So why did he decide to compose this work during his retirement, barring the obvious fact that this was a period of *otium*?

First of all, the current political circumstances are pertinent.¹⁵⁹ There was some residual civil-war fighting: the Marian commander Sertorius was active in Spain and, though Nola and Arretium had surrendered, Volaterrae continued its defiance.¹⁶⁰ A number of Roman leaders were also challenging Sulla's *auctoritas*: Pompeius had held a triumph in 81 without the dictator's consent and in 79 had also supported the consular candidature of M. Lepidus, of whom Sulla disapproved.¹⁶¹ Furthermore, according to Sallust's version of a speech Lepidus

¹⁵⁷ Ramage 1991, 96.

¹⁵⁸ App. *BC* 1.104; Suet. *Gram.* 12.

¹⁵⁹ Lewis 1991, 516-7.

¹⁶⁰ Plut. *Sert.* 10-12; Livy *Per.* 89.

¹⁶¹ Plut. *Pomp.* 13-15.

delivered as consul in 78, Lepidus directly criticised Sulla, stating his intention to repeal some of Sulla's legislation.¹⁶² In such circumstances, as Lewis states, it is little wonder that Sulla was “doing all that he could as a private citizen to reassert his *dignitas* and *auctoritas*, the validity of his own position, the value of his settlement and his readiness and capacity to defend it”.¹⁶³ This involved, above all, the promotion of his military reputation.

Secondly, there was a concern about posterity, in that Sulla intended that this work be disseminated after his death. The dedication of the work to Lucullus seems to point towards this:

Lucullus was trained to speak fluently both Latin and Greek, so that Sulla, in writing his own memoirs, dedicated them to him, as a man who would set in order and duly arrange the history of the times better than himself.¹⁶⁴

If we consider the nature of Roman literary publication with its oral renditions to elite audiences, then Lucullus as both a historian and man of letters was undoubtedly a good conduit for publicising and preserving Sulla's work.¹⁶⁵ Lucullus was one of Sulla's trusted lieutenants and Plutarch subsequently states that “in his will he [Sulla] appointed him [Lucullus] guardian of his son”.¹⁶⁶ This suggests that Sulla was looking to Lucullus to

¹⁶² Plut. *Sull.* 34; *Pomp.* 15; Sall. *Hist.* 1.55.1-27 for the speech of Lepidus in which Sulla is portrayed as enslaving the Roman people with his actions and laws; Morstein-Marx 2004, 111; Keaveney 1982a, 210; there is a question over the authenticity of Sallust's oration of Lepidus. Nonetheless, according to Plutarch, Sulla did have a strong dislike for Lepidus' candidature and this must have derived from Lepidus' intended policies.

¹⁶³ Lewis 1991, 517.

¹⁶⁴ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 1 = Plut. *Luc.* 1.3: Ο δὲ Λούκουλλος ἤσκητο καὶ λέγειν ἱκανῶς ἑκατέραν γλῶτταν, ὥστε καὶ Σύλλας τὰς αὐτοῦ πράξεις ἀναγράφων ἐκείνω προσεφώνησεν ὡς συνταξομενῶ καὶ διαθήσονται τὴν ἱστορίαν ἄμεινον.

¹⁶⁵ Sulla, being aware of Lucullus' literary proclivities, perhaps looked to his lieutenant to keep a copy or copies of his *Memoirs* as well as encouraging other literati, especially historians and poets, to draw on it for their compositions.

¹⁶⁶ Plut. *Luc.* 1.4: “... his *Memoirs*, as I have said, Sulla dedicated to Lucullus in token of affection, and in his will appointed him guardian of his son, thereby passing Pompeius by ...”.

preserve both his legacy and progeny. Additionally, the illnesses that Sulla endured in his later years probably increased the pressure to preserve an account of his lengthy service of Rome for future generations.¹⁶⁷

Thirdly, there were the festivals and monuments established in period 81-80 to commemorate Sulla's achievements. These included the *Ludi Victoriae Sullanae* set up by Sulla's nephew Sex. Nonius Sufenas in 81.¹⁶⁸ This four-day festival was intended to occur annually as a permanent celebration of Sulla's victory at the Colline Gate. Sulla was also responsible for a number of monuments, such as the statue or shrine to Hercules Sullanus on the Esquiline and the rebuilt sanctuary to Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste.¹⁶⁹ Thus, as Ramage highlights, Sulla's *res gestae* and image were already being widely commemorated; this current positive atmosphere might have instigated the composition of a detailed account to perpetuate and reinforce these messages.¹⁷⁰

Fourthly, the late second century and early first century might very well have been a 'fashionable period' amongst the Roman elite for autobiographical works. In the preceding section, we analysed the works of M. Aemilius Scaurus and Q. Lutatius Catulus, both of whom had connections with Sulla.¹⁷¹ We should consider the likelihood that Sulla had either

¹⁶⁷ Jenkins 1994, 137-40, highlights a number of the modern theories about which illnesses Sulla might have contracted and how they might have affected his actions. Jenkins, however, notes that most of the information on these afflictions derives from Plutarch and that "because of Plutarch's tendency to moralise, it would seem unwise to accept, without some reservation, his version of Sulla's physical decline".

¹⁶⁸ Vell. Pat. 2.27.6.

¹⁶⁹ Ramage 1991, 114; *LTUR* 3.21-2 for Hercules Sullanus, which is listed in Regio V of the *Notitia*; Andreae 1977, 524-6; Drerup 1966, 190-191, for a discussion of Sulla's possible motives at Praeneste.

¹⁷⁰ Ramage 1991, 111-5.

¹⁷¹ Lewis 1991, 512, suggests that Scaurus might well have been a mentor to Sulla; Plut. *Sull.* 6.18; Sulla did marry Scaurus' widow Metella in 89 BC; Plut. *Mar.* 25.4 & *Sull.* 4.2-4; Sulla was legate to Catulus during the two-year campaign against the Cimbri; Keaveney 1982a, 33, comments that: "both men, too, were litterateurs, though we may beg leave to doubt if the hurly-burley of that particular campaign left much time for elegant literary chit-chat". This omits the important point that Catulus and Sulla shared a mutual enmity of Marius after the Cimbric campaign and this might have seen some collaboration or exchange of information concerning the campaign.

heard or read these works through his military associations with Scaurus and Catulus and that this reception might well have shown him the benefits of an autobiographical composition.¹⁷²

Finally, the religious practices and beliefs of the period were a factor. Omens and prodigies were a central feature of Sulla's *Memoirs* and these phenomena frequently occurred within a religious context. For instance, Cicero, when citing the *Memoirs*, describes how a snake appeared in the midst of a sacrifice that Sulla was performing during the Social War.¹⁷³ As Rawson points out, the late Republic saw a major interest amongst the Roman elite in the origins of religious practices with the composition of literary works, including a number of monographs on augury.¹⁷⁴ Sulla, moreover, was elected augur by at least 82 and this required his active participation in certain religious rites including sacrifices, prayers and processions.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, following his Eastern successes, he began to associate himself with certain Greek gods, most notably Aphrodite, calling himself Λεύκιος Κορνήλιος Σύλλας Ἐπαφρόδιτος on some trophies.¹⁷⁶ Sulla, when composing the literary account of his achievements, recognised these associations as a valuable means of explaining the divine favour, with which he, alongside many others, believed he had been individually blessed.

Military achievements in the *Memoirs*

Sulla's *Memoirs* did not wholly deal with his military record. Of the twenty-one fragments, one mentions that his ancestor P. Cornelius Sulla was a Flamen Dialis, and another concerns the civil disturbances in Rome of 88 BC when Sulla took refuge at Marius' house.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² Evans 2003, 34, suggests that Sulla quoted Catulus' monograph in his *Memoirs*, which, if correct, indicates that Sulla had both read and then reproduced Catulus' work.

¹⁷³ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 9 = Cic. *Div.* 1.72.

¹⁷⁴ Rawson 1985, 299.

¹⁷⁵ *RRC* 359/1; Keaveney 1982b, 150-64.

¹⁷⁶ Plut. *Sull.* 34.4 & *Mor.* 318d; Ramage 1991, 101; Balsdon 1951, 4-5.

¹⁷⁷ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 2 = Gell. 1.12.16; Fr. 11 = Plut. *Mar.* 35.

Nonetheless, as Ramage points out, “his successes in the field must have been a dominant theme”.¹⁷⁸ Table 4 provides a concise overview of his military record and within it we can see the magistracies that Sulla held and the numerous campaigns in which he actively participated both as a subordinate and a commander. This is an extraordinary military record that stretched over twenty-five years, a record which included numerous successful engagements and sieges as well as a number of logistical and diplomatic achievements. Although we only have fragments and citations deriving from it, the *Memoirs* appear to have been a work that detailed this lengthy career. Lewis, moreover, points out that Sulla’s *Memoirs* followed “a plain chronological basis” and, although there is scholarly debate over its structure, it would roughly appear that: books I to either II or III dealt with his early career up to 91/90; books III or IV to either X or XI went up to 86/85; books XI or XII to XXII went up to his death in 78.¹⁷⁹ Of the twenty-one fragments, sixteen mention Sulla’s military achievements in one form or another.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Ramage 1991, 97.

¹⁷⁹ Lewis 1991, 570.

¹⁸⁰ *HHR*, Sulla Fr. 3,4,5,6,8,9,10,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20.

Table 4 The military career of L. Cornelius Sulla

Date	Magistracy	Achievements/details	References
107-5 BC	Quaestor & proquaestor to Marius.	Jugurthine War: S. recruited a force of cavalry in Sicily in 107 before participating in the campaign. In 106 S. negotiates with Bocchus & in 105 was responsible for Jugurtha's capture.	<i>MRR</i> 1.551 & 554; <i>Sall. Jug</i> 95-113; <i>Plut. Sull.</i> 3.
104-1	Legate & military tribune to Marius; legate to Catulus.	Cimbric War: in 104 S. captured the Tectosagian leader Copillus. In 102-1 S. responsible for supplying Catulus' forces; successfully led a force against Alpine tribes. Later S. participated in the victory over the Cimbri at Vercellae.	<i>MRR</i> 1.561, 564, 569 & 573; <i>Plut. Sull.</i> 4 & <i>Mar.</i> 25.
93-92	Elected praetor for 93 (date disputed); in 92 received propraetorian <i>provincia</i> of Cilicia.	Asia: S. prevented Mithridates' advance into Cappadocia. He restored the Cappadocian monarch Ariobarzanes to his throne.	<i>MRR</i> 2.14 & 18; <i>Plut. Sull.</i> 5; <i>App. Mith.</i> 57.
90-89	Legate to consul L. Iulius Caesar in 90; legate to consul L. Porcius Cato in 89.	Social War: in 90 S. assisted Marius in the defeat of Marsic force in Samnium. In 89 near Pompeii S. defeated a Hirpinian force, receiving <i>corona obsidionalis</i> . S. advanced into Samnium, taking Bovianum.	<i>MRR</i> 2.29 & 35; <i>App BC</i> 1.40, 46, 51; <i>Plin. HN</i> 22.12.
88	Consul	Civil War: following the disturbances at Rome, S. fled to his army at Nola; S. then marched on & seized Rome.	<i>MRR</i> 2.39-40; <i>Plut. Sull.</i> 6-10; <i>App BC</i> 1.55-63.
87-84	Proconsul	Mithridatic War: S. crossed to Greece in 87, besieging Athens which fell in early 86. In 86 S. defeats Mithridatic armies at Chaeronea & Orchomenos; in 85 S. negotiates peace treaty with Mithridates & reorganizes the communities of Asia.	<i>MRR</i> 2.48, 55, 58 & 61; <i>Plut. Sull.</i> 11-25; <i>App. Mith.</i> 30-63.
83-82	Proconsul	Civil War: S. lands in Italy with 5 legions in 83, defeats the consul C. Norbanus near Mt. Tifata. In 82 S. defeats the younger Marius at Sacriportus near Praeneste & then the consul Cn. Papirius Carbo near Clusium. S. finally defeats a Roman-Samnite force before the Colline Gate, seizing control of Rome.	<i>MRR</i> 2. 63-4 & 69; <i>Plut. Sull.</i> 26-32; <i>App. BC</i> 1.77-96.

Sulla's early career

Three features of Sulla's early career up to the Social War deserve attention. First of all, he was active in the Jugurthine War. Peter assigns no fragments to the *Memoirs* for this campaign, but Bates puts forward an extensive case that Sallust's detailed account of Sulla's negotiations with Bocchus and Jugurtha's subsequent capture ultimately derive from Sulla's composition.¹⁸¹ However, the only sources to which Sallust refers in his monograph are some translated Punic sources and the history of L. Cornelius Sisenna, with the latter specifically cited as being "the best and most careful" account of Sulla's affairs; furthermore, Sallust might have drawn on other anti-Marian sources like M. Aemilius Scaurus or P. Rutilius Rufus.¹⁸² Nonetheless, according to Plutarch, the capture of Jugurtha was one of Sulla's favourite achievements; he mentions how Sulla's signet-ring depicted the scene where the bound Numidian leader was handed over by Bocchus to Sulla.¹⁸³ As argued in Chapter Four, the individual figure of an enemy leader was frequently seen as the embodiment of the enemy army or country being fought against, and consequently the capture or death of this leader had immense symbolic value when disseminated back home.¹⁸⁴ Thus, there is a strong probability that Sulla included some sort of reference to Jugurtha's capture in his *Memoirs*, but without additional evidence the nature of this account remains unclear.

Secondly, Sulla criticised Marius in the early books of his *Memoirs*. It is difficult to gauge whether he criticised Marius in his account of the Jugurthine War, but a couple of passages from Plutarch on the Cimbric campaign indicate that Sulla did target the military reputation of his great rival. Like Catulus, Sulla reported that Marius deployed his troops at

¹⁸¹ Bates 1983, 246; Sall. *Iug.* 102-113; Bates focuses, in particular, on Sallust's melodramatic description of Sulla's journey to Jugurtha's encampment (105-7), since the narrative portrays Sulla in a positive light.

¹⁸² Rolfe 1931, xv; Sall. *Iug.* 17.7; 95.2: "for we shall not speak elsewhere of Sulla's affairs, and Lucius Sisenna, whose account of him is altogether the best and most careful, has not, in my opinion spoken with sufficient frankness".

¹⁸³ Plut. *Sull.* 3.4.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Ch. 4, Sec. 3.

Vercellae in order to gain the *gloria* at the expense of Catulus and Sulla.¹⁸⁵ Prior to his portrayal of Vercellae, Sulla also claimed that his good management of supplies to the Roman army in Cisalpine Gaul irritated Marius.¹⁸⁶ This latter claim might be spurious, since it is implausible that a Roman commander would be unhappy about good logistical support, although we must not dismiss the possibility that Marius was envious of Sulla's growing military reputation. Overall, as demonstrated by Caesar's *Civil War*, the denigration of one's rivals frequently went hand-in-hand with one's martial self-promotion.¹⁸⁷

Thirdly, during the Social War Sulla displayed active military leadership, some of which appeared in his *Memoirs*.¹⁸⁸ Pliny mentions that Sulla included one of his most conspicuous achievements, resulting in the award of a crown.

The dictator Sulla has also stated in his *Memoirs*, that when legate in the Marsic War he was presented with this gift [the *corona obsidionalis*] by the army, at Nola; an event which he caused to be commemorated in a painting at his Tusculan villa, which afterwards became the property of Cicero.¹⁸⁹

The *corona obsidionalis* was awarded to the individual responsible for lifting the siege of a town or military camp.¹⁹⁰ This refers to events in 89 when Sulla as legate defeated a Marsic force which threatened the Roman troops blockading Pompeii, pursuing them all the way to Nola.¹⁹¹ Pliny's account reveals a degree of subtlety about Sulla's self-promotion, in that

¹⁸⁵ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 5 = Plut. *Mar.* 25.

¹⁸⁶ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 4 = Plut. *Sull.* 4.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Section 4 of this chapter.

¹⁸⁸ App. *BC* 1.46, 50-2; Plut. *Sull.* 6.2-9; Vell. Pat. 2.17.

¹⁸⁹ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 10 = Plin. *HN* 22.12, in talking about the *corona obsidionalis* states: "scripsit et Sulla dictator ab exercitu se quoque donatum apud Nola legatum bello Marsico, idque etiam in villa sua Tusculana, quae fuit postea Ciceronis, pinxit".

¹⁹⁰ Maxfield 1981, 67.

¹⁹¹ App. *BC* 1.50-2; Plut. *Sull.* 6.2-9; *MRR* 2.36; Keaveney 1982a, 50-51.

instead of the traditional awarding of a crown by commander to one of his men, Sulla claims the Roman troops awarded this decoration to him, stressing that it was the soldiers on the spot who had witnessed and recognised Sulla's *virtus*. The biographical treatment was perhaps inspired by the painting when Sulla spent time at Tusculum during his retirement.

The Mithridatic War

The Mithridatic campaign and the subsequent civil war in Italy appear to have made up around half of the *Memoirs*; as Scholz argues, these two conflicts were the main focus of the work and they were partly apologia to explain Sulla's actions.¹⁹² Although Sulla did not bring down Mithridates and his Pontic Empire, he nevertheless captured Athens and drove out the Mithridatic forces from Greece, so re-establishing Roman control over the Greek mainland. The taking of Athens was one of Sulla's most significant achievements, alongside the capture of Jugurtha and the victory at the Colline Gate. If one considers the key cities around the Mediterranean basin that the Romans captured, such as Syracuse in 211 and Carthage and Corinth in 146, then the fall of Athens in 86 must have also had major symbolic resonance, in that it demonstrated to the Graeco-Roman World the military might of Rome. As Purcell states "the ruination of cities is a statement in the same symbolic language as founding or beautifying them".¹⁹³ Many of Sulla's Roman audience would have known through their education or reading, especially since it was the centre of philosophy, about the history and topography of Athens, although very few probably visited Attica.¹⁹⁴ Nonetheless, a small number, particularly the members of Sulla's army, would have seen the pre-eminent cultural

¹⁹² Scholz 2003, 181.

¹⁹³ Purcell 1995, 133.

¹⁹⁴ Rawson 1985, 6-7 maintains that not many Romans visited Athens until the after the Mithridatic Wars.

heart of Greece after its capture and brought back tales about its current circumstances.¹⁹⁵ Thus, there would have been an interest in and appreciation of Sulla's pre-eminent achievement.

Though Athens in the early first century was not the power it had been four centuries before, even under Macedonian, Roman and then Pontic control, the city was still politically active and maintained considerable defences.¹⁹⁶ There was also a supporting Pontic garrison at Piraeus commanded by Archelaus, which had withstood an initial Roman attack and later made a number of sallies against the Roman blockade of Athens.¹⁹⁷ According to the accounts of the siege in Plutarch and Appian, which derive in part from the *Memoirs*, Sulla's army put a considerable effort into establishing and maintaining their blockade. These endeavours included scouring financial and material resources from around Attica and further afield to fund and build the required siege equipment; some of these details are uncomplimentary to Sulla and so probably taken from other sources by Appian and Plutarch.¹⁹⁸ Plutarch, however, states that Sulla, upon being informed that a section of the Athenian defences near the Heptachalcum was vulnerable, went down himself to that location at night to verify this information.¹⁹⁹ If this detail derives originally from the autobiography (and the *Memoirs* are cited immediately after this part of the narrative), then this was a demonstration of a Roman commander personally inspecting the terrain where he was intending to send his men,

¹⁹⁵ Plut. *Sull.* 26 mentions that after concluding the treaty with Mithridates and dealing with Fimbria in 84, "he [Sulla] put to sea with his whole fleet from Ephesus, and two days later landed at Piraeus", resulting in Sulla taking a sojourn at Athens. However, Plutarch does not say how many of Sulla's officers and troops accompanied him to Athens.

¹⁹⁶ Badian 1976, 511-2; Hind 1994, 153-4; Habicht 1997, 304-314: for an Athenian perspective of the siege.

¹⁹⁷ App. *Mith.* 30-2.

¹⁹⁸ For example, App. *Mith.* 30: "appliances and apparatus of all kinds, iron, catapults, and everything of that sort were supplied by Thebes. His wood he cut in the grove of the Academy, where he constructed enormous engines"; Plut. *Sull.* 12.3: "... and he sent for the most beautiful and valuable offerings from both Epidaurus and Olympia".

¹⁹⁹ Plut. *Sull.* 14.1; the Heptachalcum was a part of the city wall situated somewhere between the western gate and the Sacred gate to the northwest of the city.

therefore exhibiting the personal virtue of *consilium*.²⁰⁰ Later, when commenting on the quality of the lofty position that he selected prior to the Battle of Chaeronea, Sulla again emphasized the quality of his tactical planning.²⁰¹ Observing and selecting beneficial positions prior to key engagements was a skill that Caesar frequently stressed in his commentaries.²⁰²

According to Peter, two fragments or citations of the siege survive. First of all:

In his *Memoirs* Sulla himself says that Marcus Ateius, who was the first to mount the wall, did not give way, but stayed put and stood his ground when his sword broke as he brought it down on the helmet of an enemy soldier whom had confronted him.²⁰³

By recognising and describing the outstanding individual *virtus* of one of his men, Sulla was communicating the calibre of his troops. He was, moreover, providing them with a heroic image of a Roman soldier high up on the walls of Athens steadfastly holding his position with a broken sword – an individual whom Sulla probably later awarded the *corona muralis*, the highly-sought decoration awarded to the first man who mounted the wall of an enemy city.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁰ Polyb. 8.37: for the similar behaviour of Marcellus in 212 BC during the siege of Syracuse, when he personally reconnoitred a section of the city's walls to confirm its potential weakness.

²⁰¹ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 14 = Plut. *Sull.* 16.1: “it has good, rich soil, is thickly wooded, and has a source of water at its foot; Sulla lavishes praise on its natural advantages and its position”.

²⁰² For example, Caes. *B Gall.* 1.22-4: prior to engaging the Helvetii in 58, Caesar describes both his intelligence gathering and subsequent advantageous positioning of his forces up the slope of a hill.

²⁰³ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 12 = Plut. *Sull.* 14.2: λέγει δὲ αὐτὸς ὁ Σύλλας ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνήμασι τὸν πρῶτον ἐπιβάντα τοῦ τείχους Μάρκον Ατῆιον ἀντιστάντος αὐτῷ πολεμίου δόντα πληγὴν ἐκ καταφορᾶς τῷ κράνει περικλάσαι τὸ ξίφος, οὐ μὴν ὑφέσθαι τῆς χώρας, ἀλλὰ μεῖναι καὶ κατασχεῖν.

²⁰⁴ Maxfield 1981, 76.

The other fragment relating to the siege again comes from Plutarch. “By his own account in his *Memoirs* he took Athens on the Kalends of March”.²⁰⁵ Why did Sulla cite the date of its fall? Assuming that he had previously mentioned the start-date of the blockade, which was probably in the autumn of 87, this later date would have specifically marked the length of time and thus the effort and endurance of Sulla’s army in taking the city.²⁰⁶ Yet, we should consider the imperial practice of commemorating key victories and other achievements of the Emperor on specific days, as demonstrated by the late Augustan calendar from Cumae which includes the celebration of Augustus’s first victory on the 15th of April, which was the Battle of Forum Gallorum in 43 BC.²⁰⁷ Furthermore, we know that the *Ludi Victoriae Sullanae* finished on the Kalends of November (the first day of the Roman New Year), in order to mark the final victory at the Colline Gate; consequently one wonders if the Kalends of March in 81-79 also saw the instigation of some sort of festival to commemorate the seizure of Athens with the inclusion of this date within the *Memoirs* simply reflecting this celebration.²⁰⁸

It would seem that Sulla’s campaign in Boeotia of 86 after the fall of Athens also received considerable coverage within the *Memoirs* and this included the defeat of two large Mithridatic armies commanded by Archelaus, at Chaeronea and then Orchomenos. Only three fragments have survived from this section of the autobiography; one of these, deriving from Plutarch, concerns the aftermath of the Battle of Chaeronea.

Although the foreigners lost a great many men on the plain, the majority were cut down as they were making for their camp. In the end only ten thousand out of so many myriads

²⁰⁵ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 13 = Plut. *Sull.* 14. 6: ἐλεῖν δὲ τὰς Αθήνας αὐτός φησιν ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνήμασι Μαρτίαις καλάνδαις ...

²⁰⁶ Hind 1994, 153, states that the siege commenced in the autumn of 87, but he does not indicate from where he got this rough date.

²⁰⁷ *ILS* 108; Beard, North & Price 1998, 70-1; Cic. *Fam.* 10.30.

²⁰⁸ Vell. Pat. 2.27; for an account the Battle of the Colline Gate on the Kalends of November.

managed to escape to Chalcis, whereas according to Sulla only fourteen of his soldiers were missing, and two of these reappeared in the evening. That is why he inscribed on his victory trophies the names of Mars, Victory and Venus, since he believed that his success was due as much to good fortune as to skill and military superiority.²⁰⁹

Although this passage does not specifically state the number of Pontic and Greek casualties, Sulla seems to have indicated that they amounted to tens of thousands in order to contrast with the twelve Romans who fell. This detail is probably influenced by the triumphal regulation and epistolary custom where Roman commanders provided statements on enemy and Roman casualties.²¹⁰ In addition, by stating that two of the fourteen missing Roman soldiers reappeared, Sulla was giving a sense of accuracy to his citation of those Romans missing, so portraying him as a master of detail.²¹¹ Later in his account of the Battle of Sacriportus during the civil war, Sulla continued this practice by citing the enormous numbers of enemy dead, whilst his troops suffered only twenty-three losses.²¹² Such extravagant claims were linked to Sulla's public belief, as espoused by the inscribed victory monument at Chaeronea, that he was blessed with the divinely ordained attribute of *felicitas*, whereby it was this divine favour as well as military skill and superiority that facilitated his pre-eminent success (see final subsection for further analysis of *felicitas*). Thus, in his *Memoirs*, Sulla was perpetuating and extending the distinctive martial ethos that he had created for himself.

²⁰⁹ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 15 = Plut. *Sull.* 19.4-5: πολλοὶ μὲν οὖν ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ τῶν βαρβάρων ἀνηροῦντο, πλεῖστοι δὲ τῷ χάρακι προσφερόμενοι κατεκόπησαν, ὥστε μυρίους διαπεσεῖν εἰς Χαλκίδα μόνους ἀπὸ τοσούτων μυριάδων. ὁ δὲ Σύλλας λέγει τέσσαρας καὶ δέκα ἐπιζῆσαι τῶν αὐτοῦ στρατιωτῶν, εἶτα καὶ τούτων δύο πρὸς τὴν ἐσπέραν παραγενέσθαι. διὸ καὶ τοῖς τροπαίοις ἐπέγραψεν Ἀρη καὶ Νίκην καὶ Ἀφροδίτην, ὡς οὐχ ἤττον εὐτυχία κατορθώσας ἢ δεινότητι καὶ δυνάμει τὸν πόλεμον.

²¹⁰ Val. Max. 2.8.1; Cf. Chapter 2, Section 2 & Chapter 4, Section 2.

²¹¹ Marincola 1997, 68, 115-116 for the role of ἀκρίβεια (accuracy) in ancient historiography; Thuc. 1.22.2 for his intention to be as accurate as possible in his enquiries.

²¹² *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 19 = Plut. *Sull.* 28.8; Cf. *HRR*, Augustus Fr. 15 = Plut. *Ant.* 68 for Augustus' citation of enemy losses at the Battle of Actium.

One final aspect of the Mithridatic campaign requires attention: Sulla's treaty with Mithridates at Dardanus, which occurred in late 85 or early 84. The stipulations for the Pontic King included: an indemnity of 2,000 talents, the evacuation of his forces from Asia and a part of Paphlagonia, the restoration of the Kings of Bithynia and Cappadocia, and the return of prisoners and deserters.²¹³ In return, Mithridates' own kingdom and position were confirmed. Hind puts it well: "No King, not even Antiochus the Great, had emerged so little scathed after a full-scale war with Rome".²¹⁴ It is difficult to ascertain in what ways Sulla portrayed the treaty in his *Memoirs*, although the crisis with which Rome was supposedly threatened possibly played a part.

One fragment of the *Memoirs* does relate indirectly to the treaty; it concerns Mithridates' lieutenant Archelaus, who played a major part in the agreement, and it perhaps shed some light on Sulla's approach. Plutarch mentions that after the treaty had been agreed, Archelaus accompanied Sulla back to Greece and that Sulla granted him a number of favours including: a grant of 10,000 plethra of land in Euboea and the status of friend and ally of Rome.²¹⁵ He then states: "At any rate in his *Memoirs* Sulla argues that all these favours were perfectly innocent".²¹⁶ Sulla appears to be reacting to criticisms about his behaviour towards Archelaus and the suggestion that Sulla had employed underhand corrupt means during the Mithridatic campaign and its resultant peace treaty. As highlighted in chapter three, one allegation, with which rivals liked to tarnish the reputation of commanders who had campaigned in the east, was that they had been corrupted and effeminised by the wealth of the Hellenistic kingdoms and that, on occasion, these same magistrates employed similar immoral means to defeat the

²¹³ Plut. *Sull.* 22.5; *FGrH* 434, Memnon Fr. 25; although Memnon states that the indemnity was for 3,000 talents.

²¹⁴ Hind 1994, 161.

²¹⁵ Plut. *Sull.* 23.

²¹⁶ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 17 = Plut. *Sull.* 23: περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτων αὐτὸς ὁ Σύλλα ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν ἀπολογεῖται.

enemy. It is plausible that this justification for his good treatment of Archelaus was part of Sulla's defence of the treaty at Dardanus, portraying its provisions as above board and not the result of a nefarious compact, a concept that would undermine the image of hard resolute service on behalf of the *res publica* that Sulla was trying to cultivate.

The Civil War of 83-1 and its aftermath

Sulla's account of the Civil War of 83-81 posed him a number of difficulties, since like his march on Rome in 88, it was a momentous decision to lead legions against one's fatherland, an action which resulted in two years of Civil War, famine, political stasis and finally the posting of the proscriptions.²¹⁷ When Sulla was writing in 79-8, this sense of domestic crisis and extensive violence must have been still fresh in the mind of many Romans. Sulla appears to have justified his decision to cross to Italy in three main ways within his *Memoirs*. First of all, he highlighted the wishes and loyalty of his troops. Secondly, like Caesar, he undoubtedly pushed the legitimacy of his position and his loyal services to Rome and, above all, his responsibility in the midst of this crisis to save the city from destruction. Thirdly, he pushed the idea that this path had long since been divinely ordained (next sub-section).

Xenophon and Caesar in their monographs stress the collective achievements and responsibilities of their armies.²¹⁸ One fragment of Sulla's *Memoirs* correlates with this practice, describing his troops' behaviour prior to crossing to Italy.

His troops were all ready to be transported across to Italy, but Sulla was afraid that they might disband and return to their various home towns once they landed there. In the first place, however, they voluntarily swore an oath that they would stay with him and would

²¹⁷ App. *BC* 1.78-107.

²¹⁸ Xen. *An.* 3.4.47-8; Caes. *B Gall.* 2.25; Cf. Section 1 of this chapter.

wait for his orders before doing any harm to Italy; and then, when they realized how desperately short of funds he was, they each contributed a portion of their own money, according to their means. Sulla thanked them, but refused to accept the offer, and after rousing their morale the crossing began – a crossing which as he himself says, was taking him to face fifteen hostile commanders who had four hundred and fifty cohorts.²¹⁹

Sulla, through this emphasis on the role of his troops in the decision to invade Italy, was presenting an unusual portrait of the Roman soldiery here: men who were not self-serving and liable to desert to their homes, as Sulla at first supposedly fears, but so loyal to their commander and with such a belief in his cause that they are willing to contribute their own funds to him. He then emphasizes the magnitude of this loyalty by citing what odds he and his army were facing – his five legions against the forty-five legions that his opponents had in total.²²⁰ Furthermore, Sulla, writing with hindsight, was perhaps reacting to the claim that his troops had been corrupted by their pillaging of Greece, since the above portrayal not only emphasizes their discipline, but also implies their willingness to sacrifice their wealth to save Rome.

In this type of justificatory work, it is probable that, like Caesar, Sulla emphasized the legitimacy of both his position and rank while at the same time highlighting the self-serving nature of his opponents. Unfortunately there are no fragments bearing on this, although he did send a dispatch to the Senate in 84 which listed his magistracies and the achievements he had

²¹⁹ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 18 = Plut. *Sull.* 27.3: μέλλοντος δὲ τοῦ στρατιώτας διαπεραιούν, καὶ δεδιότος μὴ τῆς Ἰταλίας ἐπιλαβόμενοι κατὰ πόλεις ἕκαστοι διαρρῶσι, πρῶτον μὲν ὤμοσαν ἀφ' αὐτῶν παραμενεῖν καὶ μηδὲν ἔκουσίως κακουργήσειν τὴν Ἰταλίαν, ἔπειτα χρημάτων δεόμενον πολλῶν ὀρώντες, ἀπήρχοντο καὶ συνεισέφερον ὡς ἕκαστος εἶχεν εὐπορίας. οὐ μὴν ἐδέξατο τὴν ἀπαρχὴν ὁ Σύλλας, ἀλλ' ἐπαινέσας καὶ παρορμήσας διέβαινον, ὡς φησιν αὐτός, ἐπὶ πεντεκαίδεκα στρατηγούς πολεμίους πενήκοντα καὶ τετρακοσίας σπείρας ἔχοντας, ἐκδηλότατα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰς εὐτυχίας προσημαίνοντος αὐτῷ.

²²⁰ Keppie 1984, 64-66; for how the average legion of the period was made up of ten cohorts.

attained whilst serving Rome.²²¹ However, in the *Memoirs*, Sulla did exploit the crisis that Rome faced as a means of legitimizing his position, stressing how it had been *his* responsibility to prevent her destruction; in following this divinely ordained path, he was not only demonstrating his loyalty to the *res publica*, but, moreover, that he was saving and strengthening Rome.

Two fragments of the *Memoirs* point to this sense of crisis. The first of these concerns the prophecy at Silvium from Plutarch, quoted above, which states that Sulla should hurry to save the Capitol from being burnt.²²² Sulla was symbolically playing on the fact that the sacred citadel of Rome was burnt on July 6th 83 when Carbo and his opponents were in control of the city, emphasising how the gods were instructing him to save the state not only from these men, but also from a similar calamity.²²³

Sulla later continued this theme of crisis and potential doom according to a brief fragment cited in Priscian.

Sulla in the twenty-first book of his achievements [says that]: the *res publica* would have reached the gravest of calamities.²²⁴

Now we do not know the exact context for this sentence. However, Lewis points out that there is a close verbal parallel to Priscian's fragment in Velleius Paterculus' account of the final engagement at the Colline Gate.²²⁵

²²¹ Cf. Chapter 4, Section 4; DS 77.

²²² *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 18 = Plut. *Sull.* 27.6.

²²³ App. *BC* 1.89.

²²⁴ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 20 = Priscian 9, P.476 H: "Sulla in uicesimo primo rerum suarum: ad summam perniciem rem publicam perventurum esse."

²²⁵ Lewis 1991, 517.

... on the Kalends of November ... Pontius Telesinus, a Samnite chief, brave in spirit and in action and hating to the core the very name of Rome, having collected about him 40,000 of the bravest and most steadfast youths who still persisted in retaining arms, fought with Sulla, near the Colline Gate, a battle so critical as to bring to both Sulla and the *res publica* into the gravest of peril.²²⁶

Lewis argues that Velleius, on account of the nature of his other positive portrayals of Sulla within his history of Rome, might have been directly or indirectly drawing on the *Memoirs*.²²⁷ Lewis also points out that Velleius gives the exact date of the engagement, which is a trait of the *Memoirs*.²²⁸ If Velleius' account does derive from Sulla's autobiography, it demonstrates how, by emphasising the supposed threat to Rome's very existence, Sulla justifies both his initiation and then his aggressive completion of the Civil War of 83-1. Yet, Velleius might have got these details from one of the other sources dealing with the Civil War. In addition, if this did occur in the penultimate book of the *Memoirs*, there would not be much room left for the events of 82-78, particularly Sulla's victorious celebrations and an explanation of constitutional changes, which would have probably required more space than Lewis' theory allows.

Sulla and the will of the gods

Linked to this sense of crisis was the idea advanced in the *Memoirs* that Sulla was divinely ordained to attain military success and that it was his fate to save Rome as she verged on

²²⁶ Vell. Pat. 2.27.1: "at Pontius Telesinus, dux Samnitium, vir domi bellique fortissimus penitusque Romano nomini infestissimus, contractis circiter quadraginta milibus fortissimae pertinacissimaeque in retinendis armis iuventutis ... novem Kal. Novembribus ita ad portam Collinam cum Sulla dimicavit, ut ad summum discrimen et eum et rem publicam perduceret ...".

²²⁷ Lewis 1991, 518.

²²⁸ Lewis 1991, 518; see *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 13 = Plut. *Sull.* 14.6 for the capture of Athens; *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 18 = Plut. *Sull.* 17.6 for the date [6th of July] when Sulla received Bellona's warning about the Capitol.

destruction. Sulla illustrated this divine fate by reporting various metaphysical phenomena, in doing so he played on the feelings and knowledge of his audience.²²⁹

Even before the crossing of Italy Sulla reported some significant prodigies and one from the Social War illuminates the semi-divine aura that Sulla was attempting to create for himself.

And by his own account once when he was dispatched at the head of an army to the Social War a huge chasm opened up in the ground near Laverna and billowed forth fire, and a bright flame shot up to the sky. The diviners interpreted this as meaning that a brave man, of striking appearance and superior qualities, would take power and relieve Rome of its present troubles, and Sulla claims to be that man, because his golden hair gave him a unique appearance, and he felt no qualms in testifying to his own bravery after all the excellent and important achievements.²³⁰

By citing the interpretation given by the seers (μαντεις), Sulla turns an ambiguous prodigy into a divine prophecy. In addition, one wonders if Sulla's golden hair suggested his close association with his patron god Apollo, who, as well as being responsible for delivering prophecies, was also depicted with golden hair.²³¹

Another portent cited in the *Memoirs* came from the oracle of Trophonius in Lebadea.

²²⁹ HRR, Sulla Fr. 8, 9, 16, 18 & 21; five of the fragments and citations from the *Memoirs* deal with metaphysical phenomena in one form or another.

²³⁰ HRR, Sulla Fr. 8 = Plut. *Sull.* 6.6-7: ἐκπεμπομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ μετὰ δυνάμεως εἰς τὸν συμμαχικὸν πόλεμον ἱστορεῖ χάσμα τῆς γῆς μέγα γενέσθαι περὶ Λαβέρνην· ἐκ δὲ τούτου πῦρ ἀναβλύσαι πολὺ καὶ φλόγα λαμπράν στηρίσαι πρὸς τὸν οὐρανόν. εἰπεῖν δὴ καὶ τοὺς μάντεις ὡς ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς ὄψει διάφορος καὶ περιττὸς ἄρξας ἀπαλάξει τῇ πόλει ταραχὰς τὰς παρούσας. τοῦτον δὲ αὐτὸν εἶναι τὸ περὶ τὴν κόμην χρυσωπόν, ἀρετὴν δὲ οὐκ ἀισχύνεσθαι μαρτυρῶν ἑαυτῷ μετὰ πράξεις καλὰς οὕτω καὶ μεγάλας.

²³¹ For example, Ovid *Met.* 11.165: "Apollo had wreathed his golden hair with laurel from Parnassus ..."; Keaveney 1983, 57; Plut. *Sull.* 29.8-11: Sulla had a close association with Apollo, as demonstrated at the Colline gate, where he apparently held onto a statuette of the god, even addressing it at one point during the battle.

Sulla has personally described in the tenth book of his *Memoirs* how Quintus Titius, a prominent Roman businessman in Greece, came to him immediately after his victory at Chaeronea to tell him that Trophonius had foretold a second battle there within a few days, which he would also win.²³²

If we consider the suffering inflicted upon the Roman citizens and businessmen in Greece and Asia Minor by the military aggression of Mithridates, Sulla was probably accentuating how his divinely ordained victories in Greece had restored peace and prosperity to that region. Furthermore, by actually naming and identifying the individual responsible for bringing him the prophecy, Sulla is possibly pointing to the class of people who welcomed and benefited from his military success, as well as providing his audience with a credible interpreter of this foreign cult.

Finally, there were a number of prodigies and dreams associated with Sulla's crossing to Italy in 83; Plutarch cites the following one from the *Memoirs*:²³³

as soon as he [Sulla] had crossed over to Tarentum he offered up a sacrifice, and the lobe of the victim's liver was found to be shaped like a garland of laurel with two ribbons hanging off it.²³⁴

²³² *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 16 = Plut. *Sull.* 17.1: ὡς δὲ Σύλλας αὐτός ἐν δεκάτῳ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων γέγραφε, Κόϊντος Τίτιος, οὐκ ἀφανῆς ἀνὴρ τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι πραγματευομένων, ἦκε πρὸς αὐτὸν ἤδη τὴν ἐν Χαιρωνείᾳ νενικηκότα μάχην, ἀπαγγέλλων ὅτι καὶ δευτέραν ὁ Τροφώνιος αὐτόθι μάχην καὶ νίκην προσημαίνει ἐντὸς ὀλίγου χρόνου.

²³³ Ramage 1991, 99, states that these two occurrences were simply "two clear signs that he [Sulla] enjoys *felicitas*", without analysing their possible wider meanings.

²³⁴ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 18 = Plut. *Sull.* 27.4-5: θύσαντος μὲν γὰρ εὐθέως ἦ διέβη περὶ Τάρανατα, δάφνης στεφάνου τύπον ἔχων ὁ λοβὸς ὠφθη, καὶ λημνίσκων δύο κατηρημένων.

The sacrifice performed by Sulla at Tarentum was a traditional religious rite performed by Greeks prior to battle and, also, carried out by Etruscan haruspices as means of assessing the will of the gods. By providing the distinctive description of how the lobe of the liver was shaped like a laurel garland – a symbol of military victory frequently associated with the ceremony of a triumph – Sulla was possibly playing on the memory of his recent triumph of early 81.²³⁵ In addition, it should not be forgotten that Sulla held the augurship by at least 82 and so people would have seen him lead and perform a number of public sacrifices and ceremonies.²³⁶

The inclusion of dreams, prodigies and oracles within ancient historiography and biography was common practice and the description of these phenomena was multifunctional.²³⁷ They often heightened the atmosphere of the narrative as well as providing entertaining digressions. Rawson goes further: “myth and marvels became an almost essential ornament even to basically serious works, and like rhetorical elaboration of more recent events in order to bring out pathos and drama, and to give vividness, they often ran riot”.²³⁸ Hanson, moreover, when commenting on ancient dreams and visions, notes that they often functioned to direct or re-direct the narrative – in a sense give sign-posts to the audience of where the story was going.²³⁹ Sulla recognised this latter function, as he frequently played on his audience’s knowledge of contemporary events. For instance, the slave’s vision of Bellona telling Sulla to hurry to Rome to save the Capitol focused them on what had recently happened to the Capitol.²⁴⁰

²³⁵ Plut. *Sull.* 34; *MRR* 2.74.

²³⁶ Keaveney 1982b, 150.

²³⁷ Cf. Hdt. 1.55, 3.49, 5.56, 7.143; dreams, prodigies and oracles occur throughout Herodotus’ *Histories* frequently as a means of warning protagonists in the portrayed events.

²³⁸ Rawson 1985, 217.

²³⁹ Hanson 1980, 1413-4.

²⁴⁰ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 18 = Plut. *Sull.* 27.6.

Dreams and prodigies were seen in the ancient world as being instigated by the gods or a particular god; and as either prophetic in nature or simply reflecting the events or circumstances of the present time.²⁴¹ Many ancients placed considerable value in dreams and prodigies as demonstrated by surviving inscriptions as well as literary sources.²⁴² Additionally, some saw dreams as a means of medical diagnosis and on other occasions they were interpreted as a divine order to construct a temple.²⁴³ Frequently the meaning or interpretation of these metaphysical phenomena was straightforward. However, on occasion it could be unclear and ancient writers probably included the odd ambiguous dream or prodigy as a means of drawing the audience's interest further into the narrative, as they were made to wonder what the prodigy or dream symbolised.

Plutarch was fascinated by dreams and other metaphysical phenomena, often seeing them as important means of indicating the personality and career of his subjects. As a consequence he reproduced many of them from his sources and as well as embellishing some, he probably even created a few of the dreams himself.²⁴⁴ Brenk points out that in Plutarch's surviving *Lives* there are around forty-five dreams described in some detail and this fascination is the main reason why he reproduces so many of Sulla's dreams and prodigies.²⁴⁵ Additionally, his penchant for this specific subject-matter and the resultant number of fragments and citations dealing with this topic from the *Memoirs* might well mean that their importance has been over-amplified.

²⁴¹ Price 1986, 9-18, for the various approaches to dreams of the 2nd cent AD traveller Artemidorus; Pelling 1997, 197-8, separates dreams into either “*enhupnia*, dreams which spring from the dreamer's current predicament” or “*oneiroi*, prophetic dreams which come from outside”.

²⁴² Hanson 1980, 1401-5, provides a variety of sample texts from literary or epigraphic sources which report dream-visions.

²⁴³ Gal. *Nat. Fac.* 1.12; Hippo. *Off.* 4; Paus. 3.14.4, for how the sanctuary of Thetis at Sparta was founded on what the Spartan Queen Leandris had seen in a dream; Hanson 1980, 1397; Price 1986, 23-26.

²⁴⁴ Pelling 1997, 199; Cf. Plut. *Marc.* 28.4-5; the dream of Marcellus has no parallel account in Livy.

²⁴⁵ Brenk 1975, 337.

Linked to the reporting of these dreams and prodigies in the *Memoirs* was Sulla's belief that he possessed *felicitas*; he even went so far as adopting the cognomen Felix, becoming L. Cornelius Sulla Felix. Cicero, in *De imperio Cn. Pompei*, states that there were four attributes that a pre-eminent Roman commander should possess: "military knowledge, courage, authority, and luck".²⁴⁶ As demonstrated by the inscription set up after Chaeronea, Sulla saw *felicitas* as a critical factor in his military success.²⁴⁷ By adopting this attribute as a cognomen, instead of Athens or another geographical soubriquet, Sulla, through inscriptions on coins and statues, was informing people that he personified *felicitas*, so reminding them that he been fated by the gods to attain his pre-eminent success.²⁴⁸ The inclusion of the dreams and prodigies within the *Memoirs* gave reinforcement and depth to this personal image of *felicitas*, therefore furthering the concept of Sulla's divinely ordained path. It must also be remembered that Sulla was composing these tales after he had taken *felix* as a cognomen, so he was possibly moulding these tales to fit into this image.

Conclusion

Although we know Sulla's *Memoirs* from a modest number of fragments, with careful analysis and awareness of their historical contexts, a number of insightful conclusions can be drawn. To start with, it appears that Sulla through his narrative projected a distinctive martial ethos, in which his achievements in the dutiful service of Rome were divinely ordained. Secondly, his *Memoirs* provided him with considerable scope for the extensive, often melodramatic, details with which to establish this ethos, and in so doing denigrate the reputations of his rivals.

²⁴⁶ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 28: "ego enim sic existimo, in summo imperatore quattuor has res inesse oportere,—scientiam rei militaris, virtutem, auctoritatem, felicitatem".

²⁴⁷ *HRR*, Sulla Fr. 15 = Plut. *Sull.* 19.5.

²⁴⁸ For example, *RRC* 381/1: the reverse of these aurei have the legend L·SVLLA FELIX·DIC around the image of an equestrian statue, which was erected at the Rostra in 80 BC; Vel. Pat. 2.61.3; *CIL* 1² 720; 721; 722; 724; four pedestal inscriptions from Italy and Rome start with L. Cornelio L. f. Sullae Feleici (or Felici); Ramage 1991, 104 & 110.

Finally, it probably provided some significant templates and ideas for later autobiographical works, in a modest way to Caesar's *Commentaries*, but most notably Augustus' *Memoirs*, particularly when attempting to explain one's role in a recent civil conflict.

4. Caesar's *Commentaries*

He longed for a great command, an army, and a new war, where his *virtus* could shine.²⁴⁹

Sallust's brief description of Caesar's supposed motivations in 63 BC was written with hindsight. Sallust, however, knew Caesar personally, commanding one of his legions in 49, and later serving as a praetor in the African War of 46. Many of Caesar's political manoeuvrings and alliances, especially during his consulship of 59, were intended to secure a substantial command through which he could substantially augment his growing military reputation as well as make his fortune.²⁵⁰ Thus, there is considerable truth in Sallust's statement.

This section looks at the two literary works which Caesar wrote as part of his desire for pre-eminent *gloria*: the first seven books of *The Gallic War* and the three books of *The Civil War*. Since these *Commentaries* are the only extant Latin works of their kind by an *imperator* there is a tremendous amount of scholarship on them. Rambaud, Adcock, Collins, and more recently Riggsby, Batstone and Damon, amongst others, have demonstrated the diverse and subtle means by which Caesar portrayed his Gallic campaign and then the subsequent civil

²⁴⁹ Sall. *Cat.* 54.4: "sibi magnum imperium, exercitum, bellum novum exoptabat, ubi virtus enitescere posset".

²⁵⁰ Gelzer 1968, 85-7; Suet. *Iul.* 22.1; Dio 38.8.5; Cic. *Att.* 8.8.3; for the Lex Vatinia and the additional senatorial decree proposed by Pompeius which allotted Caesar a five-year command encompassing the *provinciae* of Illyricum and Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul; *MRR* 2.180 & 184-5; Cic. *Balb.* 43; Suet. *Iul.* 18; Plut. *Caes.* 11-12; for Caesar's praetorian (or proconsular) command in Further Spain of 61-60 BC, during which he started to display his military attributes.

war of 49-48.²⁵¹ This section breaks down into three parts: first of all, the issue of audience and publication; then separate analyses of these two works. In following this approach there are two primary aims: to highlight the methods through which Caesar presented his military *res gestae* and then to explain why he adopted this means of publicity.

Audience and publication

There is considerable debate over how and for whom *The Gallic War Commentaries* were published. Mommsen believed they were “the military report of the democratic general to the people from whom he had received his commission”.²⁵² Dewitt, however, argued against their wide circulation saying that their political motivations “have been grossly exaggerated” and that they should be seen more as a traditional literary exercise; Adcock concurred, stating that “the riff-raff of the city did not read books”.²⁵³ Rambaud further argued that such literature was specifically aimed at the educated and political elite of Rome and their sons.²⁵⁴ The predominant belief is that each book was written every winter in Cisalpine Gaul (except during the winter of 54/53 when the Gauls rebelled), and then they were all published together in 51/50 as a part of his publicity for a triumph and his running for the consulship of 49.²⁵⁵

Wiseman challenges this belief, claiming that the seven *Commentaries* were published during the campaign, being disseminated throughout Rome and Italy through his extensive publicity network headed by Oppius and Balbus.²⁵⁶ Unfortunately there is no direct evidence for such publications between 59-51. Nonetheless, Wiseman maintains that Caesar was

²⁵¹ Rambaud 1953; Adcock 1956; Collins 1972; Welch & Powell (eds.) 1998; Riggsby 2006; Batstone & Damon 2006.

²⁵² Mommsen 1903, 604: “der militärische Rapport des demokratischen Generals an das Volk, von dem er seinen Auftrag erhalten hatte”.

²⁵³ Dewitt 1942, 341; Adcock 1956, 21.

²⁵⁴ Rambaud 1953, 12-19.

²⁵⁵ Rambaud 1953, 403-5; Adcock 1956, 3; Gelzer 1968, 171.

²⁵⁶ Wiseman 1998, 4-5.

reputed to be capable of producing such works at speed in order to “to keep his achievements constantly in the public eye”.²⁵⁷ Returning to Mommsen’s approach, he argues that such contemporary historical writings were disseminated at festivals and other public events and not simply to small elite audiences.²⁵⁸ Wiseman also points out that “the phrase *populus Romanus* occurs no fewer than forty-one times in Book 1”; this might be intended not only to accentuate his loyalty and service to the state, but also be part of Caesar’s aim to address his achievements to the Roman people, so associating them with his successes.²⁵⁹ In his speech *De Provinciis Consularibus* of 55 Cicero possibly indicates the widespread reception of such details, when promoting Caesar’s Gallic campaign to the Senate.

And so he has, with brilliant success crushed in battle the fiercest and greatest tribes of Germania and Helvetia; the rest he has terrified, checked and subdued, and taught them to submit to the rule of the Roman people. Over these regions and races, which no writings, no spoken word, no report had before made known to us ...²⁶⁰

Cicero was perhaps suggesting here that Rome had received new writings and oral information about the campaign. On the other hand, he could be simply referring to the dispatches or oral reports that Caesar and his officers were sending back to Rome and not the *Commentaries*. Overall, Wiseman’s argument is enticing because, alongside the circumstantial evidence cited, Caesar had a track-record of encouraging the public dissemination of information, as

²⁵⁷ Wiseman 1998, 4.

²⁵⁸ Wiseman 1987, 253-6; Wiseman 1998, 4.

²⁵⁹ Wiseman 1998, 3.

²⁶⁰ Cic. *Prov. cons.* 33: “itaque cum acerrimis Germanorum et Helvetiorum nationibus et maximis proeliis felicissime decertavit, ceteras conterruit, compulit, domuit, imperio populi Romani parere adsuefecit et, quas regiones quasque gentes nullas nobis antea litterae, nulla vox, nulla fama notas fecerat ...”.

demonstrated by his consular legislation to publicise the Senate's activities on a regular basis.²⁶¹

The potential audience of *The Civil War* commentaries has received less attention, probably because they were unfinished and published after Caesar's death by one of his lieutenants, possibly Hirtius. Collins and Carter believe that they were written during the first period of civil war in 49-48 or at least before the end of the African War in the summer of 46, particularly as the three books do not contain, as Collins puts it, "the spirit nor the foreshadowing of 'monarchical' or 'imperial' idea" that dominated the latter period of his political life.²⁶² In addition, Collins argues that a part of the target audience for these *Commentaries* was the leading *equites* and lower ranking senators whom Caesar believed he needed to win over to his side.²⁶³ However, one wonders, if Wiseman's theory of more substantial publication might also be applicable here, particularly as they may have been initially intended for wide circulation through his agents like Oppius and Balbus, in order to consolidate his base of support amongst the people in Rome and Italy following his success at Pharsalus, and not just the Roman elite.

The Gallic War

One of the primary methods by which Caesar promoted his military ethos within the *Commentaries* was by consistently including his name and citing his personal leadership within the narrative. As Rambaud points out, in both texts, Caesar's name is mentioned 775 times in all and frequently in the third person; as Bruere says, in his review of Rambaud, "the third person, far from being a sign of modesty, strengthens the impression of Caesar's

²⁶¹ Suet. *Iul.* 20.1; Welch 1996, 86; see Baldwin 1979, 189-191, on the *acta diurna*.

²⁶² Collins 1959, 117.

²⁶³ Collins 1972, 955.

ubiquitousness, and the appearance of his name in the nominative case in nearly one instance out of two stresses his role of perpetual prime mover”.²⁶⁴ Furthermore, when Caesar is not actually present in the narrated events, in a similar way to Achilles’ shadow over the *Iliad*, his personality still comes to the fore in one way or another. For instance, when Labienus led three legions against the Aedui in 52, Caesar states:

Labienus urged them to remember their long-standing tradition of courage and brilliant successes, and to imagine that Caesar, who had so often led them to victory, was present in person ...²⁶⁵

Virtus was heavily employed by Caesar. In *The Gallic War* he describes his own and his troops’ military *virtus* in a variety of ways. When employing the term *virtus*, one has to be aware of the changing and often ambiguous meaning of the term within the Latin literature of the middle and late Republic.²⁶⁶ However, as Harris argues, within Caesar’s *Commentaries*, *virtus* primarily signifies personal courage.²⁶⁷ Caesar provided a few instances of his own personal *virtus*, as demonstrated at the height of the siege of Alesia.

... at this moment [Labienus] sent to tell Caesar that he considered the time for decisive action was at hand. Caesar put on speed to get there in time for the fight. The enemy knew he was coming by the scarlet cloak which he always wore in action to mark his identity; and when they saw the cavalry squadrons and cohorts following him down the

²⁶⁴ Rambaud 1953, 197; Bruere, 1955, 144.

²⁶⁵ Caes. *B Gall.* 7.62: “Labienus milites cohortatus ut suae pristinae virtutis et secundissimorum proeliorum retinerent memoriam atque ipsum Caesarem, cuius ductu saepe numero hostes superassent, praesentem adesse existimarent ...”.

²⁶⁶ McDonnell 2003, 238-40.

²⁶⁷ Harris 2006, 303-10.

slopes, which were plainly visible from the heights on which they stood, they joined battle.²⁶⁸

Alongside the other descriptions of such active participation, Caesar was emphasising his direct visible role in his military successes, not only to the enemy, but also to the listeners and readers of the *Commentaries* back in Rome.²⁶⁹

Caesar frequently details the bravery of his troops as well. He acknowledges them by detailing their collective endeavours and also by the bravery of individuals, particularly centurions.²⁷⁰ For example, during an engagement near the River Sambre against the Belgae in 57 Caesar describes the efforts of *Legio IX* and *Legio X* against the Atrebates on the Belgic right wing.

The Atrebates tried to get across [the river] but their way was blocked: our men caught them up, drew their swords, and slaughtered many of them. Then our men crossed the river without hesitation. They advanced on to unfavourable ground: the enemy resisted. Battle began again, and again they routed the enemy.²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Caes. *B Gall.* 7.87-8: “Labienus ... Caesarem per nuntios facit certiolem quid faciendum existimet. accelerat Caesar, ut proelio intersit. eius adventu ex colore vestitus cognito, quo insigni in proeliis uti consuevit, turmisque equitum et cohortibus visis quas se sequi iusserat, ut de locis superioribus haec declivia et devexa cernebantur, hostes proelium committunt”.

²⁶⁹ For example, Caes. *B Gall.* 2.25 says how, when fighting the Belgae, Caesar himself picked up a shield and made his way to the front-line to encourage the men of *Legio XII*.

²⁷⁰ Marincola 1997, 212-3, points out that Caesar in his *Commentaries* frequently highlights the individual *virtus* of his soldiers; for example, Caes. *B Gall.* 2.25: the centurion P. Sextius Baculus against the Belgae in 57; *B Civ.* 3.53: the endurance of a centurion at Dyrrachium in 48; examples of the collective *virtus* of his men: *B Gall.* 1.52 against the forces of Ariovistus in 58 & *B Gall.* 3.15 against the ships of the Veneti in 56.

²⁷¹ Caes. *B Gall.* 2.23: “Legionis VIII. et X. milites ... Atrebates (nam his ea pars obvenerat) celeriter ex loco superiore in flumen compulerunt et transire conantes insecuti gladiis magnam partem eorum impeditam interfecerunt. ipsi transire flumen non dubitaverunt et in locum iniquum progressi rursus resistentes hostes redintegrato proelio in fugam coniecerunt”.

Such descriptions informed the audience not only of their troops' bravery, but also their unit cohesion, so indicating the quality of the troops under Caesar's command. In contrast, a fine example of individual *virtus* occurs in Book 7 when Caesar describes the sacrifice of a centurion during the unsuccessful storming of the fortified town of Gergovia.²⁷²

... Marcus Petronius, had tried to break down the gates, but he was overwhelmed by the enemy host and abandoned hope of saving himself. Gravely wounded, he called to his soldiers, who had followed him: 'Since I cannot save myself along with you, I shall at least take care to secure your survival – for it was my desire for glory which made me lead you into danger. When I give you your chance, watch out for you own safety'. At once he plunged into the midst of the enemy, killing two and forcing the rest a little way back from the gate ... In this manner he soon afterwards fell fighting, and proved the saviour of his men.²⁷³

There are a number of dramatic portrayals of individual heroism by Caesar's centurions in both *The Gallic War* and *The Civil War* and these accounts often employed the ancient historiographical practice of placing speeches in the mouths of certain protagonists to add vividness to the narrative, as illustrated by Petronius' selfless words of encouragement.²⁷⁴ As Adcock points out, the Caesarian portrayal of his heroic centurions was not simply because these men were close to Caesar's heart, but also about deliberately targeting his Roman

²⁷² Caes. *B Gall.* 7.52: the next day Caesar called an assembly at which chastised his men for their imprudence and over-eagerness.

²⁷³ Caes. *B Gall.* 7.50: "Marcus Petronius, eiusdem legionis centurio, cum portam excidere conatus esset, a multitudine oppressus ac sibi desperans multis iam vulneribus acceptis manipularibus suis, qui illum secuti erant, 'quoniam,' inquit, 'me una vobiscum servare non possum, vestrae quidem certe vitae prospiciam, quos cupiditate gloriae adductus in periculum deduxi. vos data facultate vobis consulite'. simul in medios hostes irrupit duobusque interfectis reliquos a porta paulum summovit ... ita pugnans post paulum concidit ac suis saluti fuit".

²⁷⁴ For example, Caes. *B Gall.* 5.44: when Q. Cicero's legion was besieged by the Nervii in 54, Caesar has T. Pullo shouting to his friend and rival L. Vorenus; Caes. *B Civ.* 3.91: the *primus pilus* of legio X Crastinus shouted words of encouragement to his men prior to their assault on the Pompeian line at Pharsalus.

readers' appreciation of the fact that centurions were the backbone of the legions and so a fundamental part of the military success that was being recognised back in Rome.²⁷⁵ Furthermore, as demonstrated by the recent behaviour of the American media during the Iraq War, the positive portrayals of more junior officers and men can go down very well at home, as they provide welcome digressions that benefit the overall image of a campaign.²⁷⁶

The Gallic War not only promoted stirring, courageous deeds, it also detailed Caesar's skilful and aggressive generalship. He often describes the necessary preparations prior to key military engagements or operations, such as his deployments when fighting the Helvetii in 58 and his organisation of boats to facilitate the two expeditions to Britain.²⁷⁷ Then there is his in-depth explanation of the design and measurements of the bridge built across the Rhine in 55; the structure from which Caesar launched his punitive raids against the nearby German tribes and by which the Roman troops returned safely.²⁷⁸ To emphasize the bridge's durability he even states how:

... other piles were fixed a little above the bridge, so that if the natives tried to demolish it by floating down tree-trunks or beams, these buffers would break the force of the impact and preserve the bridge from injury.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁵ Adcock 1956, 57-8.

²⁷⁶ For example, there was the publicity surrounding Colonel James Hickey, the officer who led the team which captured Saddam Hussein: *ABC 7 News*, December 15th 2003, <<http://abclocal.go.com/wls/story?section=News&id=944821>>, accessed 24th October 2007; the US news network ABC included in its story the fact that Colonel Hickey was the son of Irish immigrants who lived in the small Illinois town of Naperville; *CBS Evening News*, December 15th 2003, <www.cbsnews.com/elements/2003/12/14/iraq/videoarchive588429_0_3_page.shtml>, accessed 24th October 2007; CBS carried a live interview with the Colonel, at the end of which the news anchor said to Hickey "congratulations you're in the history books".

²⁷⁷ Caes. *B Gall.* 1.24: describes his careful positioning of his veteran and newly recruited legions; *B Gall.* 4.21 tells how Caesar in 55 summoned traders to gather intelligence about the geography of Britain and then how he gathered new ships alongside the fleet that had been employed against the Veneti the year before.

²⁷⁸ Caes. *B Gall.* 4.16-9.

²⁷⁹ Caes. *B Gall.* 4.17: "... aliae item supra pontem mediocri spatio, ut, si arborum trunci sive naves deiciendi operis causa essent a barbaris missae, his defensoribus earum rerum vis minueretur neu ponti nocerent".

Such details of preparation and forethought were included not only to provide eye-catching information, but also to present an image of a highly skilled and organized *imperator*, demonstrating the key virtue of *consilium* that all pre-eminent Roman commanders should possess.²⁸⁰ In his decisions and subsequent movements Caesar also frequently displays the virtue of *celeritas*, since it is through his rapid actions that he often seized the initiative and surprised the enemy.²⁸¹

In contrast to the detailed portrayal of his own and his troops' achievements, Caesar frequently downplays the actions of his legates by giving them a limited role within the narrative. As Welch states, with the exception of P. Crassus in Book 3, L. Cotta in Book 5, and T. Labienus in Books 5-7, Caesar's numerous officers are not given the warm praise that Caesar and his army receive. In Book 1, for instance, Labienus and Crassus are the only senior officers mentioned, although we know that there was at least one legate for each of the six legions involved in that year's engagements against the Helvetii and Ariovistus.²⁸² Cicero, in the *Pro Murena*, asserts that ambitious commanders were often not very generous towards their officers in their dispatches and this epistolary practice might have influenced Caesar's approach in both his *Commentaries*, particularly if he drew heavily on his dispatches, as Rambaud has argued.²⁸³ Caesar's approach was probably also influenced by the close political links that some of his legates had with his optimate rivals back in Rome.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ Rambaud 1953, 250-1; Cic. *Leg. Man.* 29; Cf. Section 3 of this chapter.

²⁸¹ Rambaud 1953, 251-4; Goldsworthy 1996b, 195; Caes. *B Gall.* 2.2-3, at the beginning of 57, having recently recruited two new legions in Nearer Gaul, portrays his aggressive move northwards against the Belgic tribes thus: "Caesar secured a supply of corn, struck camp, and moved out. After about a fortnight he had reached the borders of the Belgae. He arrived unexpectedly, and more quickly than anyone had foreseen".

²⁸² Welch 1996, 90-1; Caes. *B Gall.* 1.52, prior to fighting Ariovistus' force, states that he put five legates and a quaestor in charge of each of the six legions without actually naming any of these officers; Cf. Sec. 2; Nep. *Cato.* 2.3.4; for the similar approach in Cato's *Origines* in which the names of Roman leaders were omitted.

²⁸³ Rambaud 1953, 19-23; Cic. *Mur.* 20.

²⁸⁴ Labienus was the most notable example through his close association with Pompeius. Vell. Pat. 2.40.5; *MRR* 2.167-8; as tribune of the plebs in 63, Labienus initiated a bill with T. Ampius Balbus to allow Pompeius to wear the garb of a *triumphator* at public games.

On occasion, Caesar went further by rebuking his legates for certain setbacks. This is especially evident during the attacks on the wintering legions in late 54, which saw one newly recruited legion, commanded by Q. Sabinus and L. Cotta, ambushed and destroyed by the Eburones.²⁸⁵ Caesar's account places the blame for this disaster on Sabinus by highlighting the legate's hesitation, his lack of leadership and, above all, his rash decision to leave the legion's winter encampment, naively accepting the promise of safe conduct from the Eburones.²⁸⁶ Caesar doubtless realized that this major loss of Roman life could not be kept hidden from his audience back in Rome and Italy.²⁸⁷ As a result he deemed it best to detail the massacre, but in a way that focused on the critical decisions supposedly made by Sabinus during Caesar's absence so dissociating the *imperator* from the disaster.

The depiction of the Gauls and Germans was central to how Caesar promoted his achievements in *The Gallic War* and drew his readers' interest into the narrative. To start with, the numbers of barbarians faced by Caesar's army are frequently stated or implied to be considerable. After the defeat of the Helvetii near Bibracte in 58, Caesar mentions the convenient discovery of some tablets in the Helvetian camp that listed the census figures in Greek of the migrating Helvetii and their allies, all of whom totalled around 368,000, of which 92,000 were capable of bearing arms.²⁸⁸ He then mentions that another census was taken soon after indicating that only 110,000 returned home eastwards, so providing a rough idea of how many of these barbarians had been killed or captured.²⁸⁹ The census was a central feature of Roman civic life and hence a custom with which Caesar's Roman audience would

²⁸⁵ Caes. *B Gall.* 5.26-38.

²⁸⁶ Caes. *B Gall.* 5.29-37.

²⁸⁷ Caes. *B Gall.* 5.39-52; Cic. *Q Fr.* 2.13 & 16; 3.1, 3, 5, 6 & 8; Powell 1998, 115; Caesar's inability to prevent the news of the massacre reaching Rome is indicated by the presence of Quintus Cicero in the midst of the Gallic uprising, someone who was in frequent contact with his brother back in Rome.

²⁸⁸ Caes. *B Gall.* 1.29.1-2.

²⁸⁹ Caes. *B Gall.* 1.29.3.

have easily related.²⁹⁰ Furthermore, such enumeration of the enemy dead was common practice in the dispatches and speeches of Roman commanders, as well as in ancient historiography, because it specified the scale of the victory.²⁹¹

Another distinctive technique Caesar employed to describe his enemy was to state the high levels of *virtus* that many of the individual Gallic and German tribes possessed.²⁹² Prior to the Battle at the Sambre, of the three Belgic tribes who were going to make up the enemy host, Caesar describes the most formidable of them, the austere Nervii thus:

... they did not allow the import of wine and other luxury goods, because they believed such things enfeebled their spirit and weakened their courage. They were fierce men, and possessed great *virtus*, who condemned all other Belgae for surrendering to the Roman people and casting aside their ancestral *virtus* ...²⁹³

With the frequent and diverse use of *virtus* throughout the *Gallic War* to describe his numerous Gallic and Germanic opponents, Caesar was publicising the formidable nature of the opposition that his army was continuously facing.

The portrayal of the Gallic campaign over the seven books is also noteworthy, as it demonstrated the changing nature of the strategy supposedly employed by the Gallic tribes. In Books one to six Caesar describes how he attacked, raided and defeated many of the Gallic tribes in a piecemeal fashion; and that the brave and numerous Gauls were frequently

²⁹⁰ See Nicolet 1980, 60-65, for a description of the census; Brunt 1971, 13-14, provides the Roman census figures over the period of 508 BC – AD 14.

²⁹¹ See Chapter 2, Section 2 & Chapter 4, Section 2.

²⁹² Rawlings 1996, 177-82; Harris 2005, 465: “the majority of those surviving Roman writers who deal with military affairs seem to have some difficulty, or intense difficulty, in admitting the bravery of the enemy. Caesar and Tacitus were exceptions”.

²⁹³ Caes. *B Gall.* 2.15: “... nihil pati vini reliquarumque rerum ad luxuriam pertinentium inferri, quod his rebus relanguescere animos eorum et remitti virtutem existimarent; esse homines feros magnaue virtutis; increpitare atque incusare reliquos Belgas, qui se populo Romano dedidissent patriamque virtutem proiecissent ...”.

disorganized and displayed a lack of staying power in the face of Caesar's superior Roman tactics.²⁹⁴ This is in stark contrast to Book 7 with its lengthy narrative of the Vercingetorix campaign in which the Gauls were now more united, numerous and determined and, moreover, now drawing on advanced Roman-style tactics.²⁹⁵ For instance, they employed logistical warfare targeting Caesar's supplies; they entrenched camps for the first time; and they avoided engagements on ground favourable to the legions.²⁹⁶ As a result, the great Gallic revolt of 52 with its dramatic climax at Alesia appears even more impressive to the Roman audience, as Caesar had to overcome a more concentrated, better led and militarily sophisticated enemy.

Barlow highlights how the portrayal of the various barbarian leaders in *The Gallic War* created another dimension to Caesar's reputation. There are at least sixty individual leaders named in the seven books; most of whom have their warlike nature and political tendency described in one way or another.²⁹⁷ (This contrasts with the way he underplays the role of his lieutenants). Above all, Caesar subtly emphasized the *regnum*-seeking and aggressive nature of anti-Roman chieftains frequently as a means of contrast with the pro-Roman chieftains who are often depicted as moderate and loyal.²⁹⁸ This persistent pattern enabled Caesar to depict

²⁹⁴ Rawlings 1996, 176-7 & 180; Caes. *B Gall.* 3.19; after the defeat of the Venelli in 56 Caesar makes this generalisation: "for the Gallic temperament is ready and eager to start wars, but theirs minds are soft and lacking in determination when it comes to enduring defeats". Cf. Polyb. 2.19-31; Caesar's approach has similarities to the way Polybius portrays the Celts who threatened Rome in the third century BC.

²⁹⁵ Rawlings 1996, 180.

²⁹⁶ Caes. *B Gall.* 7.14, 16 & 55 on the efforts to restrict Caesar's supplies; 7.30 on the Gallic entrenchments; 7.35 & 51 on how Vercingetorix's forces avoided engagements on level ground.

²⁹⁷ Barlow 1996, 159-164, gives a table of all the Gallic and German leaders named in the eight books of *The Gallic War*, stating whether they were anti- or pro-Roman, and whether they were given any distinguishing traits or labels, such as *summa imperi* or *rex*.

²⁹⁸ Barlow 1996, 139, argues that: "Caesar subtly strengthens Rome's friends and devalues Rome's enemies through selection and slant of material, rather than through invention. Of Rome's friends, emphasis is placed on noble lineage, state organisation and structure; of Rome's enemies, on ignobility, stateless disorganisation and disarray". For example, Caes. *B Gall.* 1.3 & 19 where the warlike Aeduan leader Dumnorix, who desired *regnum*, is contrasted with his progressive brother Diviciacus, supposedly a loyal ally of Rome.

himself as a pro-active Roman governor who was honourably defending Rome's Gallic allies against warlike and self-serving chieftains like Dumnorix and Ariovistus.

Finally, there are the two extensive ethnographic digressions on Gallic and Germanic societies, alongside the frequent brief cultural sketches of certain tribes and their local geography, such as the details on the Nervii.²⁹⁹ Scholars have debated whether or not Caesar was heavily influenced by Posidonius' lost history, which included sections on the ethnology of the Gallic and Germanic peoples.³⁰⁰ Whatever the origins of this information, whether it was Posidonius, first-hand accounts, or other sources, these ethnographic details provided Caesar's audience with an idea of who he was fighting against as well as the nature of the environment in which they were operating. Furthermore, the northern Celtic tribes were one of Rome's most longstanding and fearsome enemies, who had threatened Rome through the centuries; this included the recent southern advances of the Teutoni and Cimbri in 102-1, an invasion mentioned by Caesar in Book 1.³⁰¹ Via such ethnographic information Caesar was creating an in-depth picture of the dreaded northern bogeymen that he and his army had overcome.

In analysing the ways Caesar presented his achievements in *The Gallic War* we have already touched on a number of his influences and motivations; some fundamental aspects still remain though. First of all, alongside other media such as monuments, speeches and dispatches, its main aim was to increase Caesar's military reputation in Rome to compete with his rivals, in particular the immense *auctoritas* of Pompeius.³⁰² Pompeius had established his military reputation in the Civil War of 83-81 BC, the Sertorian War in Spain and, above all,

²⁹⁹ Caes. *B Gall.* 6.11-28 is a digression from the main narrative in which the Gallic and Germanic societies are detailed and compared; 2.15 provides a brief account of the austere culture of the Nervii.

³⁰⁰ Tierney 1960, 189-275, maintains that Caesar was heavily influenced by Posidonius; Nash 1976, 111-26, challenges Tierney, arguing that Caesar was a valuable eyewitness for Gallic society.

³⁰¹ Williams 2001, 171-82: for the long-term origins and nature of this Roman fear of the Gauls; Caes. *B Gall.* 1.33 & 40.

³⁰² Welch 1996, 85-6.

through his campaign against the pirates and Mithridates. On top of his temples, triumphs, dispatches and speeches, Pompeius' achievements were also promoted in a history of his eastern campaigns by Theophanes of Mytilene.³⁰³ Although little is known of Theophanes' work, particularly its size and publication, it is highly possible that Caesar came into contact with it through his close political association and marriage alliance with Pompeius, and we know Theophanes returned with Pompeius after his eastern campaigns, becoming one of his trusted lieutenants.³⁰⁴ Through all these means of publicity Pompeius was Rome's most pre-eminent *imperator* in the 60s and 50s and the individual whom Caesar needed to challenge; and *The Gallic War* was one of the means in which he invested as part of this challenge.

Secondly, Caesar's political career and in particular his consulship of 59 produced a number of *inimici* who had actively challenged and criticised his policies, particularly his consular rival Bibulus and the younger Cato who held the tribunate that year.³⁰⁵ In addition, there was some criticism of the Gallic campaign, such as Cato's attack on Caesar's breach of faith when fighting Ariovistus in 58.³⁰⁶ Collins is right to argue that, barring Cato's action, there is little evidence of heavy political criticism of Caesar within the sources.³⁰⁷ However, he overlooks the fact that in the late Republic it was common for returning governors to be

³⁰³ Plin. *HN* 7.34 for the portico of the theatre temple complex of Venus Victrix, in which stood statues of the fourteen nations that Pompeius had conquered; Plut. *Pomp.* 14, 44-5; Cic. *Leg. Man.* 61; Vell. Pat. 2.30; Plin. *HN* 7.98; Pompeius celebrated three triumphs in 81, 71 & 61; see Chapter 4, Section 2, DS 78, 79, 82, 85, & 86: Pompeius sent at least five dispatches to the Senate concerning his military achievements, from Transalpine Gaul in 77, from Nearer Spain in 74, from Italy in 71, from Asia Minor in 63 and another from the east in 62; Cic. *Arch.* 24: Theophanes' work promoted Pompeius' achievements; *FGrH* 188 cites seven fragments or paraphrases to this work; Strabo 11.5.1; 12.3.28; Plut. *Pomp.* 37; at least three of which appear to detail Pompeius' eastern campaign.

³⁰⁴ Suet. *Iul.* 21, for the marriage alliance in April 59; Rawson 1985, 108-9; Gold 1985, 312-27, on the symbiotic relationship between Pompeius and Theophanes.

³⁰⁵ For example, Dio 38.6.1: both Bibulus and Cato actively challenged Caesar's proposed agrarian bill in 59 and this resulted in a riot.

³⁰⁶ Plut. *Cat. Min.* 51.1-5; Gelzer 1968, 131.

³⁰⁷ Collins 1972, 925

prosecuted.³⁰⁸ Caesar, moreover, had personal experience of the Roman law-courts, including his prosecution of the consular Cn. Cornelius Dolabella in 77 on a charge of *repetundae*.³⁰⁹ So he would have been conscious of mechanisms and impact of prosecutions. In writing *The Gallic War*, Caesar was challenging this potential threat in that he was consistently portraying himself as an active aggressive governor in the service of the people of Rome. The deliberate omission of the great wealth accrued during the Gallic campaign, through booty and the trading of slaves amongst other things, is also important.³¹⁰ On the one hand, this might simply be down to fact that it was deemed unseemly to mention, let alone promote, the financial benefits that stemmed from holding magisterial office. (This omission contrasts markedly with the customary display of wealth at Roman triumphs).³¹¹ On the other hand, Caesar could be deliberately playing down the financial gains not only to enhance his selfless devotion to the state, but also to make himself a less enticing target for a prosecution.³¹²

A final fundamental reason for composing this work was posterity. These *Commentaries* were a more detailed means of preserving military achievements than speeches or dispatches. Cicero's much-quoted description in the *Brutus* needs re-iterating:

³⁰⁸ C. Verres in 70, M. Fonteius in 70 or 69, L. Valerius Flaccus in 59 and M. Aemilius Scaurus in 54 to name a few.

³⁰⁹ Suet. *Iul.* 4.1; Gelzer 1968, 22-3; *MRR* 2.80; Cn. Cornelius Dolabella was proconsul to Cilicia for 80-78.

³¹⁰ Collins 1972, 938, calls this omission "that great silence of the 'Bellum Gallicum': almost nothing is said of that tremendous flow of wealth that Caesar scooped from Gaul". Catull. 29.1-4 & 23-4 alludes to this great wealth, when mocking Mamurra, Caesar's *praefectus fabrum* in Gaul, about the wealth that Mamurra had gained during the Gallic campaign through enslavements and other booty; Cf. Churchill 1999, 114.

³¹¹ Plut. *Aem.* 32-5; *Pomp.* 45; & *Caes.* 55; this practice is demonstrated by the ostentatious triumph of Paullus in 167, of Pompeius in 62 and of Caesar himself in 46. The material carried in the triumph, though, belonged to *res publica* and not the general.

³¹² Collins 1972, 939, argues that promotion of Caesar's achievements without mention of accrued wealth was more a case of distracting his audience: "the method by which this was accomplished was to present in such powerful and appealing form the deeds of glory and empire-building that no-one would notice the incidental profits".

They are indeed praiseworthy; they are like nude statues, upright and full of charm, stripped of all the clothing of rhetorical ornament ... for in history there is nothing more pleasing than clear and brilliant brevity.³¹³

As long as Cicero was being sincere here, it seems that he found them a pleasure to read. Caesar demonstrated throughout his life that he was an experienced and skilful man of letters with keen interests in poetry, grammar, rhetoric as well as history, and like Cicero and Horace he was doubtless aware of the potential longevity of literary works.³¹⁴ Thus, we should see Caesar not only being concerned with his current potential audience in Rome, but also with providing a high-quality piece of literature for later generations.

The Civil War

A number of the key means of self-promotion within *The Gallic War* are re-employed in *The Civil War*. The narrative again centres on the personality of Caesar, as he frequently displays his *virtus* and *celeritas* as well as his *industria* during specific operations. Furthermore, the collective and individual *virtus* of his troops often comes to the fore. He again downplays his legates' successes, employing them more often as scapegoats for major setbacks, as exemplified by his portrayal of Curio's downfall in Africa.³¹⁵

The key difference between *The Gallic War* and *The Civil War* was its aim to portray Caesar not as a pre-eminent conqueror of Rome's barbarian enemies, but as a loyal

³¹³ Cic. *Brut.* 262: "nudi enim sunt, recti et venusti, omni ornatu orationis tamquam veste detracta ... nihil est enim in historia pura et inlustri brevitate dulcius".

³¹⁴ Suet. *Iul.* 55-56: lists a number of Caesar's literary compositions, including a grammatical work on the theory of analogy and his invective against the younger Cato; Rawson 1985, 109-114, for a survey of Caesar's intellectual pursuits and associates; Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.6, when asking Lucceius to include Cicero's consular achievements in his current history, the orator states: "nor am I myself so foolish as to ask any author to immortalise my name in glory but one who in so doing will gain glory for his own genius"; Hor. *Carm.* 3.30, about his poetry: "I have carved out a monument more lasting than bronze".

³¹⁵ Carter 1991, 20; Caes. *B Civ.* 2.23-44.

commander of the Roman people defending the state against a group of self-serving, violent and incompetent oligarchs. In pursuing this goal, he consistently denigrates the motives and actions of the Pompeian leaders with the exception of Pompeius.³¹⁶ Sometimes this invective involved allegations of excessive violence, including the execution of Caesarian prisoners.³¹⁷ For example, T. Labienus at Dyrrachium in 48 treated some captured Caesarian troops thus:

Labienus succeeded in getting Pompeius to order the prisoners to be handed over to him, and apparently in order to make a show and create more confidence in himself, deserter that he was, when they had all been brought forward he addressed them as “fellow soldiers”, asked them in the most insulting fashion whether veteran soldiers usually ran away, and publicly put them to death.³¹⁸

Such violence was within the bounds of customary behaviour by Roman commanders, particularly if they viewed the prisoners as rebels or deserters, as they frequently did during Roman civil wars. However, if we take into account the Roman audience for these *Commentaries*, people who viewed civil war with profound concern, then Caesar was cleverly playing on their worst fears.³¹⁹ Throughout *The Civil War* Caesar reports various acts of unbridled violence by his opponents, such as when King Juba slaughtered the remainder of Curio’s men following their surrender, and when Bibulus killed the sailors of some Caesarian

³¹⁶ Rambaud 1953, 344-8.

³¹⁷ Collins 1972, 950-2: lists the numerous incidents of reported cruelty, terrorism and atrocities by the Pompeians, a number of which involve the execution of Caesarian troops; Caes. *B Civ.* 1.72.2; 2.18; 2.44.2; 3.8.3; 3.14.3; 3.19.7; 3.28.4; 3.31-3; 3.71.4.

³¹⁸ Caes. *B Civ.* 3.71: “at Labienus, cum ab eo impetravisset, ut sibi captivos tradi iuberet, omnes productos ostentationis, ut videbatur, causa, quo maior perfugae fides haberetur, commilitones appellans et magna verborum contumelia interrogans, solerentne veterani milites fugere, in omnium conspectu interfecit”.

³¹⁹ Collins, 1972, 933, points out that the horrors of internecine strife were a prominent theme in the Roman literature which depicted civil conflicts. This is exemplified by Lucan’s *Pharsalia*, where the protagonists are frequently depicted in an extremely bad light through their violent attacks on fellow citizens; Lucan 4.169-253 for a lengthy and melodramatic treatment of M. Petreius’ massacre of Caesarian soldiers in 49, who had fraternized with their Pompeian colleagues in Spain.

transport vessels which he captured in the Adriatic.³²⁰ Through such actions Caesar was continually playing on these fears of internecine strife. Another reason for this emphasis on his opponents' use of unbridled violence was that it sharply contrasted with Caesar's acts of *clementia* and *lenitas*. Furthermore, by *excluding* his side's excessive employment of violence, he was portraying the Caesarians as reluctant participants in civil war. Caesar cites notable acts of his moderation, like his sparing of Massilia from being sacked by his troops, and also his release of captured Pompeian leaders, like L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, one of his bitterest critics, following the surrender of Corfinium.³²¹ By constantly adopting and promoting this moderate conciliatory behaviour Caesar hoped to avoid the highly negative stigma that previous civil war commanders had received, especially Sulla.³²² Caesar, moreover, might have been playing on people's fears that the Pompeians, upon winning, would implement a proscription.³²³ Collins, however, points out that Caesar avoids actually using the word *clementia* in *The Civil War* suggesting that in the period of writing Caesar was conscious that such a virtue was associated with monarchy and through its omission he hoped "to stay inside the republican tradition of equality".³²⁴

As well as such descriptions of unbridled violence, Caesar blackened his republican opponents through other assertions. Sometimes he portrays them as cowardly and disloyal to their troops. L. Domitius Ahenobarbus is said to have betrayed his men at Corfinium and then later deserted the Massiliots before the final fall of their town.³²⁵ On some occasions the

³²⁰ Caes. *B Civ.* 2.44.2 & 3.8.3.

³²¹ Caes. *B Civ.* 2.12-4 & 22: "... Caesar spared them [the Massiliots], more in accordance with the fame and antiquity of their state than with what they deserved of himself and he left two legions there as a garrison"; *B Civ.* 1.23 for the release of Domitius.

³²² Cic. *Off.* 2.27: compares Sulla's "dishonourable victory" with Caesar's, saying that the latter's "victory was still more despicable".

³²³ Cic. *Att.* 9.6.7; 9.7.4; 9.10.3-6; indicates his fear of violent reprisals, going so far to say in March 49 that "he [Pompeius] has been hankering after Sulla and proscriptions all that while".

³²⁴ Collins 1972, 960.

³²⁵ Caes. *B Civ.* 1.20 & 2.22; Collins 1972, 954.

Pompeian leaders are seen as self-serving and greedy, as illustrated by the famous description of when, prior to Pharsalus, a number of them quarrelled over who should receive Caesar's property and offices like that of *pontifex maximus*.³²⁶ One of the most detailed denigrations was of Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio, the proconsul of Syria. Caesar not only states that Scipio made excessive and illicit exactions from his province, but also that he removed his legions and cavalry from Syria when the Parthians were an active threat to the east, thus making Scipio appear negligent about the security of the *res publica* as well as rapacious.³²⁷

In light of all these denigrations, Collins highlights the way in which Caesar targeted his opponents.

... as with all successful propaganda, these charges were built on a solid foundation of truth. Caesar could never have blackened his opponents so thoroughly had they not been pretty well smudged already. Most of what he tells us is confirmed or made plausible by the independent evidence of Cicero and by the non-Caesarian material of the secondary tradition.³²⁸

For example, Cicero tells us of the arguments amongst the Pompeian leaders prior to Pharsalus.³²⁹ Hence, what Caesar was doing was cleverly playing on what people knew of these individuals' behaviour and character traits; he achieved this, above all, by artfully grouping and selecting the facts together with the employment of loaded words or expressions. This skill was a product of someone experienced in the culture of invective frequently

³²⁶ Caes. *B Civ.* 3.82-3.

³²⁷ Caes. *B Civ.* 3.31.

³²⁸ Collins, 1972, 946.

³²⁹ Cic. *Att.* 11.6.9.

employed against Roman commanders whereby their official and personal behaviour away from the battlefield frequently provided their rivals with effective means of denigration.³³⁰

The one opponent not pilloried in *The Civil War* was Pompeius; on occasion, Caesar praises his prudent generalship.³³¹ Collins suggests the main reason for this generally respectful approach was that Caesar did not want to alienate Pompeius' wide body of clients in Rome, Italy and possibly further afield.³³² In addition, owing to his many military and civic achievements, many people in Rome and Italy, not simply his clients, viewed Pompeius with considerable affection and esteem; so by placing the blame for the civil war squarely on the shoulders of other republican leaders, Caesar was carefully trying to maintain the fond and respected memory of this great *imperator*, who had once been his ally.³³³ In so doing he was perhaps also downplaying the idea that the war was a showdown between two dynasts.

A number of other fundamental reasons for *The Civil War* still need addressing. First of all, it was intended as a careful apologia that justified Caesar's recent military and political actions. Above all, Caesar was very aware of the potential negative stigma that might derive from his march into Italy which sparked the Civil War. This is famously illustrated by Cicero in January 49 when he compares Caesar's advance into Italy to that of Hannibal.³³⁴ In a letter to his close associates Balbus and Oppius in March 49 Caesar openly indicates this concern when he expresses his intention not to be compared with another commander who had marched on Rome.

³³⁰ See Chapter 3.

³³¹ Collins 1972, 954; Caes. *B Civ.* 1.19.3 & 3.44-5; Rambaud 1953, 352-8; Caes. *B Civ.* 1.24; Caesar does, however, include a few minor criticisms of his great rival, including the assertion that Pompeius was arming slaves as part of his recruitment drive in Italy in 49.

³³² Collins 1972, 955.

³³³ Rambaud 1953, 353.

³³⁴ Cic. *Att.* 7.11.1: "Are we talking about an *imperator* of the Roman people or about Hannibal?"

Let us see if by moderation we can win all hearts and secure a lasting victory, since by cruelty others have been unable to escape hatred or to make their victories endure, except for Lucius Sulla – whom I do not propose to imitate.³³⁵

Sulla's actions, particularly the proscriptions, were very prominent in the minds of the Roman elite in 49 and Caesar was keen to avoid such a legacy and create a more conciliatory and constructive ethos. As argued earlier, part of his strategy was to shift the fear of excessive violence and turmoil from himself to his opponents.

Linked to his awareness was his concern, as in *The Gallic War*, for posterity. Caesar wanted to leave behind a detailed record of his achievements in these critical times, not only for the people of Rome and Italy, but also for future generations. Again we have to consider the context in which Caesar was writing, in that he was on campaign and in the current intellectual climate he probably saw the *Commentaries* as an innovative means of expressing his recent pre-eminent achievements, a work that might be later circulated within Roman literary circles.

One last point concerns the use, or rather lack of use, of dispatches to the Senate from Caesar in this period which reported the civil war engagements.³³⁶ On the lack of official news about Pharsalus Cassius Dio states: “for Caesar sent no dispatch to the government, hesitating to appear to rejoice publicly over such a victory, for which reason also he celebrated

³³⁵ Cic. *Att.* 9.7C: “temptemus hoc modo si possimus omnium voluntates recipere et diuturna victoria uti, quoniam reliqui crudelitate odium effugere non potuerunt neque victoriam diutius tenere praeter unum L. Sullam quem imitaturus non sum”.

³³⁶ Cic. *Phil.* 23; Caesar was still sending letters to the Senate about his other campaigns during this period: DS 103 on the situation in Egypt and DS 104 on his defeat of King Pharnaces of Pontus; Plut. *Caes.* 50.3; Gelzer 1968, 260; this later success also resulted in the famous lines “veni, vidi, vici” in a private letter to Gaius Matius in Rome. See Table 3 in Chapter 4, Section 2.

no triumph”.³³⁷ Though Dio is writing with hindsight, this is still a significant point. Civil War victors like Caesar and Octavian were averse to celebrating the defeat of their fellow citizens, instead frequently emphasising their successes against Rome’s external foes.³³⁸ If this is correct and Caesar was not sending back dispatches concerning Pharsalus and Thapsus, maybe he saw the composition of a justificatory apologia as an alternative means of expressing the customary urge whereby Roman *imperatores* recorded and monumentalized their current military achievements.

Conclusion to Caesar’s *Commentaries*

In *The Gallic War* Caesar’s martial ethos is that of a constantly active and decisive *imperator*, leading and inspiring his men to display their *virtus* both collectively and individually. Caesar’s ethnographic observations and digressions give this ethos a depth and a distinctive identity by providing a rich exotic picture of the environment and opposition that he and his men had endured and overcome. *The Gallic War* was an extension of the traditional forms of publicity, particularly dispatches, as Caesar looked to an alternative and more substantial means to challenge the immense *auctoritas* of Pompeius and also counter any potential and forensic attacks that he might face back in Rome. In *The Civil War*, Caesar constructs a different type of image, that of a Roman commander loyally defending the *res publica* against a number of self-serving and brutal oligarchs. By carefully selecting and embellishing events, he adds a strong sense of credibility to this Caesarian perception of the conflict. Caesar’s inability to send dispatches to the Senate reporting his civil war successes perhaps played an influential part in his decision to compose this piece of apologia.

³³⁷ Dio 42.18.1: οὐτε γὰρ ὁ Καῖσαρ τῷ κοινῷ τι ἐπέστειλεν, ὀκνήσας δημοσίᾳ χαίρων ἐπιτοιαύτη νίκη φανῆναι (διόπερ οὐδὲ ἐπινίκια αὐτῆς ἔπεμψε).

³³⁸ App. *BC* 2.101 makes the point that in the four triumphs of 46 Caesar took care not to inscribe any Roman names on the placards in his triumphal procession.

5. Conclusion

During the late Republic a select number of commanders looked to autobiographical and historical literature as an alternative means of publicising, justifying and monumentalizing their various achievements. Yet in searching for common traits, links and influences amongst these works, what stands out are the individual circumstances and specific approach that each of these *imperatores* seems to take. The *novus homo* status of the Elder Cato and the recently undistinguished ancestry of Scaurus, were doubtless major reasons behind why they looked to this new way of distinguishing themselves in order to challenge the better known and more established aristocrats with whom they were competing.³³⁹ In addition, though we have no direct evidence of these men having read or heard of each other's compositions, the fact that all of them were *literati*, i.e. educated, skilled and dedicated to the practice of literature and rhetoric, suggests that there is a high probability of cross-pollination between these leaders about the ideas and benefits that these detailed autobiographical narratives could espouse; such as in-depth accounts of portents and dreams as a means of explaining their success and actions; or how descriptions of topography, military structures, troop deployments or casualties informed their audiences that they were masters of detail. Furthermore, as argued by May, *ethos* (character) was a central feature of late Republican oratory and in a similar way these autobiographical works, as exemplified by Sulla's *Memoirs* and Caesar's *Commentaries*, were about projecting and establishing a distinctive and memorable martial *ethos*.³⁴⁰ Finally, the late Republic was a highly competitive society where *imperatores* had a strong desire to present their military achievements; in this period when a series of individuals were attaining unprecedented military success, it was those commanders of a more literary persuasion who saw these works as an effective means by which they could challenge and even attack their

³³⁹ Lewis 1991, 660.

³⁴⁰ May 1988, 6.

rivals' *auctoritas* and at the same time act as a proficient conduit by which their own *res gestae* could reach both contemporary and future audiences.

6. General Conclusions

War is among the most horrific of activities pursued by mankind. Under the cloak of military splendour and the prospect of glory, war is cruel, bloody and destructive. Its reporting, however, makes brilliant news: it offers excitement, anxiety and horror and sometimes exultation or despair. The manner in which the news of war has reached its audiences has evolved remarkably over the past 150 years.¹

Hudson and Stainer in their study *War and the Media: a Random Spotlight* make a number of other insightful observations about war reporting. They highlight how modern telecommunications and an independent media have caused armed forces and governments to become acutely conscious of how overseas military actions can be speedily reported to audiences back home; and then how these state institutions in turn have responded with their own communication strategies.² The nature and role of war reporting has fascinated me from an early age, with Brian Hanrahan's BBC communiqués from the British task-force sailing to the Falklands Islands in 1981, when I was eight, still strong in the memory.³ Modern approaches and concerns about information manipulation have undoubtedly influenced this study, although I have of course been conscious of the need to differentiate between today's

¹ Hudson & Stainer 1997, xi-xii.

² Hudson & Stainer 1997, 112, for example in a chapter on the impact of the news media during the Korean and Vietnamese conflicts, when citing the memoirs of Colin Powell, the future US general and Secretary of State, highlight the direct impact of modern telecommunications; Powell 1995, 122, as a major in early 1968 Powell had recently returned from Vietnam, and makes a telling comment about the Tet offensive: "the morning of February 1st 1968 I came out of my bedroom, put on the coffee pot and turned on the news. I was stunned. There on the screen were American GIs fighting on the grounds of the US embassy and ARVN (South Vietnamese) forces battling for the Presidential Palace in the heart of Saigon".

³ <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1901958.stm>>, accessed 4th December 2007.

practices and resources and those of Republican Rome.⁴ Like Riepl's thorough study of ancient news and communications, which predominately deals with the Roman Empire, and Lewis's work on the role and impact of news in Greek society, this thesis adds to the increasingly sophisticated picture of how and why information was transmitted and received in the Graeco-Roman World.⁵

One of the fundamental contentions of this thesis is that, whilst accepting the central role of the ceremony of the triumph and the construction of monuments in the transmission of military achievements in Republican Rome, the collated evidence and the associated analyses indicate that *imperatores* employed ephemeral, yet effective, publicity mechanisms – speeches and letters – to communicate their deeds during our period of 219-19 BC. This period also saw a number of developments in regard to these two mechanisms, most notably the passing of legislation which entailed specific requirements for those magistrates claiming triumphs. As a consequence, one hopes in future works, particularly those on generalship and imperialism during the Roman Republic, that speeches and, above all, letters are not dismissed as inconsequential mechanisms, but accepted as integral parts of the spectrum of publicity strategies that *imperatores* employed to establish and maintain their military records; and in so doing add to the multi-faceted picture of not only why the Romans went to war, as North and Rich have argued in the wake of Harris' model of Roman imperialism, but also of how the fruits of victory impacted on Roman society.⁶

⁴ For instance, there is a marked difference in the speed of communications in the ancient and modern eras: in the former period victorious dispatches carried say by legates or couriers took days to reach Rome, whilst with today's satellite communications presidents and prime ministers can be informed in moments about a completed military operation.

⁵ Riepl 1913, *Das Nachrichtenwesen des Altertums (mit besondere Rücksicht auf die Römer)*, Leipzig; Lewis 1996, *News and Society in the Greek Polis*, London: Duckworth.

⁶ Harris, 1985, 9-130; North 1980, 1-9; Rich, 1993, 44-66. Crawford 1992, 70-106, looks at the consequences of Empire for the *res publica*.

The other distinctive phenomenon highlighted in this study is how *imperatores* frequently received criticisms from their rivals, sometimes directly through oral invective and then, on occasion, by more subtle indirect criticisms, such as the circulation of rumours. (Although briefly touched on, the role of letters as a means of criticism needs further investigation, particularly during the late Republic when a number of private letters denigrated leading commanders). These oral criticisms often involved allegations of perfidious and corrupt behaviour by individual commanders outside the context of the battlefield, behaviour that created images not of skilled generalship, large enemy body counts, courageous disciplined Roman troops or of captured enemy leaders, but of self-serving individuals whose actions harmed Rome's military prestige and her capability to defend her dominions.

Overall, we should see these criticisms, which occurred both during and after campaigns as well as in different political and forensic contexts, as a significant element in the self-regulatory nature of the competitive Roman elite. What is more, we should recognise them as a significant factor in the breakdown of this elite consensus in the late Republic, as denigration, or the threat of it, caused pre-eminent *imperatores*, like Sulla, Pompeius, and Caesar, to defend their *auctoritas* and threaten the Senate with some of the very mechanisms by which they had attained their military reputations. There was a complex relationship between the promotion and denigration of military achievements as one frequently fed off the other. This is demonstrated by the rise of the *quaestiones* in the late Republic, whereby a defendant's military record could become part of both the prosecution and defence speeches as both prosecutors and advocates attempted to plant credible aspects of the defendant's character in the minds of the jury. From a broader perspective, these oral criticisms of *imperatores* were a significant driving factor in the epistolary and rhetorical strategies employed when disseminating recent military achievements; however, it must not be forgotten that there were

other factors influencing these publicity mechanisms, such as the literary proclivities and the actual military ability of each individual commander.

The rise and role of autobiographical prose within the spectrum of available strategies was analysed in chapter five. Although it is a mechanism that has received considerable scholarly attention, this thesis highlighted the unique nature of the intellectual climate, particularly during the late Republic, which influenced a number of leading *imperatores* to produce these works which partly and, on occasion, wholly celebrated and monumentalized their military *res gestae*. As well as providing detailed accounts of these achievements, autobiographical works were also seen as an effective means of countering potential criticisms and, above all, of denigrating and thus undermining their rivals' military reputations.

A number of additional avenues of research were explored during the writing of this thesis, but they have not been included primarily for reasons of space and time. The area most worthy of further attention is the role of literary 'publicists'.⁷ These 'publicists' were the poets and historians who, prior to the Augustan period, produced works that partly or wholly praised the contemporary achievements of certain commanders; and they and their related *imperator* are listed in appendix A. As well as the nature of the material, whether it was celebratory verse, a *fabula praetexta*, or a history of a campaign, the benefits and difficulties of the commander-publicist relationship are also potential areas for investigation.⁸ A number of these poets and historians, for instance, received citizenship and other privileges which

⁷ Rawson 1985, 108, occasionally employs the term 'publicist' to describe these individuals; 'publicist' is employed here reluctantly for want of a better word; Hall 1998b, 23-4; this line of inquiry was partly inspired by the following comment made by Hall when discussing Rome's encounter with Greek culture during the Republic: "already in the second century Romans had helped themselves to large dollops of Greek rhetoric and philosophy, and in the first, we find numerous Greeks, often of libertine status, as private tutors, mentors, literary agents or political advisers, 'ghost-writers', or 'spin-doctors' in the personal entourages of ambitious and politically active Romans".

⁸ Wiseman 1982, 33; Hillard 1987, 37-41; White 1993, 66-7 & 80; for research on the poets who wrote laudatory works for Roman *imperatores*; Flower 1995, 170-190; Manuwald 2001, 53-236; investigate the *fabulae praetextae* of the middle Republic; Yarrow 2006, *Historiography at the end of the Roman Republic: Provincial Perspectives on Roman Rule*, provides invaluable research into those historians who had relationships with certain Roman *imperatores*, most notably Theophanes of Mytilene.

improved their social status, and *imperatores* could draw on the non-literary skills that these individuals frequently possessed.⁹ On the other hand, the commander might be criticised for including such individuals (many of whom were not of Roman origin) in his entourage, and then a poet or historian's reputation, owing to the active culture of literary criticism in Rome, might have suffered with the composition of a laudatory work.¹⁰ Overall, an analysis of these individuals, their works and the relationships with their military patrons would further develop the argument that there was a spectrum of sophisticated publicity media by which martial endeavours were being communicated and monumentalized back in Rome during the middle and late Republic.

Another potential area of research, which would further demonstrate the range of media available to Roman *imperatores*, would be a thematic analysis of how coins promoted contemporaneous military achievements during our period. As pointed out in the introduction, coin iconography and their accompanying legends created distinctive messages about the past and ongoing exploits of individual Roman commanders and such an investigation would intersect with the studies on how abstract and divine virtues were expressed through coins.¹¹

The numerous temples, columns and other triumphal monuments on the skyline of Rome were the permanent large-scale representations of these commanders' military victories; and the ceremony of the triumph was arguably the ultimate opportunity for an aristocrat to display his individual martial prowess to the Roman community. Yet these structures and ceremonies were only *part* of a complex spectrum of publicity media employed by *imperatores* and their

⁹ *FGrH* 188, Theophanes of Mytilene; Cic. *Arch.* 24; Yarrow 2006, 47; Theophanes, for example, as well as writing a history in Greek on Pompeius' Eastern campaigns, was also awarded Roman citizenship by his patron doubtless for a variety of literary, political and military services.

¹⁰ Cic. *Tusc.* 1.2.1; M. Fulvius Nobilior was criticised by the Elder Cato for taking the poet Q. Ennius on his Ambracian campaign.

¹¹ Hölscher 1982, 271-2; Clark 2007, 147-158.

associates, and the ways in which these media were exploited still resonate with the communication practices of today's military and political leaders.

Appendix Historians and poets and their military patrons

Historians

Polybius of Megalopolis (c.200-c.118 BC)
 Posidonius of Apamea (c.135-c.51)
 Theophanes of Mytilene (c.90 BC-c.45)
 L. Voltacilius Plotus (early to mid 1st century BC?)

Imperator

P. Aemilianus Scipio
 Cn. Pompeius Magnus
 Cn. Pompeius Magnus
 Cn. Pompeius Magnus

Poets

Q. Ennius (239-169 BC)
 L. Accius (170-c.86)
 Hostius (mid 2nd century BC?)
 A. Licinius Archias (c.120s -mid 1st century?)
 M. Tullius Cicero (106 - 43)
 M. Furius Bibaculus (103 - mid 1st century?)
 P. Terentius Varro Atacinus (82 - mid 1st century?)
 Boethus of Tarsus (mid 1st century BC?)

M. Fulvius Nobilior
 D. Brutus Callaecus
 C. Sempronius Tuditanus
 L. Licinius Lucullus
 C. Iulius Caesar
 C. Iulius Caesar
 C. Iulius Caesar
 M. Antonius

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