ROMANS ON PARADE: REPRESENTATIONS OF ROMANNESS IN THE TRIUMPH

DISSERTATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

We find in the Roman triumph one of the most dazzling examples of the theme of spectacle in Roman culture. The triumph, though, was much more than a parade thrown in honor of a conquering general. Nearly every aspect of this tribute has the feel of theatricality. Even the fact that it was not voluntarily bestowed upon a general has characteristics of a spectacle. One must work to present oneself as worthy of a triumph in order to gain one; military victories alone are not enough. Looking at the machinations behind being granted a triumph may possibly lead to a better understanding of how important self-representation was to the Romans.

The triumph itself is, quite obviously, a spectacle. However, within the triumph, smaller and more intricate spectacles are staged. The Roman audience, the captured people and spoils, and the triumphant general himself are all intermeshed into a complex web of spectacle and spectator. Not only is the triumph itself a spectacle of a victorious general, but it also contains sub-spectacles, which, when analyzed, may give us clues as to how the Romans looked upon non-Romans and, in turn, how they saw themselves in relation to others.
If the question at hand is one of Roman representation, then the sources for our information on triumphs become a further complication. We must consider the motivations of the authors who describe triumphs and configure them into the equation. Whether or not the author is representing the Romans in a particular way through his descriptions must be taken into account when one tries to figure out how the Romans were representing themselves and others. Although the sources of our knowledge of triumphs may cause further complications to that same knowledge, they also make the task at hand infinitely more interesting and worthy of pursuit.

Because the triumph brings out so many intricate ideas and questions about the Romans, by analyzing both the specific primary texts and the idea of the triumph in general, we can better appreciate the cultural logic of what it means to be Roman as it is negotiated within the triumph.
To Susie
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In the most basic sense, the Roman triumph was a military parade that celebrated the victory of a Roman general. Plutarch tells us that Romulus celebrated the first triumph by marching to the Capitoline with the spoils of a conquered enemy king, and this ushered in a tradition that lasted, in fact, longer than the Roman empire itself, and well into the reign of the Catholic church. The procession consisted of the spoils of battle taken from the defeated enemy, including armor and weapons, and sometimes even sculpture and other artwork taken from the captured cities. The captured enemies themselves were also led in the parade; enemy kings, leaders, and generals were particularly coveted as part of the triumphal spectacle. Following the captives came the triumphing general himself, riding in a chariot, wearing the clothes of a triumphator, and accompanied by a slave, who held a wreath over the general’s head and reminded him of his mortality. The general’s army marched behind him, singing songs and making jokes at their leader’s expense. The whole procession made its way through the streets of

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1 Plutarch *Life of Romulus* 16

2 See Payne (1962) p. 211ff. Cf. Miller (2001), who extends the life of the triumph well into the British Empire by claiming that England appropriated the idea of the triumph for their own purposes. For the triumph as it existed in imperial times, see Barini (1952), Hickson (1991), and Miller (2000).
Rome and up the Capitoline hill, where sacrifices and vows were made to Jupiter.\(^3\) However, this parade was not just a religious rite, a ceremony in honor of Jupiter. Indeed, at least by the time of the middle-to-late Republic, the triumph was much more important as a social and political spectacle than as a sacred ritual. In fact, the triumph was the social and political spectacle of the Republic, and every Roman with any political ambition at all wanted to play the part of the triumphator.

As one might expect, this event, which was such an integral and important part of the Roman world,\(^4\) has received a fair amount of scholarly interest over the years. However, much about the triumph is as yet unknown, and probably never will be. For well over a century, scholars have puzzled and argued over the details and origins of the triumph.\(^5\) For example, near the turn of the century, two articles appeared in the same journal issue, both stating differing opinions on the triumph: R. Laqueur argued that the

\[3\] For a comprehensive survey of sources for the elemental details of the triumphal ceremony, see Versnel (1970) especially p. 56ff.

\[4\] Versnel (1970) p. 1: “According to Orosius no fewer than 320 triumphs were celebrated during the period between the founding of Rome and the reign of Vespasian. Nor was this all; also in subsequent years triumphs were held, be it at increasingly long intervals, until the last official triumph known to us. The entire history of Rome has thus been marked by a ceremony which testified to the power of Rome, its mission of conquest and domination, and to the courage of its soldiers.”

triumph and the *supplicatio* are in fact one and the same, and, just a few pages away, G. Beseler claimed that his colleague was completely wrong, arguing that the triumph is a secular event, whereas the *supplicatio* is sacred.\(^6\)

Other aspects of the triumph have been approached in much the same way; various explanations have been put forth and argued for or against by different scholarly camps, and agreement is rare. One of the triumphal details that scholars have discussed repeatedly is the meaning and origin of the word ‘*triumphus*’ itself. Some believe both the name and the ceremony originated with the Etruscans, while still others argue that they are derived from a Greek ceremony.\(^7\) Perhaps even more scholarly ink has been spilled over the problem of the triumphator’s costume. Some believe that the triumphing general was meant to represent Jupiter, while others say that the costume, and the general wearing it, is meant to recall the past Roman/Italian kings.\(^8\) Still others have been concerned with the triumphal route and the existence of the *porta triumphalis*, and, again, differing opinions abound.\(^9\)

For decades, scholarship on the triumph occurred in this form: one particular aspect of the triumph was engaged and various explanations were put forth. Then, nearly

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\(^7\) For a discussion of a Greek origin of the triumph, see, for example, Wallisch (1955). For the Etruscan argument, see Fowler (1916). For a survey of arguments for both positions, see Versnel (1970) p. 11ff.

\(^8\) For triumphator-as-Jupiter, see Strong (1915) p. 64ff; for an argument against this theory, see Fowler (1916) p. 153-157; for triumphator-as-king, see Jones (1912) p. 195, and Greenidge (1930) p. 44-45; for an overview of both arguments, see Deubner (1934), and Versnel (1970)p. 56ff. Versnel, after reviewing the history of the question, poses his own theory: the general was both Jupiter and *rex* during the triumph.

\(^9\) See, for example, Makin (1921) p. 25-33. Again, for a survey of the argument, see Versnel (1970) p. 132ff.
a decade apart, two works were published that approached the discussion of the triumph in a new way: both, although through very different methods, take a view of the triumph with the idea of surveying it in a more general and holistic way. In 1970, H.S. Versnel published *Triumphus: An Inquiry into the Origin, Development, and Meaning of the Roman Triumph*.\(^{10}\) For the first time, someone attempted the task of bringing together previous arguments on the assortment of triumphal aspects, and put forth his own theories, which, as Versnel claims, rely on all aspects of the triumph together, instead of trying to explain just one isolated detail:

> It was not before the end of the nineteenth century that questions were raised as to the nature and meaning of the triumph, and in the course of years many theories have been put forward without any agreement having been reached on the main issues. When, however, the existing theories are surveyed, one thing stands out: practically without exception they deal with only one aspect of the triumph, but often pretend that this particular aspect discloses the essential character of the ceremony.\(^{11}\)

Versnel plays the role of compiler and mediator, listing the arguments for each question and then coming up with an explanation that takes all the previous ones into account. Then, again, he does something that no one else had yet attempted: he presents a theory not just on the meaning of one detail of the procession, but on the meaning of the triumph as a whole. Versnel’s claim, in short, is that the Roman triumph was related to the New Year Festival; its purpose was to celebrate the return of a victor, who was the bearer of good fortune and brought blessings into the city with him.\(^{12}\)

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\(^{10}\) For a review of Versnel’s work, see Musti (1972).

\(^{11}\) Versnel (1970) p. 2

Versnel takes a step further toward an understanding of the meaning of the triumph by synthesizing all the prior discussions and arguments and then analyzing the whole ceremony in order to figure out what the triumph meant to the Romans. As big a step as this was, and as helpful and important as Versnel’s work still is to those interested in the technical workings of the triumph, he nevertheless falls short of the ultimate goal, that is to say, he fails to grasp what the triumph truly meant to the Romans. Versnel investigates the religious and mystical elements of the triumph; he explores the religious meanings of the procession. But the triumph was more than just a religious ritual for the Romans, and Versnel, in his efforts to cover all the bases, neglects to address the fact that the triumph was also a hugely significant cog in the political mechanics of Rome. And most significantly, Versnel’s position fails to account for the fact that so many ancient authors utterly neglect the religious dimension of the triumph when they discuss it. If the essence of the triumph is religious, then many Roman authors seem to have utterly misunderstood their own culture.

Robert Payne, in his 1962 work, *The Roman Triumph*, also approaches the triumph from a more general viewpoint. Instead of collecting and sorting through previous scholarship, though, Payne sets down an historical survey of the triumph, from its mythical beginnings to its reincarnation as a vehicle of the Roman Catholic church. Unlike Versnel, Payne seems utterly uninterested in the technical details of the procession, and instead is intrigued by how ambitious Romans used the triumph as a political tool and also in the fact that the triumph reflected the ideals, ambitions, emotions, and mindsets of the Roman people.
Payne’s work is another, yet very different, big step toward understanding the triumph. He too, however, falls short of the goal. Payne seems to recognize that the triumph was such a fundamental event in the lives of the Romans and that it was intricately linked to their sense of identity as Romans:

The highest honour open to a Roman was the honour of a triumph: for this men fought, intrigued, suffered and died. For the honour of a triumph immense sums of money were expended, innumerable people were needlessly killed, vast treasures were dissipated, and whole countries were laid waste.\textsuperscript{13}

He realizes how important the triumph was to a Roman’s military, social, and political career, and he even goes so far as to offer an explanation for why the Romans were so obsessed with the triumph. He states that the Romans earned their empire through bloodshed and crime, and thus the triumph was a response to this immoral behavior:

There is a sense in which the Roman triumph is an act of propitiation, a desolate gesture towards the gods to forgive the crimes committed in their name...There are evident lessons to be learned from the triumph. We shall see how conquest inevitably engenders conquest, and hatred breeds hatred, and how the ultimate crime lies in the self-regarding mind of the conqueror, who discovers too late that human pride shatters his humanity.\textsuperscript{14}

This, then, is the purpose behind Payne’s work; to link the triumph to the immorality and corruption within the Roman way of warfare. The move toward linking the triumph to the social and political mentality of the Romans is an important one, but Payne’s description of the triumph as a reflection of Rome’s blood guilt seems off base. To call the Roman method of military expansion immoral, however one might agree or disagree with it, is a statement of personal judgment, which anachronistically forms an opinion from a modern moral and cultural standpoint looking back on a past civilization which in

\textsuperscript{13} Payne (1962) p. 18.

\textsuperscript{14} Payne (1962) p. 16, 18.
some ways had very different value systems than our own. The goal of any analysis of the triumph should not be to use the ceremony to pass judgment on the Romans and their values, but to better understand them.

Not only is Payne’s purpose in examining the triumph flawed, but his methodology seems ineffectual as well. His book is a retelling of the triumphal accounts in the ancient sources, with little authorial commentary added. While this is in its own way helpful to someone who desires a simple overview of what accounts we have of the triumph, and even perhaps of how the triumph evolved on a basic level from its first mention up through the Renaissance, the idea that a simple retelling of the triumph stories is enough to understand them is a strange one. Whereas previous scholars seem to have been too narrow-sighted in their quest for an understanding of the triumph through the details of the procession, Payne’s scope becomes ultimately too broad. The triumph, and what the Romans saw as so important in the institution of the triumph, cannot be understood by merely compiling the stories. Payne’s work is an important addition to the scholarship on the triumph, because he makes the move toward recognizing the importance of the triumph as a social measure of Romanness, but, again, the exploration of how and why the triumph comes to be such a good measure of what it means to be a Roman has yet to be addressed.

Payne advises us that “[w]e shall never understand the Romans unless we understand the triumph.”15 The key to understanding the triumph – and hence to better understanding the Romans themselves – lies within this unexplored territory of the link

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between the triumph and the way in which the Romans defined their own Romanness.\textsuperscript{16} This link between triumph and Romanness is infinitely more complex than Payne ever believed, and this is the reason his storytelling method fails. The general in his triumphal chariot does fundamentally represent a version of the ultimate Roman, and an ultimate Rome, by conjuring images of military prowess, the power of Rome, and the security of the state under his watch. However, the ways in which the triumph reflects how the Romans defined themselves goes far beyond the image of the general on parade. As we shall see, some accounts of triumphs include a description of the pity and sorrow that the Romans in the audience felt for the captives being led past them, which needs more of an explanation than conquered peoples = Roman glory. Also, one’s attitude toward gaining a triumph oneself or towards another’s bid for a triumph reveals one’s Romanness as well. For example, if a Roman seemed too desirous of a triumph, this reflected badly upon his character as a Roman, who, it seems, should be more concerned about the greater good of the state than personal glory. We shall also discover that the support that a Roman had from his fellow Romans with respect to his bid for a triumph revealed his (and their) position within the social dynamics of Rome, and the relationships of amicitia are a very important part of what it means to be a Roman. These aspects, among others, of the triumph and its relationship to a definition of Romanness will be examined in the

\textsuperscript{16} For a discussion of how to define Romanness, see Braund (2002) p. 70ff. For the use of spectacle to help Romans define Romanness, cf. Handelman (1990), who defines public events as, “occasions that people undertake to make more, less, or other of themselves than they usually do.” Also, cf. Krostenko (2001) p. 1: “The social performance of identity through aesthetic means was of extraordinary importance to elite Roman culture…The importance of such displays to Roman culture can be gauged, on the one hand, by the continual additions made to the repertoire of display,…and on the other, by the continual recurrence of efforts to control who performed such displays or how.”
following chapters. This, then, is the goal of the present work: to re-examine a selection of texts that discuss the triumph with a view towards discovering in what ways the triumph is both a display of and a means of measuring Romanness, both for us and for the Romans themselves.

The influence that the triumph holds over the Romans’ view of their own identity manifests itself even outside the bounds of the actual procession. Chapter two will deal with the displays that a Roman general who wants to lead a triumph must perform in order to earn said triumph. The triumph itself, as we shall see, is a display of a Roman’s Romanness, but a general must first, it seems, prove that he is not only a Roman, but a good Roman, i.e. a Roman who adheres to the social rules of Rome, before he can ever be awarded the honor of a triumph. In other words, a Roman who wants a triumph must put on certain displays of Romanness before he can perform the biggest spectacle of Romanness.

These pre-show displays are nowhere more evident than in Cicero’s *Letters*. Within the letters, we can see that military success is not the goal that is rewarded with a triumph, but in fact, is simply a means to an end, and that end – the true goal – is the triumph itself. However, to get a triumph, one must act as if the honor is not what one desires, that serving Rome is its own reward. Cicero gives us a unique view of what goes on behind-the-scenes when a Roman canvasses for a triumph, by discussing fellow Romans who either succeed in their attempts of displaying their Romanness or those who very publicly fail. Even more interesting are the letters in which Cicero discusses his
own bid for a triumph, in which we get an intimate glimpse of how one puts together a display of not wanting a triumph in order to get a triumph. We will also explore the reasons why Cicero’s attempt at gaining a triumph ultimately fails.

In chapters three and four, we will move on to the triumph itself, and look at how Romanness is displayed within the procession, both through the general himself as a model of a good Roman (and, indeed, sometimes a model of what a Roman should not be), and through the display of the captives, and how their non-Romanness informs the Romanness of the general and even of the Romans in the audience, watching the parade. Each chapter deals with a different author’s depiction of the triumph. Chapter three will examine the historian Livy’s view of the triumph. Livy opens his work by describing his project in terms of the importance of spectacle within his account of Rome and the Romans. Livy approaches the triumph no differently: by looking at past triumphs, his Roman reader (and hopefully we as well) can learn what it means to be a good (or bad) Roman. This chapter will deal both with the display of Romanness within the triumph and also the spectacle put on by/with the non-Romans in the triumph. Also, we will see that the triumph can act not only as a definer of Romanness, but also as a mechanism that sometimes blurs the line between Roman and non-Roman. This two-fold function of the triumph in itself reveals something about how the Romans thought about Romanness; while in some ways they seem to have felt quite confident in their role as Roman conquerors, a city at the head of an ever-expanding sphere of power and influence, they were also at times insecure in that role, aware, perhaps, of the fact that the people they triumphed over might pose a cultural threat to that very Romanness.
Chapter four, then, focuses on the description of the triumph in Plutarch’s *Lives*, including an extended look at the triumph of Aemilius Paulus over the Macedonians, which is the longest description of a triumph extant. For Plutarch, as for Livy as well, the triumph is not a simple definer of Roman and non-Roman. Instead, we shall see that Plutarch reveals the intricate bonds between Roman *victor* and non-Roman *victus* and shows that the triumph reflects those bonds in the very act of both defining and complicating what is means to be Roman or non-Roman.

Finally, in chapter five, we will turn from letters, history and biography (in other words, prose accounts of the triumph), and examine what transformations the triumph undergoes when seen through the lens of the Roman love poets. To the love poets, the triumph seems to belong to another world, another Rome, a Rome in which politics and war are priorities. But poets such as Ovid and Propertius hold stock in a different set of priorities, in which love conquers war, and the military triumph loses its importance. Ovid and Propertius, with the addition of Plautus, go beyond disavowing the social and political importance of the triumph. They appropriate the triumph; they make it their own by using the language of the triumph (conquest, spoils, captives, and, of course, the triumphal procession itself) as a way of describing their own subject: love. More importantly, the poets prove that there is more than one way to be the ultimate Roman, that there is more than one way to define Romanness, and they do so by redefining the Roman triumph.

In re-examining how the Romans themselves and others talk about the triumph, we can start to fill in the missing pieces left behind by the previous work on the triumph.
by thinking not just about the particulars of the triumphal procession, about what the
general wore and whether he was a representation of Jupiter or a king, but about how the
Romans saw themselves within the triumph and how the triumph played an enormous
role in how the Romans defined themselves as Romans. And so, as Payne advises, we
may be able to better understand the Romans by trying to better understand the triumph
and what it meant to Rome.
CHAPTER 2

CICERO’S LETTERS AND THE UNWRITTEN RULES OF THE TRIUMPH

Valerius Maximus, in the second book of his Facta et Dicta Memorabilia, sets down for his readers the laws and regulations that governed the awarding of a triumph to a victorious general. He explains, for example, that a general could not celebrate a triumph unless at least 5000 of the enemy had been killed in a single battle.\(^{17}\) Also, a triumph could not be celebrated for a victory which resulted in the recovery of what had previously been conquered by Rome; a triumph should function only as a celebration of the augmentation of Rome’s military might with new conquests.\(^{18}\) Certain rules were passed in order to curb the temptation on the part of generals desirous of a triumph to fabricate their qualifications; one such law, as Valerius Maximus tells us, was passed in 62BC, and instituted a penalty for generals who lied in dispatches sent to the senate about how many enemies had been slain. This law required that soon after they entered the city, generals were to take an oath before the city quaestors vowing that their previously reported statistics were in fact valid.\(^{19}\)

\(^{17}\) Val. Max. 2.8.1: \ldots lege cautum est ne quis triumpharet nisi qui quinque milia hostium una acie cecidisset...

\(^{18}\) Val. Max. 2.8.4

\(^{19}\) Val. Max. 2.8.1
These laws,\textsuperscript{20} which governed the triumph and the generals who wanted one, indicate how important and coveted an honor the triumph truly was for the Romans; the fact that they felt the need to set parameters on the ceremony, limiting the number of generals who could qualify for a triumph and discouraging dishonest attempts at gaining one, attests to this. The official laws were not, however, the only guidelines governing the honor of the triumph. Besides conforming to the regulations set down by the senate, a general also had to follow another set of rules in order to gain the right to triumph, but these rules are not to be found in the writings of Valerius Maximus, nor any source that cites official laws. For these unofficial rules to gaining a triumph, we must turn to Cicero, who himself canvassed his fellow Romans in an attempt at gaining a triumph and who discusses in his letters not only his own attempt at winning the right to triumph, but also the attempts of other Romans for the honor. By examining a selection of Cicero’s letters in which he corresponded with Atticus, Cato, Caelius, and others, we can see him going through the process of trying to get a triumph in reward for his military ventures in Cilicia during his governorship, and we can follow him as he works with both the official and unofficial rules for the triumph.\textsuperscript{21} Furthermore, an examination and understanding of these unofficial rules can help us to think about how the Romans valued the triumph as a display of Romanness, and, more interestingly, how that display of Romanness extended

\textsuperscript{20} For more on the triumphal laws, including the Lex Porcia Maria proposed by Cato in 62, see Wistrand (1979) p. 25ff.

\textsuperscript{21} For a discussion of Cicero’s letters as a reflection of the social and political atmosphere of republican Rome, see Hariman (1995) p. 99: “…the object of Cicero’s letters is the repertoire of rhetorical conventions that comprise the calculations, anxieties, and character traits typifying republican politics.”
far beyond the parade itself, and served as a measure both of whether a general’s actions merited a triumph at all, and, after the procession, of a Roman’s worth in relation to his status as a triumphator.

2.1: Cicero’s Lament

Gaining a triumph was hard work. First of all, of course, a general had to win a significant defeat over the enemy with minimal loss to his own army. In addition to the obvious victory requirements, a general then had to convince the senate that his victory was worthy enough for them to vote to award him the honor of a triumphal procession, and this, as we shall see, was in some cases no easy task. In fact, Cicero himself never gets his triumph.

At first, Cicero does not even want a command, let alone a triumph. In several letters written from Cilicia, where he served as governor in 51-50BC, Cicero complains about not wanting the appointment that is keeping him away from Rome.\(^{22}\) In a letter to Caelius Rufus written in June 50BC, he laments even the office that gives him the chance for a triumph:\(^{23}\)

\(^{22}\) For Cicero’s lamentations on being away from Rome because of his governorship, see for example, *Ad Att. 5.8, 5.11, 5.13, 5.15*, among others.

\(^{23}\) Carcopino (1951) (p. 199, 128-9) states that Cicero only accepted the governorship because of the potential for a triumph, and then, once he had taken up his post, he constantly complained about the folly of his decision. This seems extreme to say the least.
Urbem, urbem, mi Rufe, cole et in ista luce vive; omnis peregrinatio, quod ego ab adulescentia iudicavi, obscura et sordida est iis quorum industria Romae potest inlustris esse. Quod cum probe scirem, utinam in sententia permansissem! cum una mehercule ambulatuncula atque uno sermone nostro omnis fructus provinciae non confero. Spero me integritatis laudem consecutum: non erat minor ex contemnenda quam ex conservata provincia. ‘Spem triumphi’ inquis ‘****’: satis gloriose triumpharem <si> non essem, <et> quidem tam diu, in desiderio rerum mihi carissimarum.24

The City, dear Rufus, live in/honor the City and live in its light; every journey abroad, as I’ve thought since boyhood, is ignoble and vile to those whose diligence can be distinguished in Rome. Although I knew this absolutely, if only I had stuck to my judgment! All the fruits of the province can’t compare to just one of our short walks or just one of our conversations. I hope that I have gained praise for my integrity: it came no less from spurning a province than from preserving one. You say that you hope for a triumph (for me): I would triumph gloriously enough if I were not – and indeed for so long – in need of those things that are so dear to me.

For Cicero, a lot of what defines him is his relationship to the city of Rome, a dynamic that shows up again and again in the letters in which his bid for a triumph is discussed.25

When he wrote this letter to Caelius, Cicero was still in his province, the guardianship of which may earn him a triumph. However, in this letter Cicero shows us a version of himself that is more concerned about being with his friends and family than about pursuing the right to a triumph. Urbem, urbem…Romae – that’s what’s important; Rome can make the right man inlustris, but being away from the city is obscura et sordida. He mentions the actual triumph only by way of reference to Caelius’ earlier letter to Cicero26 – Caelius is the one who wants a triumph for Cicero; Cicero claims that he would settle for another, less taxing kind of triumph – one that keeps him close to those he loves and inside the city.

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24 Ad Fam. 2.12.2-3.6

25 Cf. Bell (1997) p. 1: “For Cicero, to be in Rome meant to have opportunities for his person and activities to be illumined for the attention of fellow-citizens, fortunate outsiders and visitors, and even for the edification of posterity. He needed to be seen in the city.”

26 Ad Fam. 8.5
So, since triumphs are about leaving Rome and not being able to come back into the city (until the senate allows it) without losing part of what makes one the Roman that one is *(imperium)*, and since Cicero – in this letter and in several others written while he is in the province – seems to be so ostentatiously against these conditions regulating ostentation, why then does he, as we shall see, spend so much time and energy trying to gain a triumph for himself, and why was the bid for a triumph so particularly difficult in Cicero’s case? This chapter will attempt to answer these questions and also to dissect the ‘unofficial’ rules for getting a triumph.

2.2: What a Triumph is All About

The triumph was a celebration – much like the tickertape parades of a few decades ago – for a victorious general returning from the front lines. However, at least by Cicero’s time, and perhaps even significantly earlier, the prospect of a triumph had changed from a reward to a goal. Caelius reveals the true nature of the triumph in a letter to Cicero in which he discusses his hopes for Cicero’s ‘tour of duty’ in the province:•

Nam si hoc modo rem moderari possemus ut pro viribus copiarum tuarum belli quoque exsisteret magnitudo et quantum gloriae triumphoque opus esset adsequeremur, periculosam et gravem illam dimicationem evitaremus, nihil tam esset optandum. Nunc si Parthus movet aliquid, scio non mediocrem fore contentionem; tuus porro exercitus vix unum saltum tueri potest. Hanc autem nemo ducit rationem, sed omnia desiderantur ab eo, tamquam nihil denegatum sit ei quo minus quam paratissimus esset, qui publico negotio praepositus est.

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27 By all accounts, Caelius Rufus seems to have been quite a character, and his cynical but candid view of the triumph attests to this. For more on Caelius’ character, see Boissier (1897) p. 159-208, and Clauss (1990).

28 *Ad Fam 8.5.1.3-13*; written in Sept. 51
For if we could somehow manage this so that the size of the war is in proportion to the strength of your troops and we achieve however much glory is needed for a triumph and avoid danger and a serious struggle, nothing could be more hoped for. For if the Parthians make any kind of move, I know that the struggle would not be an average one; moreover, your army is scarcely capable of guarding one pass. No one thinks about this, but they expect everything from the one who has been put in charge of affairs of state, as if nothing had been denied to him from being as prepared as possible.

This, according to Caelius, is what war is all about: personal reputation and honor-gaining is the number one priority, and striving \textit{rei publicae causa}, instead of being the main objective, is a means to an end – a show that one performs in order to get a triumph, which is then, the ultimate goal. The stage must be set very carefully, though, in Cicero’s case – and the grammar reflects the slipperiness of the situation by means of a very long and complex condition. Caelius wonders how it might be possible to ‘stage’ a war that’s just the right size for Cicero’s army, which, apparently, isn’t all that big – it can barely defend one pass. Again, the goal for this staged war is solely the gain of a triumph. From Caelius’ perspective, the triumph begins to look less like a medal of honor and more like the Roman version of the Tony award. Caelius also mentions the audience of this spectacle; he complains that the Romans expect generals to put on a great show but that they don’t give any thought to the difficulty of the production. The audience expects a certain kind of spectacle from their generals, and so the generals demand from their audience that they be an audience to another kind of show in return, the triumph.\footnote{Cf. Hariman (1995) p. 121: “…by finding one’s nerve and crafting consent through effective persuasion, the republican actor achieves the public self that is the key to personal advancement. The republican community understands heroism not as the conquest of an alien warrior, but as the individual’s triumphing over personal limitations to become the exemplar of civic virtue.”}
In a letter written in December 51, Cicero’s response to Caelius’ wish is that the wish seems to have come true, although there is also a hint that Caelius should be careful what he wishes for.\textsuperscript{30}

Ut optasti, ita est; velles enim, ais, tantum modo ut haberem negoti quod esset ad laureolam satis…Ita victoria iusta imperator appellatus apud Issum, quo in loco, saepe ut ex te audivi, Clitarchus tibi narravit Dareum ab Alexandro esse superatum, abduxi exercitum ad infestissimam Ciliciae partem. Ibi quintum et vicesimum iam diem aggeribus vineis turribus oppugnabam oppidum munitissimum, Pindenissum, tantis opibus tantoque negotio ut mihi ad summam gloriæ nihil desit nisi nomen oppidi. Quod si, ut spero, cepero, tum vero litteras publice mittam…\textsuperscript{31}

It is just as you have hoped; for you would like, you say, for me to get just enough action for a triumph…And so with just victory I was hailed imperator at Issus, in which place, as I’ve often heard from you, Clitarchus told you that Darius was conquered by Alexander. I led the army to a very dangerous part of Cilicia. Here for 25 days already I’ve been besieging Pindenissum, a heavily fortified town, with ramparts, penthouses, and towers. It’s such a great undertaking that nothing is lacking toward the highest glory for me, unless it’s the name of the town. But if, as I hope, I capture it, then I will send an official report…

Cicero didn’t have to fight against the Parthians, as Caelius had feared, but instead, is fighting against a much less threatening enemy, the inhabitants of Pindenissum.\textsuperscript{32}

Although Cicero assures Caelius that the magnitude of the undertaking is enough to fit the specs for a triumph, he is uncertain whether or not the obscurity of the town will hinder his chances at a triumph. If he had been capable of fighting against the Parthians – one of Rome’s most (in)famous opponents – Cicero would have certainly had a better chance at earning a triumph. However, since his opponent is a more equal match, he is


\textsuperscript{31} Ad Fam. 2.10.2.1-2,3.4-12

\textsuperscript{32} Caelius (and Cicero’s) fear of potentially fighting against the Parthians is understandable – Cicero’s governorship was only two years after Crassus’ defeat at the hands of the Parthians. For Cicero’s military stance toward the Parthians, see Sherwin-White (1984) p. 290 ff.
worried that conquering the Pindenissans is a spectacle that is a little too far removed from the glory of a victory over the Parthians. Cicero ironically links his being hailed \textit{imperator} with Caelius’ talk of the defeat of Darius by Alexander; the comparison of the famous military victory of Alexander over Darius with Cicero’s (not yet even accomplished) victory over the virtually unknown town of Pindenissum becomes even more absurd when one considers that Cicero is concerned that, even if he defeats his enemy, the victory won’t be good enough to impress the senate into voting him a triumph. Nevertheless, even with these concerns, Cicero is holding off on sending an official report to the senate (which he should have done immediately following his being hailed as \textit{imperator}) until he defeats the Pindenissans, apparently as a way of fluffing the triumphal resume.\footnote{Cf. Ad Att. 5.20.3.4-9 written in Jan. 51: \textit{Hic a.d. III Id. Oct. magnum numerum hostium occidimus, castella munitissima nocturno Pomptini adventu, nostro matutino cepimus incendimus, imperatores appellati sumus. Castra paucos dies habuimus ea ipsa quae contra Darium habuerat apud Issum Alexander, imperator haud paulo melior quam aut tu aut ego.} (‘Here on Oct. 13\textsuperscript{th} we killed a great number of the enemy, we captured and burned some heavily fortified forts by Pomptinus’ nightly attacks and my daily attacks. We were hailed imperatores. For a few days we held the very camps that Alexander held against Darius at Issus, a general who was more than a little better than you or I.’) Here Cicero tells a slightly different story to Atticus than the one told to Caelius. He ironically compares himself to Alexander, but he is nevertheless the one to bring up the association. Caelius may have forced it on Cicero, but Cicero imposes it on Atticus. He also makes no mention of the potential for a triumph, and up to this point in time, has not yet made any mention of a triumph to Atticus. In fact, Caelius’ expression of a wish for a triumph for Cicero is the first mention in the extant letters of a triumph for Cicero by anyone, including Cicero himself.}

The show that a general puts on while in the province, as we’ve seen, was an important factor in his bid for a triumph. However, the closer one gets to Rome, the more important appearances and the spectacle of the self become:
Formam igitur mihi totius rei publicae, si iam es Romae aut cum eris, velim mittas quae mihi obviam veniat, ex qua me fingere possim et praemeditari quo animo accedam ad urbem; est enim quiddam advenientem non esse peregrinum atque hospitem.³⁴

Therefore I would like you to send to me a report of the shape of the republic, if you are at Rome or when you will be there, so that it might meet me on the way and from which I might be able to fashion myself and think over in what frame of mind I will approach the city; for there’s something to be said for coming to Rome not as a foreigner and a stranger.

If the provinces are one kind of stage, Rome itself is the ultimate stage.³⁵ Cicero wants to know the *formam*, the shape, the appearance, of Rome – he wants to know ‘what’s playing’ before he gets there, so he can shape his own persona, i.e. figure out what part he needs to play, before he arrives. When he arrives at Rome, however, he won’t enter the city right away, because he is hoping to get the senate’s vote for a triumph. Instead, he will put on yet another kind of spectacle, one that all generals wanting a triumph performed, the waiting game that took place outside the city. Cicero tells Atticus that he doesn’t want to approach Rome as a stranger or even a non-Roman (*peregrinum*). Indeed, he doesn’t even want to arrive as merely a Roman, but a particular brand of Roman – a *triumphator*. Is there more at stake in gaining a triumph than climbing the Roman social ladder? Perhaps one can only return from the provinces in one of two guises, either as a Roman captor (i.e. a *triumphator*) or as the captive (*peregrinum*), no longer a Roman.

³⁴ *Ad Att. 6.3.4-10*, written in June 50.

³⁵ Cf. Barton (2002) p. 220-221: “Being, for a Roman, was being seen...If Being, for the ancient Romans, was being seen, being seen was a basic existential risk...The spectator was, for the Romans, an inspector, judge, and connoisseur.” Also, cf. Krostenko (2001) p. 18ff.
2.3: Wanting Without Seeming to Want

For those who were sent out as generals to the provinces, a triumph was a fairly important acquisition because it could further one’s status as a good Roman, or perhaps, even restore one’s status as a Roman. Nevertheless, and despite the fact that one had to petition the senate for a triumph (and the lesser, related honor of the supplicatio), it seems that one of the unofficial rules for getting a triumph was that one shouldn’t appear too eager or desirous of the honor – you had to want a triumph without seeming to want it.

Robert Hariman, in his book *Political Style: The Artistry of Power*, remarks, “[t]he republican understanding of political ethics is grounded in a narrative conception of the self. This conception of civic identity defines the individual in terms of a civic role and the correct performance of the role in terms of the traditions and prospects of the community.” A Roman general had to correctly perform his role both as a successful military leader and as one who did not have too much desire for a triumph in order to fit into the civic definition of ‘general worthy of a triumph.’ The importance of fulfilling this role of the general stands out in Cicero’s letters, in which he either approves or disapproves of certain people according to how they act in respect to wanting a triumph. For example, in a letter to Atticus, he presents his opinion of the consul Metellus in terms of his desire for a triumph.37

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36 Hariman (1995) p. 126

37 Cf. Hutchinson (1998) p. 87: “As other letters confirm, there were general difficulties, social, political, and philosophical, in praising oneself, and pursuing a triumph; and Cicero’s passion for fame had been attacked by others and defended by himself.”
Cicero approves of Metellus’ consulship in every way except one – he shows too much desire for a triumph. Metellus, apparently, has been too open about his disappointment at the news of peace in Gaul, and Cicero reads his disappointment as the result of his wanting a triumph. In other words, Metellus is not putting on enough of a spectacle – he’s too open with his desire (*cupit*) for a triumph. According to Cicero, if one wants a triumph, one must put on a spectacle of *mediocritas*, a spectacle of moderated, even suppressed, desire.39

In a letter from Caelius to Cicero, Appius Pulcher, unlike Metellus, gets high praise for displaying the right kind of attitude towards the triumph:

> Non dubito quin perlatum ad te sit Appium a Dolabella reum factum sane quam non ea qua existimaveram invidia; neque enim stulte Appius, qui, simul atque Dolabella accessit ad tribunal, introierat in urbem triumphique postulationem abiecerat; quo facto rettudit sermones paratiorque visus est quam speraverat accusator.40

Caelius informs Cicero that Dolabella has brought charges against Appius, who, at the time, was waiting outside the city in the hopes of being voted a triumph. From Caelius’

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38 *Ad Att. 1.20.5.1-4*, written May 60.

39 For a discussion of a similar complaint in Cicero’s *Brutus*, in which he accuses his fellow citizens of falsely claiming too many triumphs for their ancestors (*Brut. 62*), see Ridley (1983).

40 *Ad Fam. 8.6.1.1-6*, written Feb. 50.
letter, it seems as if Dolabella was counting on Appius’ desire for a triumph to keep him outside Rome. However, Appius seems to have surprised everyone by not hesitating to throw down the chance of a triumph and entering the city as soon as he heard about Dolabella’s action. In other words, Appius put on a good show, definitely a show of unwanted, a show that does wonders for his precarious PR – he put on a show of unexpected preparedness that caught everyone, including his accuser, off guard.

Cicero advises Appius that if he truly believes in the spectacle he performed, he will celebrate a different kind of triumph:

Illud plane moleste tuli, quod certissimum et iustissimum triumphum hoc invidorum consilio esse tibi ereptum videbam. Quod tu si tanti facies quanti ego semper iudicavi faciendum esse, facies sapienter et ages victor ex inimicorum dolore triumphum iustissimum…

I took it badly when I saw that a very sure and just triumph was stolen from you by the plots of jealous men. But if you value a triumph only as much as I have always thought it should be valued, you will act wisely and you will lead a triumph over the grief of your enemies…

Cicero saw the show (videbam) – he was a spectator of Appius’ putting down the triumph, even though it was a second hand spectacle (Caelius re-performed it for him in his letter). He tells Appius that if he practices what he performs (i.e. if he doesn’t place too much importance on having a triumph), he will have a triumph, of a different kind. In other words, if he believes in the part he is playing now, he will be able to take up the role of the triumphator anyway – he can play the part of the victor over his enemies. However, these are Roman enemies and not provincial, foreign ones; which makes it a very different sort of triumph indeed.

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41 Ad Fam 3.10.1.7-12, written by Cicero to Appius Pulcher in Apr. 50.
Appius boosts his reputation by sacrificing his right to triumph and by resisting the desire for one. The other side of that desire, though, is to give in to it; to show too much desire for a triumph can mean disaster for a general’s public image. Cicero mentions an elaborate example of how not to act with respect to a triumph in a letter to his brother, Quintus:

Cum Gabinius quacumque veniebat triumphum se postulare dixisset subitoque bonus imperator noctu in urbem hostium plenam invassisset, in senatum se non commitebat. Interim ipso decimo die, quo eum oportebat hostium numerum et militiae renuntiare, inrepsit summa infrequentia. Cum vellet exire, a consulibus retentus est; introducti publicani…cum a me maxime vulneraretur, non tulit et me trementi voce exsulem appellavit. Hic (o di! nihil umquam honorificentius nobis accidit) consurrexit senatus cum clamore ad unum sic ut ad corpus eius accederet; pari clamore atque impetu publicani.42

Although Gabinius had said everywhere he went that he was demanding a triumph and suddenly, like the good imperator that he is, he invaded the city, which was full of enemies, at night, he didn’t venture into the senate. Then, on the 10th day itself, on which he should have announced the numbers of enemies and troops, he crept in when attendance was at its lowest. When he wanted to leave, he was held back by the consuls; then the publicani were brought in…when he was especially wounded by me, he couldn’t bear it and, in a trembling voice, he called me an exile. At this (O gods, nothing more complimentary has ever happened to me) the senate, to a one, rose up with a clamor in such a way that they approached his person; the publicani did the same with an equal clamor and force.

Gabinius is the poster-child for what not to do to get a triumph. He displays his desire for a triumph wherever he goes; he certainly doesn’t seem to know the rules about displaying, or rather hiding, desire. Cicero obviously does not approve, and, in fact, takes a very mocking tone toward the whole affair.43 He says that Gabinius did what any good general would do – he attacked a city full of enemies at night. However, the city is the City, Rome, and his enemies are Romans. Moreover, the very act by which Cicero

42 Ad Q.F. 3.2.2.3-14, written Oct. 54

43 For a different interpretation of Cicero’s attitude toward Gabinius, see Carcopino (1951) p. 210-211, esp. footnote 1.
mockingly defines Gabinius as a good *imperator* (attacking the city), forfeits Gabinius’ status as a general – he loses his *imperium* the moment he crosses into the city. In reality, Gabinius probably crept into Rome at night in order to avoid the publicity of giving up the right to the triumph he so publicly (and therefore tactlessly) desired; Cicero also tells us that he avoided entering the senate as well. Cicero mockingly represents Gabinius as a good and brave general in order to draw attention to the fact that he is really entering Rome with his tail between his legs. Once Gabinius enters Rome, Cicero describes what happens in terms of an anti-triumph. Gabinius enters the senate on the tenth day after having entered Rome, the very day that, if he had in fact celebrated a triumph, he would have been expected to give his official post-triumphal report. Moreover, Gabinius is reluctant to enter the senate, and only does so when it is poorly attended; if he had led a triumph, his report to the senate would have been a much more honorable event. Also, the spectacle of Gabinius’ senate appearance is the opposite of what one might expect from a victorious general; he is nervous and visibly trembling. In the true spirit of an anti-triumph, the *publicani*, tax-farmers, are led out as a display; perhaps these take the place of Gabinius’ captives for a ‘real’ triumph – they suffered at the hands of pirates because of Gabinius’ neglect. As captives for an anti-triumph, they represent not Gabinius’ good conduct as an *imperator*, but instead his failure as a general.

Gabinius becomes so desperate that, in response to his verbal wounding, he calls Cicero an exile. This too becomes a spectacle of Gabinius as an anti-general acting out an anti-triumph; not only has he lost his *imperium*, but his words are also completely powerless compared to Cicero’s, which wound Gabinius deeply, and which are, of
course, Cicero’s main source of power in Rome. Indeed, not only are Gabinius’ words powerless to help him, but, instead, they create a spectacle of Cicero’s status as a well-respected Roman – Cicero says that nothing more complementary could have happened for him. In fact, Cicero’s language in the letter plays with this scene as a military encounter with words as the weapons, and so Gabinius’ anti-triumph in the senate turns into a triumph of a sort for Cicero.

Having looked through Cicero’s eyes at how others act in regard to pursuing a triumph, let us now take a look at how Cicero himself handles the task of wanting without seeming to want:

Quaeres fortasse quid sit quod ego hoc nescio quid gratulationis et honoris a senatu tanti aestimem. Agam iam tecum familiariter, ut est et studiis et officiis nostris mutuis et summa amicitia dignum et necessitutine etiam paterna. Si quisquam fuit umquam remotus et natura et magis etiam, ut mihi quidem sentire videor, ratione atque doctrina ab inani laude et sermonibus vulgi, ego profecto is sum. Testis est consulatus meus, in quo, sicut in reliqua vita, fateor ea me studiose secutum ex quibus vera gloria nascet, ipsum quidem gloriam per se numquam putavi expetendam. Itaque et provinciam ornatam et spem non dubiam triumphi neglexi, sacerdotium denique, cum, quem ad modum te existimare arbitror, non difficillime consequi possem, non adpetivi; idem post iniuriam acceptam, quam tu rei publicae calamitatem semper appellas, meam non modo non calamitatem sed etiam gloriam, studui quam ornassima senatus populique Romani de me iudicia intercedere. Itaque et augur postea fieri volui, quod ante a neglexeram, et eum honorem qui a senatu tribui rebus bellicis solet, neglectum a me olim, nunc mihi expetendum puto.

Perhaps you will wonder why it is that I set so great a value on some sort of congratulation and honor from the senate. I’ll speak frankly with you, as is worthy of our common pursuits and duties and our close friendship and even our family ties. If ever there was anyone removed by nature and even more, as indeed I seem to sense, by reasoning and teachings, from empty praise and the talk of the town, certainly I am that person. My consulate is my witness, in which, just as in the rest of my life, I admit that I have followed those things very eagerly from which true glory is able to be born, I have never thought that glory itself ought to be sought for its own sake. And so I turned down an honorable province and the sure hope of a triumph, and finally, I didn’t seek a priesthood, although – and I think you agree with me – I could have gained it without much trouble. I accepted this same priesthood after the insult which you always call a

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44 Cf. *Ad Fam. 15.4* as a display of the power of words with respect to the triumph, discussed below.

45 *Ad Fam. 15.4.13.1-20*, written in 51/50; date uncertain.

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calamity for the republic but for me not only not a calamity but even a glorious deed, I am eager that the most honorable judgments possible of the senate and the Roman people might be decreed for me. And so afterwards, I wanted to be made an augur, which I had turned down before, and that honor which the senate usually awards for military achievements and which I once rejected, now I think I ought to ask for it.

This letter to Cato\textsuperscript{46} reads like one of Cicero’s speeches: *Quaeres fortasse quid sit quod* echoes the beginnings of many of his speeches, and the tone and style throughout are more reminiscent of Cicero’s orations than the chatty world of the letters to Atticus and Caelius.\textsuperscript{47} So this letter is an attempt on Cicero’s part to persuade Cato that Cicero is justified in wanting a *supplicatio* (an honor that usually preceded the awarding of a triumph). He starts off by presenting himself as the kind of person who has the ‘right’ attitude toward public opinion and praise (i.e. triumphs). He even, in the manner of a true speech, calls a character witness – his consulate. He goes on to say that, in the past, he has been known to turn down, among other things (a province and a priesthood), the chance at a triumph. However, after enduring the *iniuria* of his exile, he argues that he’s a changed (Ro)man. After his return, he pursued and gained a priesthood, and now that he is governing a province, he views his chance at a triumph as something that the republic owes him. Cicero skillfully takes Cato through his metamorphosis by means of his prose, so that, by the end of the argument, he has transformed himself (a spectacle put on for Cato’s benefit) from one who spurns public praise to a person to whom such praise is owed. So, although near the beginning of this letter Cicero says that he will not ask

\textsuperscript{46} For Cicero’s correspondence with Cato regarding Cicero’s *supplicatio* and triumph, see Lacey (1978) p. 102ff.

\textsuperscript{47} For this letter’s similarity to a forensic speech, see Wistrand (1979) p. 16ff. For echoes of this phrase in Cicero’s speeches, see *Pro Roscio*, *Pro Caelio*, *In Caecilium*, *Pro Rabirio*, and *Pro Sestio*, among others.
Cato for his help in acquiring a supplication,\textsuperscript{48} toward the end of his speech/letter, the newly-transformed Cicero does ask for help.\textsuperscript{49} Perhaps returning from exile is like returning from a province – one returns from both either as a triumphant, socially ‘better’ Roman, or one returns having lost some (or all) of one’s Romanness. Cicero’s return from exile (and his return from his province, as we shall see later on) includes a bit of both. Cato, Cicero tells us, claims that, although his exile was a calamity to Rome, it was a source of \textit{gloria} (like a triumph) for Cicero himself. On the other hand, Cicero claims that he has returned, not triumphantly, but certainly a changed (Ro)man.

Cato responds to Cicero’s request in a letter written after the matter had been voted on in the senate:

\begin{quote}
Itaque, quod pro meo iudicio facere potui, ut innocentia consilioque tuo defensam provinciam, servatum Ariobarzanis cum ipso rege regnum, sociorum revocatam ad studium imperi nostri voluntatem sententia mea et decreto laudarem, feci. Supplicationem decretam, si tu, qua in re nihil fortuito sed summa tua ratione et continenta rei publicae provisum est, dis immortalibus gratulari nos quam tibi referre acceptum mavis, gaudeo; quod si triumphi praerogativam putas supplicationem et iiciero casum potius quam te laudari mavis, neque supplicationem sequitur semper triumphus et triumpho multo clarius est senatum iudicare potius mansuetudine et innocentia imperatoris provinciam quam vi militum aut benignitate deorum retentam atque conservatum esse; quod ego mea sententia censebam. Atque haec ego iiciero ad te contra consuetudinem meam pluribus scripsi ut, quod maxime volo, existimes me laborare ut tibi persuadeam me et voluisse de tua maiestate quod amplissimum sim arbitratus et quod tu maluisti factum esse gaudere.\textsuperscript{50}
\end{quote}

And so I did what I was able to do in line with my own judgment, so that I might praise with my speech and my vote the fact that by your integrity and counsel, your province was defended, Ariobazanes’ kingdom was preserved – along with the king himself – and the will of the allies was restored to the zeal of our \textit{imperium}. A supplication has been decreed for you, and, though in this affair nothing was provided for the republic by chance, but by your own solid reasoning and moderation, if you prefer

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Ad Fam. 15.4.11}

\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Ad Fam. 15.4.14.1-3:} \textit{Huic meae voluntati, in qua inest aliqua vis desideri ad sanandum vulturis iniuriae, ut faveas adiutorque sis, quod paulo ante me negaram rogaturum, vehementer rogo…} (‘I urgently ask you that which a little before I said I wouldn’t ask, namely that you favor and be a helper to my \textit{voluntas} in which there’s some strength of longing to heal the wound of \textit{iniuria}...’)

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ad Fam. 15.5.1-3.5}, written in May 50.
that we give thanks to the immortal gods rather than give thanks to you, then I’m happy. But if you should think that a supplication is a sure token of a triumph and for that reason you prefer that chance be praised instead of you, a triumph doesn’t always follow a supplication and it is much more noble than a triumph for the senate to judge that a province was kept and guarded by the gentleness and integrity of a general than by military force or the kindness of the gods. This is what I expressed in my speech to the senate.

And so for this reason against my usual custom, I’ve written to you at length so that – and this is what I truly desire – you might think that I have worked hard to persuade you that I wanted what I thought best for your maiestas and that I’m happy that you got what you preferred.

Cato’s answer to Cicero’s rhetorical display of un-wanting turned into justifiable wanting is another rhetorical display, but this one is a spectacle of what happens when one refuses to play by the rules. By way of checking Cicero, Cato takes everything about the triumph (and supplication) at face value and literally. Thus, he says that he’s glad Cicero wanted to defer his own glory to the gods by pursuing a supplication, which, although on the surface gives thanks to the gods for military success, is still a form of public praise for the imperator. He goes on to warn Cicero that if his intentions are otherwise (i.e. if he looks on the supplication as a precursor to a triumph), then he should remember that a supplication doesn’t always guarantee that a triumph will follow. Cato also argues that in fact it is more honorable to not be voted a triumph at all, since a triumph is awarded to those who guarded their provinces by force and it is more honorable to preserve one’s province by means of mansuetudo and innocentia. He ends his letter by saying that he is glad that Cicero got what he wanted, by which he means that his honor was given to the gods in the form of the supplication, not that Cicero’s own glory was furthered by the supplication. By taking Cicero’s spectacle of un-wanting literally, Cato is refusing to play the game that Cicero is working so hard to perfect; by doing so, Cato succeeds in
disarming Cicero’s argument and at the same time justifies his own refusal to vote for
either a supplication or triumph for Cicero without seeming to break any rules of *amicitia*
between Cicero and himself, a topic which we will turn to in the next section.

2.4: *Amicitia* and the Triumph

The general who makes a bid for a triumph, as we have seen, puts on a certain
kind of spectacle, a show of un-wanting or sometimes a show of wanting too much. The
generals who (try not to) want a triumph, though, are not the only people involved in the
triumph-getting process who put on a show. As in many other aspects of Roman social
life, *amicitia* played a large role in getting (or not getting) a triumph:\(^{51}\)

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Haec scripsi a.d. VIII Kal. Nov., quo die ludi commetebantur, in Tusculanum proficiscens
ducensque mecum Ciceronem meum in ludum discendi, non lustiois, ea re non longius
(quod vellem), quod Pomptino ad triumphum a.d. III Non. Nov. volebam adesse. Etenim
erit nescio quid negotioli; nam Cato et Servilius praetores prohibituros se minantur nec
quid possint scio (ille enim et Appium consulem secum habebit et praetores et tribunos
pl.), sed minantur tamen\(^{52}\)

I’ve written these things on Oct 24\(^{th}\), on which day the games were undertaken. I’m
headed for my Tuscan villa and I’m taking my Cicero with me to a school of learning,
ot not of playing. This business won’t take too long, which is the way I want it, because I
want to be present for Pomptinus’ triumph on Nov 3\(^{rd}\). For who knows what trifling
business there will be; for Cato and Servilius, the praetors, threaten that they won’t allow
him to triumph and I don’t know what they’re capable of (for Pomptinus will have
Appius the consul with him, along with praetors and tribunes of the plebs), but
nevertheless they’re threatening…

In this letter to his brother Quintus, Cicero mentions that he wants to be back at Rome for
Pomptinus’ triumph; he wants to make an appearance. The spectacle here works two

\(^{51}\) For Cicero’s definition of *amicitia* in the letters, see Meyer (2000) p. 71ff. For *amicitia* and Cicero’s
business ties, see Rauh (1986). For Cicero’s thoughts on and use of *amicitia* in general, see Brunt (1965).

\(^{52}\) Ad *Q.F.* 3.4.6.1-9, written Oct. 54.
ways. First, Cicero wants to show his friendship for Pomptinus by being present at the triumph – he wants to be seen seeing the triumph. But he also wants to be a spectator simply for the sake of the spectacle, but not the spectacle of Pomptinus’ triumph as much as for the spectacle that Cato and Servilius threaten to put on – the show of not letting the show go on. The whole episode (which is a spectacle that Cicero is putting on for Quintus – indeed a spectacle that has not yet happened – a pre-show?) is introduced with allusions to other kinds of spectacles: Cicero says he wrote the letter on the day that the games started. He also mentions that he is taking his son to school - a school of learning, not a playschool.

Cicero also mentions this same episode in a letter to Atticus:

Pomptinus vult a.d. IIII Non. Nov. triumphare. Huic obviam Cato et Servilius praetores ad portam et Q. Mucius tribunus; negant enim latum de imperio, et est latum hercule insulse. Sed erit cum Pomptino Appius consul. Cato tamen adfirmat se vivo illum non triumphaturum; id ego puto, ut multa eiusdem, ad nihilum recasurum.53

Pomptinus wants to triumph on Nov 2nd. The praetors Cato and Servilius, along with Q. Mucius the tribune, will block him at the gate; for they deny that the matter of his imperium was put to the senate – and indeed it was put to them, and tactlessly, too. But the consul Appius will be with Pomptinus. Nevertheless, Cato claims that Pomptinus won’t have a triumph while Cato’s alive; but I think this, like many other of this same man’s affairs, will come to nothing.

Again, according to Cicero, Cato and Servilius threaten to block Pomptinus’ triumph with a spectacle of their own. Now, Q. Mucius has joined the dissenting crowd. In fact, Cato has claimed that Pomptinus will triumph over his dead body – Cato has become, then, through his own spectacle, the enemy that Pomptinus must conquer in order to triumph. Once again, a ‘normal’ triumph has become a triumph over other Romans. Pomptinus, however, isn’t alone – the consul Appius will make an appearance in support of his

53 Ad Att. 4.18.4.5-11, written Oct. 54.
triumph. So there are three displays going on at the same time – Pomptinus with his (potential) triumph, Appius showing his support of Pomptinus, and Cato and his gang making a display of their lack of support for the triumph. Moreover, Cicero says that, like many other instances of the same kind, these threats probably won’t amount to anything. So, not only has this spectacle (of Cato’s sit-in at the gate) not yet occurred, but it probably won’t – Cicero presents to Quintus (and to us) a spectacle of a non-spectacle. But the show must go on; Cato or no Cato there will be a spectacle – either Pomptinus will lead a triumph or Cato won’t allow it – in both cases the audience will see a show. In fact, at this point, Cato and his posse really don’t need to act out their show – the sheer potential of it has generated enough buzz that Cicero (and presumably others in the city) have heard about it and have produced their own versions of the spectacle for others – Cato’s show is already being performed.

When canvassing for his own triumph (and the supplication as well), Cicero uses amicitia as an argumentative tool for convincing people to help him. Not even Atticus is immune to this line of argument:

Amicorum litterae me ad triumphum vocant, rem a nobis, ut ego arbitrор, propter hanc παλιγγενεσίαν nostram non neglegendam. Quа re tu quoque, mi Attice, incipe id cupere, quo nos minus inepti videamur.

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54 In fact, Hutchinson (1998) convincingly argues that all of Cicero’s letters aim to persuade: “Even where letters seem at a superficial glance to be simply expressing the writer’s feelings, or conveying news, or merely joking, closer consideration of the context and the detail shows again and again that the writing is infused with persuasion, with the attempt to make the addressee believe or feel in a particular way, most commonly about the author…The epistolary aim of sustaining friendship exhibits its connections with the oratorical aim of wooing the audience…” (p. 21).

55 *Ad Att. 6.6.4.13-16*, written Aug. 50.
The letters of my friends call me to a triumph, a matter which, as I think, ought not to be neglected by us because of this rebirth of ours. You too, my Atticus, start wanting this so that we don’t look so silly.

According to Cicero, the display that one’s friends put on in respect to the triumph is just as important as the display of the potential triumphator. He commands Atticus, like a good imperator, to start wanting the triumph for him, because by doing so he will make Cicero’s wanting it seem more justified. Cicero wants Atticus to be seen wanting the triumph for him, i.e. to put on a show of wanting on Cicero’s behalf. The use of the 1st person plural verb here is significant. It’s not the ‘royal ‘we’’ here, instead it is Cicero’s way of pulling Atticus into the spectacle of wanting with him – if Atticus doesn’t start putting on a show of wanting, Cicero’s display of wanting will force them both into a spectacle of seeming inepti.

Notice that Cicero says that his friends are ‘calling him to a triumph.’ He doesn’t say outright the he himself wants one – he simply says that he agrees with his friends and that, after his return from exile – described as a rebirth – he thinks he is justified in pursuing a triumph (rem a nobis, ut ego arbitror, propter hanc παλιγγενεσίαν nostram non neglegendam). He plays the game of wanting but not wanting even with Atticus. This same line can be read in yet another way; the statement that Cicero’s amici want a triumph for him is followed closely by his command that Atticus start

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56 As far as we can tell, this is in fact the truth. In the extant letters, the first mention of a triumph for Cicero is made by Caelius, not by Cicero at all (Ad Fam. 8.5 discussed above).

57 Note that the idea of rebirth fits nicely with the rhetorical tactic he uses in his letter to Cato (Ad Fam. 15.4, discussed above) of coming back from exile as a changed (Ro)man.

58 Cf. Wistrand (1979) p. 51: “What we can say for certain is that Cicero’s manner of going about the business squares extremely well with his wish to appear as passive on this point, since Atticus had obviously announced his disapproval of Cicero’s plans…”
wanting it for him as well. In this way he is (not so) subtly advising Atticus to make sure that he shows himself to be among the \textit{amici} of the previous sentence; a display of triumphal \textit{amicitia} is just as much for the eyes of the potential \textit{triumphator} as it is for the voting committee.

Cicero mentions his interest in a triumph two months earlier in another of his letters to Atticus:

\begin{quote}
Reliqua plena adhuc et laudis et gratiae, digna iis libris quos dilaudas: conservatae civitates, cumulate publicanis satis factum; offensus contumelia nemo, decreto iusto et severo perpauci, nec tamen quisquam ut queri audent; res gestae dignae triumpho, de quo ipso nihil cupide agemus, sine tuo quidem consilio certe nihil.\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

The rest [of my governorship] is up to this point full of praise and thanks, worthy of those books which you so extravagantly praise: states have been kept safe, enough has been fully done for the tax-farmers, no one has been offended by insult – very few have been so offended that they dare to complain; my \textit{res gestae} are worthy of a triumph, but in regards to a triumph, I won’t do anything rash and I certainly won’t do anything without consulting you first.

This letter reads like a miniature, textual version of a triumph – Cicero parades his \textit{res gestae} in front of Atticus’ eyes and declares them worthy of a (real) triumph. Indeed, his actions as a governor are “\textit{plena adhuc et laudis et gratiae},” the very stuff that supplications and triumphs are made of. However, he assures Atticus that he won’t do anything \textit{cupide} regarding the triumph; in other words, he tells Atticus that he knows the rules and that he will put on the proper display of un-wanting. He also claims that he won’t do anything about the triumph without first consulting Atticus.\textsuperscript{60} The rules of friendship-displays with respect to the triumph work both ways; not only can Cicero use friendship as a trump card when seeking support for his triumph (if you’re truly my

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ad Att. 6.3.3.1-6}, written Jun. 50.

\textsuperscript{60} Which isn’t in fact the case, for what it’s worth. Cicero sent the letter requesting Cato’s support in January of 50, and this letter to Atticus is dated June of the same year.
friend you’ll show your support), but he also makes an effort to show that asking for help from Atticus is a display of his own friendship (my asking for your support shows that I value your friendship).\(^{61}\)

In yet another letter to Atticus, Cicero expresses his delight at the display of friendship from Pompey. In this passage, Cicero describes his reaction to a previous letter from Atticus in which Atticus reports Pompey’s support to Cicero:

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\text{Nihil potuit esse iucundius; erat enim de re publica, de opinione quam is vir haberet integritatis meae, de benevolentia quam ostendit eo sermone quem habuit de triumpho. Sed tamen hoc iucundissimum, quod intellexi te ad eum venisse ut eius animum erga me perspices; hoc mihi, inquam, accidit iucundissimum.}^{62}
\]

Nothing could be more pleasing; for it [the letter] was about the republic, about the opinion that that man [Pompey] has of my integrity, about the kindness he showed in that conversation about my triumph. But nevertheless, this was the most pleasing part, that I knew that you had come to him so that you might perceive his mindset toward me. This was to me, I say, the most pleasant thing.

This letter is Cicero’s re-presentation to Atticus of Atticus’ presentation of Pompey’s show of *amicitia*. Cicero puts on a spectacle of his reactions to Atticus’ letter and its content; he is happy to hear that Pompey is openly supportive of his bid for a triumph. However, what makes him even more pleased is Atticus’ own spectacle – the fact that he put on a show of his *amicitia* toward Cicero for Pompey by means of demanding a spectacle from Pompey, either of support or lack thereof, for Cicero’s triumph. In yet

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\(^{61}\) Cf. Cicero’s letter to Cato (*Ad Fam. 15.4*, discussed above), in which Cicero says that he feels that their friendship is such a close one that he doesn’t feel as if he needs to ask for Cato’s support (but then, near the end, asks for it anyway…). Also relevant is the fact that Cicero purportedly wrote letters to all the senators asking for support for his triumph except Hirrus; so the opposite is true as well, namely that *not* asking someone for help is a display of the lack of *amicitia*. For techniques of political canvassing, which are most likely reflected in triumphal canvassing, see Millar (1998) p. 19ff.

\(^{62}\) *Ad Att. 7.2.5.4-9*, written Dec. 50.
another layer of spectacle, Cicero then shows his amicitia toward Atticus by proclaiming that Atticus’ friendship is more important to him than Pompey’s friendship and also than the triumph itself.63

The true sense of the reciprocity of amicitia is quite clearly expressed in a letter that Cicero wrote to Appius Pulcher regarding the latter’s bid for a triumph:

Ego, etsi ipse ita iudicabam et fiebam crebro a meis per litteras certior, tamen maximam laetitiam cepi ex tuis litteris de spe minime dubia et plane explorata triumphi tui, neque vero ob eam causam, quo ipse facilius consequerer (nam id quidem Ἐπικούρειον est), sed mehercule quod tua dignitas atque amplitudo mihi est ipsa cara per se…Illud quod polliceris velim pro tua fide diligentiaque et pro nostra non instituta sed iam inveterata amicitia cures enitare, ut supplicatio nobis quam honorificentissime quam primumque decernatur.64

Even though I already thought so and was frequently made more certain of it by letters from my friends, nevertheless I take great joy from your letter about the sure-fire and clearly ascertained hope of your triumph, and I’m not happy because it means I might more easily get a triumph myself – for indeed that’s an Epicurean idea – but by god because your dignitas and your greatness are dear to me all by themselves…For the sake of your faith and diligence and our not-just-established-but-already-long-time-friendship, I would like for you to see to it that you strive to do what you promised, namely that a supplication is decreed for me as honorably and as soon as possible.

First, Cicero expresses his friendship to Appius by saying that Appius’ certain triumph is a source of happiness for him – Appius’ good fortune is Cicero’s good fortune, but not, he assures his friend, because Cicero himself might more easily gain a triumph because of this; his happiness is based solely on Appius’ happiness. However, after stating that there’s no personal motivation behind his joy, he cashes in his chips. This same

63 For the relationship between Cicero and Pompey as seen through the letters, see Holliday (1969); cf. Lawrence (1964).

64 Ad Fam. 3.9.2.1-6.4.1-4, written Mar. 50.
friendship that has resulted in Cicero’s pure and unmotivated happiness for Appius’ success also demands, according to Cicero, that Appius himself offer a reciprocal display of amicitia by showing support for Cicero’s bid for a supplication.65

In another example of Cicero’s clever use of rhetoric in the letters, Cicero reminds L. Paullus of their on-going friendship and uses that reference to friendship in an effort to gain Paullus’ support for his triumph:

Sed ita fato nescio quo contigisse arbitror ut tibi ad me ornandum semper detur facultas, mihi ad remunerandum nihil suppetat praeter voluntatem. Ornasti consulatum, ornasti reeditum meum; incidunt meum tempus rerum gerendarum in ipsum consulatum tuum. Itaque cum et tua summa amplitudo et dignitas et meus magnus honos magnaque existimatio postulare videatur ut a te plurimis verbis contendam ac petam ut quam honorificentissimum senatus consultum de meis gestis faciendum cures, non audeo vehementer a te contendere, ne aut ipse tuae perpetuae consuetudinis erga me oblitus esse videar aut te oblitum putem.66

But I think that by some fate it has happened that the ability to support me is always given to you, but to me nothing is available for repaying you except the desire to do so. You supported my consulate, you supported my return from exile; the time of my res gestae has met up with your consulate. And so, your highest distinction and dignitas and my great honor and great reputation seem to demand that I seek from you with many words that you see to it that a decree is made as honorably as possible about my res gestae. I don’t dare to ask it of you too strongly, lest I seem to have forgotten your on-going familiarity toward me, or lest I think that you have forgotten.

Cicero presents Paullus with a list of the acts of friendship that Paullus has shown Cicero in the past. In essence, Cicero gives Paullus a textual triumph – while ostensibly discussing his own res gestae, Cicero displays Paullus’ res gestae of friendship relative to himself and re-presents Paullus as an amicus in a spectacle of words meant for Paullus’ eyes. After ‘convincing’ Paullus of the existence of their friendship, he claims that he doesn’t want to ask him for help too forcefully, lest he insult him by the very act of

65 Note that this is the same Appius that gave up his bid for a triumph by crossing into the city and therefore forfeiting his imperium, as discussed above (Ad Fam. 8.6).

66 Ad Fam. 15.13.2.1-11, written Sept. 51.
asking – their friendship is so close that they shouldn’t have to ask one another for help, which means that asking for support might indicate a lessening of the friendship. Cicero puts on a show of trying not to put on a show of a lack of *amicitia*.

In the letter to Cato discussed above, Cicero tries to play this same game of *amicitia*:

> Nunc velim sic tibi persuades, si de iis rebus ad senatum relatum sit, me existimaturum summam mihi laudem tributam si tu honorem meum sententia tua comprobas, idque, etsi talibus de rebus gravissimos homines et rogare solere et rogari scio, tamen admonendum potius te a me quam rogandum puto. Tu es enim qui me tuis sententiis saepissime ornasti, qui oratone, qui praedicatione, qui summis laudibus in senatu, in contionibus ad caelum extulisti; cuius ego semper tanta esse verborum pondera tibi putavi ut uno verbo tuo cum mea laude coniuncto omnia adsequi me arbitrarer; te denique memini, cum cuidam clarissimo atque optimo viro supplicationem non decerneris, dicere te decreturum si referre tur ob eas res quas is consul in urbe gessisset; tu idem mihi supplicationem decrevisti togato non, ut multis, re publica bene gesta sed, ut nemini, re publica conservata.67

Now I would like you to persuade yourself that, if a motion about these affairs is put to the senate, I would consider the highest praise to have been attributed to me if you approve my *honos* with your vote, and this, although I know that very grave men are accustomed to ask and be asked about such affairs, nevertheless I think it best to suggest it to you rather than ask you. For you are the one who has very often supported me with your votes, who has exalted me to the skies with speech, with commendation, with the highest praise in the senate and in public meetings; it’s you the weight of whose words I have always considered so great that I think that with one of your words joined with my praise I achieve all things. Finally, remember that when you did not decree a supplication to a certain very noble man, you said that you would decree one if the motion concerned the things that he accomplished as a consul in the city; you even decreed a supplication to me when I was a private citizen, not, as for many, for having done well for the republic, but, as for no one else, for having saved the republic.

The majority of the relatively lengthy letter is a long description of Cicero’s actions while in his province. Cicero follows this textual version of a triumph (a word-parade of his *res gestae*) with another sort of spectacle. Just as in the letter to L. Paullus, he displays a list to Cato of Cato’s actions as a friend to Cicero. He defines Cato in terms of his friendship to Cicero (*tu es enim is qui… “For you are the guy who…”*). Cicero re-presents Cato to

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67 *Ad Fam* 15.4.11.1-16
Cato as a friend – his letter is a mirror into which Cato will look and see himself praising Cicero and supporting him in the senate. He even shows Cato an image of himself giving Cicero a supplication; Cicero is merely asking him to repeat what he has already done before. Just as he sets Cato apart by defining him as “the guy who” supports Cicero publicly, he also sets himself apart from other Romans (and therefore more closely links himself with Cato in terms of amicitia) by defining himself in terms of non, ut multis...sed, ut nemini - he reminds Cato that the circumstances for Cicero’s supplication were (and presumably still are) unlike those for anyone else; both Cicero and Cato are Romans set apart from the rest.

Caelius Rufus (among others) sent letters to Cicero with the news that a supplication was decreed for him, along with the news that Cato did not vote for it. The news that Cato did not vote for the supplication for him does not deter Cicero from trying to persuade Cato to vote for a triumph:

...quem ego currum aut quam lauream cum tua laudatione conferrem? Nam ad meum sensum et ad illud sincerum ac subtile iudicium nihil potest esse laudabilius quam ea tua oratio quae est ad me perscripta a meis necessariis.

Sed causam meae voluntatis (non enim dicam cupiditatis) exposui tibi superioribus litteris; quae etiam si parum iusta tibi visa est, hanc tamen habet rationem, non ut nimis concupiscendus honos sed tamen, si deferatur a senatu, minime asperrandus esse videatur. Spero autem illum ordinem pro meis ob rem publicam suscepticis laboribus me non indignum honore, usitato praesertim, existimaturum. Quod si ita erit, tantum ex te peto, quod amicissime scribis, ut, cum tuo iudicio quod amplissimum esse arbitarris mihi tribueris, si id quod maluero acciderit, gaudeas. Sic enim fecissse te et sensisse et scripsisse video, resque ipsa declarat tibi illum honorem nostrum supplicationis iucundum fuisse, quod scribendo adfuisti; haec enim senatus consulta non ignorant ab amicissimis eius cuius <de> honore agitur scribi solere.  

68 See Ad Fam. 8.11

69 Ad Fam. 15.6.1.10-2.14, written Jul. 50.
...What triumphal car or laurel could I compare to your praise? For nothing is able to be more praiseworthy, according to my sensibility and that sincere and subtle judgment, than that speech of yours which has been transcribed to me by my friends. But I have explained in earlier letters to you the reason for my wish (I won’t call it desire), even if it doesn’t seem justifiable enough, nevertheless, this is why it makes sense: the honor ought not to be coveted too much, but, if the senate should offer it, it wouldn’t seem like a very good idea to spurn it. However, I hope that that order, for the sake of the labors I undertook for the republic, will think me not unworthy of an honor that is indeed a common one. If this so happens, I only ask from you, as you wrote in such a friendly manner, since you attributed to me what you thought most complimentary, that you be happy if what I prefer to happen happens. For I see that you have thus acted, felt, and written, and that the matter itself declares that for you that honor of ours of a supplication was pleasing, because you were present when the decree was written. For I’m not ignorant of the fact that this decree of the senate is usually written up by the closest friends of the one for whose sake the honor is being decreed.

In this second letter to Cato, Cicero plays both the un-wanting game and the amicitia trump. He claims that Cato’s friendship is more important than a triumphal car or laurel. Notice that Cicero never once mentions the triumph by name; he displays both the proper level of interest in the triumph (because he places it lower in the hierarchy of desire than amicitia) and the value he places on Cato’s friendship. This still works within Cicero’s line of argument, however, since, according to Cicero, the way in which Cato might best show his amicitia is by approving of a triumph for Cicero. Cicero emphasizes his moderation with respect to wanting the triumph; he makes a prominent

\footnote{For a detailed treatment of Cicero’s persuasive style in this letter, see Hutchinson (1998) p. 87-100.}

\footnote{Cf. Hutchinson (1998) p. 47: “They [the letters] show, too, however, Cicero’s intense consciousness of his addressee. The manner and nature of the letters are radically adapted to suit their recipients. One can also see concerns and thoughts being modified to fit the person. For short moments in the letters at most, one might possibly think Cicero to be only pouring out his emotions; but at least more usually that object must be seen as bound up with the wish to persuade, affect, and soothe, and to keep particular relationships in harmony.” This seems to particularly explain how Cicero seems to very delicately deal with Cato in this letter. Also, cf. Hutchinson p. 87, regarding this letter: “On a superficial reading the letter may seem a lifeless series of facts, but analysis displays a purposeful and potent narrative, with many affinities to the narrative of Caesar.” This link to Caesar’s writings will become more interesting as we move to a discussion of Caesar’s role in Cicero’s bid for a triumph later on.}

\footnote{For Cicero’s failure to mention ‘triumph’ in this letter to Cato, see Wistrand (1979) p. 13. For Cicero’s various versions of his military deeds, including the one given here to Cato, see Wistrand (1979) p. 10-11. However, Wistrand takes the letters in which Cicero discusses his res gestae in the province at face value, as factually reliable. This seems dangerous, especially in light of the present discussion.}
display of not calling it a cupiditas (although, of course, by the very act of not calling it a cupiditas, he calls it a cupiditas) and goes on to say that he isn’t over-wanting it, but if the senate offers a triumph, he wouldn’t turn it down.

Cicero praises Cato’s speech, which he says that his friends have sent to him in letters, as a good-faith act of amicitia, but, at the same time, he is calling attention to the fact that these displays of amicitia are displays in the true sense – Cicero’s friends were among the spectators of Cato’s display, and even Cicero has ‘seen the show.’ Perhaps the most interesting part of Cato’s spectacle (and Cicero’s re-presentation of the spectacle) is what Cicero leaves unmentioned – i.e. the fact that Cato did not vote for the supplication. Cicero is telling Cato that he knows what he said, but also what he didn’t do.

In Cato’s response to Cicero’s first letter, as we have seen, he turns the tables on Cicero by refusing to play the game – he takes what Cicero says at face value and refuses to recognize the game that Cicero is playing (both the game of un-wanting and the game of amicitia). In Cicero’s response to Cato, he, in a sense, calls Cato’s bluff; he turns Cato’s words around to his own benefit, and says that if Cato truly is happy that Cicero ‘got what he wanted,’ then he will also be happy (and presumably then support Cicero) if Cicero is decreed a triumph. Cicero takes his own turn at refusing to play Cato’s game of refusing to play.

He finishes his argument by again showing Cato a picture of Cato as a friend – Cicero says that he “sees” (video) Cato’s actions, opinions, and writings – he appropriates
these things as spectacles for his own use – and he mentions the fact that Cato was present at the writing of the supplication decree, and uses this as proof that Cato is not only *amicus*, but indeed is *amicissimus* toward Cicero.\(^{73}\)

After the senate passed the decree for a supplication for Cicero, Caelius writes to Cicero a letter that includes the details of the senate meeting:

Non diu sed acriter nos tuae supplicationes torserunt; incideramus enim in difficilem nodum. Nam Curio tui cupidissimus, cui omnibus rationibus comitiales <dies> eripiebantur, negebat se ullo modo pati posse decerni supplicationes…Itaque ad pactionem descendimus, et confirmarunt consules se his supplicationibus in hunc annum non usuros. Plane quod utrisque consulibus gratias agas, Paulo magis certe; nam Marcellus sic respondit ei, spem in istis supplicationibus non habere, Paulus se omnino in hunc annum non edicturum. Renuntiatum nobis erat Hirrum diutius dicturum. Prendimus eum; non modo non fecit sed, cum de hostiis ageretur et posset rem impedire si ut numeraretur postularet, tacuit; tantum Catoni adsensus est, qui <de> te locutus honorifice non decretar supplicationes. Tertius ad hos Favonius accessit. Qua re pro ciusque natura et instituto gratiae sunt agendae, his quod tantum voluntatem ostenderunt, pro sententia cum impedire possent non pugnarunt, Curioni vero quod de suarum actionum cursu tua causa deflexit. Nam Furnius et Lentulus, ut debuerunt, quasi eorum res esset una nobiscum circumierunt et laborarunt. Balbi quoque Corneli operam et sedulitatem laudare possum; nam cum Curione vehementer locutus est et eum, si alter fecisset, inyiriam Caesari facturus dixit, tum eius fidem in suspicionem adduxit. Decrerant quidem [qui] neque transigi volebant Domitii Scipiones; quibus hac re ad intercessionem evocandam interpellantibus venustissime Curio respondit se eo libentius non intercedere quod quosdam qui decernerent videret confici nolle.\(^{74}\)

Your supplication tortured us not for a long time, but bitterly; for we came to a difficult knot. For Curio really wanted to help your cause, but his comitial days were taken away from him for all kinds of reasons, so he said he couldn’t in any way allow your supplication to be decreed…And so we came to an agreement, and the consuls agreed that they would not hold your supplication in this year. Clearly you should thank both consuls, certainly Paullus more than the other one, for Marcellus responded to Curio that he had no hope in this supplication, whereas Paullus said that he wouldn’t decree it for this year. It had been announced to us that Hirrus would speak for a long time. We pressured him; not only did he not do it, but, although the sacrificial victims were being discussed and he was capable of impeding the matter if he demanded a house count, he was silent; he merely agreed with Cato, who spoke in an honorable way about you and then didn’t vote for the supplication. Favonius joined these to make a third. For this, you ought to thank them according to the nature and custom of each; the latter group because they merely displayed their will and, although they could have hurt you with their opinions, didn’t put up a fight. You should thank Curio because he put aside his

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\(^{73}\) For Cicero’s attitude toward Cato’s support of Bibulus’ triumph (as opposed to Cicero’s), see Wistrand (1979) p. 36-40.

\(^{74}\) *Ad Fam. 8.11.1.1-5, 7-30*, written May 50.
own agenda for your cause. Furnius and Lentulus, as they should, canvassed and worked together with me as if it was their own affair. I can also praise the hard work and earnestness of Balbus Cornelius because he talked urgently with Curio and said that if Curio acted otherwise, he would do harm to Caesar and he called Curio’s loyalty to Caesar into question. Domitius, Scipio and their gang voted for the supplication but didn’t want it to be carried out; to these guys, who kept interrupting in order to get an intermission called, Curio very charmingly said that he freely did not interfere in the matter because he saw that certain ones who voted for it didn’t want it to happen.

This letter is yet another example of a spectacle of a spectacle – a triumph of amicitia. Caelius puts on a parade of who showed themselves to be friends of Cicero and who pointedly made displays of lack of friendship, with friendship being defined by how one reacts toward Cicero’s bid for a supplication. More specifically, it is a display of the various degrees of amicitia shown by those in the senate during the discussion of the supplication. In turn, those who supported Cicero, Caelius says, should be thanked according to the degree of help they offered. Both consuls showed their support, but Paullus did so more than Marcellus. Cato et al. should be thanked not so much for what they did in support of Cicero, but for what they didn’t do – Caelius says that if they wanted too, they could have hurt Cicero’s cause.

But, again, this is not just a report of who’s nice (to Cicero) – it also contains the names of who’s been naughty. Domitius, Scipio and their lackeys hold an interesting, and complex, place in this hierarchy of Cicero’s friends and enemies. The spectacle that they perform is an odd twist on the idea of wanting without seeming to want. Scipio & Co., according to Caelius’ report, vote for the supplication, and so on the surface put on a show of supporting Cicero, but in fact keep trying to screw up the works by interrupting. It’s as if they are putting on a show of not wanting to seem to not want Cicero’s supplication. The scene becomes even more complex when Curio takes the stage. Curio calls attention to the Scipio Show, by saying that he won’t veto the matter because he
sees (videret) that the Scipio Gang, although they voted for it, don’t want the motion to go through. So, if we trace the spectacle backwards, we find that Caelius is re-presenting the spectacle of Curio watching (and reacting with his own display) the spectacle put on by the Scipiones:

Scipiones ← Curio ← Caelius (and the rest of the senate) ← Cicero.

All of these spectacles are, then, reflections of Cicero’s own display and the literal spectacle of his potential supplication.

2.5: The Trouble with Triumphs and the Trouble with Caesar

Cicero, more than most it seems, runs into trouble when it comes to getting a triumph. However, although the senate never actually decrees a triumph for him, Cicero seems to have experienced a few quasi-triumphs (or perhaps anti-triumphs) of his own, without the senate’s help. As discussed earlier, returning from exile seems to have certain elements in common with returning from the provinces. In a letter to Atticus, Cicero describes what he experienced on his return to Rome after his exile:75

A.d. III Id. Sext. cognovi, cum Brundisi essem, litteris Quinti fratris mirifico studio omnium aetatum atque ordinum, incredibili concursu Italiae, legem comitiis centuriatissimae esse perlatam. Inde a Brundisinis honestissime ornatus iter ita feci ut undique ad me cum gratulatione legati convenerint. Ad urbem ita veni ut nemo ullius ordinis homo nomenclatorii notus fuerit qui mihi obviam non venerit, praeter eos inimicos quibus id ipsum, se inimicos esse, non liceret aut dissimulare aut negare. Cum venisset ad portam Capenam, gradus templorum ad infima plebe completi erant a qua plausus maximo cum esset mihi gratulatio significata, similis et frequentia <et> plausus me usque ad Capitolium celebravit in foroque et in ipso Caopitolo miranda multitudo fuit.76

75 For a discussion of Cicero’s return and his reception in the city, see Petersson (1920) p. 323-330.

76 Ad Att. 4.1.4.9-22, written Sept. 57.
On August 8, when I was at Brundisium, I learned from my brother Quintus’ letter that the law had been passed in the *comitia centuriata* with the wondrous eagerness of all ages and orders and an incredible gathering of Italy. Then I made a trip from Brundisium that was so honorably decked out that legates from all over came to me with congratulations. My arrival in the city was such that there was no man of any order known to my *nomenclator* who didn’t come to greet me except those enemies who weren’t able to hide or deny the very fact that they were my enemies. When I came to the Capenan gate, the steps of the temple were filled with the common people, who showed their congratulations to me with the greatest applause. A similar, crowded applause followed me all the way to the Capitol, and in the forum and in the Capitol itself there was a wondrous crowd.

Cicero’s description of his return to Rome has many echoes of a triumph in it, and in some ways it is even more elaborate than a triumph. In Cicero’s description, the audience is the most important element; he turns his focus onto the nature of his audience, and away from what was originally the true spectacle – himself returning from exile. He claims that this triumphant return is voted for by not just the senate, but by the whole of Italy – Cicero’s audience isn’t just Rome, it’s people of all ages and classes and from all of Italy. His journey from Brundisium to Rome is a parade in and of itself, but he doesn’t dwell on describing himself during the journey, instead he says that what made it so ornate were the legates sent to congratulate him from all over. When he arrives in the city, again, he doesn’t dwell on his own image, but instead describes the nature and reactions of the audience to his appearance. Everyone known to the *nomenclator* was accounted for, either as friend (those who made a show of their

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77 For the rhetorical structure of this letter, see Meyer (2000) p. 109-131. In particular, cf. Meyer p. 116: “Cicero’s description of his return to Rome could easily be excerpted as a composition separate from the epistle itself. In style and content it is virtually a historiographical monograph, like similar passages in Polybius on Scipio or Plutarch on Timon. There is a rhetorical motive behind this extended treatment of the *reditus*. The perception of this event is of paramount importance to the recovery of Cicero’s *ethos*, and it is natural that the orator would use his power to create in his reader’s mind an impression favorable to his purpose…It is in the context of these episodes [his return] that Cicero will ‘prove’ the restoration of his political identity.” Also, p. 119: “Altogether the effect on the reader is that he is reading a strictly factual and impartial – and therefore undeniably ‘plausible’ – account of events; indeed, it has the feel of an official ‘dispatch’ to the Senate.”
friendship) or foe. The enemies, of course, complete the recipe for a triumph; just like the captive displayed in a ‘real’ triumph, these enemies couldn’t help but be on display – they were unable to hide the fact that they were *inimicos*. Moreover, they are the defeated enemy – they didn’t want Cicero to return from exile, so by entering the city, he is in a sense triumphing over them. Cicero even lays out the parade route for Atticus, and, much like a triumph, it led up to the Capitol, and he was followed and met by cheering crowds all along the way.⁷⁸

In his letter to Cato asking for support for a *supplicatio*, Cicero sets out in detail his actions in the province:

> Confectis his rebus ad oppidum Eleutherocilicum Pindenissum exercitum adduxi. Quod cum esset altissimo et munitissimo loco ab iisque incoleretur qui ne regibus quidem umquam paruiscent, cum et fugitivos recipere et Parthorum adventum acerrime exspectarent, ad existimationem imperi pertinere arbitratus sum comprimere eorum audaciam, quo facilius etiam certerorum animi qui alieni essent ab imperio nostro frangerentur. Vallo et fossa circumdedi, sex castellis castrisque maximis saepsi, aggere vineis turribus oppugnavi ususque tormentis multis, multis sagittariis, magno labore meo sine ulla molestia sumptuus sociorum, septimo quinquagesimo die rem confeci, ut omnibus partibus urbis disturbatis aut incensis compulsi in potestatem meam pervenirent. His erant finitimi pari scelere et audacia Tebarani. Ab iis Pindenisso capto obsides accepi; exercitum in hiberna dimisi… ⁷⁹

When these things were completed, I led the army to the Free-Cilician town of Pindenissum. Since this town was in a very high and fortified place and was inhabited by people who had never even obeyed kings, and since they received fugitives and were most eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Parthians, I thought that it was in the best interest of the reputation of our *imperium* to repress their arrogance so that the spirits of anyone else who were strangers to our *imperium* might be crushed more easily. I surrounded the town with a rampart and a trench, I enclosed it with six forts and large camps, I besieged it with ramparts, penthouses, and towers, and using many catapults, many arrows, and my own great labor without any trouble or expense for the allies, I accomplished the deed on the 57th day, so that, with all parts of the city ransacked or burned, they were compelled to come under my power. These had neighbors – the Trebarani – who were just as wicked and arrogant as the Pindenissans. I received hostages from these after Pindenissum was captured, then I sent the army to winter quarters…

⁷⁸ Cf. Meyer (2000) p. 123: “Instead of the forgiven *exsul*, Cicero has portrayed himself as the triumphing general returning after the war. This is the key ingredient in restoring his *ethos* as *dux togatus.*”

⁷⁹ *Ad Fam. 15.4.10.1-16*
The description makes up over half of a fairly long letter (9 out of 16 sections). By describing his proconsular deeds, Cicero is creating a spectacle of his res gestae for Cato – he is, in essence, leading a triumph through his words. As with Cicero’s return from exile, this textual triumph has similarities to a ‘real’ triumph. The most noticeable echo in this passage is the re-presentation of the conquered enemy. Just as in a triumph, Cicero leads the conquered enemy before his audience and displays them in a way that is most beneficial to the imperator. Cicero portrays the Pindenissans as arrogant (audaciam) and foreign to Roman rule (alieni essent ab imperio nostro). Although they’re not as formidable an enemy as the Parthians, they are in league with them, which makes them, according to Cicero, worthy opponents. Cicero even re-performs the act of taking hostages from the Trebarani, who are just as wicked and arrogant as their neighbors (pari scelere et audicia). Although Cicero was never awarded a ‘proper’ triumph, he manages to celebrate one in his own way through the power of words.

This trouble with the triumph for Cicero is closely linked in the letters with the source of the problem – Cicero’s (and Rome’s) trouble with Caesar. Caelius discusses the growing tension that Caesar’s province and army causes in the first extant letter that

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80 Carcopino would have us attribute Cicero’s failures in political matters to his failure to be a good statesman, or, for that matter, to his failure to be a good man: “His Letters, every page of which reveals the eccentricities of his mind and the vices of his heart, the faults and defects of his personality, explain the perpetual bankruptcy which were their consequence and their penalty. In reading them we see why, in spite of his extraordinary culture, his dazzling gifts and his immense talent, Cicero met with nothing but failure and frustration in politics. He possessed none of the qualities which make and he had all the faults which destroy a statesman” (p. 231)
mentions a triumph for Cicero, and in many of the other letters in which Cicero talks about his bid for a triumph, he also puzzles over what to do about Caesar. Indeed, Caelius mentions Cicero’s triumph and Caesar almost in the same breath:

Quod ad rem publicam attinet, in unam causam omnis contentio coniecta est, de provinciis; in qua adhuc [est] incubuisse cum senatu Pompeius videtur ut Caesar Id. Nov. decedat…Scaena rei totius haec…

As for what pertains to the republic, every argument is about the same thing: the provinces. Up to this point Pompey seems to have been pressuring the senate that Caesar leave his province on Nov. 15th…This is how the stage is set…

This passage is in the same letter as, and in fact immediately follows, Caelius’ representation of what went on in the senate during the vote for Cicero’s supplication. Recall that Caelius started out the section on the *supplicatio* by describing it as a difficult knot. He, then, follows one spectacle of a tough situation with a spectacle of an even more difficult dilemma – the tension between Caesar and Pompey. He introduces his description of the details of this struggle with an image of the stage. Caesar (and Pompey) is putting on a show, one which the whole of Rome is watching (*in unam causam omnis contentio*). Does Cicero’s supplication (and subsequent bid for a triumph) become the opening act for this main event, or is Caesar’s show the reason that Cicero (and his triumph) get shoved off the stage?

81 *Ad Fam. 8.5.3.8*, written Sept. 51.
83 *Ad Fam. 8.11.3.1-4, 7*
84 *8.11.1*
The trouble with Caesar turns everything in Rome upside down. This applies to Cicero’s bid for a triumph as well. Cicero makes this clear in a letter to Atticus in which he seeks his friend’s advice about both situations:

…it pleases me greatly that we do something about a triumph, and to be outside the city for a very good reason…You, however, will think about my situation: first by what craft I might keep on Caesar’s good side, then about the triumph itself; which I see is easily done, unless contemporary events in the republic hinder it. I came to this conclusion both from letters from friends and the supplication…But nevertheless, Caesar, congratulating me about my supplication, he triumphed about Cato’s vote/speech, he didn’t write what Cato said in his speech but only that he had not decreed the supplication for me.

Cicero says that he wants to use his bid for a triumph as an excuse to stay out of Rome – his reason for this is that he wants to delay the necessity of dealing with his relationship with Caesar. Under the shadow of Caesar, then, the triumph has ceased to be a goal – something to be attained in its own right – and has become a tool by which to avoid entering Rome. Cicero’s desire to stay out of Rome is itself a complete turnabout from

85 Ad Att. 7.1.5.4-6, 7.1-4, 8-11, written Nov. 50.


87 Cf. Carcopino (1951): “To avoid having to take part in a civil war, Cicero would willingly have resumed his proconsulship to preside over the mountaineers’ boyish games. His fantastic wish was not granted. Nor were the undeserved honours of a Cilician triumph granted to him. His military command and his ambition
his normal desires; during his tour of duty in the province, nearly every letter sent to his
friends and family lamented his absence from Rome and begged for help in getting him
home as soon as possible. In this letter to Atticus, however, he says that he wishes he
were still in his province so that he didn’t have to deal with Caesar. Cicero also says
that Caesar “triumphed” over the news of Cato’s speech honoring Cicero, by which he
means that Caesar made a display of happiness at Cicero’s good fortune. However, the
fact that Cicero uses triumphare to describe Caesar’s reaction is significant – with Caesar
around, the question of Cicero’s triumph turns into an occasion for Caesar to triumph. Even in his displays of amicitia, Caesar conquers all: Caesar’s friendships are described
in terms of military mastery – when Caesar is a triumphator, no one else is allowed to
play the role.

Caesar even manages to be a financial hindrance to Cicero’s triumph:

Mihi autem illud molestissimum est, quod solvendi sunt nummi Caesari et instrumentum
triumphi eo conferendum; est enim ἄµορφον ἀντιπολιτευόµενον χρεωφειλέτην esse.90

However, to me this is the most troubling thing, that the money and means for my
triumph must be paid and handed over to Caesar; for it’s unseemly to be indebted to a
political opponent.

There is one thing about the triumph (and life at Rome in general) that Caesar does not
change – even with Caesar in the mix, it’s still all about appearances, about putting on a

\[\begin{align*}
\text{to secure a triumph, however, served at least one useful purpose, for to them he owed the fact that he could not re-enter Rome until he had laid down the fasces of a general. This gave him the option of staying outside [the city] as long as he liked and thus remaining aloof from the fray” (p. 255). Carcopino, true to form, treats every possible act on Cicero’s part as a reflection of his ineptitude.}

88 5.7-8: Ridebis hoc loco fortasse: quam vellem etiam nunc in provincia morari! Note that Cicero even brings attention to how absurd his wish is compared to his former feelings on the matter.

89 For a discussion of Caesar’s own, actual triumphs, see Deutsch (1926), and Weinstock (1971) p. 60-79.

90 Ad Att. 7.8.5.9-12, written Jan. 50.
spectacle. However, instead of using his money to pay for the spectacle of a triumph, Cicero must hand it over to Caesar – and not to put on a show, but to avoid one; the unsightly spectacle of being in debt to an enemy.\footnote{For the problem of debt at the time of the civil war, both for Cicero and Caesar, see Frederiksen (1966). For yet another example of Caesar getting in the way of Cicero's triumph, see Ad Att. 7.7.4.1-6, 4.8.5.1: De honore nostro nisi quid occulte Caesar per suas tribunos molitus erit, cetera videntur esse tranquilla; tranquillissimus autem animus meus, qui totum istuc aequi boni facit, et eo magis quod iam a multis audio constitutum esse Pompeio et eius consilio in Siciliam me mittere quod imperium habeam...Itaque si hoc imperium mihi molestum erit, utar ea porta quam primam videro. (“About our honos, unless Caesar is secretly cooking something up with his tribunes, it seems like smooth sailing the rest of the way. My mind is, however, very tranquil, which treats the whole affair as if it is all equally good, and more than that, because now I hear from many people that it has been decided by Pompey and his counsel to send me to Sicily since I still have imperium…And so if this imperium will be bothersome to me, I’ll use the first gate I see.”)}

With Caesar around, not only do triumphs become impossible, they also become dangerous:\footnote{During the political tensions leading up to the civil war, triumphs were not the only dangerous undertaking; for the dangers of Cicero writing to Atticus during this period, see Dodge (1901).}

\begin{quote}
Plane eum cui noster alterum consulatum deferret et triumphum (at quibus verbis! ‘pro tuis rebus gestis amplissimis’) inimicum habere nolueram. Ego scio et quem metuam et quam ob rem.\footnote{Ad Att. 7.26.2.6-9, written Mar. 49.}
\end{quote}

I was certainly not willing to make an enemy out of one to whom our Pompey offered another consulate and a triumph (and in what words! ‘For your most excellent res gestae’). I know whom to fear and why.

The relationship between \textit{amicitia} and the triumph was discussed above, but with Caesar, the link between the two changes. Pompey’s show of friendship to Caesar by way of offering him a triumph becomes a danger to Cicero. This offer of a triumph is not only a spectacle of \textit{amicitia} (and an odd one at that, since it’s between Caesar and Pompey – the
definition of *amicitia* itself changes around Caesar), but also, for Cicero, a spectacle of fear – one no longer counts his friends by way of the triumph, but those who should be feared (*ego scio et quem metuam et quam ob rem*).\(^{94}\)

The situation becomes even more dangerous for Cicero when Caesar’s attention is turned toward him:

\[
\text{…sit enim nobis amicus, quod incertum est, sed sit; deferet triumphum; non accipere}
\]

\[
<\text{vereor}> ne periculosum sit, <\text{accipere}> invidiosum ad bonos. ‘O rem’ inquis ‘difficilem et inexplicabilem!’ Atqui explicanda est; quid enim fieri potest?\(^{95}\)
\]

[Caesar] might be friendly to me, it’s uncertain, but he might be; he might offer me a triumph; I’m afraid to turn it down lest that be dangerous, but I’m afraid to accept it, since I might become hated by the *boni*. ‘O difficult and unsolvable problem!’ you say. But it must be solved; for what can be done?

For all the time and energy Cicero put into trying to gain support for and get voted a triumph, when he finally thinks he might be offered one, he doesn’t know what to do.

The problem is, of course, again, Caesar. If Caesar is the one who offers Cicero the triumph, the stakes of the spectacle become dangerously high. When Caesar’s gaze turns to Cicero, all of Rome looks with him. If he rejects the offer, Cicero will be rejecting Caesar’s display of *amicitia* and that would prove dangerous for Cicero.\(^{96}\) If, however, he accepts the offer, his reputation among the *boni* will be damaged. So, with Caesar in town, a triumph is impossible for Cicero, even if Caesar himself offers one. If Caesar’s brand of *amicitia*, as discussed above, is a conquest, then a triumph accepted from Caesar would be not a spectacle of Cicero Victor, but of Cicero Victus – again, Caesar is the ultimate, and only, *triumphator*.

\(^{94}\) For a discussion of Cicero’s indecision in this letter, see Gaillard (1983).

\(^{95}\) *Ad Att. 8.3.6.10-14*, written Mar. 49.

\(^{96}\) Again, under Caesar, displays of *amicitia* become fearful spectacles.
Since a ‘real’ triumph isn’t possible with Caesar in the mix, Cicero seems to turn once again to metaphorical quasi-triumphs. However, Caesar seems to have a hand in distorting this kind of triumph as well, until it resembles more of an anti-triumph than merely a quasi-triumph:

What could be more anti-triumphal than retreating from Rome and leaving it to the hands of the enemy? Cicero seems to be aware of the anti-triumphal nature of abandoning Rome, and his lament to Atticus again contains echoes of a ‘normal’ triumph, but these echoes are distorted:

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97 *Ad Att. 8.3.1.1-5, 3.15-19*

98 *Ad Att. 8.3.5-9, 15*
A ‘real’ triumph has a definite, even ritual, parade route, and even in Cicero’s other quasi-triumph he describes in detail the route of his journey.\textsuperscript{99} In this anti-triumph, however, Cicero agonizes over the absolute uncertainty of the whole affair. He doesn’t know where (not) to go or whom (not) to take with him. Caesar even manages to get in the way of this anti-triumph; Cicero says that he can’t take the route that leads to Pompey because Caesar is blocking the way. Abandoning Rome is the ultimate anti-triumph, but during civil war, where everything is turned upside down, an anti-triumph is the closest one can get to a ‘real’ triumph.

Let’s look at one more of Cicero’s pseudo-triumphal descriptions – a description of his return to Rome from the province in a letter he wrote to Tiro:\textsuperscript{100}

\begin{quote}
Ego ad urbem accessi prid. Non. Ian. Obviam mihi sic est proditum ut nihil possit fieri ornatus. Sed incidi in ipsam flammam civilis discordiae, vel potius beli; cui cum cuperem mederi et, ut arbitror, possem, cupiditates certorum hominum (nam ex utraque parte sunt qui pugnare cupiant) impedimento mihi fuerunt. Omnino et ipse Caesar, amicus noster, minacis ad senatum et acerbas litteras miserat et erat adhuc impudens, qui exercitum et provinciam invito senatu teneret, et Curio meus illum incitabat. Antonius quidem noster et Q. Cassius nulla vi expulsi ad Caesarem cum Curione profecti erant, postea quam senatus consulibus praetoribus tribunis pl. et nobis qui pro consulibus sumus negotium dederat ut curaremus ne quid res publica detrimenti caperet. Numquam maiore in periculo civitas fuit, numquam improbi cives habuerunt paratiorem ducem...Nobis inter has turbas senatus tamen frequens flagitavit triumphum...Haec te scire volui. Tu etiam atque etiam cura ut valeas litterasque ad me mittas quotienscumque habebis cui des. Etiam et etiam vale.\textsuperscript{101}
\end{quote}

I arrived near the city on Jan. 4\textsuperscript{th}. The procession that met me was such that nothing could have been more ostentatious. But I have fallen into the flame of civil strife, or rather of civil war; which, although I desire to heal and, I think, I could do so, but the desires of certain men (for there are those on both sides who desire to fight) were a hindrance to me. Indeed, Caesar himself, our friend, wrote a threatening letter to the senate and up to this point was shameless; he held an army and a province against the will of the senate, and my Curio encouraged him. Even our Antonius and Q. Cassius – with no force – were expelled and set out toward Caesar along with Curio. After this the

\textsuperscript{99} Cf. \textit{Ad Att. 4.1}, discussed above, and \textit{Ad Fam. 16.11}, discussed below.

\textsuperscript{100} For the relationship between Cicero and Tiro, see McDermott (1972).

\textsuperscript{101} \textit{Ad Fam. 16.11.2-3.2, 3.6-7.13-15}, written Jan.49.
senate handed over to the consuls, praetors, tribunes of the plebs, and to those of us who are proconsuls, the business of seeing to it that no harm comes to the republic. Never has the state been in greater danger. Never have shameless citizens had a more prepared leader…Among this turmoil, nevertheless, the senate has largely demanded a triumph for me…I wanted to write these things to you. See to it more and more that you get well and that you send letters to me as often as you have someone to whom you might give them. Again, I insist that you get well. Farewell.

Cicero structures this letter to reflect the troubled republic and his position within it. Sickness runs rampant throughout the letter – the sickness of the state is framed by the sickness of Cicero’s triumph, which is, in turn, framed by Tiro’s own illness.  

[Tiro’s illness][Cicero’s sick triumph][the sickness of the state][Cicero’s triumph][Tiro’s illness].

After addressing Tiro’s illness in the first section of the letter, Cicero presents Tiro with a spectacle of his return to Rome that echoes, again, a triumph, but a ‘sickly’ one. Cicero, of course, doesn’t actually enter Rome (a ‘sickly’ return) because he wants to try for a real triumph, but a procession comes out of Rome to meet him – so his return to Rome is in the form of a backward triumph. This is, of course, because he comes home to civil war, which turns everything on its head, including triumphs. The sickness of the state has infected Cicero’s triumph(ant return).

Cicero then expresses his desire (cuperem) to become a doctor to the state (and to Tiro and to his triumph), but is unable to do so because of the desire (cupiditas) of others.

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102 For Tiro’s health in relation to the health/safety of Rome in Cicero’s letters, see Clavel-Lévêque (1976) p. 252ff. Cf. Beard (2002) p. 141: “We are being asked to read, in other words, the sickness of Rome on and against the sickness of Tiro; the body politic against the body of the slave.”
Again, norms are turned upside down – normally, desire in a potential *triumphator* is bad form, but here, Cicero’s desire could save the state (and Tiro and his triumph) if only the desires of others (including, of course, Caesar himself) were not in his way.

From the sickness of the state (the heart of all sickness), Cicero returns to the triumph. He says that *inter turbas*, the senate still wants to grant him a triumph; but the affairs of the ailing state prevent it from happening – the infection is spreading. In fact, it has spread and infected not only the triumph but *amicitia* as well – Caesar is described as *amicus noster*, but this is a sick kind of friendship, a friendship that, as we have seen, frightens Cicero, even in the very act of offering him the triumph he seeks.

Finally, Cicero ends the letter by returning full circle to Tiro’s illness. However, whereas he focused in the beginning of the letter on Tiro’s sickness (*doleo non te valere*), at the end he concentrates on Tiro’s recovery – like a good doctor, he commands Tiro (and the state and his triumph) to get well.

Cicero the doctor ultimately fails to heal both the sick state and his ailing triumph, but this letter represents the potential for recovered health – the potential for Cicero to celebrate a real triumph surrounds and is closely linked to the state’s ability to recover from the oncoming civil war. However, just as Cicero is unable to have a normal triumph under the gaze of Caesar, neither is the state able to recover from its own internal wounds.

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103 It’s interesting to note that Cicero says *inter turbas*, which is the opposite of what goes on in the text – the sick state (the *turbas*) happens *inter* Cicero’s discussions of his triumph.

104 *Ad Fam. 16.1.2*
Although the triumphal regulations and laws described by Valerius Maximus seem detailed and complex – an attempt to govern the spectacle of the triumph itself – the ‘unofficial’ rules of the triumph are by far more intricate. The triumphal spectacle proper was only one of the displays put on by the (potential) triumphator and his friends and enemies, and one might argue that the triumph itself was not the most important of these spectacles. Celebrating a triumph could do wonders for a Roman general’s public image, but showing too much desire for a triumph, for example, could result in disaster for a reputation. The triumph can also be seen as a reflection of the health of the state, and Cicero’s failure to get a triumph and Caesar’s disruption of that attempt reflect the upheaval that Caesar caused the republic. Much as the Romans themselves carefully diagnosed their mutual relations by way of reading all of the activity that surrounded the triumph, so too can we better appreciate the complexities of the more general logic of spectacle by ourselves watching them watch one another.
As Cicero’s *Letters* have shown, there are many displays involved in the process that includes – but certainly does not exclusively contain – the Roman triumph. Livy, too, like Cicero, recognizes the importance of display in Roman society, and this understanding is evident in his descriptions of and use of the triumph in his own text. Unlike Cicero, however, Livy does not try to win the honor himself; instead of being on the inside of the process, he (and Plutarch too, as will be discussed in the following chapter) provides us with a view of the triumph from the perspective of one who is not himself a triumphator, either potential or actual. Nevertheless, for both Cicero and Livy alike, the triumph is a display of Romanness, a means by which to measure one’s worth as a Roman and to hold that measure up against and define the non-Roman as well. And again, as in Cicero’s *Letters*, the triumph from Livy’s point of view does not provide a simple answer to what it means to be Roman and what it means not to be Roman. Just like the Romans themselves, in Livy’s text, the triumph is ever-changing and hard to define.\(^5\)

Throughout his text, Livy shows a fondness for spectacle and he recognizes the importance of spectacle in Roman social and political life. In fact, from the beginning, Livy describes his work itself in terms of a spectacle; it is a display of the spectacle of history:

Res est praeterea et immensi operis, ut quae supra septigentesimum annum repetatur et quae ab exiguis profecta initiis eo creverit ut iam magnitudine laboret sua; et legentium plerisque haud dubito quin primae origines proximaque originibus minus praebitura voluptatis sint, festinantibus ad haec nova quibus iam pridem praevalentis populi vires se ipsae conficiunt: ego contra hoc quoque laboris praemium petam, ut me a conspectu malorum quae nostra tot per annos vidit aetas, tantisper certe dum praevalentis populi vires se ipsae conficiunt: ego contra hoc quoque laboris praemium petam, ut me a conspectu malorum quae nostra tot per annos vidit aetas, tantisper certe dum praevalentis populi vires se ipsae conficiunt:  

Moreover, the task is a huge job, since it is traced back over 700 years and since it started out from small beginnings and has grown to the point that now it labors with its own greatness. And I hardly doubt that for most readers, the first beginnings and the events nearest to the beginnings will offer less pleasure, because they rush to these new events with which the very strength of a long-time powerful people consumes itself: I, on the contrary, will seek a reward for my work that I might turn myself away from the sight of the evil which our age has gazed upon for so many years, at least as long as I recall with all my mind those good old days, free from every care which, even if it can’t turn the soul of a writer from the truth, can nevertheless make him uneasy.

This spectacle is one which may be looked at with gazes that have many different purposes, and those purpose-filled gazes can reveal something about the character of the spectator. Livy predicts that most gazers will skip the early shows and head straight to the spectacles of the most recent historical events, wanting more of a disaster movie than a period piece, since in his own times, Livy believed that Rome was crumbling under its own powerful weight (ab exiguis profecta initiis eo creverit ut iam magnitudine laboret sua). The author himself, however, is more interested in turning away from this common spectacle – contemporary evils (conspectu malorum quae nostra tot per annos vidit

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106 Livy 1.pf.4-5

aetas) – and turning his gaze toward the past. The early history of Rome is, according to Livy, a spectacle that is easy on the eyes after the horror show of the evils of his own time. Whereas those evils can be dangerous (they can turn the soul of a writer from the truth), the spectacle of the past is a refuge from danger – it’s a spectacle that offers a kind of gaze-therapy. But this eye treatment isn’t meant only for Livy; he in fact offers this display to his audience as a cure-all for what ails them:

Hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu foedum exitu quod vites.108

This is what is especially beneficial and fruitful in the examination of events, to look at the lessons of every example placed on a distinct monument; from this you may decide for you and your state what you should imitate, from this you may decide what shameful beginnings and shameful results you should avoid.

Livy lays out the spectacles of Rome for his audience and advises his readers to decide for themselves which shows should be imitated and which should be shunned.109 For Livy, then, a history of Rome is a story of spectacles, and to study those spectacles is to better understand Rome itself.110

108 Livy 1 pf.10

109 For Livy’s history as a monument, see Braund (2002) p. 20ff. and Jaeger (1997) p. 15ff. For Livy’s text as monument and a comparison of the text to an architectural structure, see Kraus et al. (1997) p. 57ff. For spectacle as a driving force in Livy’s text and for the view that Livy presents his text itself as a spectacle, see Feldherr (1998). Cf. Miles (1995) p. 16ff., who argues that Livy’s use of monumenta corresponds closely with his use of fabulae earlier in the preface; Miles claims that Livy is comparing the idea of spoken, oral evidence (fabulae) with written, visual evidence (monumenta). For Livy’s use of exempla in his text, see Chaplin (2000).

110 For the view that Livy works to create Roman civic identity through his text, see Feldherr (1997). Cf. Kraus et al. (1997) p. 73: “What [Livy] substitutes for...confidence is the repeated demand that we examine and test our assumptions about Roman identity as constructed by Roman tradition.” Also, cf. Henderson (1998) p. 309: “Virgil and Livy survived the civil wars, too, to write the most ambitious efforts to comprehend Rome from their post-bellum perspective. All of them went through the trauma of re-thinking the story of their lives, and their country; and found anything they wrote before Augustus taking on never suspected significance before their very eyes...”
Livy’s treatment of the triumph falls under this same rubric of spectacle-gazing and learning. Just as one can turn one’s eyes to the spectacle of the Roman past to learn about Rome, so too one can watch the spectacle of the triumph and learn from it about the triumphing general, about the enemy, about the soldiers, even about the allies, and further, about what it means to be Roman or not Roman.111 Livy encourages his spectators to make judgments about past events, to decide what decisions to mimic and which to avoid, and this guidance toward judgment shines through in his descriptions of triumph as well. Livy gives us descriptions of the triumph in which the qualities of a good Roman, of a not-so-good Roman, and of the non-Roman are key elements in the spectacle. To Livy, the triumph is a display of Rome and thus it reflects the state of the state, the political health of the people taking part in the triumph, and the status of the enemy. Thus, when Rome is strong and healthy, the triumph can be a brilliant display of the power of Rome, but when Roman affairs are not so stable, this too is revealed in the triumph.

This reflection of Roman life through the spectacle of the triumph is never more clear than in Livy’s description of how the Roman people used to feel and what they were thinking about whenever the general left the city for his province:

per hos forte dies P. Licinius consul votis in Capitolio nuncupatis paludatus ab urbe profectus est. semper quidem ea res cum magna dignitate ac maiestate agitur; praecipue convertit oculos animosque, cum ad magnum nobilensque aut virtute aut fortuna hostem euntem consulem prosecuntur. contrahit enim non officii modo cura, sed etiam studium spectaculi, ut videant ducem suum, cuius imperio consilioque summam rem publicam tuendam permiserunt. subit deinde cogitatio animos, qui belli casus, quam incertus

111 For a discussion of the structure and style of Livy’s triumph notices and for the triumph notices as an integral part of Livy’s annalistic style, see Phillips (1974a). For a study of Livy’s use of specific vocabulary in his triumph notices, see Phillips (1974b). Also, cf. Beard (2003) p. 550: “Triumphal ekphrasis regularly offered Greco-Roman writers an opportunity to explore, and to re-improvise, the shifting interplay of politics and theatricality, showmanship and imperialism, that the triumph signified…”
During these days, by chance, P. Licinius the consul, after he announced his vows on the Capitoline, set out from the city wearing the military cloak. This affair is indeed always carried out with great dignity and grandeur, it particularly turned the people’s eyes and minds when they followed a consul who was going up against an enemy great and noble for either their courage or luck. For not only care of duty, but even the eagerness for a spectacle, draw them together to see their general, to whose authority and strategy they have entrusted the utmost protection of the republic. Then these thoughts cross over their minds: what the misfortunes of war are, how uncertain the outcome of war is, and how impartial Mars god of war is; they think of favorable or unfavorable outcomes, what disasters have often happened because of the ignorance and rashness of generals, and on the other hand, what good things prudence and courage have accomplished. Who knows of which mind and which fortune is the consul whom they are sending to war? Will they soon see him climbing the Capitoline in triumph, with his victorious army, toward those same gods whom he is now leaving, or will they give that joy to the enemy?

Again, as in the opening of Livy’s work, here we have the turning of the eyes and minds of the people, but this time, it isn’t really away from something (as in the preface, where Livy encourages us to turn our eyes from the present to the past), but toward the departing general, indeed, toward the future. They envision the general as a potential returning triumphant general, and they are eager for the show (studium spectaculi), both this present one – the departure of the general – and the possible future triumph. As they watch the actual parade of departure, the Roman people are gazing with their mind’s eye at the triumph-to-be, already seeing the spectacle that they hope will soon be a reality. And this potential spectacle functions for them just as Livy hopes his history of Rome through spectacle will work for us: as they watch both shows (the actual one and the one in their minds), they ask themselves the same kinds of questions that Livy advises his

112 Livy 42.49.1-6

113 For a discussion of Livy’s use of time in his text, see Kraus et al. (1997) p. 53ff.
readers to keep in mind as they watch his big show. They think about the past and speculate about the future: they remember past glories and failures that generals have made, and they wonder which sort of general is the one leaving the city now, will he be the kind to bring back tales of glory or sob-stories of failure. The triumph, like Livy’s work as a whole, is a spectacle of what to do and what not to do, and in this instance in particular, the departure of the general turns this process of learning from the past upside down. The spectators of the present (and future) display(s) are hoping that their general will learn the lessons that their gazing has taught them, and they must wait for the future potential display to become a present, actual display in order to gaze on the answer mirrored in the spectacle of the returning general. As we shall see, in some instances, the hope-filled eyes of the Romans were met with a triumph that fulfilled their expectations, but sometimes the actual spectacle didn’t meet the standards of their imagined one. However, the triumph in Livy’s work rarely fails to reveal the nature of the general and how he measures up as a Roman.

114 Livy 1.0.9 ...ad illa mihi pro se quisque acriter intendat animum, quae vita, qui mores fuerint, per quos viros quibusque artibus domi militiaeque et partum et auctum imperium sit; labante deinde paulatim disciplina velut dissidentes primo mores sequatur animo, deinde ut magis magisque lapsi sint, tum ire coeperint praecipites, donec ad haec tempora quibus nec vita nostra nec remedia pati possamus perventum est. “…as far as I’m concerned, each person, for themselves, should diligently turn their minds toward the following questions: what life and morals were like, by what men and what skills, at home and at war, was power both obtained and increased; then let him follow in his mind, as discipline wavers, morals at first falling apart, then as they slip more and more, finally they begin to fall headlong, until they have arrived at these times in which we can endure neither our vices nor their cure.”

115 Cf. Feldherr (1998) p. 9-10: “Within this passage, describing the profectio or ritual departure of the consul P. Licinius Crassus from Rome at the start of his campaign…the process of vision plays a very precise role in communicating the social and political authority of the consul to the spectators and thus reinforcing the bond that links them to the collective power of the state…Livy’s analysis of the spectators’ reactions to the sight of their consul demonstrates how the act of watching modulates from the fulfillment of a ‘desire to see’ (stadium spectaculi) to a form of civic participation.”
3.1: The Triumph as a Measure of a (Ro)man

Just as in Cicero’s *Letters*, so too in Livy’s history, a good general is measured in terms of his desire for a triumph, or more specifically in terms of his ability to show a lack of desire for a triumph. In Livy’s narrative, the triumph can be a display meant to persuade its audience of the Romanness of the triumphing general, but a humble refusal of a triumph can be interpreted as an even better sign of a good Roman.\(^{116}\) Thus, one of the clearest examples in Livy’s text of the triumph as a spectacle of the general as a good Roman is, interestingly enough, an instance of a triumph that never actually takes place:

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\text{Victoria egregia parta, tristis tamen duobus tam claris funeribus. itaque consul decrenente senatu triumphum, si exercitus sine imperatore triumphare possit, pro eximia eo bello opera facile passurum respondit; se familia funesta Q. Fabi fratris morte, re publica ex parte orba, consule altero amisso, publico privatoque deformem luctu lauream non accepturum. omni acto triumpho depositus triumphus clarior fuit; adeo spreta in tempore gloria interdum cumulatior redit.}^{117}
\]

A famous victory was obtained, nevertheless, it was made sad by famous funerals. And so the consul, when the senate proposed a triumph, responded that if the army was able to triumph without their commander, for their extraordinary deeds in that war he would easily allow it. But since his family was in mourning because of the death of his brother Q. Fabius, and the republic was in part orphaned by the loss of the other consul, he would not accept a laurel disfigured by public and private grief. This turned-down triumph was more famous than any enacted triumph; so it is that sometimes timely-spurned glory returns increased.

Fabius is a good Roman general because he knows where the triumph falls in the hierarchy of importance and of propriety, where it ranks in the distinction between public and private concerns. The general believes that, because he and his family are mourning the death of his brother, it is not the proper time for him to celebrate the very public display of a triumph. At this point, though, the distinction between public and private becomes unclear. Although this is for Fabius a decision between public and private in

\(^{116}\) For a detailed analysis of Livy’s use of the vocabulary of virtue in his text, see Moore (1989).

\(^{117}\) Livy 1.47.9-11
which private wins out, his refusal is a very public action/display; it’s so public in fact, that, according to Livy, this (un)triumph becomes the most famous triumph ever. This unseen spectacle (and the spectacle of refusing that spectacle) then is more visibly pleasing to its Roman audience than any of the actual triumphal displays. So what is on display here that is so (in)visibly appealing? It’s the same thing that’s on display in any triumph: Roman goodness, Roman virtus, what it takes to be a good Roman. In a more visible triumph, part of what presents a general as a good Roman is how many and how fierce are the enemies that he has conquered, but in Fabius’ case, his Roman virtus resides in his ability to turn down the chance to display that very virtus. Fabius knows that this laurel/triumph would be wrong, deformed even, because of the public’s grief and his own. The spectacle of the spectacle would be grim – it’s an ugly triumph, disfigured by inappropriateness, and Fabius comes out the other side of refusal looking better than ever, since refusing an ugly triumph makes him more attractive, more (and a better) Roman.

Unlike Fabius, whose refusal of a triumph resulted in no triumph being celebrated at all, C. Claudius Nero both enjoys the good publicity of refusing a triumph and rides in a triumph as well:

...et suplicatione amborum nomine et triumpho utrique decreto, inter ipsos, ne cum bellum communi animo gessissent triumphum separarent, ita convenit, quoniam et in provincia M. Livi res gesta esset et eo die quo pugnatum foret eius forte auspicium fuisset et exercitus Livianus deductus Romam venisset, Neronis deduci de provincia non potuisse, ut M. Livium quadrigis urbem ineuntem milites sequerentur, C. Claudius equo sine militibus inveheretur. ita consociatus triumphus cum utrique, tum magis ei qui quantum merito anteibat tantum honore collegae cesserat, gloriam auxit. Illum equitem aiebant sex dierum spatio transcurrisse longitudinem Italiae, et eo die cum Hasdrubale in Gallia signis conlatis pugnasse quo eum castra adversus sese in Apulia posita habere Hannibal Credisset. Ita unum consulem pro utraque parte Italiae adversus duos duces duos imperatores hinc consilium suum hinc corpus opposuisse. nomen Neronis satis fuisse ad continendum castris Hannibalem; Hasdrubalem vero qua alia re quam adventu eius obrutum atque extinctum esse? itaque iret alter consul sublicmis curru multiiugis si
vellet equi: uno equo per urbem verum triumphum vehi, Neronemque etiamsi pedes incedat vel parta eo bello vel spreeta eo triumpho gloria memorabilem fore. hi sermones spectantium Neronem usque in Capitolium prosecuti sunt…notatum est eo die plura carmina militariibus iocis in C. Claudium quam in consulem suum iactata…\textsuperscript{118}

…And when a thanksgiving had been decreed in both their names and a triumph to each, they agreed between themselves not to divide the triumph, since they had waged the war in a common spirit; since the matter was settled in M. Livius’ province and on the day on which the battle was fought the auspices by chance were his, and it was Livius’ army that had been brought back to Rome, and Nero’s army couldn’t be brought back from the province, they agreed that the soldiers would follow Livius entering the city on the four-horse chariot, and C. Claudius would ride in on horseback without his soldiers. And so the shared triumph added glory to each consul, but more so to the one who yielded to his colleague as much honor as he surpassed him in earning. Indeed, it was said that Nero, in the space of six days, had crossed the length of Italy, and that he had fought with Hasdrubal in Gaul, standards against standards, on that day on which Hannibal thought the consul held his camp placed in Apulia facing his own. And so one consul, on behalf of each part of Italy, faced two leaders and opposed two generals, here with his strategy, and here in person. Nero’s name was enough to hold Hannibal in his camp, but what other than his arrival had blocked and destroyed Hasdrubal? So let the other consul go, high on his many-yoked chariot, if he wants: the true triumph is carried through the city on one horse, and even if Nero should walk on foot, he will be remarkable either for what he accomplished in the war or for the glory he spurned in the triumph. These speeches of the spectators followed Nero all the way up to the Capitoline…It has been noted that on that day more songs were aimed at C. Claudius by the joking soldiers than at their own consul…

Livy tells us that both consuls gained glory from the decision to combine their right to two triumphs into one triumph – a form of refusal in itself – but that the general who did the most refusing, Nero, gets the most fame. Indeed, Nero steals the show from his fellow general, Livius, by refusing to steal the show, and Livy’s narrative reflects this. Livius is barely mentioned in the description of the triumph itself at all; instead, Livy shows us the spectators. In turn, we see the triumph through their eyes, and what they see is not Livius at all, but Nero climbing the Capitoline. We even get a description of the triumphant non-triumphing general’s war exploits – a spectacle outside of the spectacle of the triumph. Nero’s spectacle powers go beyond the triumph; we see Nero defeating Hasdrubal just by showing up, making an appearance, and he kept Hannibal in his camp

\textsuperscript{118} Livy 28.9-16,18
by the mere rumor of his presence. Like Fabius, who increases his *fama* by being noticeably non-visible in a triumph that is never put on display, Nero conquers the enemy even in his absence, just by appearing to be present. Nero is omnipresent, omni-gazable; those watching him in the triumph see him as someone who has crossed Italy in six days and who has the power to be seen everywhere at the same time.

So, making a public display of shying away from the triumphal spotlight can earn you even more time in that spotlight. Livius’ soldiers, who are following the triumphator in the procession and are both part of the spectacle and, because they are responding to the sight of Nero in the triumph, part of the audience as well, treat Nero as if he were their general and as if he were the one truly triumphing through their display of songs and jokes. So, at least in the case of Fabius, Nero, and Livius, by rejecting the role of triumphator, you become a triumphator, and by accepting it, you very nearly kill your chances at truly being one. And Livy is guiding us as his audience to this conclusion by forcing our view of the spectacle to come through the eyes of the spectators, who are gazing at both Nero and the soldiers, and the soldiers themselves, who are, if not physically looking at Nero, directing the gaze of the spectators – and us – toward Nero as the true triumphator through their songs. Again, as in Cicero’s *Letters*, in which to triumph and the events leading up to it are a complicated series of social maneuvers involving displays of desire and self-denial, so too the triumph in Livy’s text is a complex game in which denial can be rewarded even over the military victory itself.

The honor of a triumph lasts far beyond the actual procession, and for the rest of a former triumphator’s life, his actions are viewed through the perspective of the past.
Camillus presents the decision to abandon Rome for Veii as an honor to him, an honor that stems from the fact that he captured and triumphed over Veii; he presents the city as a monument to his triumph, to his achievement as a general in conquering it. If the Romans abandoned Rome for Veii, the new city would be a literal, visible monument, a physical manifestation of the honor that lives on after a triumph, and this spectacle would be in front of his eyes – and the eyes of all Romans – every day. However, Camillus also puts on a show of rejecting this honor (like Fabius and Nero rejecting the triumph), and he does this because, he says, this honor (like Fabius’ potential triumph) is a deformed one. A true triumph takes place in the streets of Rome, with Romans as the spectators watching a display of a Roman general’s virtus. The honor that continues from the

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119 Livy 5.30.1-3
triumph for the general, then, is the memory of that procession through Rome. Camillus rejects having this honor in the form of the captured city partially because that honor would not reside in Rome; in fact, he would have to abandon Rome to receive the honor. Should Camillus accept this honor, Romanness itself would become deformed, unrecognizable. In fact, everything would be turned upside down – the Romans would abandon their city for an abandoned city, a conquered land would replace the land of the conquerors. The gods have abandoned Veii, so will they abandon the Romans if they inhabit Veii? Would the conquerors become the conquered by fleeing their city – that’s what conquered peoples do, right? For that matter, would the Romans still be Romans if they abandoned Rome? Camillus argues that the people of Rome should fight this by voting against it, and even fighting against this ‘honor’ blurs the image of Rome, since the only way to fight the law is through civil war; Romans would be fighting against Romans for their homeland. Camillus recognizes this and thus rejects the honor, and in the process, makes a display of himself as the savior of Rome by saving it from Veii all over again.\footnote{For Camillus’ speech against emigration to Veii as a second salvation of Rome, see Miles (1995) p. 88ff. See esp. p. 89: “Camillus’ speech is important because it reveals the distinctive elements that link his achievement specifically to the city’s original foundation, so that Camillus’ salvation of the city also constitutes a refoundation of it.”}

Camillus was not always so attuned to the proper ways to approach a triumph, however. In fact, in the triumph that Camillus originally celebrates over Veii, Livy tells us that he oversteps the bounds of triumphal propriety:
This passage starts out looking like a description of a good triumph – a great one, in fact. Livy tells us that Camillus’ return was more crowded (celebratior) with spectators than any return had ever been, and the triumph itself held more honor than usual. Compared with other triumphs, then, this one is not just an example of a good triumph, it’s the best. But this uber-triumph becomes too extreme, and turns into a disfigured spectacle. And most deformed of all is the general himself. He is described as maxime conspectus, and although a triumphing general naturally should be visible, a spectacle all by himself within the triumphal spectacle, Camillus manages to become too visible, too showy. He enters the city in the traditional chariot, but has yoked four white horses to the car, and this extra display makes this a sight (visum) that isn’t civic or human enough. Camillus adds too much to the show, which in turn takes away from his spectacle, and what is taken away is the very quality a Roman general should be displaying during a triumph: his Romanness. Camillus’ triumph lacks civis-ness (parum civile). Indeed, Camillus presents himself not only as un-Roman, but by reaching for equality with the gods, he nearly gets what he wants – he presents himself as un-human (parum humanum) as well.

121 Livy 5.23.4-6
In this uber-triumph, uber-visibility becomes synonymous with anti-civic (non-Roman) behavior, sacrilege, and even inhumanity. The triumphing general already inhabits a liminal space between soldier and civilian, public and private, and his relationship to the gods (particularly Jupiter\textsuperscript{122}) is especially slippery. It’s all too easy for a general to go too far and slip outside of the liminal space in a way that is \textit{nefas}; Camillus obviously carries the resemblance of the triumphator to Jupiter too far.\textsuperscript{123}

Thus the triumph can not only serve as a measure of the good general; Livy also uses it as a way to show that Romanness was never a stable quality, and that one’s reputation as a Roman could easily be sullied as a result of putting on an unacceptable show. In Camillus’ case, he puts on too much of a show, but, in the previous passage, he eventually sees that, although, in Livy’s text, Rome is a collection of spectacles, knowing when to back away from self-display can mean the salvation both of one’s own reputation and of Rome itself.

Part of putting on a proper triumphal show (both before, during and after the procession itself) is, again, not showing too much desire for the triumph. Thus, those generals who fail to hide their desire for a triumph risk damaging their reputations as Romans. Tiberius Aemilius Mamercinus and Lucius Furius are, according to Livy, two prime examples of generals whose desire for the honor damages their chances at leading

\textsuperscript{122} Some scholars think that the costume of the triumphing general was meant to portray him as a Jupiter-figure. See Versnel p. 56ff.

\textsuperscript{123} For the view that Camillus’ triumph reflects the moral decline of Roman at the time, see Miles (1995) p. 82ff. For Camillus’ role in Livy’s text as a ‘source’ for the story, see Feldherr (1998) p. 79ff.
a triumph. First, whereas rejecting a deserved triumph can help one’s reputation nearly as much as leading a triumph itself, demanding one out of turn can have the opposite effect, as in the case of Mamercinus:

ubi cum proeliis quidem superior Romanus esset, ad urbem ipsam Pedum castraque sociorum populum, quae urbi adiuncta erant, integer labor restaret, bello infecto repente omissō consul, quia collegae decretum triumphum audivit, ipse quoque triumphi ante victoriam flagitator Romam rediit. qua cupiditate offensis patribus negantibusque nisi Pedo capto aut dedito triumphum…

When, although the Romans had indeed been superior in battles, the job of capturing the city of Pedum itself and the allied people’s camp, which was joined to the city, remained intact, the consul [Tiberius Aemilius Mamercinus] suddenly quit the unfinished war because he heard that a triumph was decreed to his colleague, and he himself also returned to Rome demanding a triumph before he had gained a victory. The senators were displeased by this desire and they denied him a triumph unless he captured Pedum or the city surrendered…

Whereas spurning a triumph can lead to just as much glory, and sometimes even more than the actual triumph could give, wanting one too much can be a display all on its own, a bad display, one that ends up looking more like bad publicity than an honorable spectacle. Mamercinus does everything wrong: he demands a triumph when he shouldn’t, by which he presents himself as an improper general. His very presence is even a spectacle that works against him – he left his province to return to Rome before his tour of duty was completed, and his presence in Rome can only function as a visual reminder to the Roman citizens (and in particular the senate, the body of citizens who vote on offering triumphs to generals) that he is not in his province – he’s visible where he shouldn’t be and this is a spectacle of his absence from where he should be. As a result of this bad show, the senators demand a better performance from the general before casting him as a triumphator and send him back to his province.

124 Livy 8.12.8.10
Mamercinus demands a triumph out of turn and the senate punishes his improper spectacle by denying him the spectacle he desires for desiring it too much. Lucius Furius, however, similarly demands a triumph, but his skills of display are sharper than the consul in the previous passage, and he manages to gain a triumph even though some think he does not deserve it:

L. Furius simul quod in Etruria nihil erat rei quod gereret, simul Gallico triumpho imminens quem absente consule atque invidente facilius impetrari posse ratus est, Romam inopinato cum venisset, senatum in aede Bellonae habuit expositisque rebus gestis ut triumphati sibi in urbem invehi liceret petit. apud magnam partem senatus et magnitudine rerum gestarum et gratia. maiores natu negabant triumphum et quod alieno exercitu rem gessisset et quod provinciam reliquisset rapiendi per occasionem triumphi…huius generis orationibus ipsius amicorumque victa est praesentis gratia praetoris absentes consulis maiestas triumphumque frequentes L. Furio decreverunt. triumphavit de gallis in magistratu L. Furius praetor et in aerarium tulit trecenta viginti milia aeris, argenti bigati centum septuaginta milia quingentos. neque captivi ulli ante currum ducti neque spolia praelata neque milites secuti: omnia praetor victoriām penes consulem esse apparebat.

L. Furius, both because there was nothing to do in Etruria and because he was grasping for a Gallic triumph, which he thought he could easily obtain with the angry and jealous consul absent, when he had come to Rome unexpectedly, he called the senate in the temple of Bellona, set forth his exploits, and asked that he might ride into the city in triumph. Among a great part of the senate he gained influence both by the greatness of his deeds and by his influence. The older senators denied him a triumph both because he fought with another’s army and because he abandoned the province out of a desire for seizing the opportunity for a triumph…Because of speeches of this kind given by L. Furius himself and his friends, the authority of the absent consul was conquered by the influence of the present praetor, and a packed senate decreed a triumph for him. L. Furius triumphed over the Gauls while in office and deposited 320,000 asses of bronze in the treasury and 100,500 silver pieces. No captives were led before the chariot, no spoils were put on display, no soldiers followed: it appeared that everything was in the possession of the consul except a victory.

This spectacle is about who’s present and who’s absent, who’s visible and who’s not, in Rome. Furius thinks that he can persuade the senate to vote him a triumph because the other consul, Gaius Aurelius, who is portrayed as angry and jealous (a spectacle in itself), is absent, and the show he puts on in order to get the triumph – and its success – depend upon this absence. Furius’ own appearance at Rome from his province.

125 Livy 31.47.6-48.2,49.1-3
is an unexpected spectacle. His sudden presence in Rome is, again, a show of his absence in the province, where he should be; but the absence of the other consul seems to cancel out the bad publicity that Furius’ own showy absence might have caused. There are some senators who do not approve of his leaving the province for a triumph, but Furius’ influence in the senate counters that skepticism (counter-spectacle), and he is voted a triumph. Livy says that Furius’ gratia, along with the display of his friends’ support and the visible absence of the other consul are what win the senate over to the granting of a triumph for him. However, the triumph celebrated is by no means an ordinary triumphal display. It is, in fact, a very strange triumph, an unspectacle of sorts. Livy tells us that nothing is displayed; instead Livy gives us an anti-list (for an anti-triumph): there are no captives (because Furius has conquered no one), no spoils, and no soldiers (because they were left behind in the province). Livy says Furius has everything but the victory, which, in essence, means that he has nothing – his triumph consists solely of Furius on a chariot. This is a spectacle of absence (much like his bid for a triumph), and this is what happens when the triumphal process goes wrong. The result is a deformed triumph, like the deformed laurels that Fabius rejects. Furius’ problem – and this problem is a symptom, a display, of not being a good Roman – is that he, unlike Fabius, doesn’t see that this triumph is deformed (or he doesn’t care). Furius can’t make the distinction that a triumph like this one does not bring honor to the triumphator;

126 For this passage as an example of following precedent in deciding on a general’s right to triumph, see Chaplin (2000) p. 146ff.
instead, it results in a deformed honor, and, ultimately, a deformed version of a
triumphantor. Furius is not the vision of the Ultimate Roman, but a caricature of a Roman
deformed by gratia, desire and absence.

The triumph, then, is a display which can be at times helpful, but can also work
against the triumphator. Any idea of the ‘moment’ of the triumph is a fiction; the
triumph lives on far beyond the actual procession in a spectacle of the former triumphing
general. This longevity of the triumphal spectacle points to the importance of the
triumph for a general’s lasting reputation. Unfortunately for the general, sometimes that
triumph spectacle can be used by others against a former triumphator:

eodem anno censuram multi et clari viri petierunt. quae res, tamquam in se parum magni
certaminis causam haberet, aliam contentionem multo maiorem excitavit. petebant T.
Quinctius Flamininus P. Cornelius Cn. F. Scipio L. Valerius Flaccus M. Porcius Cato M.
Claudius Marcellus M’. Acilius Glabrio, qui Antiochum ad Thermopylas Aetolosque
deicerat. in hunc maxime, quod multa congiaria distribuerat, quibus magnam partem
hominum obligarat, favor populi se inclinabat. id cum aegre patenterunt tot nobles,
novum sibi hominem tantum praeferri, P. Sempronius Gracchus et C. Sempronius
Rutilus, tribuni plebis, ei diem dixerunt, quod pecuniae regiae praedaeque aliquantum
captae in Antiochi castris neque in triumpho tulisset, neque in aerarium retulisset. varia
testimonia legatorum tribunorumque erant. M. Cato ante alios testis
conspiciebatur; cuius auctoritatem perpetuo tenere partem toga candida elevabat. is
testis, quae vasa aurea atque argentea castris captis inter aliam praedam vidisset,
ea se in triumpho negat vidisse. postremo in huius maxime invidiam desistere se
petitione Glabrio dixit, quando, quod taciti indignarentur nobles, id aeque novus
competitor intestabili periurio incesseret.127

In the same year, many famous men sought the censorship. This matter, as if it had in
itself too little cause for conflict, aroused another, much greater conflict. Those seeking
office were T. Quinctius Flamininus, P. Cornelius Scipio son of Gnaeus, L. Valerius
Flaccus, M. Porcius Cato, M. Claudius Marcellus, and M. Acilius Glabrio, who
conquered Antiochus and the Aetolians at Thermopylae. The favor of the people inclined
itself toward this guy in particular, because he had handed out many public gifts, with
which he placed a great part of the people under obligation. Since so many nobles
scarcely endured this, i.e. that a new man was to such a degree preferred to them, P.
Sempronius Gracchus and C. Sempronius Rutilus, tribunes of the plebs, served a
summons to him, that he had brought a certain amount of royal money and booty seized
in the camp of Antiochus, but didn’t bring it to the triumph nor did he deposit it in the
treasury. The testimonies of the legates and the military tribunes were varied. M. Cato
stood out before the other witnesses; his candidate-toga lessened the authority gained by

127 Livy 37.57.9-15
his whole course of life. This witness said that the gold and silver vessels he had in the
captured camps among other royal booty he did not see in the triumph. Finally, so as to
cause ill will towards Cato, Glabrio said that he would withdraw himself from the race,
since his equally ‘new’ competitor attacked his candidature with perjury, which the
nobles silently resented.

The nobles are angry because a novus homo has become more popular in the polls than
they are: Glabrio has put on a better show and therefore is making them ‘look’ bad. So,
they take him to court; they put on another kind of spectacle in which they use Glabrio’s
past triumph (another spectacle) to make him ‘look’ bad in turn (yet another spectacle).
There are many layers of displays and representations here, and the goal of every
performer is to walk offstage looking like a good Roman. The nobles try to look like
better Romans by dragging Glabrio’s Romanness through the mud, and they do this by
attacking Glabrio’s own, past display of Romanness, his triumph. They claim that his
triumph was bogus because part of the spectacle was not spectated – some of the spoils
were unseen, were not shown in the triumph and also didn’t show up in the treasury. So
Glabrio is re-presented as a bad Roman general, because in his display of what a good
Roman general he was, he didn’t show what should have been seen.

In the midst of this spectacle-circus is Cato. Cato presents another spectacle
within the spectacle (of the triumph) within the spectacle (of the trial of the triumph). In
fact, Cato’s at the center of it all, at least for Livy – not Glabrio or his triumph or the
show being put on by the nobles. And it is remarkable how important his spectacle is –
Livy tells us that he stood out in the crowd of witnesses (M. Cato ante alios testis
conspiciebatur). Even the way he is dressed is so important that, according to Livy, it
outweighs the rest of his life’s activities as a representation of his character. His
candidacy costume (he’s running for the same office as Glabrio and the nobles) marks
him as a biased witness. Of course, the show he puts on in those clothes is important as well. He, too, re-presents Glabrio as un-Roman by his claims of sight and sight unseen. He claims that he saw (*vidisset*) the captured spoils in the camp, but did not see them (*negabat vidisse*) in the triumph. A spectacle of not-seeing condemns Glabrio. And, of course, Glabrio’s response is a show of its own: a formal refusal, not of a triumph, which he has already had, but of the candidacy. But he doesn’t put on this show without also re-presenting his re-presenter (Cato) as a *novus homo* too, as an equal, and by doing so he re-presents himself as well, as a Roman who is just as Roman as those who are accusing him of not being Roman enough.

Whether or not Glabrio truly did something wrong during his triumph doesn’t seem to matter here; the issue is that it is possible to recast the spectacle into other versions and other spectacles altogether later on for various reasons. The reputation of the triumphing general is not taken off the line at the end of the parade route; obviously it can be revisited and the spectacle can be re-presented later, even by one’s enemies, thereby putting one’s Romanness back on trial, so to speak. And so the triumph lives on well after the actual procession, and one’s status as a Roman can be redefined again and again in relation to that one triumphal ‘moment.’
The longest extant account of a Roman triumph is the description of Aemilius Paulus’ triumph over Perseus and the Macedonians in Plutarch’s biography of the general. Livy’s account of Aemilius’ triumph, however, is surprisingly brief. Nevertheless, his treatment of the campaign against Perseus and the events leading up to the triumph shows that Livy understood the importance of the spectacles that lead up to the spectacle of the triumph itself. Just as in the account of Glabrio and the importance of his past triumph on his lasting reputation as a Roman, so too in the case of Aemilius Paulus, and in Roman life in general, the triumph was so much more than just an instant of spectacle. The triumph was an enduring display of Romanness, and the spectacles involved in the triumph started long before and lasted long after the actual parade.

Livy stresses the longevity of the triumphal spectacle and its influence in his treatment of Aemilius Paulus. Aemilus’ triumphal spectacle begins for Livy with the announcement of his victory during the Roman Games:

ante diem quintum decimum kalendas Octobres, ludorum Romanorum secundo die, C. Licinio consuli ad quadrigas mittendas escendenti tabellarius, qui se ex Macedonia venire diceret, laureatas litteras reddidisse dicitur. quadrigis missis consul currum conscendit et, cum per circum reveheretur ad foros publicos, laureatas tabellas populo ostendit. quibus conspectis repente inmemor spectaculi populus in medium decurrit. eo senatum consul vocavit recitatisque tabellis ex auctoritate patrum pro foris publicis denuntiavit populo L. Aemilium collegam signis conlatis cum rege Perseo pugnasce; Macedonum

See chapter 4 below.

Livy’s description of Aemilius’ triumph takes up only half of a chapter (45.40), and he only truly discusses Paulus’ appearance in the procession, which is itself a very short description.

Cf. Beard (2003) p. 553: “Destabilizing the boundaries of triumphal ritual as it is usually understood, Josephus is asking us to see Titus’ progress to Rome as a series of repeated triumphal events” (emphasis original to the author). Beard, here describing Josephus’ account of Titus’ triumph, falls into the misunderstanding that there is a single ‘moment’ of the triumph. Instead, Josephus understands that the triumph is not contained merely within the ‘boundaries’ of the procession itself, but that its significance spills out into Roman life both previous to and after the parade.
On September 16th, the second day of the Roman Games, a courier who said he came from Macedonia is said to have given a laurel-wrapped letter to C. Licinius the consul as he was mounting his chariot. When the race was over, the consul got down from his chariot, and when he was being conveyed back to the public seats through the circus, he showed the letter to the people. They, gazing at the letter, suddenly forgot about the spectacle and ran down into the middle of the arena. There the consul called the senate, the letter was read aloud, and on the authority of the senators, before the public seats, he announced to the people that L. Aemilius his colleague had fought with king Perseus, standards against standards; the Macedonian army had been slaughtered and routed; the king had fled with a few followers; and all the states of Macedonia had come under the dominion of the Roman people. When these things were heard, a shout rose up with a huge applause; the games were left behind and most men carried the happy news home to their wives and children.

Again, Aemilius’ victory over the Macedonians is a spectacle for the Romans long before a triumph is ever decreed. This passage takes place during/at the Roman Games, and Livy mentions this at the beginning of his account, thus setting the scene, so to speak, for portraying the event as a spectacle (within a spectacle) from the start. Also, the receipt of the letter announcing Aemilius’ victory and the reading of that letter by the consul are both spectacles themselves. The letter is even dressed up like a triumphator, wrapped in laurel, and the spectators gather to ‘watch’ the reading. These two spectacles (the receiving and the reading of the letter) frame the event of the consul racing in the games, which is yet another form of spectacle.

The audience gazes at the letter (quibus conspectis), and in doing so, they forget about the games – the other spectacle – completely (inmemor spectaculi populus). They then rush to the center of the arena, thus making themselves a spectacle of spectators; in fact, the roles of spectacle have been completely reversed. The consul leaves the arena, where he was part of the spectacle of the games, and puts on another show in the

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131 Livy 45.1.6-10
bleachers, to the audience, which is now in the arena – spectator becomes spectacle.

Finally, when they hear the news of Aemilius’ victory, the crowd abandons the games altogether, preferring the promise of Aemilius’ future show to the present spectacle.

From Roman citizens gazing at letters at the Games to Roman soldiers trying to catch a glimpse of the king they have conquered, the next big scene on the road to Aemilius’ triumph is the conquered Perseus’ arrival in the Roman camp:

Perseus was the head of the war, and not only his fame and his father’s and his grandfather’s and everyone else’s fame to whom he was related by blood and race, made him remarkable, but also Philip and Alexander the Great, who made Macedonia the greatest power in the world, showed forth in him. Perseus came into the camp in dingy clothes with his son, but with no other companion, who, as an ally of his misfortune, would have made him more pitable. He was not able to keep walking because of the crowd of people rushing to catch a glimpse of the show. Finally the consul sent lictors, who cleared a path to the general’s headquarters. The consul rose, although he ordered the others to remain seated, walked a little ways toward the entering king, offered his right hand, pulled him up when he fell at the consul’s feet, didn’t allow him to grasp his knees, brought him into the tent, and ordered him to sit opposite those called into council…’However these things may be, whether they happened by human error, or misfortune, or necessity, keep a good spirit. Through the misfortunes of many peoples and kings has the mercy of the Roman people been known, and this mercy offers you not only hope but an almost certain confidence of safety.’ Aemilius Paulus said these things to Perseus in Greek, then he spoke in Latin to his own men, ‘you see a distinct example of the changeable nature of humanity. I say this especially to you, young men. Therefore, while in fortunate times, one should treat no one violently or arrogantly, nor should one trust his present fortune, since it is uncertain what evening brings.’

132 Livy 45.7.3-5,8.5-6
The Macedonian king’s arrival at the Roman camp is described very much in the language of a triumph. Perseus himself is described as remarkable (conspectum), and he is made so by his ancestry. This is mentioned in relation to how his remarkability will be reflected and thus will increase the remarkability of Aemilius Paulus’ triumph and also, then, Aemilius himself. The reputation of Perseus’ ancestors (which, Livy reminds us, include Philip and Alexander the Great) is said to shine forth in Perseus, so it’s interesting that the king enters the Roman camp in dingy clothing – he’s not shiny in any way. He may be a glorious Macedonian king with illustrious ancestors, but he’s also now the property of the Romans and so he must take on the role and aspect (and clothing) of a captured enemy. As Perseus tries to make his way through the camp toward Aemilius’ tent, he can’t keep walking because the path is blocked by Roman soldiers who are trying to see him; the spoils of war are already being led through the streets (of the camp, though, not of Rome) on display to a Roman audience. However, this also sounds like a description of a crowd at Rome waiting to greet a returning general on his way to a triumph. Thus, one could also read this display as a representation of Perseus not as a captured spoil, but as triumphator. Adding to this portrayal is the fact that Aemilius sends lictors to escort Perseus through the crowd; this really makes him seem like a Roman consul. But in the end, Perseus is still a spectacle re(-)presented and controlled by the Romans.

When Perseus reaches Aemilius’ tent, Aemilius addresses him in Greek, which also blurs the line between Roman and non-Roman, and assures Perseus that he’s in practically no danger at all. However, Aemilius then addresses his soldiers in Latin,
thereby recreating the distance between Perseus and the general, between Romans and non-Roman, and also re-emphasizing the fact that Aemilius may show kindness to Perseus in his own fashion, but Perseus is still the conquered foe and is thus merely a representation of himself, and that spectacle is controlled by Aemilius. He even refers to Perseus as an example for the soldiers to learn from; he has become (is pronounced by the Roman to be) pure spectacle, nothing else, and for the benefit of the Romans, not himself or his people.133

Aemilius’ triumph over Perseus and the Macedonians, the description of which occupies a large section of Plutarch’s biography of Aemilius, is, as mentioned earlier, surprisingly short in Livy’s account. We do, however, get a spectacular preshow in the speech of Servilius, one of Aemilius’ soldiers. The soldiers have been persuaded by Galba to be upset that they didn’t get a larger share of the spoils from Macedonia, and thus they have decided to veto Aemilius’ bid for a triumph. Servilius, then, in the following speech, re-persuades them on behalf of Aemilius with a spectacle of his own, and he has many different spectators going on at once in this speech:

quid autem dicitis, milites? aliquis est Romae, praeter Persea, qui triumphari de Macedonibus nolit: et eum non isdem manibus discerpitis, quibus Macedonas vicistis? vincere vos prohibuisset, si potuisset, qui triumphantis urbem inire prohibet. erratis, milites, si triumphum imperatoris tantum et non militum quoque et universi populi Romani esse decus censetis…nec L. Paulum minorem aut maiorem imperatorem triumphus faciet –, militum magis in hoc universisque populi Romani fama agitur, primum ne invidiae et ingrati animi adversus clarissimum quemque civem opinionem habeat et imitari in hoc populum Atheniensem lacerantem invidia principes suos videatur…tot de Gallis triumphi, tot de Hispanis, tot de Poenis ipsorum tantum imperatorum an populi Romani dicuntur? quemadmodum non de Pyrrho modo nec de Hannibale, sed de Epirotis Carthaginiensibusque [et Macedonibus] triumphi acti sunt, sic non M’. Curius tantum nec P. Cornelius, sed Romani triumpharunt. militum quidem propria est causa, qui et ipsi laureati et quisque donis, quibus donati sunt, insignes

133 For Aemilius Paulus as father-figure to his troops and for Perseus as an exemplum for Aemilius’ troops, see Chaplin (2000) p. 116ff.
Triumphum nomine cientes suaeque et imperatoris laudes canentes per urbem incedunt. si quando non deportati ex provincia milites ad triumphum sunt, fremunt; et tamen tum quoque se absenis, quod suis manibus parta victoria sit, triumphare credunt. si quis vos interroget, milites, ad quam rem in Italian deportati et non statim confecta provincia dimissi sitis, quid Romam frequentes sub signis veneritis, quid moremini hic et non diversi domos quisque abeatis vestras, quid alius respondeatis, quam vos triumphantis videri velle? vos certe victores conspici velle debebatis. triumphatum nuper de Philippo, patre huius, et de Antiocho est; ambo regnabant, cum de iis triumphatam est. de Perseo capto, in urbem cum liberis adducto non triumphabitur? quodsi in curru scandentis Capitolium, auratos purpuratosque, ex inferiore loco L. Paulus in turba togatorum unus privatus interroget ‘L. Anici, Cn. Octavi, utrum vos digniores triumpho esse an me censeitis?’ curru ei cessuri et prae pudore videntur insignia ipsi sua tradituri. et vos Gentium quam Persea duciin triumpho mavolitis, Quirites, et de accessione potius belli quam de bello triumphari? et legiones ex Illyrico laureatae urbeb inibunt et naves socii: Macedonice legiones suo abrogato triumphos alienos spectabunt? quid deinde tam opima praeda, tam opulentae victoriae spoliis fiet? quonam abdentur illa tot milia armorum detracta corporibus hostium? an in Macedoniam remittatur? quod si signa aurea, marmorea, eburnea, tabulae pictae, textilia, tantum argentae habebantur, tantum auri, tantum pecunia regia? an noctu tamquam furtiva in aerarium deportabuntur? ille nihil praeterquam loqui, et id ipsum maledice ac maligne, didicit: ego ter et viciens cum hoste ex provocatione pugnavi; ex omnibus, cum manibus conserui, spolia rettuli; insignis corpus honestis cicatricibus, omnibus adverso corpore exceptis, habeo.” nudasse deinde se dicitur et, quo quaeque bello volnera accepta essent, rettulisse. quae dum ostentat, adapertis forte, quae valenda erant, tumor inguinum proximis risum movit. tum “hoc quoque, quod ridetis, inquit “in equo dies noctesque persedendo habeo, nec magis me eius quam cicatricum harum pudet paenitetque quando numquam mihi impedimento ad rem publicam bene gerendam domi militiaeque fuit. ego hoc ferro saepe vexatum corpus vetus miles adulcensibus militibus ostendi: Galba nitens et integrum dentur.”

What are you saying, soldiers? There is someone at Rome, besides Perseus, who doesn’t want there to be a triumph over Macedonia: and you’re not tearing him to pieces with those same hands with which you conquered Macedonia? He would have forbidden you to conquer it if he had been able to, this guy who won’t let you enter the city in a triumph. You’re wrong, soldiers, if you think that the triumph is an honor for the general alone and not also for the soldiers and all the Roman people….A triumph will make L. Paulus neither a lesser nor a greater general; it is more the fame of the soldiers and the Roman

134 Livy 45.38.2-3,5-6,11-39.10, 13-19
people that is paraded around in this procession, first so that Rome might not have a reputation of envy and an ungrateful spirit against each illustrious citizen and seem to imitate in this the Athenian people, who beat their leaders with envy... Are the so many triumphs over Gaul, so many over Spain, and so many over Carthage said to be only for the generals themselves or for the Roman people? Just as triumphs were led not just over Pyrrhus and Hannibal, but over the people of Epirus and Carthage [and Macedonia], thus, not only did M. Curius and P. Cornelius triumph, but so did the Roman people. Indeed, the soldiers have a personal stake in this, who themselves are laurelled and each, decorated with the gifts given to him, walks through the city, shouting Triumph! by name and singing their own and their general’s praises. If ever soldiers are not brought back from the province for a triumph, they complain; nevertheless, even though they’re not there, they believe that they are triumphing because they gained the victory with their own hands. If anyone should ask you, soldiers, why you were brought back and were not dismissed immediately after completing your province tour of duty, why you have crowded into Rome under the standards, why do you delay here and don’t disperse each to his own home, what would you say, other than that you want to be seen in the triumph? You certainly ought to want to be seen as conquerors. Recently there have been triumphs over Philip, Perseus’ father, and over Antiochus; both were still king when they were led in triumph. Will there not be a triumph over the captured Perseus, who was led to the city with his children? But if L. Paulus, from a lower place, one private citizen in a crowd of toga-ed men, asked those climbing the Capitoline in a chariot, clothed in gold and purple, ‘L. Amicius, Cn. Octavius, do you think you are more worthy of a triumph or I?’ They would be seen climbing down from the chariot and handing over their decorations to him. Would you rather have Gentius led in triumph than Perseus, citizens, and there be a triumph over an addition to the war rather than over the war itself? The legions from Illyricum and the allied sailors will enter the city in laurels: will the Macedonian legions watch the other triumphs while their own was abolished? What, finally, will happen to such rich spoils of such an opulent victory? Where will all those thousands of arms taken from the bodies of enemies be hidden? Or will they be sent back to Macedonia? What about the gold, marble, and ivory statues, the paintings, the cloths, all the embossed silver, all the gold, all the royal money? Will they be carried to the treasury at night, as if they were stolen? What? Where will the very noble, very wealthy captured king – the greatest spectacle of them all – be shown to the victorious people? Many of us remember what a crowd the captured king Syphax, an addition to the Punic War, brought about. Will the captured king Perseus and his sons, Philip and Alexander - such great names - be removed from the eyes of the state? The eyes of all desire to see L. Paulus himself, two-time consul, master of Greece, entering the city in a chariot. We made him consul for this, so that he might complete the war that, to our great shame, dragged on for four years. We determined a victory and a triumph with our foreseeing minds for this man when he was allotted a province, left home, and set out for it. Will we now deny him the triumph when he is victorious? Indeed, are we not only cheating him of his honor, but also the gods of theirs? For a triumph is owed to the gods as well as to men...Will the gates be closed to L. Paulus’ triumph? Will Perseus, king of Macedonia, along with his children and the rest of the crowd of captives and the Macedonian spoils, be left behind in the Flaminian Circus? Will L. Paulus go home from the gate a private citizen, as if returning from the countryside? You, centurion, soldier, listen to what the senate has decreed about L. Paulus, rather than Servius Galba’s lies, and listen to what I have to say rather than him. That guy has learned nothing except how to talk, and even this he does abusingly and harmfully. I have fought with an enemy in a challenge 23 times; I have returned with the spoils of everyone I have fought; I have a body marked with honest scars, all of them received facing the enemy.’ It is said that he then stripped and told in which war he received each wound. While he was showing these, he by chance uncovered what should have been kept covered, and the swelling of his groin
made those nearby laugh. “This too, that you laugh at,” he said, “I got by sitting on my horse day and night, and I’m neither ashamed of nor do I regret this more than these scars, since it never hindered me from managing the affairs of the state at home or in the military. As an old soldier to young ones I show this body which has been often troubled by the sword: let Galba strip his white and untouched body.”

From the beginning of his speech, Servilius represents Galba as a bad character (a bad Roman), who doesn’t want a triumph for Aemilius, and in fact he portrays him as the only person who doesn’t want Aemilius to triumph, and by doing so, he has already turned the soldiers into soldiers who want a triumph for Aemilius. He also presents Aemilius’ soldiers as ones who ought to defeat Galba, just like they defeated the Macedonians, thus likening Galba to the non-Roman, conquered enemy; he even presents the soldiers as wanting to be seen themselves in the triumph: he tells them that they at least should want to be seen in a triumph. Then Servilius sets forth an explanation of what the triumph is all about; it’s not just all for the general, but the triumph is also for the soldiers and the Roman people as a whole. The triumphing general is not just a spectaculum; he’s also a speculum, a mirror for the people. His honor is mirrored in the people and the soldiers too. In fact, the general is such a good mirror of honor that the soldiers don’t even have to be present in Rome during the triumph to still be visible, a part of the triumphal spectacle. Servilius then gives his audience a description of the triumph without Aemilius as triumphator; he presents Aemilius as a private citizen looking up at the other triumphators, and he represents this presentation as somehow wrong. Aemilius, in this hypothetical triumph, is on the wrong side of the gaze/look spectrum; he should be the object of the gaze, not the one gazing up at the triumphators.

Servilius says that the triumphators themselves would recognize the imbalance, and that they would certainly climb down off their chariot and hand over the reins and their triumphal ornamentation to the rightful triumphator. Moreover, he says that they would be seen (*videntur*) abdicating to Aemilius, and by phrasing the whole exchange in terms of a scene being watched by an outside audience, he places the whole affair even more deeply into the language of a spectacle. Now the spectators can see the true object of the gaze as well and those gazing (the true triumphator and the ‘impostors’). He puts this whole show on in the minds of and for the people – the triumph is already taking place. This idea of watching and being watched as a crime applies to the soldiers as well; they shouldn’t have to watch other soldiers triumphing while their own triumph has been taken away – again, the watchers and the watched have been misplaced.

Everything falls apart if Aemilius can’t triumph: what will happen to the spoils? How will the people see them? Will they be sent back to Macedonia? To Servilius, the only point of conquering the enemy (and their spoils) is so that they might be seen by, put on display for, the Romans in a triumph at Rome. And so if there is no triumph, then the victory itself is negated, as if it never happened, and the spoils might as well be returned to the (un)conquered enemy. If not, then the spoils will have to be sneaked into Rome’s treasury under cover of night – a set of circumstances completely opposite those of the triumph – and it will be as if they were stolen; again, without a triumph, the victory, and thus the right to the ownership of the spoils, no longer exists. And what about Perseus? Without a triumph, he will not be able to be seen (again, this seems to Servilius to be the only point of war, to show off what has been conquered); indeed, he’ll be stolen from the
sight of the people, which brings the rhetoric back to the language of crime. War without
a triumph is, then, a crime, and so Galba, and those soldiers that are persuaded by him,
are committing a crime against Rome by refusing Aemilius a triumph. The eyes of the
people desire to see Aemilius too, those same eyes, according to Servilius, that foresaw
his victory and the triumph, and now they cannot see that triumph in the present. Without
a triumph, the Roman people become blind seers, seers that get in the way of their own
predictions by forbidding in the present what they desired and predicted in the past.

Servilius then returns to Galba, presenting him as a liar, as a faceless voice. Next
to this description of Galba, he juxtaposes a picture of himself as a brave soldier, who has
challenged many enemies (and thus Galba would fall into this category, the (Roman)
enemy) and has won each challenge (thus, then, effectively winning this battle against
Galba as well). To punctuate his point, Servilius then exposes his chest and points out
each wound he has received in battle – all while facing forward, of course. Servilius’
body then becomes a monument of his Romanness, which in turn, is a monument to
Aemilius’ Romanness and his right to a triumph. Servilius makes a spectacle of himself
on behalf of Aemilius’ spectacle of a triumph. Indeed, Servilius makes too much of a
spectacle of himself; in his eagerness to show his scars, he exposes too much – he shows
what should not be seen – but says that he is not ashamed of the spectacle, because even
this sight, which evokes giggling from some of the Roman spectators, is also a testament
to his Romanness; his swollen groin exposes his passion for Rome, and, of course, all
shows are for the benefit of Rome in one way or another. Servilius then challenges Galba
to do the same – to expose his body as a monument to his own loyalty to Rome, his own
Romanness, and Servilius predicts that his opponent’s body will be clean and untouched
– clear signs of a un-Roman soul.\textsuperscript{136}

Servilius’ speech leaves us with a view of what the triumph means to the Romans:
it is not only a measure of a Roman; it is also a reflection of the state of Rome itself. For
Servilius, all of Rome has a part in the triumph; in fact, the state of the triumph is closely
linked to the state of the state: if Aemilius isn’t allowed to triumph, then Rome itself is in
some way not as it should be.\textsuperscript{137}

3.3: The Triumph as a Measure of a (non-Ro)man

In Livy’s narrative, the triumph is not only a spectacle of the Roman general, of
how good (or not so good) a Roman general is; it’s also a display of the conquered, the
enemy, the non-Roman, and also a spectacle of the relationship between the capable,
powerful Romans and the submissiveness of the conquered/conquerable enemy:

Valerius levibus certaminibus temptandi hostis causa haud ita multos moratus dies
signum pugnae proposuit, paucis suos adhortatus ne novum bellum eos novusque hostis
tereret: quidquid ab urbe longius proferrent arma, magis magisque ini imbelles gentes
eos prodire. ne Sidicinorum Campanorumque cladibus Samnitium aestimarent virtutem;
qualescumque inter se certaverint, necesse fuisse alteram partem vincire. Campanos
quidem haud dubie magis nimio luxu fluentibus rebus mollitiaque sua quam vi hostium
victos esse. quid autem esse duo prospera in tot saeculis bella Samnitium adversus tot
decora populi Romani, qui triumphos paene plures quam annos ab urbe condita numeret;
qui omnia circa se, Sabinos Etruriam Latinos Hernicos Aequos Volscos Auruncos,
domita armis habeant; qui Gallos tot proelis caesos postremo in mare ac naves fuga
compulerit?\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{136} For this and other incidents in Latin literature of revealing scars as evidence/proof of Romanness, see
Evans (1999).

\textsuperscript{137} Cf. Jaeger (1997) p. 4: “Sevilius’ speech and Paulus’ tour appear in the last surviving book of the \textit{Ab Urbe
Condita}, yet the worldview they reflect at this moment of the Roman triumph is entirely consistent
with the one promoted by the historian from the beginning.”

\textsuperscript{138} Livy 7.32.5-9
For the sake of testing the enemy with small fights, Valerius delayed a few days, then he put out the sign for battle and encouraged his men with a few words so that the new war and the new enemy might not frighten them: the farther from the city they carry their arms, more and more they move toward unwarlike people. They shouldn’t estimate the courage of the Samnites by their defeats of the Sidicini and the Campanians; whatever the nature of their fighting amongst themselves, it was necessary that one side be conquered. It’s hardly doubtful that the Campanians were conquered by too much luxury, faltering affairs, and their own weakness than by the strength of their enemies. Moreover, what are the two successful Samnite wars in so many ages compared to the glories of the Roman people, who count almost more triumphs than years since the founding of the city; who control everything around them – the Sabines, Etruria, the Latins, the Hernici, the Aequi, the Volsci, the Aurunci – tamed with arms; who finally forced the Gauls, slaughtered in so many battles, in flight to the sea and their ships.

Faced with a new (unseen) enemy, Valerius encourages his soldiers by comparing this enemy, the Samnites, with the Romans, which, according to the general, is really no comparison at all. Valerius dismisses the previous victories of the Samnites by attributing them to the cowardice of the conquered and not the courage of the victor. Valerius appropriates the victories of his non-Roman opponents and re-presents them to his soldiers not as a result of the faults of the enemies of the Samnites – the Samnite victories don’t make the Samnites more like Romans because they are successful in battle; instead they simply make the conquered peoples even more un-Roman than the Samnites. The general then pulls Rome into the comparison by claiming that the two victories that the Samnites have won, even if they were indicative of military prowess on the part of the victors, are still nothing compared to all of the triumphs that the Romans have celebrated. To emphasize this, Valerius relives some of the past triumphs celebrated by the Romans, by parading the already-conquered peoples in the minds of his soldiers, listing them in his speech. There have been almost more triumphs than years

139 For a general treatment of the Samnites and their relationship to Rome, see Salmon (1967).

140 For a discussion of Valerius’ speech as a type of hortatio in Livy’s work, see Walsh (1970) p. 225ff. For this speech as an exemplum in Livy’s work, see Chaplin (2000) p. 32-49.
since the founding of the city; the triumph is portrayed here as nearly a better measure of Roman progress than time itself. So, on some level, the measure of a Roman/Rome is always ever the triumph, and, in the eyes of the Roman general encouraging his troops, the enemy/non-Roman is looked at as simply another triumph in the making.141

In another, later war with the Samnites, the Romans again appropriate the enemy even before the battle begins, this time through the display that the Samnites themselves put forth:

141 For the view that the Romans saw all their military pursuits as always right and justified, see Baldson (1979) p. 2ff.

142 Livy 9.40.1-6,15-17
triumphed by a decree of the senate, and in his triumph, the captured arms offered by far the greatest display. The sight of these was so great that the gold shields were distributed to the owners of the banking houses to decorate the forum...and indeed the Romans used the decorated arms of the enemy to honor the gods.

War is as much about spectacle as it is about fighting. Here, the Samnites include shiny new armor as part of their preparations for war, and, presumably, it was meant to be admired by the enemy and to portray the Samnites as a rich and powerful enemy. However, these arms are conquered, re-presented, and re-conquered again and again by the Romans. The Roman generals interpret and re-present this armor in a different way than the Samnites meant it to be interpreted. They teach their soldiers that they ought to be rough (the Roman version of the spectacle of military virtus), not all dressed up in fancy clothes. Gold and silver do not mark one as (are not a proper display of) military courage or competence, iron is. The Samnites don’t get it right – they try to present themselves as fierce opponents with fancy armor, and this is not the proper display, according to the Romans.

The Samnites also misunderstand their own display. The Roman general re-presents the arms as always already spoils – they were never really ever truly armor at all. In the Roman mind, this armor was built to be spoils for the Romans, and by interpreting the Samnite display in this way, the Romans have already conquered them (and their armor) long before the battle begins. The (always already) captured armor, which is bright, shiny, and attractive before battle, becomes deformed as armor after the battle. Once it has been conquered, it can no longer be thought of as armor (and, again, to the Romans, it never was armor to begin with) – it is deformed as armor, but becomes perfectly fine as spoils, quite spectacular spoils, in fact. As spoils, the armor (that never
really was armor) steals the show in the triumph, and the sight of it is so spectacular that
the armor is given to the moneylenders to decorate the forum with. Indeed, they are used
to honor the (Roman) gods. So the Romans completely appropriate the armor, by re-
defining it and thereby transforming it into spoils, and then again re-presenting it as their
own magnificent display (it makes much better Roman spoils than Samnite armor), and
finally re-presenting it again as an offering worthy of their own gods.

3.4: The Samnites Victorious: The Triumph Gone Wrong

We’ve seen how the triumph can define what it means to be Roman, and what it
means to be subordinate to the Romans. However, Livy also recognizes that the triumph
is not always (and in fact rarely is) a simple spectacle of Good Roman and Bad Non-
Roman. In fact, Livy sometimes uses the triumph to blur the line between Roman and
non-Roman, and shows his audience that the triumph can frustrate just as it can work to
define the two constructs. One of the main roles the triumph plays is as a celebration of
the victorious Roman, but when the Romans don’t come out as the victors, the triumph
undergoes a transformation that reflects the trouble for Rome. Elsewhere, as we have
seen, Livy uses the triumph to reflect Rome’s victories over and superior attitude toward
the Samnites. In this next passage, however, the Samnites have defeated the Romans,
and this military upset is reflected in Livy’s distortion of the language of the triumph:

redintegravit luctum in castris consulum adventus, ut vix ab iis abstinerent manus,
quorum temeritate in eum locum deducti essent, quorum ignavia foedius inde quam
venissent abituri: illis non ducem locorum, non exploratorem fuisse; beluarum modo
caecos in foveam missos. alii alios intueri; contemplari arma mox tradenda et inermes
futuras dextras obnoxiaque corpora hosti; proponere sibimet ipsi ante oculos iugum
hostilie et ludibria victoris et voltus superbos et per armatos inermium iter, inde foedi
agminis miserabilem viam per sociorum urbes, reditum in patriam ad parentes, quo
sasepe ipsi maioresque eorum triumphantes venissent: se solos sine volnere, sine ferro,
sine acie victos; sibi non stringere licuisse gladios, non manum cum hoste conferre; sibi nequiquam arma, nequiquam vires, nequiquam animos datos. haec frementibus hora fatalis ignominiae advenit, omnia tristora expeririundo factura quam quae praeceperant animis. iam primum cum singulis vestimentis inermes extra vallum extra eissi; et primi traditi atque in custodiam abducti. tum a consulis abire lictores iussi paludamentaque detracta; tantam <id> inter eos qui paulo ante [eos] excussantes dedendo lacerandosque censuerant miserationem fecit, ut suae quisque conditionalis oblivitus ab illa deformatione tantae maiestatis velut ab nefando spectaculo averteret oculos. primi consules prope seminudi sub iugum missi; tum ut quique gradu proximus erat, ita ignominia objectus; tum deinceps singularis legiones. circumstabant armati hostes, exprobrantes eludentesque; gladii etiam plerisque intentati, et volnerati quidam necatique, si voltus eorum indignitate rerum acerius victorem offendisset. ita traduxit sub iugum et quod paene gravius erat per hostium oculos, cum e saltu evassissent, eti velut ab inferis extracti tum primum lucem aspicere visi sunt, tamen ipsa lux deformis infinitibus agmen omni morte tristior fuit...neque illis sociorum comitas voltusque benigni et adloquia non modo sermonem elicere sed ne ut oculos quidem attollerent aut consolantes amicos contra intuerentur efficere poterant; adeo super maerorem pudor quidam fugere conloquia et coetus hominum cogebat. postero die cum iuuenes nobiles missi a Capua ut proficiscerent ad finem Campanum prosequerentur revertissent vocatique in curiam percontantibus maioribus natu multo sibi maiores et abiectiores animi visos referrent: adeo silens ac prope mutum agmen incessisse; iacere indolem illam Romanam ablatosque cum armis animos; non reddere salutem, [non salutantibus dare responsum,] non hescere quemquam prae metu potuisse, tamquam ferentibus abhuc cervicibus iugum sub quod missi esset; habere Samnites victoriam non praeclaram somum sed etiam perpetuam; cepisse enim eos non Romam, sicut ant Gallos, sed, quod multo bellicosius fuerit, Romanam virtutem ferociamque...paene maestior exercitum ipso civitas esse; nec ducibus solum atque auctoris sponsoribusque pacis irasci sed innoxios etiam milites odisse et negare urbe tective accipierunt. quam concitationem animorum fert advance exercitus etiam iratis miserabilis. non enim tamquam in patriam revertentes ex insperato incolumes sed captorum habitu volutque ingressi sero in urbem ita se in suis quisque tectis abfinderunt, ut postero atque inequentibus diebus nemo eorum forum aut publicum aspicere vellet.143

The return of the consuls renewed the mourning in the camp, so that they scarcely could keep from laying their hands on those whose rashness had led them to this place, because of whose cowardice they would leave more shamefully than they had come: for them there was no guide of the area and no scout; like wild beasts they were sent into a pitfall. They look at each other; they look at the arms that must soon be handed over, and their right hands, soon to be defenseless, and their bodies, submissive to the enemy. They placed before their own eyes the enemy's yoke and the mockery of the victor and their arrogant faces and the journey of the unarmed through the armed, then the wretched road of their shameful line through the allies’ cities, the return into their country and to their parents, to where they themselves and their ancestors had often returned in triumph: they alone were conquered without a wound, without a sword, and without a battle; they were not allowed to draw their swords, nor were they allowed to fight the enemy; in vain they were given arms, strength, and spirits. While they muttered these things, the fated hour of dishonor arrived, which was made sadder by experiencing all the things to come than what they had anticipated in their minds. First they were ordered to leave the rampart, unarmed, each with only his clothing. The hostages were first handed over and led off into custody. Then the lictors were ordered to leave the consuls and the generals’ cloaks

[143] Livy 9.5.6-6.3,6.8-13,7.9-11
were taken away; this evoked such great pity among those who a little while before cursed them and agreed that they should be handed over and tortured, that each man forgot his own condition and turned his eyes from that degradation of such great authority, as if from an impious spectacle. First the consuls, nearly naked, were sent under the yoke; then, as each was next in rank, thus he was exposed to disgrace, then in succession, each legion. The armed enemy stood around them, reproaching and mocking them; indeed, swords were pointed at many, and they were wounded and even killed if their faces offended their conquerors by being too sharp with indignation for the affair. Thus they were led under the yoke and what was even worse, it was in front of the enemies’ eyes, and when they came out of the pass, although it was as if they had been brought back from the dead, then they seemed to look at the daylight for the first time, but to those looking at the disfigured army, the light itself was sadder than any death…The kindness, friendly faces, and encouragement of the allies were not able not only to coax them to talk, but even to raise their eyes and look at their sympathetic friends; in addition to sadness, a certain shame compelled them to avoid the conversations and assemblies of men. On the next day, when the young nobles, who had been sent from Capua to accompany those going to the Campanian border, had returned, they were called into the senate, the elders questioned them, and they responded that the Romans seemed much sadder and more downcast: the army marched very silently and were nearly mute; they threw away that innate Roman quality and their spirits were taken away with their arms; they didn’t return a salute to those greeting them, none of them were able to open their mouths to speak for fear, as if their neck still bore the yoke under which they had been sent; the Samnites held a victory that was not only famous, but everlasting as well, for they had not captured Rome, as the Gauls had before, but, a much more warlike deed, they captured the Roman courage and fierceness…The state was almost more miserable than the army itself…they were angry not only with the generals, the authors, and the supporters of the peace, but they even hated the innocent soldiers and said that they shouldn’t be allowed back into the city and their homes. This disturbance of spirits was shattered by the arrival of the army, which was pitied even by the ones who were angry. For not as men returning to their homeland unexpectedly safe, but with the manner and look of captives, they entered the city late and each one hid himself in his own house in such a way that on the next day and in the following days, none of them wanted to look on the forum or the public.

The Roman army has been utterly defeated at the hands of the Samnites, and the consuls agree to surrender themselves and their army to the victors – an extremely shameful act in the eyes of the Romans. As a result, the enemy sends the Roman army under the yoke in what is described by Livy as a very strangely (anti)triumphal-like procession.144 Before they are led under the yoke, the Roman soldiers become miserable by looking at each other and themselves – a spectacle of Roman self as the captive – and they see there (in each other and themselves) a spectacle that has not yet taken place. What they see is

144 For a discussion of Livy’s references to this episode throughout his work, see Chaplin (2000) p. 41ff.
absence (the arms that will soon be taken away) and helpless submission (their bodies). They also make a spectacle out of what is not yet present – they see the enemy yoke, the future mockery and arrogance in the faces of their conquerors. They even look ahead to their return to Rome, and whereas a normal returning army might ‘look forward’ to a triumph (and Livy tells us that the past triumphant returns are definitely in the minds and eyes of the soldiers), these men are looking toward (but certainly not ‘forward to’) a return that will be anything but triumphal. When the time for their procession under the yoke arrives, the anti-triumphal implications shine through in Livy’s description. First of all, the roles of Roman audience and captured enemy in the spectacle have been completely reversed: the audience is comprised of non-Romans, who are the conquerors in this situation, and the Roman soldiers are the ones being led as the conquered, the ones on display. The generals are stripped of their distinctions, as opposed to being emphasized by them, as would be the case in a triumph; this serves to begin the process of stripping the Romans of their Romanness, a process which will be completed as they cross under the enemy’s yoke. The soldiers, who are both part of the spectacle of the conquered and spectators of their own downfall, turn their gaze away from the generals (and become anti-spectators).145 This, again, is reminiscent of Livy’s statement in the preface that he is turning his gaze toward the past and away from the present; the difference, though, is that Livy derives pleasure from looking to the past as a way to forget the present, while the Roman soldiers look away from their general in sadness, so sad that they forget their present condition, and are looking away not to the happy past,

145 For a discussion of the soldiers averting their eyes, see Frederick (2002).
but toward the sadness-filled future. For them, there’s no escaping their plight – the spectacle before them is of grim subjection to the enemy, and the future is filled with spectacles of returning to Rome in defeat, which spectacle itself will be haunted by the memory of past, triumphal returns. There’s something definitely wrong with this show, and Livy recognizes this by calling it a *nefando spectaculo* – an impious display.

In this upside-down version of a triumph, even the power of the gaze is misplaced, in the eyes of the non-Roman victors, and the soldiers have to be careful how and where they look. The gaze/look relationship becomes dangerous when the spectacle is in the control of the non-Roman – the soldiers are killed if they look wrong (either actively or passively), and the whole situation is made worse because it all happens in front of the enemy’s eyes. Then, when the soldiers finally come into the light, which Livy tells us should be a good thing, they are instead horrified because they catch sight of one another, and that spectacle too is wrong and strange and terrible. When they pass through the yoke, the soldiers are transferred into the place of the defeated, a role normally played by the non-Romans. They stop seeing (indeed, they were punished for it before and now they stop seeing altogether) and start being seen only. The allies see them and they seem to them sad and quiet; they won’t look up at them or speak to them at all.\(^{146}\) The transformed, disfigured triumph has transformed/disfigured the (once) Roman soldiers into the non-Roman, the conquered. Even the Romans back at Rome treat the

\(^{146}\) Cf Barton (2002) p. 218: “In Livy’s extended account of the humiliation of the Roman army at the Caudine Forks, the Capuan allies with their *voltus benigni*, their healing, embracing, annealing looks, try to reanimate the dispirited Roman soldiers, arisen from the defile like zombies from a crypt. Livy sharply contrasts the way the Capuans looked at the Romans with the way the victorious Samnites, with their scornful *voltus superbi*, regarded the Roman soldiers bowing under the yoke and running the Samnite gauntlet of blows and derision.”
returning soldiers as non-Romans. They think that the soldiers should not be allowed to return to their homes, and they not only don’t deserve a triumphant return, they deserve no return at all. But when they do enter the city, their submissive, non-Roman self-display gains for them the pity of their Roman audience. They enter the city in the opposite way that they would if they were returning in a triumphal procession: they enter the city at night instead of during the day in full view, and they sneak in, in order to not be seen, whereas the very point of marching in a triumph is to be seen. They don’t show their faces (don’t display themselves) to the Roman people for several days afterward, and Livy describes this in an interesting way – they keep themselves from the public eye not because they don’t want to be seen (although this must comprise at least part of their reasoning), but instead, Livy says that they don’t want to look upon the public or the forum. Their ability to distinguish between and control the roles of the look and the gaze are still in confusion from the anti-triumphal spectacle of passing under the enemy’s yoke. Thus, this is what happens when the triumph goes wrong and the enemy, the non-Roman, is in control of the show: Roman life as the Romans knew it very nearly ceases to exist, and Roman and non-Roman roles get blurred and confused and transformed and reversed.

In his history of Rome, Livy shows us a Rome that is full of spectacles, and he uses the spectacle of the triumph as a tool by which to display the Romanness of Rome, and how that Romanness is as fragile and ever-changing as the Romans perhaps feared it to be.¹⁴⁷ Just as the triumph had to be fought for and earned, so too Romanness was

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Feldherr (1998) p. 15-16: “The right of the returning commander to celebrate a triumph depended not only on the magnitude and importance of the victory but on the quality of the authority he possessed. A
something that was not just a moment of identity, but a sense of self that had to be
struggled with and negotiated. Not only is a general’s status as Roman negotiated and
renegotiated within the spectacle of the triumph, but the line that divided the notions of
Roman and non-Roman is also just as much at stake in the triumphal display. Livy
recognizes the complexities inherent in the triumph, and, although he in some instances
portrays the triumph as a means to define the Roman as conqueror and the non-Roman as
conquered, he also understands that the triumph can be (and usually is) a complicated
spectacle of the complex (and in some ways uncertain) ideas of what it means to be
Roman.

triumph could only be awarded to the person under whose imperium and auspicii the victory had been
won. These two concepts, referring respectively to the ability to command citizens and to take the
auspices, together define the power of the highest Roman magistrates. As a result of these criteria, every
triumph necessarily becomes an affirmation, not just of the success won by a particular commander, but of
the divine and human bases upon which supreme authority in the state rests.” As I have argued, I believe
that the triumph, in Livy’s text and in Roman thought in general, was much more complex than Feldherr’s
statement allows it to be. If Livy thought what Feldherr would have us believe he did, then it becomes
impossible to understand how such examples as Camillus’ and Furius’ triumphs, and Livy’s use of
triumphal imagery in his account of the Samnite victory over the Romans at the Caudine Forks, fit in to his
view of the triumph.
CHAPTER 4

THE TRIUMPH IN THE LIVES OF PLUTARCH

Throughout his Lives, Plutarch refers to the Roman triumph many times and in a variety of contexts. Some instances are mere mentions of someone leading a triumph, while other passages go on for pages describing in detail the triumphal procession. No matter what the context, however, Plutarch’s treatment of the triumph nearly always reveals something of the character of the triumphing general, of those triumphed over, and – perhaps most intriguingly – of the Romans themselves. \(^{148}\) For, of course, the triumph is a Roman custom to the core, according to Plutarch: \(^{149}\)

\[\text{εὖξαµενος οὖν ὁ Ρωµιός, εἴ κρατήσει καὶ καταβάλω, τῷ Διὶ φῶν ἀναζήσῃς αὐτὸς τὰ ὅπλα τοῦ αὐράχος, αὐτὸν τε καταβάλλει κρατῆσας καὶ τῷ Διὶ φέρων ἀναθήσει αὐτὸς τὰ ὅπλα τοῦ ανδρός, αὐτὸν τε καταβάλει κρατήσας, καὶ τρέπει τὸ στρατεύµα ἅσχης γενοµένης, ἀλλὰ τὸν εἶπεν καὶ τὴν πόλιν, οὐ µὴ ἠδὶκῆσε τοὺς ἐγκαταληφθέντας, ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ισοῖς ἐποίησεν, τούτον µὲν οὖν οὐκ ἐστίν ὁ τι µᾶλλον ἔστερος τῷ Ρώµῃ, οἳ προσποιοῦσιν ἑαυτῷ καὶ συννέµουσιν ἐν κρατήσεις, οἳ δὲ ἑαυτῷ καὶ τὴν πόλιν, οὐ µὴ ἠδὶκῆσε τοὺς ἐγκαταληφθέντας, ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ισοῖς ἐποίησεν, τοῦτον µὲν οὖν οὐκ ἐστίν ὁ τι µᾶλλον ἔστερος τῷ Ρώµῃ, οἳ προσποιοῦσιν ἑαυτῷ καὶ συννέµουσιν ἐν κρατήσεις, ἂν δὲ ἑαυτῷ καὶ τὴν πόλιν, οὐ µὴ ἠδὶκῆσε τοὺς ἐγκαταληφθέντας, ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ισοῖς ἐποίησεν, τοῦτον µὲν οὖν οὐκ ἐστίν ὁ τι µᾶλλον ἔστερος τῷ Ρώµῃ, οἳ προσποιοῦσιν ἑαυτῷ καὶ συννέµουσιν ἐν κρατήσεις, ἂν δὲ ἑαυτῷ καὶ τὴν πόλιν, οὐ µὴ ἠδὶκῆσε τοὺς ἐγκαταληφθέντας, ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ισοῖς ἐποίησεν, τοῦτον µὲν οὖν οὐκ ἐστίν ὁ τι µᾶλλον ἔστερος τῷ Ρώµῃ, οἳ προσποιοῦσιν ἑαυτῷ καὶ συννέµουσιν ἐν κρατήσεις.

\[^{148}\] Cf. Duff (1999) p. 8-9: “Historical theory…has laid stress on the importance of the process of writing itself as interpretation and emphasized the historian’s own role in creating history. The priorities which he gives to different sorts of material are themselves revealing of the assumptions and values of the writer and of his society. Plutarch’s construction of Classical Athens or Republican Rome can throw as much light on his own society as it does on those he writes about.”

\[^{149}\] For a detailed account of the rituals and customs entailed in the triumph, see Versnel (1970).

\[^{150}\] Plutarch Life of Romulus 16.3-5
And so Romulus prayed that if he should conquer and overthrow Acron, he would bring Acron’s armor to Jupiter and dedicate them to him; he conquered and overthrew Acron, put his army to flight during the battle, and captured the city. He didn’t harm those who were captured, but instead he ordered them to tear down their houses and follow him to Rome, so that they might be citizens amongst equals. There isn’t anything that increased Rome more than this, that it always added to itself and incorporated those whom it conquered. Romulus, considering how especially he might present his vow in a way gratifying to Jupiter and how he might offer it in a way that was pleasing for the citizens to see, he cut down a large oak in the camp and shaped it like a trophy, and he fastened and adjusted each piece of Acron’s armor in battle array, and he himself dressed up in his garments and crowned with laurel his head with flowing long hair. He placed the trophy on his right shoulder and held it upright, and he set forth leading his soldiers, who were following in arms, in a victory song, and the citizens received him with joy and wonder, And so the procession furnished the origin and model of subsequent triumphs,…

According to Plutarch, Romulus himself invented the triumph, as the fulfillment of a vow made to Jupiter that he might conquer his enemy.¹⁵¹ His prayers are apparently granted (although Jupiter’s role in this is left untouched by Plutarch), because he routs the enemy, defeats Acron, and captures the city. (Plutarch’s description of) Romulus’ treatment of the captives sets a precedent for the (Plutarch’s) history of Roman conquest – he doesn’t harm them, but instead he tells them to tear down their homes and invites them to come to Rome and live as equal citizens.¹⁵² The captured people become Roman citizens; they become fully incorporated into Roman society. The non-Roman tears down his world – is ordered to do so by the Romans – and becomes part of the Roman world. Plutarch goes on to say that this is the Roman Way; conquest for the Romans meant incorporating, taking over the identity of the conquered, redefining them. However, as he is telling us that the triumph is Roman all the way (you can’t get much more Roman than Romulus),

¹⁵¹ For varying discussions of Plutarch’s sources in the Lives, see Buckler, Hillard, Pelling (1979), Pelling (1980), and Vollgraff (1880). For Plutarch’s use of his own experiences as a source in the Lives, see Buckler (1992).

¹⁵² For reading the Life of Romulus as a way of learning about how Romans and others viewed Roman history, see Hale (1985).
Plutarch is at the same time drawing attention to the question, what does it mean to be
Roman, anyway? Although Romulus might be as Roman as the aqueduct, his treatment
of the captives makes a definition of ‘Roman’ hard to come up with. The Romans,
through the medium of the triumph, presented, defined, re-presented, re-defined the non-
Roman, while at the same time they embraced the non-Roman and made it their own.\textsuperscript{153}
This, according to Plutarch, is how the Roman Empire got so big.

So the line between Roman and non-Roman becomes blurry at times. And all of
this Romanness and non-Romanness and blurriness gets put on display for all the
(Roman) world to see. Romulus takes great care to create a spectacle pleasing to the
people – this is not just an offering to Jupiter, it’s Romulus putting on a show of Romulus
the Great Roman for the Romans. But it’s also a display of all those new (non?)Romans
too, for they’re marching right behind the Romanest Roman of them all. For Plutarch,
the spirit behind the triumph doesn’t seem to have changed much down through the
years – in all of his triumphal descriptions, the staged spectacle, the show that’s put on
and how one represents oneself as Roman and others as (non-)Roman, these things are
very important. This is indeed the model for all subsequent triumphs in Plutarch, and so
by examining some of his descriptions, we can gain insight on how the Romans defined
themselves and others through the spectacle of the triumph.

\textsuperscript{153} For Plutarch’s attitude toward Rome and Rome’s power, see de Blois (1992), Mahaffy (1890) p. 291-
consciously Greek and even in some ways anti-Roman, see Buckler (1992) p. 4821ff., Gossage (1967) p.
In fact, what we will discover in these descriptions of specific triumphs is Plutarch’s view of the Roman triumph as it functions in Roman society. Plutarch realizes that, while on the surface the triumph is a persuasive tool used to portray a Roman general as a successful Roman and does so through the definition it poses both of the Roman general and the conquered non-Romans, Plutarch himself uses the triumph as a tool to reveal the fact that coming up with definitions for ‘Roman’ and ‘non-Roman’ is much more complex an undertaking than it might at first appear to be. In fact, through Plutarch’s descriptions of the triumph, he argues that it is impossible to separate one from the other (Roman from non-Roman), and that the portrayal of a general as Roman fully depends upon how the non-Roman captives are defined, who are, in turn, impossible to define as captured non-Romans without at the same time considering the Romanness of the general. In other words, as we shall see in our examination of Plutarch’s triumphal descriptions, he uses the triumph, which for the Romans was a means to persuade their fellow Romans of their Romanness, to persuade his readers that the triumph is in fact not such a simple definer and persuader of what it means to be Roman.

4.1: The Triumph as the Measure of a (Ro)Man

ὁ γὰρ ἐν ἴματίῳ βίος ἐπισφαλῆς ἔστι πρὸς ἀδεξίαν τοῖς ἐκ τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν ἐπέλαυσεν καὶ πρὸς ἰσότητα δημοτικὴν ἀναμέτρος· αὐτοὶ μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἐνταῦθα πρωτεύειν ὡς ἐκεῖ δικαιοῦσι, τοῖς δὲ ἐκεῖ φερόμενος ἐπισφαλέοι ἐνταῦθα γενόμενοι μὴ πλέον ἔχειν εἰκόνις ἀνεκτόν ἔστι. θνὸς τὸν ἐν στρατοπέδῳ καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐνταῦθα πρῶτον ὡς ἐκεῖ δικαιοῦσι, τὸ δὲ ἀπολεγόμενον καὶ ἐπισφαλέοις τῇ ἐκεῖ τιμής καὶ δύναμιν ἀνεπίφθονος φυλάττουσι. ¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ Plutarch *Life of Pompey* 23.5-6
For life in a toga is dangerous when it comes to ill-repute for those who gained their greatness from the army and who are not suited for common equality. These men think it fitting that they be #1 in the city just as they see fit to be #1 on the battlefield, while it is unbearable for those who have less power in the army that they not have more power even in the city. Therefore, whenever they come upon one in the forum who is well known for his armies and triumphs, they overpower and reject him, but for one who renounces and withdraws from public life, they respect the honor and power that he gained in the field and leave it unenvied.

It’s not easy being a triumphator; in fact, Plutarch tells us that it’s downright dangerous to walk around in a (triumphal) toga. The triumph is about presenting oneself as a Roman, a good Roman, but here, we get a different picture of these triumphing generals. They don’t seem to fit into Roman society once they return to Rome from the battlefield. They want to be #1 just as they were in the field, but the Roman citizens won’t allow it. Rome was nervous about having their generals in the city – the rules for the triumph attest to this. So, once they have triumphed, which is a big visual display of their generalship and all their accomplishments as generals, Plutarch says they best serve themselves by disappearing into Roman private life, and by not drawing attention to themselves through political, public affairs. They must play a game of show and hide – put on the biggest self-display of them all, and then vanish from the spotlight. Just how Roman are these Roman generals, if they can’t seem to fit back into Roman life once they return to Rome? Perhaps even more intriguing is the question, if these generals are less Roman than when they left Rome, how then should we adjust our view of the triumph as

155 Cf. Parker (1999) p. 167: “…the shame of ‘making a spectacle of oneself’ runs counter to an even more important Roman cultural imperative: to be ‘the observed of all observers.’ In many societies, the higher one’s status, the more invisible one becomes…Mediterranean societies, on the other hand, with their emphasis on life lived in the open spaces of the City…tend to prove power by the number of social connections, by the size of the retinue. The more powerful the man, the more visible he is. The Romans found themselves in a culturally determined double bind: to be the object of others’ sight was to be open to attack, yet to be publicly observed was proof of power.”

156 For the specific rules governing the triumph, see Valerius Maximus 2.8; Cf. Versnel (1970) p. 164ff.
a display of the general’s Romanness? Is this a true display of Romanness, or are the
generals trying to convince the Romans that they are in fact still Roman and that they
deserve to be let back into the city?

Regardless of whom the triumphing general is trying to convince, there’s no
doubt that the triumph is a way in which to present to the city the general’s status as a
good Roman. Plutarch also uses the triumph as a tool for measuring the worth of a
Roman.\textsuperscript{157}

\begin{scriptsize}
\begin{quote}
\‘Ην δὲ πλησίον αὐτῶ τῶν ἁγίων ἡ γενομένη Μανίου Κουρίου τοῦ τρίς ἡραμβείσαντος ἔπαυλις. ἐπὶ
tαῦτην συνεχῶς βαδίζων καὶ ἰζώμανς τοῦ ται χωρίου τὴν μικρότητα καὶ τῆς ὀψήφιος τὸ λιτόν,
ἐννοιάν ἐλάμβανε τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ὃτι Ἡ Ῥωμαίων μέγιστος γενόμενος καὶ τὰ μαχημάτα τῶν ἔξω
ιππαγόμενος καὶ Πύρρον ἔξωλάσας Ἰταλίας, τούτο τὸ χωρίον αὐτὸς ἐσκαπάς καὶ ταὐτὴν τὴν
ἔπαυλιν ὕπει ἐπὶ τέσσερις ἡραμβεῖσας...\textsuperscript{158}
\end{quote}
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Near [Cato’s] fields there was a farmhouse that used to belong to Manius Curius, a three-time
triumphator. [Cato] was constantly going out and looking at the smallness of the place and
the simplicity of the house, and he thought of the man who, although he was the greatest of
the Romans and subdued the most warlike nations and drove Pyrrhus out of Italy, plowed this
little piece of land and, after three triumphs, lived in this cottage,…

This passage, like many of Plutarch’s mentions of the triumph, is not an actual
description of a triumph. Instead, the mere mention of someone’s triumph is used as a
measure of his behavior in other aspects of life. Here, for example, two brief mentions of
Manius Curius’ three triumphs frame the passage and the context of the story. As in the
previous passage, it is not how one presents oneself during the triumph, but afterwards

\textsuperscript{157} Cf. Barrow (1967) p. 58: “To Plutarch life is activity; a man’s actions reveal his character; his actions
are initiated by himself or are reactions to the actions of other men. A spotlight on the hero will reveal
nothing; the whole stage – scenery and actors – must be lit up if he is to be seen for ‘what manner of man

\textsuperscript{158} Plutarch \textit{Life of Marcus Cato} 2.1
that’s at issue, and that can mark the true measure of a man. Manius Curius is a good Roman not just because he is a great general with three triumphs under his belt, but because he afterwards became Joe Roman again. He did precisely what Plutarch says one must do in order to be accepted back into Roman society after the triumph. Plutarch portrays the triumph as something that, although it is a highly sought-after honor, can be a danger to one’s Romanness by tempting a general to become too arrogant, too visible. Manius Curius is a good Roman because he resists this temptation and returns to his humble farm. Notice that Plutarch calls Manius the greatest of the Romans – this phrase occurs repeatedly throughout the Lives. And notice that, not only is he the greatest Roman, but he defeated the most warlike nations. The greatest Roman becomes the greatest by fighting and conquering the greatest enemy – again, a theme Plutarch returns to many times.

There’s another layer to this good Roman scale, though. Manius Curius’ spectacle of Roman goodness lasts way after his three triumphs. Manius is by this time long dead, but his spectacle lives on – Cato goes out to the little farm again and again to look at (θεώµενος) the cottage and the field, and this view reminds him not only of Manius’ triumphal displays but of his actions afterwards as well. This, in turn, is a story told by Plutarch about Cato for the purpose of presenting Cato as a good Roman himself; by simply recognizing that what he ‘sees’ about Manius presents Manius as a good Roman, he presents himself as a good Roman. His vision of Manius’ farmhouse and his interpretation of what he sees makes him a good Roman.
Later on in his *Life of Cato*, Plutarch again uses the simple mention of a triumph to measure Cato’s status as a good Roman:

…already then the Republic did not keep its purity in size, but in ruling over many affairs and men it mixed together many customs and put forth models of every kind of lifestyle. So naturally they were amazed at Cato, seeing that other men were broken down by toils and softened by pleasures, but that Cato was unconquered by both, not only while he was still young and ambitious, but even when he was already quite old and after his consulship and triumph,…

As in the passage from the *Life of Romulus*, Plutarch presents a Rome that is filled not with only pure Romans, but emphasizes that the city is a mix of cultures and peoples. Although in the passage from *Romulus*, Plutarch tells us that this is how the Empire was won (incorporating other cultures into Rome’s own), here, he seems to say that this melting pot poses a threat to one’s true Romanness. Cato stands out as a good Roman because he remains ‘unconquered’ (ἀήττητον) by the already-conquered culture, while others are ‘broken down’ by them. Cato maintains his Romanly virtue even after celebrating a triumph, so again, the notion that the triumph is a danger to Romans is floating just under the surface. Here, Cato responds to the dangerous spectacle of the triumph with another spectacle – the people ‘look at/are amazed at’ (ἐθαύμαζον) him and they ‘watch’ (ὁρῶντες) both themselves being worn down by non-Roman culture and Cato

\[159\] Plutarch *Life of Marcus Cato* 4.2-3
successfully resisting it. This is Cato’s version of a triumph, a sort of reverse-triumph: he puts on a show of his ability to remain unconquered, instead of displaying his prowess at conquering others.

Plutarch isn’t the only one who knows that triumphs are displays of Romanness – Plutarch’s Romans were well aware of this as well, and definitely used it to their advantage:

The people especially proclaimed in public that Marius was the third founder of Rome, since the danger that he expelled was no less than the Gallic one, and everyone rejoiced with their children and wives at home and offered food and libations to both the gods and Marius, and said that Marius alone was worthy of celebrating both triumphs. But he didn’t celebrate a triumph in that way, but together with Catulus, wanting to present himself as moderate in the midst of such great good fortune. It’s also possible that he was afraid of Catulus’ soldiers, who were ready for a fight and might keep him from triumphing if Catulus were kept from the honor.

Caius Marius is hailed as Roman Founder #3 – you can’t get much more Roman than that – and is offered the honor of celebrating two triumphs by himself. He declines to do it alone, though, and by doing so, he is performing yet another show; he is consciously presenting himself in a specific way, as moderate, humble – a good old Roman quality. But Plutarch isn’t fooled (and thanks to him, neither are we); he presents this Roman in yet another light, a Roman who presents moderation as a motivator but is more likely motivated by fear, which is not so much a good Roman quality. Plutarch’s portrayal of

\[166\] Plutarch Life of Caius Marius 27.9-10
Marius, however, isn’t so un-Roman either. The Romans were well aware that putting on a show that was not completely true was what the triumph was about and, on occasion, did it very well.

So, Plutarch recognizes that part of what makes the triumph such a complex display is revealed in the fact that although the parade itself is a display of Romanness, rejecting one can be an even greater show of that same Romanness. Plutarch gives an even clearer example of this public humility in his *Life of Fabius Maximus*:

> λέγεται δ’ ὡς ἀληθῶς τοῦ Φαβίου τὸν πρόπαππον ἐν δόξῃ καὶ δυνάμει μεγίστη Ῥωμαίων γενόμενον πεντάκις μὲν ὑπατεύει καὶ ἑραμβὸς ἐν πόλεμοις μεγίστων ἐπιφανεστάτους καταγαγεῖ, ὑπατεύοντι δ’ ὑπὲρ προσβεβλητῶν συνεξελίξεως ἐπὶ τὸν πόλεμον, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἑραμβῷ τὸν μὲν ἐπιφανεστάτου ἐπὶ τεξθίπτη, τὸν δ’ ἵππον ἑρευτα μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπικολουθεῖν, ἀγαλλιάμοιον ὅτι τὸν μὲν υἱὸν κυρίον, τῶν δὲ πολιτῶν μέγιστος καὶ προσαγορευόμενος, ὕστερον αὐτὸν τοῦ νόμου καὶ τοῦ ἀρχοντος τίθησιν.\

Truly it is said that Fabius’ great-grandfather, who held the greatest reputation and authority among the Romans and who was five times consul and celebrated the most remarkable triumphs over the greatest enemies, when his son was consul, went out with him to war as an officer, and in the triumph, his son rode in on a four-horse chariot while he followed on horseback with the others, exulting in the fact that although he was master over his son and was called – and actually was – the greatest of the Romans, he placed himself second to the law and the commander.

Fabius’ great-grandfather was a Roman and a half; he had the ‘greatest reputation,’ and the ‘most remarkable triumphs’ over the ‘greatest enemies’ (*ἐραμβὸς ἐν πόλεμω μεγίστων ἐπιφανεστάτως*). There are a lot of superlatives in this passage describing him as the Romanest Roman. He’s the greatest Roman because he conquered the greatest enemies. Within the triumph, the degree of foreignness of the enemy helps to boost the Romanness of the conqueror – the foreigner the foreigner, the Romaner the Roman.

Indeed, Plutarch openly calls Fabius’ great granddad the ‘greatest of the Romans’ (*τῶν δὲ

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161 Plutarch *Life of Fabius Maximus* 24.5
and Fabius himself is hyper ‘-est’; his name already marks him as such (Maximus). However, the triumph is still all about being humble. He marches in his own son’s (Fabius’ grandfather’s) triumph as a common soldier even though he himself had led better, more impressive triumphs (since these were the ‘most remarkable’ triumphs over the ‘greatest enemies,’ they were presumably better shows than his son’s triumph). This is then a show within a show – a show of humility toward the law and toward the rank of his son. He makes a display of yielding the stage to his son, despite his own spectacularity. Or does he? By making this seemingly humble display, does he not, in a certain sense, steal the show from his son, the ‘real’ triumphator? Plutarch, at least, tells this story to point out the father’s good, Roman, humbleness, not to portray the son’s triumph (the above-cited passage is the whole story, including all that is mentioned about the son’s triumph). In fact, this is Fabius’ Life, not even his grandfather’s, so his great-grandfather steals a few lines even from Fabius’ spotlight. Humility sells – and steals the show.\textsuperscript{163}

Just as the triumph is a measure of what a good Roman is, it can just as easily be used to reveal a Roman’s flaws. The triumph is a two-sided show; it gives the general a chance to display himself in the best possible light, while all of Rome watches, but it also means that every Roman eye is on him, so any wrong step can mean public disaster for one’s reputation:

\textsuperscript{162} Plutarch describes several people in this way in the Lives. What does this tells us about his view of the Romans? Can there truly be more than one Greatest Roman?

\textsuperscript{163} For a comparison of the Life of Fabius Maximus with its parallel Life of Pericles, see Stadter (1975).
Pompey did these things out of boundless lust for power, but the origin of Crassus’ sickness, greed, was joined with a new passion and jealousy for trophies and triumphs, brought on by Caesar’s exploits, in which things alone Crassus thought he was inferior to Caesar, and superior in all else, and he neither accomplished this nor rested from its pursuit before he ended in inglorious ruin and public misfortunes.

Openly wanting a triumph is the wrong kind of display to make, and this is Crassus’ main fault. He has a “passion” (ἔρωτα) for triumphs, which is certainly far from a show of moderation. Plutarch cites Caesar as the cause of this jealousy. As discussed in the chapter on Cicero and the triumph, Caesar makes it difficult for anyone but Caesar to be a triumphator, and Crassus is no exception. Here again, superlatives reign supreme, or at least the desire for them. Crassus wants to be the best Roman, wants to be better than Caesar, and he thinks he is better in everything but triumphs. This open desire for a triumph ends in public ruin, and naturally so – Crassus put on the wrong kind of show (wanting a triumph) and pays for this with another kind of tragic spectacle – his own demise.

The spectacle of a triumph neither begins nor ends with the actual triumph; the canvassing for one is a long process filled with its own displays, and how one acts after

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164 Plutarch *Life of Crassus* 14.5

165 Note that for Plutarch, those who show moderation are worthy of being labeled with superlatives; however, those who desire to be the -est and lack moderation get no superlative praises – Crassus could hardly be called one of the greatest Romans, although (and because) he badly desires to be.
the triumph, as we have seen in previous passages, can also be an important show.

However, a slip-up in these before- and after- shows can be just as dangerous as they can be helpful to one’s reputation as a Roman:

metrical ὁ Μάριος σύγκλητον ἠξέρρωσεν ἐν Καπετωλίῳ, καὶ παρῆλθε μὲν εἰτε λαξίων αὐτῶν εἰτε τῇ τύχῃ χρώμενος ἀγρυμότατον ἐν τῇ ἕμιμβικῇ σκέυῃ, ταχύ δὲ τῷ βουλήν ἀχξεσαίων αἰσθάμενος, ἐξανέστη καὶ μεταλαβὼν τὴν περιπόρφυρον αὔξεσθείσαν αὐτὸς ἐξηλίζειν. 166

After the procession, Marius gathered the senate on the Capitoline, and entered – either unaware of himself or making a rather rude show of his good fortune – in his triumphal apparel, but he quickly perceived that the senate was upset, got up and left, changed his clothes, and returned again.

If anything, the triumph is not a simple spectacle – it’s always a two-way show: the general putting on a show for the Roman spectators and at the same time watching the reactions of his audience. Marius is no different; he enters the senate still dressed in his parade outfit and shocks the senators, that group of Romaner-than-thou nobiles. Plutarch gives two explanations for Marius’ actions, both polar opposites of one another. Either Marius was 1) unaware (λαξίων αὐτῶν – escaped his own notice) of what he was doing, which means he wasn’t being a good, observant Roman, or 2) he was making a boorish, unrefined display - again, not exactly a quality cherished by the Romans. But all is not lost for Marius, because his visual skills finally kick in and he sees his audience, sees their reaction, and rectifies his blind mistake.

It also happens, of course, that generals reveal their faults during the actual triumph:

ὀ δὲ Κάμιλλος, εἶτε μεγαλύτερο τοῦ ἤργου, πάλιν ἀντίταλον τῆς Ἱώμης ἐται δεκάτω τῆς πολιορκίας καὶ πολιτικῆς ἀρχῆς ἐπαχθέστερον, τά τ’ ἄλλα σοβαρῶς ἐθριάβεσε, καὶ τέθριππον ὑποζεύξαμενος

166 Plutarch Life of Caius Marius 12.7
Camillus, either because of the magnitude of the deed – he had overpowering a city that could oppose Rome and endure a siege of ten years – or because of the congratulations showered on him, he was raised to pretension and thoughts too arrogant for a lawful man in civil office. Among other things, he celebrated a pompous triumph, riding through Rome on a chariot harnessed with four white horses – something no general has done before or since. For they consider such a chariot sacred and devoted to the king and father of the gods. Because of this incident, he was held in suspicion by the citizens who were unaccustomed to luxury…

Again, Camillus is set up as a great Roman because he overcame an equally great enemy. Indeed, this enemy resembles Rome in its greatness. Camillus, however, goes overboard and becomes a bad Roman because he becomes too (Roman?) arrogant. His triumph is pompous because of his chariot with four white horses. No other Roman general ever tried this, Plutarch tells us. The citizens lose respect for Camillus because they’re unaccustomed to luxury, which makes Camillus sound like the non-Roman invading with his softness and luxury, as in the Cato passage above. The nervousness that the Romans felt towards their generals shines through here. Any general sitting outside the city with his army waiting to enter the city in triumph must have reminded the Romans that he might just as easily enter the city in violence. Camillus, who has just overpowered a city that strongly resembles Rome, now rides into the city, with his army, and brings in with him the luxury that so resembles the foreign cultures that Plutarch describes in the Life of Cato. Has Camillus become too foreign in his time outside of Rome with his army, or has he become too pompous (too Roman) for his (and the city’s) own good? Again, the triumph is an act of persuasion, but here, Plutarch shows us how Camillus fails to

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167 Plutarch Life of Camillus 7.1
persuade Rome of his Romanness through his misuse of the triumph. Instead, Plutarch again reveals the complexities of the triumph by showing us how Camillus, by his abuse of the triumph, persuades Rome of his non-Romanness. According to Plutarch, there’s so much more at stake in the triumph than a general persuading Romans that he’s a good Roman general. The triumph also puts one’s Romanness on the line, and if the performance isn’t persuasive enough, the consequence isn’t merely being pegged as a ‘bad’ Roman – there’s a danger, as in Camillus’ case, of being categorized as not Roman at all, indeed, as the enemy.

According to Plutarch, Antony shows himself to be a bad Roman not because of how he acted during his triumph or even before or after the parade, but where he held it:

\[\text{ὑστερον \ ου \ πάλιν \ ἐρμαδὼν \ ἐις \ Ἀρμενίαν, καὶ πολλαὶς \ ἱποτάσσονται \ καὶ \ προκήρυκες \ πεῖσας \ αὐτῶν \ ἐλθεῖν \ εἰς \ ψεῖρας, συνέλαβε \ καὶ \ διόρισε \ ὑποσχέσεσι \ καὶ \ προκλήσεσι \ πείσας \ αὐτὸν \ εἰς} \ \text{᾿Αρεινίαν}, \ \text{καὶ \ πολλαῖς} \ \text{ὑποσχέσεσι} \ \text{καὶ} \ \text{προκλήσεσι} \ \text{πείσας} \ \text{αὐτὸν} \ \text{ἐλθεῖν} \ \text{εἰς \ ψεῖρας,} \ \text{συνέλαβε} \ \text{καὶ} \ \text{δέσ} \ \text{ιον} \ \text{καταγαγὼν} \ \text{εἰς} \ \text{᾿Αλεξάνδρειαν}, \ \text{καὶ} \ \text{πολλαῖς} \ \text{ὑποσχέσεσι} \ \text{καὶ} \ \text{προκλήσεσι} \ \text{πείσας} \ \text{αὐτὸν} \ \text{ἐλθεῖν} \ \text{εἰς} \ \text{ψεῖρας} \ \text{συνέλαβε} \ \text{καὶ} \ \text{δέσ} \ \text{ιον} \ \text{καταγαγὼν} \ εἰς} \ \text{᾿Αλεξάνδρειαν} \ \text{ἐθριά} \ \text{μεθευσεν.} \ ]^{168}

But later [Antony] again invaded Armenia, and when he had persuaded [Artavasdes] with many promises and invitations to come to him, he seized him and led him as a captive in a triumph at Alexandria. This especially upset the Romans, that he freely bestowed the noble and sacred rites of his country upon the Egyptians for Cleopatra’s sake.

His triumphing in Alexandria (or anywhere else besides Rome) very much angers the Romans – this is a Roman spectacle put on by Romans for Roman eyes; the idea that it might be performed for anyone not Roman and at any place not Rome was horrifying. This relocation also completely befuddles the whole scene. The triumphator is still Roman, albeit a bad one. However, not only are the captives foreign (as they should

\[^{168}\text{Plutarch} \ \text{Life of Antony} \ 50.6-7\]

\[^{169}\text{Or is he? Antony slowly becomes less and less Roman and more and more Cleopatra’s subject throughout the work.}\]
be), the audience and even the stage itself (Alexandria) is foreign as well – in a sense, Antony (and his army) is the only outsider here. Antony’s crime is that he puts on a Roman show not for Romans but for the ultimate non-Roman: Cleopatra. Not only is she not Roman, she’s also a woman – race and gender alike are completely scrambled. More on this interesting couple later.

It’s not always the triumphator that draws the attention, as we saw with Fabius Maximus’ great-grandfather. While Plutarch used the mention of that triumph as an example of good Romanness, he uses this next one to point out once again Crassus’ bad behavior:

And so it seems to me that Lucullus did more harm through others than he did good through himself for his country. For the trophies in Armenia, which stood near Parthia, Tigranocerta, and Nisibis, and the abundance of wealth carried from these places to Rome, and the captured diadem of Tigranes, which was displayed in Lucullus’ triumph, incited Crassus toward Asia, thinking that it was all spoils and plunder, and nothing else. However, he quickly encountered the Parthian arrows and proved that Lucullus didn’t overcome the enemy because of their thoughtlessness and cowardice, but by his own courage and cleverness.

Lucullus’ triumph does harm to Rome, not because Lucullus himself acts inappropriately for a Roman, but because its foreign spoils are too enticing for Crassus to resist. Crassus misinterprets Lucullus’ spectacle – he sees it wrong, which, in itself, shows Crassus to be a bad Roman (he doesn’t know the optical rules of the triumph game). While Lucullus’ triumph is meant to be a spectacle of what a great Roman Lucullus is (he conquered and

170 Plutarch Life of Lucullus 36.6-7
brought back so many spoils), Crassus misreads it as a display of how easily the Parthian spoils could be won. As a result of this mis-vision, Crassus puts on a show of his own; he is utterly defeated by the Parthians and loses those famous standards. This, of course, spirals into all kinds of other spectacles; the Romans are for so long disturbed by what the loss of the standards presents to others about them, and, most famously, the display on the statue of Augustus Prima Porta – the shield which presents the standards being reclaimed. Crassus’ failure also puts Lucullus back on display. By losing so miserably to the Parthians, he presents to Rome a portrait of Lucullus’ status as a good Roman through the tragedy of his own failure as a Roman. By not being able to rout the Parthians, Crassus gives proof that Lucullus’ victory was not due to Parthian cowardice, but to Lucullus’ ability as a general. So, the display of a triumph can outlive just the parade, indeed, it can even out live the life of the triumphator. As discussed earlier, Cato’s display of Romanness is affected by Marius Curius’ triumph (and his behavior afterwards), and here, Lucullus’ triumph, which results in disaster for Crassus and by extension Rome because of the standards fiasco, lives on in Augustus’ program of public self-presentation in the visual celebration of the reclaiming of the standards.

Although Plutarch normally portrays both Catos as exceptionally upstanding Romans, Cato the Younger too has trouble following the optic protocols of the triumph:

*Περαιωθεὶς δὲ ταῖς ναυσὶν οὐκ ἔδειξε τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις, ἀλλὰ πάντες μὲν ἄρρητες καὶ ἱερεῖς, πάσα δ’ ἡ βουλῇ, πολὺ δὲ τοῦ δήμου μέσας ἀφάντων πρὸς τὸν ποταμόν, ὡστε τὰς ὀχήμας ἀμφιτέρας ἀποκεκρύβας καὶ ζημίας μεθάλλα ὁμίλει καὶ φιλοτιμίᾳ λαέπεθε συν τὸν ἀνάπλουν αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοῖς σκιαῖς ἐνώπιος τοῦτ’ ἐσαίματο καὶ αἰσθάδες, ὡς τῶν ὑπάτων καὶ τῶν στρατηγῶν παρόντων ὤν’ ἀπέβη πρὸς αὐτοὺς, ὡς’ ἐπάνη τὸν πλοῦν, ἀλλὰ χείρῃ τὸν ὀχήμα παρεξελαύνων ἐπὶ νεώς ἔξωρος βασιλικῆς, οὐκ ἀνήκε πρόστερον ἢ καθομίλει τὸν στόλον εἰς τὸ νεῶριον, οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ τῶν χρημάτων παρακομιζόμενων δι’ ἁγιών, ὡς τοὺς δήμος ἐκδιώκει τὸ πλήθος, ἢ τῇ βουλῇ συναχθεῖσα μετὰ τῶν
Cato’s return did not escape the Roman’s notice, and all the officers and priests, the whole senate, and a great part of the people went to the river to meet him, so that both banks were covered and nothing of a triumph was missing in spectacle and distinction from his trip upstream. And yet to some it seems gauche and presumptuous that, although the consuls and generals were present, Cato didn’t disembark for them, nor did he pause his voyage, but he rode past them in a rush on a royal ship with six banks of oars, and he didn’t stop until he brought the fleet to the dockyard. But when the goods were carried through the forum, the people were amazed at the vast amount of it, and the senate convened and, with suitable honors, voted that a special generalship be given to Cato and that he view the spectacles with purple-bordered clothing. Cato declined these honors,…

Cato isn’t celebrating a triumph here, but something very much like a triumph in the most important way – spectacle. Cato doesn’t just slip into the city unnoticed; he stages a very visible return. So visible, in fact, that Plutarch tells us that nothing of the spectacle of a triumph is missing from the display. Cato even, as some say, gets presumptuous during his pseudo-triumph, and what does he do that is offensive? He gives a good show, but doesn’t return the gaze directed at him – he isn’t playing by the optic rules. The spoils, however, seem to make up for this – the people look in awe/approval at them (ἔθαυμαζε). Cato’s reward for his spectacular homecoming performance? The honor of watching (and being seen at, of course) the shows with (purple) bells on. But Cato comes back with an encore, and refuses these honors, yet another planned spectacle of that good old Roman humility for his Roman audience.172

Sometimes the Romans didn’t agree on whether a certain triumph was good for Rome or harmful. In the case of Marcellus’ triumph over Syracuse, Plutarch shows us a

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171 Plutarch *Life of Cato the Younger* 39.1-3

172 Cf. Duff (1999) p. 135: “Thus these Lives [Phokion and Cato Minor] are concerned more with revealing the moral character…of the two men than with giving a chronological narrative of the historical events in which they were involved…The narrative is shaped to communicate and reinforce moral lessons.”
triumph in which the general’s actions are not unanimously considered either proper or improper by the Roman audience:

When the Romans summoned Marcellus to the domestic war, he returned with the most and best of the ornaments that he removed from Syracuse, so that they might be a spectacle in his triumph and a decoration for the city. For Rome neither had nor knew anything of refined and extravagant things, and there was no fondness of grace and subtlety in the city, but instead it was full of barbarian arms and bloody spoils and crowned with triumphal trophies. It was neither a cheerful nor fearless sight, and it wasn’t a spectacle for the timid or faint-hearted...Therefore Marcellus was more liked by the people, because he adorned the city with these spectacles which had Hellenic pleasure and grace...But they blamed Marcellus first in that he made the city offensive because not only captive men, but even the captured gods were led in triumph through Rome, and second, because the people were accustomed to waging war or farming, and were inexperienced in luxury and laziness, and, like the Euripidean Heracles,

‘simple, unadorned, and brave in great circumstances.’

But Marcellus filled them full of idleness and chatter and they talk cleverly about art and artists and waste away better part of the day doing so. Marcellus wasn’t upset by this, and he even said to the Greeks that he had taught the Romans, who were ignorant of the beautiful and wondrous things of Greece, to honor and admire them.

Before Marcellus and his triumph came along, Rome, Plutarch tells us, was full of barbarian arms, which is a comment on what previous triumphs had brought to and decorated the city with, and we are told that it was a dreadful sight. Marcellus was liked by some Romans because, in his triumph, he brought prettier stuff for them to decorate
the city with, not just enemy armor, but foreign art as well. The thought of enemy arms filling the city is an interesting one. It is as though Marcellus, by marching into the city with his new-fangled conception of what a triumph should display, is triumphing not only over Syracuse, but the foreign arms in Rome that have already been conquered and already been triumphed over – he’s expelling a foreign enemy from the city. However, not all Romans are delighted by Marcellus’ new notions; some are troubled by the same thing that pleased their fellow citizens – the display of foreign art in the city. Marcellus is disliked because he brings in foreign culture and, as a result, softened the Romans, Hellenized them. Again, the idea that the triumph is dangerous because it can result in the Romans becoming too influenced by other cultures plays a large role in Plutarch’s descriptions of the spectacle. This raises yet another question: who’s conquering whom? Is Marcellus proclaiming his mastery over the Syracusans, or, within the same triumph, are the Syracusans in some way claiming mastery over the Romans through their cultural influence? Where then does Marcellus stand in all of this? Plutarch tells us that he pays no mind to those who speak out against the Syracusan art, and instead he proclaims to the Greeks that he has taught the Romans how to admire (θαυμάζειν) the beautiful things of Greece. So, is Marcellus triumphing over the Syracusans, or is he triumphing with them over Rome?

Furthermore, Plutarch’s view of pre-Marcellan Rome is complex as well. According to Plutarch, Rome, before Marcellus’ triumph, was full of the captured enemy (the enemies’ captured things), which parallels his description of Romulus and the first triumph. Rome has always been full of the non-Roman element: the captured, integrated,
To complicate the text(ual triumph) even more, the scope of display extends beyond Romans (Marcellus) displaying Greeks. There’s also Marcellus (a Roman) showing the Romans to the Greeks, in that he tells the Greeks how the Romans admire Greek art now that he has brought it into the city.\footnote{For Marcellus’ contribution to Rome’s Hellenification via the Syracusan spoils and Plutarch’s view of Marcellus in this scene, see Swain (1995) p. 254ff. Cf. Pelling (1989) p. 199-200: “A typical Roman response to anything Greek or cultured was to steal it, to destroy it, or just occasionally to liberate it…In this Life, indeed, the contrast between Greek and Roman is strongly felt, and there is an unusual interest in stressing the qualities of Rome as a city at the time: so bellicose, so unsophisticated, so primitive – so very different, indeed, from the Thebes of the paired Life \textit{Pelopidas}.” This, however, seems to be a bit extreme and overly caricaturistic.} Moreover, all of these displays are sub-shows under the bigger display being put on by Plutarch himself, a Greek showing Romans showing Greeks to Romans (and Romans to Greeks). So, if Marcellus triumphs over Greece by displaying them to Rome, and perhaps even triumphs over Rome by displaying them to the Greeks, then Plutarch, a Greek, triumphs over all by putting all other shows on display within his own grand spectacular text.\footnote{See Swain (1995) p. 229: “…in his presentation of Romans Plutarch often shows himself to be conscious that Hellenic culture had been imported to Rome and could never be fully taken for granted among Romans as it could among Greeks, and that as a consequence it is worth while for him as a student of character to consider how well and with what benefit Romans absorb it.”}

It’s also interesting to note the way in which Plutarch describes what a good Roman should be – he uses Euripides as an example. A good Roman is a (Euripidean) Greek Roman. So perhaps the protests of the Romans against Marcellus’ invading Greek culture come too late – they’ve already been conquered.\footnote{Or Plutarch is perhaps (re)conquering them through his narrative, both in claiming mastery over them by describing them and in his choice of Euripides as a description of them.}
Plutarch’s Rome finds itself in danger once again when Pompey tries to lead a triumph under Sulla:177

After this, Pompey asked for a triumph, but Sulla spoke against it. For the law gives a triumph to the consul only, but to no one else. Therefore the first Scipio, who conquered the Carthaginians in Spain after bigger and better battles, didn’t ask for a triumph, because he was neither a consul nor a general. And if Pompey, who had not yet fully grown a beard and who, because of his age, was not yet a member of the senate, rode into the city in a triumph, then both Sulla’s authority and Pompey’s honor would be completely odious. Sulla said these things to Pompey, that he would not allow it, but would stand in his way and cut short disobedient-Pompey’s ambition. But Pompey didn’t flinch, instead he told Sulla to keep in mind that more people worship the rising sun than the setting sun, and that while his power was growing, Sulla’s was growing weaker and dying. Sulla didn’t exactly hear these things, but seeing from their faces and gestures that those who did hear were amazed, he asked what had been said. When he found out what Pompey had said, he was astounded at Pompey’s audacity, and he shouted out two times in a row, ‘Let him triumph!’ But although many were upset and irritated, Pompey, as they say, wanted even more to aggravate them, and tried to ride into the city on a chariot with four elephants, for he had brought back many of the captured royal elephants from Libya. But the gate was too narrow, so he put away the elephants and changed to horses.

Just the potential of Pompey triumphing is a spectacle in itself – and a bad one too – not only for Pompey, the triumphantor, but even for Sulla, if he allows it. A lot is at stake in these spectacles; reputations, as we have seen, can be made or broken by such shows. In this passage, Pompey’s desire for a triumph is just as big a display as the triumph itself.

177 For Plutarch’s sources in the Life of Pompey, see de Wet (1981).
178 Plutarch Life of Pompey 14.1-6
He even threatens Sulla, when Sulla makes his own display of not supporting Pompey’s wishes. Sulla doesn’t hear Pompey’s threat, but he sees the audience watching Pompey’s show of defiance, and knows from their reactions that whatever Pompey said, it can’t be good. Pompey, then, is already putting on a show with a layered audience (Sulla→audience→Pompey), and Sulla gauges the severity of Pompey’s statement not by Pompey’s face, but by looking at another show, the audience’s faces. When Sulla sees that Pompey puts on a mean show, he says, ‘let him perform his show,’ knowing that the audience (Rome) will not give Pompey good reviews.

Even knowing how his Roman audience feels about how he is presenting himself, Pompey is still more determined than ever to have his triumph. For Plutarch, it’s at this point that his identity as a Roman blurs, the point which should be the apex in the life of a Roman - the triumphing Roman general. He wants to ride into town with four, royal, Carthaginian elephants yoked to his chariot. This sounds strangely like what Hannibal wanted to do: invade Rome with Carthaginian elephants. In the process of getting a triumph (in the wrong way – he’s not even legally eligible for one), Pompey has become (the ancestor of) his captives, those he is triumphing over. The gate is too narrow, however, and he abandons the elephants for horses.\footnote{On the issue of Pompey and his elephants, cf. Scullard (1974) p. 193-194: “One may imagine that the scurrilous verses that soldiers chanted at their general’s triumph might contain sarcastic references to this episode, especially as they were disgruntled at the amount of booty they had received.”} So Rome narrowly escapes Carthaginian invasion, because its gates won’t allow anything but a Roman-sized triumph to pass through. Again, Plutarch highlights the ambiguous nature of Romanness within
the triumph. The point at which Pompey should seem the most Roman – the triumph – becomes for Plutarch the moment when Pompey is perhaps least Roman; he in fact becomes the enemy.  

This is not the only time that Pompey misbehaves when a triumph is involved:

And so Pompey’s slanderers found fault with these things. Not even his best friends were happy with him for what he did to Metellus concerning Crete. Metellus, who was related to the Metellus who fought with Pompey in Spain, was sent to Crete as a general before Pompey was chosen. For Crete was a kind of second source of pirates after Cilicia, and Metellus was rounding up many of them and killing and destroying them. Those that survived and were besieged sent a suppliant olive branch to Pompey and summoned him to the island…when Pompey received this, he wrote to Metellus, hindering the war. He wrote to the cities that they not give heed to Metellus, and he sent a general from his officers, one Lucius Octavius, who entered the fortifications with those besieged and fought along with them, and this not only made Pompey look oppressive and tyrannical, but even ridiculous, since Pompey was lending his name to unholy and godless men and clothing them with his reputation, as if it were a remedy, through his envy and rivalry against Metellus. For it is said that Achilles didn’t act like a man, but like a boy, completely erratic and prevented anyone else from killing Hector,  
llest someone, striking him, win the glory and Achilles would come in second. But Pompey fought to save a common enemy in order to take away a triumph from a general who worked very hard for it.

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180 For a discussion of the date of this triumph, see Badian (1955) and Twyman (1979); for a study of all three of Pompey’s triumphs, see Deutsch (1924); for a discussion of Pompey’s political role in Rome in general, see Syme (1960) p. 28ff.

181 Plutarch Life of Pompey 29.1-7
Again, in the name of being the best Roman, Pompey becomes a non-Roman. He fights on the side of the pirates (whom he later triumphs over – mission here accomplished), simply in order to keep Metellus from triumphing over them – he switches sides and fights for the enemy (you can’t get much less Roman than that). He becomes a pirate in order to triumph over the pirates – indeed, he pirates Metellus’ chance at a triumph in doing so; he takes on the characteristics of the enemy perhaps more than he had planned to. This transformation of Pompey’s from Roman to non-Roman is emphasized by Plutarch’s comparison of his actions to those of Achilles, the best of the Achaeans (not the Romans), who is obsessed by the idea that he might not be the one to kill Hector.

Lucullus criticizes Pompey’s triumphal shenanigans, and manages a stinging insult in the process:

Lucullus retorted by saying that Pompey was marching toward fighting against a phantom and a shadow of war, being accustomed to swoop down upon someone else’s kills, just like a lazy vulture, and to tear at the remains of wars. For in this way he had claimed for himself the successes of Crassus, Metellus, and Catulus over Sertorius, Lepidus, and Sparticus’ followers. Therefore Lucullus wasn’t amazed that he was appropriating the reputation of the Armenian and Pontic wars, a man who contrived somehow or other to throw himself into a triumph over runaway slaves.

Just as the greater the enemy, the greater the Roman applies to the triumph, the opposite is also true. Here, Lucullus insults Pompey by saying that he is fighting not a real war,

182 Plutarch Life of Pompey 31.11-13
but a ghost war – one that’s already been won; he’s a vulture, feeding his triumph with carrion.\textsuperscript{183} Lucullus is making a display of Pompey that isn’t too favorable, and in the process, he, in a certain sense, celebrates his own triumph over Pompey – a triumph of words. How lowly is the Roman that steals a triumph over runaway slaves (a pretty pathetic enemy)? Pretty lowly. Pompey’s real enemies (and he handpicked them himself, not they him) are Crassus, Metellus, and Catulus – Romans! Where does that leave Pompey? Who is he? A Carthaginian vulture? Or worse, a Roman triumphing over Romans…?

We’ve seen how the triumph can be an indicator of the greatness of a Roman, usually through the greatness of the conquered enemy, and also how the triumph can just as easily reveal one’s shortcomings. We’ve also seen how Plutarch reveals that the triumph can jumble the notions of Roman and non-Roman, making a triumphing general look more like an invader of Rome than a Roman of the highest order. What, then, according to Plutarch, happens when Romans fight against Romans? In his \textit{Life of Coriolanus}, Plutarch uses the voice of Coriolanus’ mother to speak about the complications introduced by triumphing over fellow Romans:\textsuperscript{184}

\begin{quote}
...\vspace{5mm}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
ἐγὼ δ’ οὐ περιμένω ταύτην μοι διαίτησαι τῷ τόχῳ ζώση τῶν πόλεμον, ἀλλ’ οὐ μὴ σε πέσῃς φιλίαν καὶ ὡμόλογον ἀπό ταῦτα καὶ κακοῦ δέμονον ἀναμσίαν ἀδέσποτων αὐρατῷ γενέσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ λιμενῶν τῶν ἔτερων, οὔτω δικαιοῦ καὶ παρασκευαζόντος σειτόν ὡς τῇ πατρίδι μὴ προσεῖμαι δούλους πρὸς ἦν κεφαλὰς ὑπεράνω τὴν τεκνόσαν. οὐ γὰρ ἀκείνην μὲ δι’ τῶν ἡμέραν ἀναμένειν ἢ τῶν ἕως ἐποίημαι ζημιαζόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν πολιτῶν ἢ ζημιαζόμενον κατὰ τὸν πατέρα-os.\textsuperscript{185}
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{183} For Plutarch’s treatment of the relationship between Pompey and Lucullus, see de Wet (1981) p. 126ff.

\textsuperscript{184} For Plutarch’s use of sources in the \textit{Life of Coriolanus}, see Russell (1963), who claims that Dionysius of Halicarnassus was his only source.

\textsuperscript{185} Plutarch \textit{Life of Coriolanus} 35.6
I won’t wait for the war to decide my fate while I’m alive, but if I can persuade you to choose friendship and harmony over discord and ill-will and to be a benefactor to both sides rather than a destroyer of one of them, thus keep in mind and prepare yourself for the fact that you won’t be able to go to war with your country before you step over your mother’s dead body. For I must not wait for the day on which I will watch my son being led in triumph by his fellow citizens or triumphing over his own country.

What does it mean when Romans triumph over Romans? Well, it’s not good, according to Plutarch. The roles of Roman triumphator and non-Roman captive are thrown into confusion. Here, Coriolanus’ mother is so upset at the prospect of either the horror of being mother to someone who triumphs over other Romans – how disgraceful – or the shame of Romans triumphing over her son; she’s willing to become a casualty of her son’s war so as not to be living when either event happens. When Romans triumph over Romans, it becomes difficult to see who the victor is. Coriolanus does not in fact celebrate a triumph over other Romans (like a good son, he listens to his mother), but were he to do so, the spectacle would be a confusing one. The triumphator would be Roman (or would he? he plays the role of enemy against Romans…), but the captives, the conquered, triumphed-over soldiers and citizens, would be Roman as well, and, of course, so would the audience. According to Plutarch, triumphing over one’s fellow Romans, triumphing over one’s own (mother)land, is as bad as committing matricide.

When thinking of Romans fighting Romans, Pharsalus quickly springs to mind. Plutarch draws attention to the link between the state of Rome and the triumph by blaming this internal violence at least in part on the triumph itself:

ἦδη δὲ συνθήκης διδομένου παρ’ ἀμφοτέρων, καὶ τῆς σάλπιγγος ἀρχομένης ἐγκελεύεσθαι πρὸς τὴν σύστασιν, τῶν μὲν πολλῶν ἔσχοπτο τῷ καὶ τῷ ἀνδρῶν· ὑδρίης δὲ Ῥωμαίων οἱ βέλτιστοι καὶ τινὲς Ἐλλήνων παρόντες ἐξω τῆς μάχης, ὡς ἔχεις ἔν τοι δείον, ἔλογγον τὴν πλεονεξίαν καὶ φιλονικίαν ὅποιον φέρουσα τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἐξέθηκαν. ὥσπερ γὰρ συγγενικά καὶ τάξεις ἀδελφοὶ καὶ οἱνα σημεῖα καὶ μᾶς πόλεως ἑωμαρίας τοσαῦτη καὶ δύναμις αὐτῆς πρὸς οὕτων συνῆπτεν, ἐπιδεικνυμένη τὴν ἀλλιωμένην φύσιν ὡς ἐν πάσι γενομένη τυφλόν ἐστι καὶ μακριός. ὡς μὲν γὰρ ἤδη καὶ τῇ ψυχήν

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χρῄζουσιν ἄρχειν καὶ ἀπολαύειν τῶν κατειργασμένων τὸ πλεῖστον καὶ κράτιστον ἀρετή γῆς καὶ
θαλάσσης ὑπῆκοον, ὥς δὴ ἐτί τροπαίων καὶ θρίαμβου ἐρωτι βουλαμένως χαρίζασθαι καὶ διψώντας
ἐμπίπτασθαι Παρθικῶν πολέμων ἡ Γερμανίκων.  

When the signal had already been given on both sides and the trumpet began to sound the call
for battle, and each of the many men looked for his own part to play, a few of the noblest of
the Romans and some of the Greeks who were present outside of the battle, when the dreadful
action was near, talked about greed and rivalry and where it had brought the Republic. For
familial arms, brotherly ranks, common standards, and such great manliness and power of one
city turned against each other, showing that human nature, when it becomes passionate, is
blind and crazy. If they then desired to rule over and enjoy in peace what they had already
conquered, the greatest and best in virtue of land and sea was already subject to them, but if
they wanted to gratify their lust for trophies and triumphs, they could satisfy their thirst on
wars against Parthians and Germans.

This passage comes directly before Plutarch’s description of the battle itself. Those who
are discussing Roman greed are an interesting mix: the noblest/best Romans (note the
superlatives again) and people who aren’t Romans at all, Greeks. All of them, though,
for whatever reason, are “outside” (ἐξω) of the battle – their perspective is portrayed by
Plutarch as clearer than those in the battle; they’re on the outside of the battle looking in.
What they’re watching is, of course, a kind of spectacle (in a certain sense, they’re
getting the original show from which the triumph is born – the triumph is a version of the
actual battles it represents which has been doctored to suit the triumphator’s wishes),
Romans fighting Romans, and it’s a show, according to the viewers, that is all about
blindness. Romans are greedy for triumphs; they want to put their conquests on display –
but they’ve become blind to whom they’re presenting to whom. Romans to Romans?
That’s a skewed world-vision. On top of this, they should be happy with what they’ve
already got, which is already the greatest and the best. Perhaps Romans triumphing over
Romans is what happens when the (b)est isn’t good enough.

186 Plutarch Life of Pompey 70.1-3
Plutarch, however, blurs the roles of Roman, Conqueror, and Conquered in the triumph outside the realm of outright civil war as well. In fact, this blurring occurs in his description of Camillus’ triumph after having saved the city of Rome itself:

Rome was so unexpectedly taken and even more unexpectedly saved, the barbarians having control of the city for a total of seven months. They arrived in the city a few days after the ides of July and were driven out around the Ides of February. Camillus celebrated a triumph, as was fitting for one who was the savior of the ransomed country and who led the city back to itself. Those outside of the city, along with their children and wives, followed Camillus as he rode into the city, and those who were besieged on the Capitoline, nearly dead from hunger, came forth and embraced one another and cried in disbelief at their present happiness. The priests and temple servants recovered all the sacred objects that they had either buried on the spot or taken with them in flight, adorned them, and carried them in display for the citizens, who received the longed-for sight with delight, as if the gods were returning to Rome.

Here, Camillus has taken Rome back from the barbarians and is leading the people back into their city; clearly a happy scene, right? Camillus leads a triumph as the savior of Rome and all are happy, but who and what is Camillus triumphing over? What city has he (re)captured, but Rome itself, and whom is he leading in triumph, but Roman citizens with their own holy objects on display. And the citizens who march along as Camillus’ spoils look the part of captives; nearly starved to death, in disbelief in the change of fate, which is, in fact, how Plutarch describes some of the captive non-Romans in other

187 Plutarch Life of Camillus 30.1-3
So even a triumph that gives to the Romans a “longed-for sight” can seem dangerously close to blurring the lines between captor and captive, Roman and non-Roman.

Camillus isn’t the only Roman who brings Romans back to Rome with him and includes them in his triumph; Plutarch portrays Titus as a great Roman liberator as well:

The Achaeans voted many honors for Titus, but none seemed to match his good deeds except one gift, and he cherished this one above all the rest. This was it: there were unfortunate Romans who, in the war against Hannibal had been sold and scattered in many places as slaves. In Greece there were 1200 of them, and they were always pitiable because of their change in fortune, but then more than ever, since some were falling in with sons, some with brothers, some with friends, slaves meeting up with free men, captives with victors. Titus didn’t take these men from their owners, although he was distressed by them, but the Achaeans ransomed each man for five minas and, gathering them all together, they presented them to Titus as he was about to set sail, so that he sailed away happy, having received a noble compensation for noble deeds, and one fitting for a great and patriotic man. This seems to have been the most splendid part of his triumph, for these men, just as is the custom of slaves when they are freed to shave their heads and wear felt caps, did these things and followed Titus in the triumphal procession.

This triumphal description is just as strange as the previous passage, maybe even stranger. Here we find Romans as slaves in Greece, and the situation just keeps getting weirder. When Titus’ army comes to Greece, these Roman slaves (products of the war

188 Cf. Plutarch *Life of Aemilius Paulus* 33ff.

189 Plutarch *Life of Titus Flaminius* 13.7-9
against Hannibal) start running into the ‘real’ Romans; brothers meet up with brothers, old neighbors with old neighbors, and so on. Captive Roman meets Roman Roman. Interestingly, Titus doesn’t save them, the Greeks do; they ransom them all and present them as a gift (!) to Titus. This is a twist on the usual game – the non-Romans are (re)presenting the Romans in a display of generosity to another Roman. Titus then takes them home to Rome and parades them around in his triumph, dressed, no less, as freed slaves. They don’t reenter the city as Roman Romans, but as freed non-Romans. Is Titus triumphing over Romans, or just freed slaves that used to be Roman? Plutarch tells us in his list of Roman Romans meeting slave Romans that captives met up with victors, but who is doing the capturing and whom are they conquering? It doesn’t seem too clear.

4.2: Crassus, Cleopatra, and Caesar: What Happens When Non-Romans Try to Take Over the Triumph

We’ve looked at what Romans do in and how they react to the spectacle of the triumph, but what happens when a non-Roman tries to present himself within the triumph? As one might expect, when the barbarians are successful in taking over a triumph, the roles of Roman conqueror and non-Roman captive are considerably confused:
ὁ δὲ Σουρήνας τὴν κεγαλὴν τοῦ Κράσσου καὶ τὴν χεῖρα πρὸς Ὀρώδην ἔπεσαν εἰς Ἀρμενίαν, αὐτὸς δὲ διαδόθη λόγον ὑπ’ ἀγγέλων εἰς Ἑλευκείαν ὡς ζῶντα Κράσσου ἄγοι, παρασκευαζότας παραγόντας τοῖς γελοίοις, ὠδεὶς προσαγορεύοντος ἱστοκτονήμου. ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐμφανίσατος Κράσσος τῶν αἰχμαλώτων, Γάιος Πακκιανός, ἔσκειτα ἤσσαλις γυναικὸς ἐνδὺς καὶ διδάκτῃς Κράσσος ὑπακούετον καὶ αὐτοκράτως τοῖς καλοῦσι. ῖς ἔπεσαν καὶ ἄγοι, πρὸς αὐτῷ δὲ σαλπιγκταὶ καὶ ῥαβδοῦξοι τις ὀχοῦσαν καὶ ἀμάκτων εἰσῆλθεν· ἔξηγεν τὸν ἐν αὐτῷ ἑλέαντα καὶ περὶ τοὺς παλείκους προσφατοῖς κεφαλαὶ ὑπακούειν καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ τοῖς καλοῦσι, ἐφ’ ἵππου καθῆτος· ἐξῆρτο δὲ τῶν ῥάβδων βαλάντια καὶ περὶ τοὺς πελέκεις πρόσφατοι κεφαλαὶ ἡρέσαντο κατὰ τοὺς ἱστοκτονήμους, Τοῦτο δ’ έίποντο Σελευκίδες ἐταῖροι μουσαρχοὶ καὶ κάθοι καὶ ἀνανδρίας τοῦ Κράσσου λέγοντες. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν πάντες εἶδον.

Surena sent Crassus’ head and hands to Horodes in Armenia, but he spread the story by messengers to Seleucia that he was bringing Crassus back alive, and he prepared a sort of mock procession, insolently calling it a triumph. The prisoner who most resembled Crassus, Gaius Paccianus, was led in on a horse, dressed in queen’s clothing, and taught to answer to those calling him Crassus and Imperator. In front of him, trumpeters and some lictors, riding on camels, came in. Purses were hung from the fasces, and around the axes were Roman heads freshly decapitated. The courtesans of Seleucia followed singing vulgar and joking songs about the effeminacy and cowardice of Crassus. Everyone saw these things.

This is Plutarch’s only description of a non-Roman, mock triumph, and nothing, of course, is as it should be, right down to the triumphator himself.191 Surena, who has utterly defeated and killed Crassus, then proceeds to lead a mock triumph, with a fake Crassus as the triumphing general. So the triumphator is fake, although he’s still Roman; Surena picks out the Roman captive who most resembles Crassus (notice the superlative – he’s the Crassusest of the Crassuses, Romanest of the (non-)Roman captives). This man is then forced to put himself on display, a false display, and parade through Seleucia (not Rome) in a mock triumph. His army, which is not really his, consists of the Romans brought back as captives by Surena, and their trappings are decorated with Roman heads. He is (forced to) lead(ing) Crassus’ men as if they were his own, when both he and they

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190 Plutarch Life of Crassus 32.1-3

191 Cf. Russell (1973) p. 134: “Most astonishing of all is the gusto with which Plutarch takes up the scene of the Parthian mock triumph.” For a comparison of Crassus’ defeat and (anti-) triumph to Euripides’ Bacchae, see Nadolny and Zadorojniy. For Plutarch’s condemnation of yet use of tragedy in the Lives, see de Lacey (1952).
are captives, and perhaps not truly Roman anymore. In the place of Crassus’ army are Seleucian prostitutes, doing what his soldiers would do in a ‘real’ triumph (make jokes at Crassus’ expense), but the tone of it here, of course, is all wrong. Also, the fake Crassus is dressed not in triumphal garb, but in the gown of a queen – both race and gender are thrown completely out of whack, and the picture is one that was no doubt disturbing to the Romans. And everyone, Plutarch tells us, saw these things. What a strange way to end the description. Who does he mean when he says ‘everyone’? Presumably not the ‘everyone’ that might be assumed if the triumph were a ‘real’ one held in Rome. Then ‘everyone’ would, of course, be the Romans. But here, we're not in Rome, but Seleucia. Not only have the norms of the triumph been skewed by Surena, but even the worldview – the center of it all is no longer Rome within this alternate triumphal spectacle.

Out of all the non-Romans in Plutarch’s Lives who try to control how they are presented by the Romans, both in and outside of the triumph, Cleopatra comes the closest to succeeding. In this next passage, she takes a journey upriver that Plutarch describes in a very similar way to his description of Aemilius Paulus’ upriver trip home before his own triumph:192

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192 See Plutarch Life of Aemilius Paulus 30.
In this spectacle – and there’s no doubt about its spectacularity – everything has been very carefully arranged to put on a very precise display.\textsuperscript{194} Cleopatra herself is the master of the show, and, as in most spectacles run by non-Romans, nothing is as it seems.

Cleopatra is not Cleopatra, but Aphrodite, and she looks as if she had walked out of a painting. She’s surrounded by boys dressed up as Cupids, again described as looking like the Cupids from a painting. The painting imagery emphasizes even more the idea that this is a well thought out and planned show – every brush stroke in its place. Again, Plutarch uses superlatives (Cleo picked out her most beautiful girls for this show) and this links the description to the triumph. Cleo’s superlatives may have a slightly different

\textsuperscript{193} Plutarch \textit{Life of Antony} 26.1-4

\textsuperscript{194} For Plutarch’s sources for the \textit{Life of Antony}, see de Wet (1990).
purpose than those of the Roman generals in their triumphs. Where a Roman is made more Roman by his superlatives (greatest Roman with the greatest enemies), Cleopatra is perhaps playing on this same theme by making a seductive display for Antony. If the (b)est enemy is the way to becoming the Romanest Roman, then Cleopatra is making her own triumph-like display of her (b)est things, suggesting to Antony just how conquerable she is; she uses the idea of the triumph to her own advantage. And she succeeds – the people choose Cleo’s show over Antony’s, and soon Antony is left sitting alone, with no audience, while everyone flocks to be Cleo’s audience; Cleopatra’s spectacle triumphs over Antony’s. Throughout Plutarch’s *Life of Antony*, Antony slowly loses his sense of Romanness as a result of his entanglement with Cleopatra. But Cleo takes more from Antony than his Roman identity, she even steals his *Life* – Plutarch keeps on writing the text long after he tells of Antony’s death; he stops only after Cleopatra herself has died.\(^{195}\)

However, once Octavian enters the scene, Cleopatra’s mastery over the spectacle slowly disappears, but not without a struggle:

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\text{ἐκ δὲ τούτου τὸν Προκλήιον ἔπαψε, κελεύσας ἢν δύνηται μάλιστα τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ζώσης κρατῆσαι· καὶ γὰρ ἐφοβεῖτο περὶ τῶν χρημάτων, καὶ μέγα πρὸς δόξαν ἥρατο τοῦ ξενιμέδου καταγαγεῖν ἑκείνην. \(\varepsilonἰς\) μὲν οὖν χεῖρας τῆς Προκλήιν συνελθεῖν οὐκ ἠθέλησεν...}^{196}\]

After this Caesar sent Proculeius, having ordered him if at all possible to get possession of Cleopatra alive. For he was worried about her treasure/money, and he thought it would be great for his honor to lead her in his triumph. But she was not willing to turn herself over to Proculeius’ hands.

\(^{195}\) For the importance in this text of Cleopatra’s role in Anthony’s downfall, and even in changing the course of history, see Lamberton (2001) p. 139ff. For the end of the *Life of Antony* and the question of death as not the end of *Life*, see Pelling (2002) p. 369ff. For a discussion of closure in the *Lives* in general, see Pelling (1997).

\(^{196}\) Plutarch  *Life of Antony* 78.4-5
Octavian wants her, alive, for his triumph, which certainly means trouble for Cleopatra; triumph-wise; Octavian usually gets what he sets out to have. However, Cleo’s not going down without a fight, and the ensuing struggle between Octavian, the ultimate Roman conqueror, and Cleopatra, the ultimate non-Roman seductress, is spectacular in itself.

Cleopatra has, of course, decided that she will kill herself before she is led in triumph into Rome. Octavian knows, or at least suspects, her intentions, and keeps a close watch on her, but Cleo has a few tricks left that the over-confident Roman doesn’t expect:

Finally Cleopatra gave to Caesar a register of the amount of her wealth, and when Seleucus, one of her trustees, gave proof that she was stealing away and hiding some of it, she leapt up, grabbed him by the hair, and inflicted his face with many blows. When Caesar, smiling, stopped her, she said, ‘But is it terrible, Caesar, if, when you think it worthy to come and speak to me in my condition, and my servants denounce me, if I put aside some womanly ornaments, not for poor little me, of course, but small gifts for Octavia and your Livia, by which I might find you to be gracious and more gentle?’ Caesar was satisfied by this, thinking that she definitely wanted to live. And so he told her that he trusted these matters to her and in all else he would treat her better than she could hope for. Then he left, thinking he had deceived her, but rather having been deceived himself.

Here, Octavian and Cleopatra play a game of deception with one another, and Cleo puts on another of her spectacles. Octavian is given proof that she is being dishonest with him, but she re-presents that proof to her own advantage, something that is rarely

197 Plutarch Life of Antony 83.5-7
achieved by a non-Roman. When caught in the act of deception, Cleopatra holds up another lie for display. She in fact admits to the deception, but her explanation is a spectacle for Octavian’s eyes only, and one that presents herself as the poor, defenseless foreigner under the power of the big, strong Roman. She holds up a (distorted) mirror to Octavian and shows him what he wants to see. Her show succeeds, and she dupes her Roman audience. Octavian leaves thinking that he has deceived his captive, but has in fact been completely fooled by her.

As the battle between Roman and non-Roman continues, despite her efforts, Cleopatra begins to lose. She discovers that Octavian is nearly ready to send her off to Rome, and asks permission to visit Antony’s grave once more before she leaves:

ἡ δ’ ἀκούσας ταῦτα πρῶτον μὲν ἠδοήζῃ Καίσαρος, ὡποῖς αὐτὴν ἔσω ἱράς ἐπενεγκεῖν Ἀντωνίῳ καὶ συγχωρήσαντος, ἐπὶ τῶν τάφων κομιδεύεσθαι καὶ περιπεσοῦσα τῇ σοφῇ μετά τῶν συνήξεων γυναικῶν ἦν φιλ’ Ἀντώνιε ἐπεν “Εἴπατον μὲν σε πρώην ἐτερθεὶν ἐμεθέρεαι, σπένδω δὲ τῷ αὐχέναις, καὶ φρονεμοῦντες μὴ κοπετοῖς μὴ διήσας αἰκίσασθαι τὸ δούλον τότῳ σόμαι καὶ πνεύμανον ἐπὶ τοὺς κατὰ σοῦ θείαμόσους. ἀλλὰ δὲ μὴ προσθήκου τιμᾶς ἡ χράς: ἀλλʼ αὕτη σοι τελευταίᾳ Κλεοπάτρας ἀγορίσμεθα. ζῶσας μὲν γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐκ ἂν ἄλλης διότι, κυμαίνομεν δὲ τῷ ἤθῳ διαράφασθαι τοὺς τόπους, σὺ μὲν ὁ Ῥωμαῖος ἑκατάδει καϊμένος, ἐπὶ δ’ ἡ δύστηρος ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ, τοσοῦτο τῆς τοσοῦτο εὐημεροῦσα χώρας μένου. ἀλλʼ εἰ δὴ τής τῶν ἐκεί ἔοικος ἄλιτο καὶ δύναμις ἡμᾶς - , μὴ προθή χόρσαι τῆς σεαυτοῦ γυναίκα, μηδ’ ἐν ὠμοὶ περιεχθεῖσα διαμεμένου σεαυτόν, ἀλλ’ ἑνταῦθα μὲ κρύβῃ μετὰ σεαυτοῦ καὶ σύκοφος, ὡς ὠμοὶ μηρύκων καλῶν ἄστιν οὐδὲν ὁτόν μέγα καὶ δεινῶν ἐστίν, ὡς ὁ βραχύς ὁτους χρόνος ὅν σοῦ χωρίς ἔζηκα.”

198 Plutarch Life of Antony 84.3-7
When she heard these things, first she begged Caesar that she be allowed to carry libations to Antony. When her request was granted, she was carried to the tomb, she embraced the urn, surrounded by her regular girlfriends, she said, ‘Dear Antony, I buried you lately with still-free hands, but now I pour libations as a captive, guarded, and neither lamentations nor sad songs torment this slave’s body, kept safe for the triumph over you. Don’t expect any other honors or libations; these are the last you’ll get from Cleopatra. While we were alive, nothing kept us apart from each other, but we are likely to trade places in death – you, a Roman, lying here, and I, miserable, in Italy, getting as much of your land. But if there is some strength and power in the gods there – for the gods here have betrayed us – then don’t abandon your still-living wife, and don’t allow yourself to be triumphed over through me, instead, hide me here and bury me with you, because for me, nothing of the countless evils I have had is so great and terrible as the short amount of time I have lived without you.

Cleopatra says that she, as a captive, has no control over even her own body; it is now Roman property and is safely guarded for the triumph. The idea that in death she and Antony will switch places is an interesting one. Antony, nearly completely devoid of any Romanness before he died, never returns to Rome, but instead lies buried in Egypt among non-Romans. And she will end her days, she says, not in her own country, but in Antony’s native city, as a captive spoil decorating a triumph over Antony. What she describes is the world as Octavian would have us see it: Antony was not truly Roman at the end (so it’s OK to triumph over him), but just in case that’s too weird, Cleopatra is the ‘real’ enemy being triumphed over. By taking on Octavian’s logic, Cleo seems to face her own defeat. Or does she? She makes a plea to Antony that sounds strangely like Coriolanus’ mother’s lament – don’t let your wife be used to triumph over you.

Cleopatra portrays the upcoming triumph as Roman triumphing over Roman (which, of course, it was), but again, the roles are reversed. Antony has lost most of his status as a Roman; he’s lying in Egyptian soil. But Cleopatra presents herself as (the wife of) a Roman, and so condemns Octavian to triumphing over another Roman, regardless of whether it’s over Antony or Cleopatra.
So Cleopatra puts up a good fight against Octavian, and wins, in her own way – she kills herself with the bite of an asp:

ἐνιοὶ δὲ καὶ τὴν βραχίωνα τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ἄφθεναι δύο νυμμάς ἔχουσα λεπτὰς καὶ ἀμμυδάς. οἳς ἔοικε πιστεύει καὶ ὁ Καῖσαρ. ἐν γὰρ τῷ διομάδῳ τῆς Κλεοπάτρας αὐτῆς εἴδωλον οἰκήζετο καὶ τῆς ἀσπίδος ἰμαφυκώμας. 199

Some say that they saw two small, indistinct punctures on Cleopatra’s arm. It’s likely that Caesar believed this too, for in his triumph, an image was carried in the procession of Cleopatra with the asp clinging to her.

However, any victory for the non-Roman is bittersweet, and Cleo is no exception. Octavian wants to lead her as a captive in his triumph and she is unwilling to do so, but the only way for a non-Roman to defeat Octavian is through death. And even then she can never fully escape her Roman re-presentation – she is still paraded through the triumphal parade as a plaque with a picture of her being bitten by the asp.

We have seen that Plutarch, through his descriptions of the triumph, reveals the complexities of a procession that, at first glance, seems to function as a display of Romanness and even Roman greatness. He shows his audience that, even while performing this act of persuasion (that the triumphing general is a great Roman), the triumph itself reveals the gaps within how the Romans thought of themselves as Romans, and also is a display of how intricately linked the idea of what it means to be Roman is to the definition of what it means to be other than Roman. These triumphal (and therefore Roman in general) definitional complexities are nowhere more illuminated than in Plutarch’s description of the triumph of Aemilius Paulus, to which we will now turn.

199 Plutarch Life of Antony 86.5-6
4.3: Aemilius Paulus, Perseus, and Plutarch’s Logic of the Triumph

In his *Life of Aemilius Paulus*, Plutarch shows us how the relationship between Romans and their non-Roman captives is acted out by the Romans as a dichotomy of us/them = seeing/seen, and that this logic of power is expressed through the power of display. Simply put, the Romans saw themselves as possessing the power not only of self-display, but also as holding the power of display over others, non-Romans; they have the power to define what a non-Roman is as well.

This dichotomy of Roman/non-Roman = seeing/seen, displaying/displayed is a natural, fundamental feature of the Roman triumph. Captive non-Romans are put on display and their non-Romanness and their captiveness are presented by Romans and for Romans as a way of displaying their own Romanness.200 Plutarch recognized that the triumph and its logic of display organized how the Romans saw themselves and their relationship to others (non-Romans); this triumphal logic not only manifests itself in Plutarch’s descriptions of the triumph of Aemilius Paulus, but it spills over into the *Life* as a whole, governing how Plutarch displays the relationship between Aemilius Paulus and Perseus as well.201

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200 Cf. Preston (2001) p. 87: “The formation of identity is a process of self-definition in opposition to other identities; it relies as much on differences from others as on similarities within a group.”

201 Cf. Reiter (1988) p. 98-99: “[Aemilius Paulus’] career is not related during the course of describing a period of time; rather, Paulus’ career is used to magnify the virtues of the man. Confrontations with enemies, both Roman and alien, are cleverly employed to heighten the figure of Paulus...To further this notion, Plutarch introduces Perseus as a foil to the noble Paulus; the conflict between these two men is nothing less than a contest between the good and meritorious Paulus and the depraved and wicked eastern potentate, Perseus.” I believe, as I will argue here, that the relationship between the two leaders is significantly more complex than this, however.

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The discussion of Aemilius Paulus’ triumph covers four of the 39 chapters of the *Life*; 10% of the work, which is devoted to the description of an entire life span, is given to a mere three days. This is a significant amount of space, and thus I believe that the work as a whole focuses on, looks forward to, and glances back to the event of the triumph. It will be the case, then, that not only will reference be made to Plutarch's treatment of Aemilius Paulus' triumph, but to sections of the text that fall outside of those that deal primarily with this description, with the view that, although not directly discussing the event, they are still tied in some way to its description. I would like to first of all take a look at how both Aemilius Paulus and the captured Macedonian king, Perseus, are presented in the work as a whole, and then to focus in on their portrayals in the description of the triumph itself in order to explore this link between the idea of Romanness in Rome and its reflection in the triumph.²⁰²

4.4: Dr. Paulus, or How Perseus Didn’t Learn to Stop Worrying and Hate the Romans

Throughout the text, Aemilius Paulus is described in terms of a good Roman,²⁰³ whereas Perseus is comparatively described as Aemilius’ opposite;²⁰⁴ Perseus embodies

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²⁰² See Preston (2001) p. 92: “To write ‘Roman history’ is to assume that there is such a thing as ‘Romanness.’ Not only does writing about the past construct a particular representation of identity, in the way it depicts ‘Greekness’ or ‘Romanness,’ but the very act of writing asserts the existence of identity itself.”

²⁰³ Cf. Reiter (1988) p. 97: “...Plutarch lifts [Aemilius Paulus] out of the historical scene and gives him a world into himself, a world attuned only to the virtues and deeds of Paulus. From Plutarch’s hand emerges a Paulus who is, by design, ahistorical; he is, as Plutarch freely admits, no more than a reflection of reality, a stylized and formalized representative of public and private propriety.”

²⁰⁴ The relationship between Aemilius Paulus and Perseus is not, of course, the only instance of comparison in the *Lives*. The majority of the *Lives* themselves came in pairs, the subject of one *Life* compared to the other, most directly in the *synkrisis* that followed the pair. For a study of *synkrisis* in the *Lives*, see Gossage (1967) p. 61ff., Larmour (1992), Pelling (2002) p. 349-363, and Swain (1992).
all the traits that a Roman should shun, thus emphasizing his status as a non-Roman and, by contrast, Aemilius’ status as Roman.\textsuperscript{205} At the beginning of the work, Plutarch details the family history of Aemilius and by doing so, makes the point that he is from one of the oldest and most elite families in Rome:\textsuperscript{206}

Most writers agree that the house of the Aemillii was among the old and noble families in Rome. Some of those who claim that Pythagoras was king Numa’s teacher say that the first of these – the one who gave the name Aemilius to the family – was Mamercus, the son of Pythagoras the wise man, and that he was called Aemilius because of his cunning way of talking and his charm…coming of age during a time that flourished with great men who were most distinguished in their reputations and virtues, Aemilius Paulus stood out among them.

Aemilius’ family is one of the oldest and best in Rome, which makes Aemilius a very Roman Roman indeed. Not only is Aemilius Paulus a Roman, but his family, by means of its established place in society, represents the history of Rome itself. But Plutarch goes even further than this: Aemilius Paulus not only comes from one of the Romanest families, he was born into a time of great Romans, but still he literally outshines them all (\textit{διέλαμψεν}). Aemilius is the Romanest of the Romanest Romans, the best of the best.

\textsuperscript{205} Cf. Wardman (1974) p. 27: “…a particular hero may be compared with contemporaries who are either lacking in virtue (\textit{aretē}) or have none at all…A good character, that is, invites some comment on his bad or good contemporaries.” See also p. 32-33.


\textsuperscript{207} Plutarch \textit{Life of Aemilius Paulus} 2.1,2.3.3-5
It is interesting to note, however, that the description of Aemilius’ place at the top of Rome’s best list is mitigated by the idea that his famous name ultimately comes from Greek origins. Plutarch, in the midst of extolling Aemilius Paulus as an icon of Roman greatness, slips in the possibility that this Roman greatness somehow originates from a Greek construct. The first of the Aemilii became Aemilius because he possessed αἱ µυλία, wily ways. According to Plutarch, what makes the Aemilii, a respected Roman family, great is ultimately that part of them that is Greek. So, from the beginning of the text, Plutarch makes it clear that this will not simply be a comparison of Good Roman vs. Bad Greek. Instead he shows us that a dichotomy such as us vs. them, Roman vs. non-Roman, virtuous vs. wicked is never and can never be so simple.

The first description of Perseus in the text contains parallels to this portrait of the Aemilii:

But Perseus, the orphaned son of [Philip], received along with the kingdom the hatred toward the Romans, although he was not strong enough to bear it because of the smallness and wickedness of his character, in which, among all sorts of sufferings and sickness, the love of money held first place. And it is said that he was not legitimate in birth, but that Philip’s wife took him, newborn, from his mother, a certain Argive seamstress named Gnathaenion, and, substituting him, escaped notice.

Perseus’ inheritance, the important birthright handed down to him by his Macedonian forefathers, is a hatred of all things Roman. It makes sense that Plutarch would describe

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208 ibid. 8.6-7
Perseus and the Macedonians as being unfriendly toward Rome, since a large part of the
text’s plot involves Romans at war with the Macedonians. Plutarch, however, by
couching this enmity in terms of family legacy, turns a case of warring nations into one in
which the nations, no matter how hard they fight, are inextricably linked by the very
characteristics that form their respective sense of what it means to be Roman or
Macedonian. Aemilius inherits a tradition of Roman greatness through a Greek name;
Perseus inherits, on equal par with the rule of a kingdom, a hatred for Rome. Part of
what defines Perseus as not only Macedonian, but also king of Macedonia, is his
relationship with Rome. The two leaders are natural enemies, yet at the same time, one’s
sense of self as Roman or Greek respectively depends upon the other’s.

Perseus’ role in this comparison is further complicated by his incompetence and
possible illegitimacy. Like Aemilius, whose family name belies its claim to Roman
greatness, Perseus’ cultural identity is anything but clearly Greek. Besides being defined
by its relationship to Rome, the authenticity of Perseus’ Macedonianness is called into
question in two different ways. First of all, Plutarch tells us that Perseus wasn’t worthy
of his inheritance – he wasn’t a good enough Macedonian to hate the Romans. In a
sense, then, Plutarch describes Perseus’ shortcomings in a parallel, if opposite, manner to
the way in which he describes Aemilius’ nobility: Perseus is a poor excuse for a
Macedonian because he can’t successfully hate the Romans. Just as Aemilius’
Romanness is described in terms of his Greekness, likewise Perseus’ Greekness (or lack
thereof) is described through his failed relationship with Rome.
Plutarch goes even further to call into question Perseus’ status as Macedonian by citing the rumor that he might not even be either a rightful king or even Macedonian at all. He is, then, a twice-removed version of non-Roman; an outsider even among the Macedonians. Thus, from the beginning, the comparison between Roman and non-Roman is complicated by the complexities posed in the very definitions of Roman and non-Roman within the text.

Plutarch blames Perseus’ lack of Greekness in large part on his greed. This greed makes another appearance a little farther on in the text, and this time it helps to define not only Perseus' failure, but Aemilius’ success as well:

When I see that [Aemilius Paulus] brought an end to the war and his generalship with the fierceness of his courage, with his reliable plans, with the eager help of his friends, and with the ability to be brave and to use sound reasoning in the face of danger, I’m not able to attribute his brilliant and distinct accomplishment to his renowned good fortune, as I am in the case of other generals. Unless, indeed, someone says that the greed of Perseus became good fortune concerning the affairs for Aemilius, since it overturned and overthrew the bright and great prospects of the Macedonians toward the war, abundant with hopes, because Perseus played the coward with his money…but he, rising against such a force and a war where such was the provision expense, measured out in portions and sealed up his money, fearing to touch it as if it were someone else's.

Here, even Perseus’ greed cannot be disentangled from his relationship to Aemilius and Rome, and at the same time, it serves as a link between Aemilius’ Roman greatness and Perseus’ non-Roman shortcomings. Plutarch praises Aemilius by claiming that his

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209 ibid. 12.1.4-2.8,5.1-4
military success against Perseus and the Macedonians is due to his own skill and deeds, and it is not attributable to fortune – something Plutarch says he can’t claim for other generals. So again, Aemilius stands out among his peers – the best of the best. However, yet again, Plutarch makes a bold statement of praise and then tempers it by backing off with a statement that belies the simplicity of that praise. Aemilius was such a great Roman that he didn’t need luck to pull off the victory over Perseus. But, if there was any luck involved, it was in the form of Perseus himself and his greed. According to Plutarch, the dichotomy of Roman/non-Roman, conqueror/conquered is so much more than that – the success of the one is dependent upon and inextricably bound to the failure of the other. Aemilius’ success depends upon the fact that Perseus has always already failed.

This failure, this greed, comes in the form of Perseus hoarding and fearing for his money. The Macedonian king counts out and seals up his money; by sealing it up, he puts his mark on the money (παρεσημαίνετο) and thus marks it for someone else – the Romans. Indeed, Perseus turns from fearing for his money to fearing the money itself. Once the money is marked (with Perseus’ sign, for the Romans), Plutarch says that he was afraid to touch it – it has (always) already become the property of Rome. Thus, Aemilius’ victory over Perseus depends not only on his own actions, but also upon Perseus’ action and his (failure to possess) Macedonianness.
Keeping in mind the complexities within Plutarch’s constructs of Roman and non-Roman, let’s now take a look at how he narrates the relationship of Aemilius’ military success and Perseus’ failure under the rubric of the power of display. To begin with, let’s return to Perseus’ fear, which reappears in the description of the final battle between the two armies:

And when…[Aemilius] saw…the shields of the other Macedonians, terror and alarm took hold of him…as if he had never seen a more terrifying sight…Then, showing himself gracious and bright to those fighting, he rode past them on his horse without a helmet or a breastplate. But the king of the Macedonians, as Polybius says, when the battle began, playing the coward, rode back to the city, pretending to sacrifice to Heracles, who neither accepts cowardly prayers from cowardly men, nor completes their unlawful requests.

Plutarch attributes Aemilius’ victory and Perseus’ defeat in part to the ability of each to put on a proper show. Moreover, the power of display is further defined in terms of how each leader reacts to fear. Aemilius, despite the fact that he is more terrified than he has ever been, puts himself on display for the sake of his troop's morale; he makes a spectacle of himself and in doing so, he exerts his power over his army – he rallies them to fight harder. Although Aemilius is himself the object of the display, he still retains the power to represent himself to his troops in just the way he wishes, i.e. as brave and confident in the face of danger. Perseus, on the other hand, reacts to the battle and his fear in a completely different manner; he retreats toward the city, running away from the battle.

\[210\] ibid.19.1.5-6,9,10-11;2.2-9
He too puts on a display (pretending to be on his way to worship Heracles), but unlike Aemilius' display, this one fails. Plutarch tells us that Heracles (and Plutarch as well, of course) sees right through Perseus’ façade, and thus Perseus lacks the Roman ability to control how he is represented.

Notice that the fear itself is of a different kind for each leader. Aemilius’ fear is of the ‘real’ variety and is a reflection of what he sees happening around him. Perseus’ fear is internal, innate cowardice (ἀποδειλιάσας). This is the same term Plutarch used in the description of the king and his (or the Romans’) money. Again, this cowardice contributes to Perseus’ defeat and Aemilius’ victory.

There is another fundamental difference in the function of display for the Roman and for the non-Roman. Let us look further at Perseus' retreat:

ἐπεὶ δὲ καταλαμβάνοντες οἱ πεζοί τοὺς ἱππεῖς ὡς ἀνάνδρους καὶ προδεδωκότας, λοιδοροῦντες ἀπὸ τῶν ἱππῶν ὤθουν καὶ πληγὰς ἔδιδοσαν, δείσας τὸν θόρυβον ἐκ τῆς οδοῦ παρέκλινε τὸν ἱππόν, καὶ τὴν πορφύραν, ὡς μὴ διάσημος εἴη, περισπάσας ἐθέτο πρόσθεν αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ διάδημα διὰ χειρῶν εἶχεν.211

But when [Perseus’] footmen, overtaking his horsemen and abusing them as cowards and traitors, pushed them from their horses and beat them, fearing the tumult, he turned his horse from the road and, having drawn his purple cloak round so that it might not be conspicuous, he placed it in front of him, and he held his crown in his hands.

Again, just as in the description of Perseus' parentage, not only is Perseus less than a Roman, he is also not even fully Macedonian. His own troops, who are Macedonian and therefore non-Roman, objectify him by abusing him as a coward and a traitor. The non-Roman objectifying another non-Roman: Perseus is continually being pushed farther and

211 ibid. 23.1
farther from what it is to be Roman. In response to this, Perseus tries to make himself
inconspicuous by hiding the tokens that identify him as a king. This attempt at
invisibility fails: Perseus is eventually captured despite his efforts to hide. This failed
invisibility also signifies his status as non-Roman; it is an attempt to represent himself,
and the non-Roman is not able to do this. Once he is in the hands of the Romans, they
themselves successfully represent him as no longer a king; when we reach the description
of Perseus in the triumph, this contrast will become even more striking.

Another possible reason why Perseus tried to become invisible can be explained
by discussing the implications of the term 'visibility' itself in regards to the Roman and
the non-Roman. For the Roman, visibility is a tool; we have seen that this is the case
with Aemilius. He made a display of himself to boost the morale of his troops during
battle. Aemilius' status of Roman in itself defines him as someone who is a spectacle, but
at the same time has mastery over that objectification; he controls his own visibility. This
is certainly not the case with Perseus. If he is seen and recognized as the Macedonian
king, he will be captured. Thus, for Perseus, visibility is most definitely a trap.
However, because he is non-Roman, he has no control over his own visibility; thus,
although he makes an attempt at being inconspicuous, the attempt fails. If the non-
Roman cannot control his visibility, who then has that control? The Romans, of course.
They have mastery over both their own visibility and that of the objectified non-Roman
as well. This, as we shall see, is evident in the staging of the triumph too. Perseus is
displayed (i.e. made visible) in the way in which the Romans want him to be portrayed;
he has no control over how he is seen.
This logic of display, the relationship between Roman and non-Roman as spectator and spectacle, is at play in the first meeting of Aemilius the victorious general and Perseus the captured king:

δεηθεὶς γὰρ ἀχθῆναι πρὸς τὸν Αἰµίλιον, ὁ μὲν ὡς ἀνδρὶ μεγάλῳ πετυκότι πτῶμα νεμοστὸν καὶ δυστυχεὶς ἐξανασᾶς ὑπήντα μετὰ τῶν φίλων δεδακρυμένος· ὁ δὲ, αἰσχυντος ἰδίαμα, προδαλῶν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ στάμα καὶ γονάτων δραξάμενος ἀνεβάλλοτο φωνὰς ἀγεννεῖς καὶ δεήσεις, ἃς οὐχ ὑπείμενεν οὐδ’ ἤκουσεν ὁ Αἰµίλιος, ἀλλὰ προσβλῆσας αὐτὸν ἀλγοῦντι καὶ λαλυμενῶν τῷ προσώπῳ,... 'τί δέ μου καταδάλλαις τὴν νίκην, καὶ τὸ κατόρθωπον σωσίμον, ἐπιδιδομένος ἐαυτὸν οὐ γενναῖον οὐδὲ πρέποντα Ρωµαίων ἀνταγωνιστήν; ἀρετὴ τοι δυστυχοῦσιν ἔχει μοῖραν αἰδοὺς καὶ παρὰ πολεµίοις, διὰδε τ’ Ῥωµαίοις, καὶ ὑποτηκῇ, πάντη ἀτιµότατον. 212

For, [Perseus] asked to be led to Aemilius, and Aemilius, accompanied by friends, crying, stood and went to meet him, as if for a great man who took a fall because of resentment toward the gods and bad luck, but Perseus, a most shameful sight, throwing himself on his stomach and seizing Aemilius' knees, tossed up low-born cries and prayers, which Aemilius would not abide nor listen to, but looking upon him, with a distressed and sorrowful face, he said..."Why do you bring down my victory, and make my success small, showing yourself as neither a noble nor fitting opponent for Romans? Virtue indeed in unfortunate men holds great respect for reverence even among enemies, but, to Romans, cowardice, even if with good fortune, is in every way most dishonorable.

In this passage, Perseus tried his hand at another display, for which Aemilius is the spectator. 213 Again, Perseus’ display fails – he puts on a show hoping for pity, but instead he gets chastised for potentially damaging Aemilius’ own image. Again, Perseus has no control over his own self-display. Aemilius, on the other hand, sees all shows, including Perseus’, with a view toward how each will reflect upon Rome’s image and his own image as a Roman. He not only has control over his own image but also gains mastery over the displays of others by controlling how those shows are interpreted.

212 ibid. 26.5-6

213 For the differences between Plutarch’s version of this scene and Livy’s, see Swain (1989). Cf. esp., p. 325: “Perseus is a foil to Aemilius throughout the Life, and the purpose of the alteration is to draw attention to Aemilius’ own later dignity in the face of adverse fortune.”
Notice that Perseus’ cowardice yet again appears as a factor of his status as the conquered non-Roman. Here Plutarch, who has already defined Perseus’ cowardice as a measure not only of his non-Romanness but also of the tenuous status of his Macedonian identity, places the power to further define cowardice in the hands of the Romans. Once Perseus is conquered, he is objectified in terms of Roman ideals: cowardice = dishonor. In doing so, Plutarch, who is in control of all definitions and holds the ultimate power of display in the world of the text, recognizes the power of Rome by way of this same rubric of definition through display.

4.6: The Power of Display and the Logic of the Triumph

Let us now move from the characterization of Aemilius and Perseus in the text as a whole to Plutarch’s description of Aemilius’ triumph over Perseus and the Macedonians, in which the dichotomy between Aemilius the conquering Roman and Perseus the captured non-Roman king is put on display for all of Rome.

Before looking at how Perseus and Aemilius Paulus themselves appear in the triumph, let’s take a look at how the captured Macedonian weapons are displayed in the procession. Their presentation is important in that it embodies the logic of power through display that is the foundation of Roman triumphal logic:
On the second [day of the triumph], the best and most extravagant of the Macedonian arms were sent forth on many carts, the arms themselves sparkling with newly-cleaned bronze and iron, and arranged in skill and combination so that they might seem like ones which were piled on by chance and at random… the arms were placed at fitting intervals, so that the striking against one another in the rough transport supplied an indeed dreadful noise, and the sight of the arms, although they had been conquered, was not without fear.

Here, Plutarch describes the plundered enemy arms as φοβερὸν and not ἄφοβον, dreadful and not without fear. This uneasiness towards the weapons of the enemy was not uncommon among the Romans. H. S. Versnel, in his work, *Triumphus: An Inquiry into the Origin, Development, and Meaning of the Roman Triumph*, tells us that, "the Romans shrank from the enemy armour they had captured. It was, loaded as it was with enemy power, dangerous and not to be brought within the walls of Rome."215 These arms were allowed to be brought into the city perhaps because, "they were [φοβερὸν and not ἄφοβον] to all outsiders, but evidently not to the person who, by his victory, had proved himself to be stronger…than his opponent, and who for this reason no longer has anything to fear from the - to him - harmless spolia."216 Thus, then, the thing which is feared for its possession of "enemy power" is only able to be brought into the city once it had been rendered harmless, i.e. once it has been conquered and therefore subdued, tamed. So the Macedonian arms are able to be paraded through the city because the victory of the

214 Plutarch *Life of Aemilius Paulus* 26.5-6
216 ibid. p. 309
triumphator, Aemilius Paulus, rendered them harmless, conquered, powerless. However, like everything else that falls under the rubric of Roman vs. non-Roman in this text, there is a twist to this particular display. Plutarch tells us, that the arms were arranged in such a way, not only so that they would seem to have been arranged haphazardly, but also so that, by their striking against each other, they would be a fearful sight. These arms have already been rendered harmless - otherwise they would not have been allowed within the city walls. However, since they are no longer a threat, they must, for the sake of display, for the sake of the triumph, be carefully arranged so that they still seem threatening. This, then, is the portrayal the non-Roman, the Macedonian, as a threatening and significant opponent, which in turn portrays the triumphator in an even greater light for having conquered such a threatening and dangerous foe. The Macedonian weapons are re-presented in a manner that had nothing to do with the "reality" of the non-Roman, but in one that has everything to do with the construct of the non-Roman and, in turn, the construct of the triumphator. Again, the triumph is a spectacle in the true dramatic sense; the procession of the non-Roman was arranged in

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218 Cf. Brilliant (1999) p. 221: “The visual splendor of the Roman triumph could thus create memorable impressions of such vivid authority that they put ceremony before history, obscuring the anterior bloody, violent, and precarious aspects of war. The carefully confected triumphal procession, in effect, substituted the celebratory parade with all its color and sound for the difficulties and dangers of the campaign and made the triumph the center of social memory, shared by many more Romans than ever went to war. The more intense the spectator’s experience of the parade, the more he is psychologically implicated in its performance, the stronger the affect and, thus, his appreciation of the transcendent triumphator, the cynosure of all eyes.”
such a way to encourage specific emotional responses from the Roman audience.\footnote{“To satisfy us, the spectacle must engulf us, threaten us, sweep us up from the first” (Dixon p. 7). Dixon is discussing the state of modern theory, but this statement is very applicable to the Roman audience of the triumph. The specific arrangement of the conquered arms satisfies their need to be, in this case, 'threatened'. Cf. Beacham p. 40-41: “By progressively sequencing the participants and objects as they were observed by the spectators, the triumph modulated and ordered the aesthetic impact and response of the audience so that moments of high intensity, such as the appearance of the victorious general or visual depictions of "high points" from the campaign, were balanced by lighter sequences in which booty was displayed or jesters performed ribald dances. An emotional response could be encouraged by juxtaposing, for example, captured and condemned enemy chieftains and the newly Roman victims of their oppression…”}

This, then, is the fundamental logic of the triumph – that the ‘real’ (here the Macedonian weapons) is dressed up as something else (‘scary’ weapons) and displayed as that ‘else’ as if it were the reality, even as it is recognized as being artificial (already captured, thus not threatening, weapons).\footnote{Cf. Beard (2003) p. 550: “The nature of spectacle, the collapsing boundary between representation and reality is one of the commonest themes in ancient accounts of triumphal celebrations.”} The job of the triumph, like any good display, is to persuade. First and foremost, it is a persuasion of the greatness of the Roman general through the display of the captured spoils and people, which includes displays of how non-Roman the captives are, while at the same time being worthy opponents of the Roman leader. Thus, the re-presentation of the weapons as fearful leads to a representation of the general as worthy of a triumph because he has conquered these scary weapons and the ‘dangerous’ foes who wielded them.

The appearance of Perseus in the actual triumph is as intricately complex as the display of the Macedonian weapons, if indeed not more so. Before his own appearance, however, came his children, led in as slaves along with their tutors and other servants, in tears and supplicating toward the audience:
Then, after a short interval, the children of the king were led as slaves, and with them a crowd of nurses, teachers, and chaperones, and these were reaching out their hands to the spectators and teaching the children to beg and to entreat…the children hardly at all understood the size of their evils on account of their young age; by which there was even more pity toward the time when their perception would change, so that Perseus went by almost overlooked. Thus the Romans turned their gaze to the children with pity, and many wept, and for everyone the spectacle was a mixture of grief and joy until the children were past.

In this passage, we see a strange interaction between the observer and the observed. In fact, it is difficult to distinguish just who is watching and who is being watched. First of all, the children are led in as δοῦλα; thus they are at this point merely a θέαν for the Roman spectators - a representation of the non-Roman as slaves to the Romans; the non-Roman is being observed by the Roman. This, like the weapons, is a representation of the non-Roman solely for the enjoyment of the spectator; the general has captured the children of the king, and to celebrate this great feat the children are paraded through the streets of Rome for the pleasure of the Romans. But we have another group included amongst the children; the tutors, chaperones, and teachers. These complicate the mixture a bit. They are well aware of their dire situation and are reaching their hands out in supplication to the crowd. The children, in turn, are learning from their companions to supplicate the spectators, presumably from watching them. So, now we have a situation

221 Plutarch Life of Aemilius Paulus 33.2-4

222 Notice the abundance of visual language in this passage: θεατὰς, ἀναισθησίας, παρορῶμενον, ὀψεῖς, θέαν. This is the triumph categorized as spectacle through Plutarch's choice of words.
in which the Romans are observing the children and the children are observing their
caretakers. This act of learned supplication on the part of the children creates a
significant response from the audience. For, as Plutarch tells us, the children have
*learned* this behavior, but they do not *understand* its implications. They are unaware of
the τῶν κακῶν τὸ μέγεθος; i.e. they are too young to understand their misfortunes or what
it means for them to be paraded through Rome as captive slaves in a triumph.\(^{223}\) The
spectators are aware of this, and Plutarch says that they are saddened, not so much by the
children's ignorance, but by the transition into a state of consciousness regarding their
status as slaves, which will occur when they are older. Again, from this arises an
interesting situation. The Romans - the spectators - i.e. those who are responsible for the
representation of the children - the non-Roman - as slaves, change their view of this
manifestation of the non-Roman (their own) when the non-Roman does not wholly
comply with its preordained classification. The children are not aware that they are now
slaves - a category into which the Romans placed them - and thus the Romans' perception
of them changes. Their Ἁθαν now becomes a mixture of sorrow and joy while the
children are in their presence.

Moreover, the children, for all the attention they are drawing, are not observing
the audience; their attention is focused on their companions. Meanwhile, a completely
reversed relationship exists between the caretakers and the Roman spectators: the adult
supplicants are extending their hands and begging in earnest toward the crowd, but they

\(^{223}\) For Plutarch’s thoughts on children in general, see Eyben (1996), esp. cf. p. 94: “In general a child will
be rather uncritical, naive and gullible. The inability to judge what is good and useful is another obvious
consequence of a child’s mental weakness.”
pass by virtually unnoticed by them. This is because the audience is devoting their
attention to the children, who, instead of returning the gaze, although they are making the
motions of supplication, are in fact observing their caretakers, and are, in effect, oblivious
to their own audience.

So the interactions between the non-Roman and the Roman, the observed and the
observer, are not as easy to unlace as they first appear to be. Here, roles are reversed,
while they in some ways remain unchanged. The children are still being forced into a
preset representation of themselves as the non-Roman, the slave, but at the same time,
they reshape the mold by their very ignorance of its existence. They cannot effectively
play the part assigned to them because they are unaware that they have been cast into that
role. Just as in the text as a whole, so in the triumph as well, the roles of Roman and non-
Roman are difficult to set certain boundaries on. Although the triumph is still a display
of the status of the Roman general and his captives in the present as a result of past
actions, to Plutarch, it is also a reflection of how those roles are never quite concrete, but
are always shifting and changing.

As yet another result of the attention drawn by the children, Plutarch says that
Perseus goes by nearly unnoticed. This near invisibility fits in with his portrayal
throughout the text. Plutarch’s comparison between Aemilius the conquering Roman and
Perseus the conquered Macedonian has been anything but simple up to this point. It
makes sense then, that Perseus’ appearance in the triumph is unexpectedly unremarkable.
One might expect the king of the captured people, the ultimate sign of the general’s
victory, to attract a certain amount of attention in the triumph. But Perseus has frustrated
Aemilius’ hopes of glory before – recall that his move for pity angered Aemilius because it would potentially lessen the general’s own honor. In the context of the logic of display, Perseus’ near invisibility becomes even clearer.

Long before he begins his description of the triumph, before Perseus had been captured, Plutarch tells us that the king of the Macedonians wanted to display his vast wealth to his Roman captors:

Περσεὺς δὲ τὸν χρυσὸν αὐτὸς αὑτοῦ καὶ τέκνων καὶ βασιλείας καταχαέμενος οὐκ ἠθέλησε δι᾽ ὀλίγων σωθῆναι χρηµάτων, ἀλλὰ μετὰ πολλῶν καµισθέις ο πλούσιος αἰχµάλωτος ἐπιδείξασθαι ῾Ῥωµαίοις ὅσα φεισάµενος ἑτήρησεν αὑτοῖς. 224

But Perseus himself was not willing to be saved by means of a small amount of money, pouring forth gold for himself, his children, and his kingdom; but wished as the wealthy prisoner, being carried away with many things, to show to the Romans how much he, sparing, had preserved for them.

Perseus desires to put on a display of his wealth for the Romans. He specifically wants to make a display of his wealth to the Romans once he has been captured, but this is not at all what actually takes place during the triumph. The treasures of the Macedonian king are not put on display by Perseus himself, but it is the Romans who do this - the description of the Macedonian weapons attests to this. If one recalls, the weapons were arranged in a particular way so that they would induce a particular reaction from the spectators. Thus the already-conquered arms are conquered a second time by their being organized for display. The same method of two-fold conquering can be applied to the present example. Perseus wants to show his wealth to the Romans; he is captured by the Romans, the Romans display the wealth of Perseus. The non-Roman is

224 Plutarch *Life of Aemilius Paulus* 12.7
voiceless; he is not able to express himself in any way on his own. Thus Perseus is not allowed to display his own wealth; instead, the Romans display it themselves, in their own way, i.e. in such a way that fits into the construct that they have built for what it means to be a Macedonian/non-Roman. By doing so, they are effectively taking away the voice of the non-Roman, Perseus. Consider, then, what happens to this money once it becomes the possession of Rome: it is counted, sorted, and displayed as such within the triumph. The Romans use the same techniques as the non-Roman, Perseus, to gain power over the money: they count it and sort it, and by doing so they claim mastery over it; it is then under their rule. What, then, is the difference between Perseus and the Romans? Why does this method work for the Romans but not for Perseus? This difference lies within the power of display; Perseus, the non-Roman, doesn’t know how to properly put his money on display. The Romans, on the other hand, effectively appropriate Perseus’ captured money and turn it into a spectacle of their own power over the conquered king.

Later, however, once he has been captured, Perseus changes his mind and does not want to be put on display:

καὶ τὸν προσέπεσε τῷ Αἰμιλίῳ δέχονται μὴ πομπευ.amazonaws καὶ παραιτούμενος τὸν Δείμβου. ὁ δὲ τῆς αναινείας αὐτοῦ καὶ φιλοψυχίας, ὡς οὖν, καταγελῶν, “Ἀλλὰ τοῦτο γ᾽,” εἶπε, “καὶ πρότερον ἐν ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ καὶ νῦν ἀποτελεῖται” δηλών τῷ πρὸ αἰσχύνης δάνατον, ὅν ὡς ὑπομένεις ὁ δείλαιος, ἀλλ᾽ ὦπ' ἐλπίδων τινῶν ἀποκαλομασθεὶς ἐγεγόνει μέρος τῶν αὐτοῦ λαφύρων.225

And yet he sent to Aemilius begging and asking that he not be led in the triumph. But Aemilius, mocking the man’s cowardice and love of life, as it seems, said, "But this indeed was available to him before and even now, if he should want it," signifying death in place of shame, to which the wretch did not submit, but, showing weakness by certain hopes, became part of his own spoils.

225 Plutarch *Life of Aemilius Paulus* 34.2
For Perseus, the only means by which he might avoid becoming the spectacle, avoid yielding to the Roman construct of the non-Roman, is death. In the denial of this request, the last vestige of his 'voice' is taken away. Indeed, he becomes grouped together into the same category as his treasures; he is paraded through the streets and put on display in the same manner as his arms, his chariot, his crown, his money and other luxuries. Thus, Perseus, who, in his mind, is the owner of the treasures, becomes, once configured into the Roman construct of the non-Roman, a part of these same spoils. Perseus, as we have seen in the previous passage, wants to make a display of his wealth for the Romans, and this signifies that he does in fact realize that his wealth is a token to the Romans of his defeat by the Romans. However, he is never allowed the chance to make his understanding known, because his ability to voice his opinions has been taken from him.

Notice that Perseus becomes part of 'his own' spoils. Plutarch has shown us more than once that these spoils are in fact never Perseus’ own. In section 12.1, discussed earlier, Perseus marks the Macedonian money for the Romans – it is always already Roman spoils, as is Perseus himself. His only means of escape is death, and, according to Aemilius, he isn’t (Ro)man enough to take it.

Although the audience to the triumph barely notices Perseus, Plutarch sees all, and he gives us a description of what he claims the Roman audience didn’t see:

\[\text{Αὐτὸς δὲ τῶν τέκνων ὁ Περσεὺς καὶ τῆς περὶ αὐτὰ ἰθαραχίας κατόπιν ἐπορεύεται, φαίνεται μὲν ἔμαθεν ἀμελήγομενος καὶ κρησίδας ἔχων ἐπιχωμοίος, ὑπὸ δὲ μεγέθους τῶν κακῶν πάντα παρεμόρφωμεν καὶ παραπληγμένων μάλιστα τὸν λογισμὸν ἐσόριον, καὶ τοῦτο δ᾽ ἐπεὶ χρόνος φέλων καὶ συνήθων, βεβαιάσθηκεν τὰ πρόφυσα τέντηκε, καὶ τῷ πρὸς Περσέα οἷον καὶ διακεχεύον ἐνοικεῖν παραστάσιν τοῖς ἰσιομένοις ὅτι τὴν ἑκατοντάρχην ὀλοφύρωσαν τῶν καὶ ἐαυτούς ἐλάχιστοι φρουτάζοντες.}\]

226 Plutarch  *Life of Aemilius Paulus* 34.1

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And after the children and the caretakers around them, Perseus himself was led, wearing a grey cloak and having soldier's boots that were native to his country, and like one who is wholly amazed by the size of his misfortunes and deranged especially with respect to reason. And indeed a group of friends and intimates followed him, whose faces were weighed down with grief, and by continually looking toward Perseus and crying they presented to those watching the notion that they were lamenting the misfortune of that man, thinking least of all about their own.

Like his children before him, Perseus is surrounded by people who show their concern for his plight. Unlike the children, though, the only observations made by the spectators about Perseus come from those surrounding him and not from Perseus himself. In the end, then, Plutarch shows us the Romans putting on a show of a Greek for the Romans. In this case, though, Plutarch gives us a show of the non-Roman not putting on a show. For all the effort Perseus seems to have put into first controlling his own display (which failed) and then trying to escape being put on display (which, again, failed), he is ultimately fairly successful at escaping the notice of the Roman audience, even if he can’t escape Plutarch’s watchful eye.227

Finally, Aemilius Paulus himself appears, in a magnificent chariot, wearing the customary robes and all the accoutrements associated with them. Behind Aemilius marched his army, all carrying laurel sprays, singing, praising, and, of course, jesting as well:

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227 Cf. Reiter (1988) p. 103: “Such was the inevitable outcome of a miser and a coward who dared pit himself against Aemilius, and, for Plutarch’s audience, this was the intended message.” Reiter seems a bit heavy-handed as far as Plutarch’s bias toward Aemilius in the comparison. Again, I think the relationship between Aemilius and Perseus is far more complex than Reiter wants us to believe.
Then [Aemilius] himself came next, mounted on a magnificently adorned chariot, a man indeed worthy to be seen apart from such power, wearing a purple, gold-spangled robe and holding forth a spray of laurel in his right hand. And indeed the army carried laurel crowns all together, following the chariot of the general according to company and squadron, some singing certain native songs mingled with laughter, others victory songs and praises of his accomplishments to Aemilius, who was looked upon and admired by all, but envied by no one of good men.

Aemilius, the triumphing general, seems to stand out here as the ultimate Roman. He is decked out in all the proper attire, playing the role of Great Roman perfectly. However, even here within the triumph, Plutarch reminds us that the construct of what a great Roman should be is intricately linked with and defined by the construct of the non-Roman, and he does so by closely paralleling this passage with the description of Perseus in the triumph. In this passage, there are all kinds of seeing going on. Plutarch characterizes Aemilius as worthy to be seen in any context, not just as a triumphator – again the logic of the triumph spills out into Roman life in general. Also, Aemilius is seen and admired by the whole audience. Not only is Aemilius hyper-visible, but he attracts the right kind of attention – no one is jealous of him, but all admire his success. This looks back to Perseus, whose description within the triumph comes right before this passage and who was hardly noticed at all. With both descriptions of the defeated and the victorious leaders so close together in the text, the connection between the two is hard to miss. The reason, at least in part, for Aemilius’ spectacular display in the triumph is

228 Plutarch Life of Aemilius Paulus 34.4
Perseus’ defeat. Thus, under the rubric of the power of display, Perseus’ conspicuous invisibility contributes to Aemilius’ successful spectacle. Again the roles of the two enemies are inextricably bound together.\textsuperscript{229}

One last contrast between Aemilius and Perseus comes after the description of the triumph and after the tragic death of Aemilius’ children, when Aemilius says:

\begin{quote}
ικανῶς γὰρ ἴμαι καὶ τοῖς ἴμοις κακοῖς εἰς τὴν τῶν κατοικημέων ἀποκέχρηται νόμεσιν, οὐκ ἁρανέστερον ἔχουσα παράδειγμα τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἀσθενείας τοῦ ἡμιμισθουσίου τὸν ἡμιμισθουσίου· πλὴν ὅτι Περσεὺς μὲν ἔχει καὶ μετακεκακημένος τοὺς παιδίας, Αἰμιλίος δὲ τοὺς αὐτοῦ νικήσας ἀπέβαλεν.\textsuperscript{230}
\end{quote}

“For [Fortune] sufficiently has satisfied divine indignation at my successes with me and my misfortunes, and she does not make the one triumphing a less visible example of human weakness than the one being triumphed over. Except that Perseus, who has been conquered, has his children, but Aemilius, who conquered him, lost his children.”

Here, Aemilius admits that Fortune places all men on an equal plain; no one is exempt from her powers to delve out good and bad fortune alike, including Aemilius himself, the paragon of what a 'good Roman' should be.\textsuperscript{231} In fact, in this passage, he compares himself to Perseus and admits that Perseus, even though he has been conquered, he still has his children, and Aemilius, who conquered Perseus, has lost his children. He’s not completely right, however. Perseus, in a sense, has lost his children as

\textsuperscript{229} Cf. Payne (1962) p.87: “More than anyone else Aemilius Paulus, the strict votary of the ancient Roman virtues, was responsible for the invasion of luxury into the Roman state. In a hundred different ways his victory over Macedonia contributed to the gradual weakening of the Roman fibre.” This seems a bit over dramatic, but it also points to the link between the conquered and the conqueror: Aemilius Paulus, according to Payne, by his very show of making Rome better by having conquered Macedonia, contributes to its downfall, and so Perseus reaches from beyond his defeat to help defeat Rome itself.

\textsuperscript{230} ibid. 36.6

\textsuperscript{231} For the role of fortune in the \textit{Life of Aemilius Paulus}, especially as a means of linking this life with its parallel, the \textit{Life of Timoleon}, see Swain (1989).
well. They are now the spoils of war, whether they can recognize themselves as such or not; they now belong to Rome, not Perseus. And so Plutarch brings us full circle; just as Aemilius’ and Perseus’ identities as Roman and Macedonian are linked through their family histories and legacies, so too are they made equal by their children, the failed hope for their families’ future.

Plutarch, then, a Greek writer displaying the Romans displaying the Greeks, is the master of all displays.\textsuperscript{232} In his \textit{Life of Aemilius Paulus}, and in the \textit{Lives} as a whole, he shows us Romans (and thus Rome) who define themselves through their power to define both themselves and what lies outside the realm of Roman, while at the same time being forever bound to the non-Roman in the very act of defining the difference between Roman and other. The triumph, then, is the ultimate show of this complex dichotomy between Aemilius and Perseus, Roman and Greek, and all that comes between the two and binds them together.

\textsuperscript{232} For Plutarch’s relationship to Rome in his writings, cf. Barrow (1967) p. xiv-xv: “[Plutarch] is treated as one of the late witnesses to the vitality of Greek letters, as a lover of all things Greek, as a Hellene born out of due time…But in fact he was born into the Roman Empire and lived through the last half of the first century A.D. and part of the second. He was a Roman citizen, living in a Roman province, traveling in Roman provinces, spending periods of time in the Rome of the Emperors, and counting among his numerous friends many Romans, some of distinction. He may have loved his native Boeotia with an ardent Patriotism; he may have been heir to Greek learning and thought; but the world in which he lived was now Greco-Roman, and he could not fail to be influenced by ideas which were Roman. He is imperfectly understood if he is not seen in the environment of the Roman Empire. And equally the Empire is not understood unless it is seen to be such as to enable a Plutarch to be such as he was.” See also Jones (1971) p. 124-125: “When Plutarch surveys Roman culture, including those aspects of it which he dislikes, he does so less from a Greek than a Greco-Roman point of view…Plutarch’s attitude to Rome is in a sense both Greek and Roman: Greek, in that he saw himself as a Greek by birth and language. Roman in that his interests and sympathies are bound up with the empire.” Cf. Vasunia (2003) p. 369: “…Plutarch’s work delineates the awkward truths of Roman colonization and, at the same time, presents to his audience a way of being Greek that is sensitive to the inescapable presence of empire.” For a discussion of the relationship between Greece and Rome in general at this time, see Baldson (1979) p.30ff., who describes it as a “love-hate” relationship (p.30).
CHAPTER 5

TRIUMPHAL TRANSFORMATIONS: POETS, LOVE, AND THE TRIUMPH

In Cicero’s letters, Livy’s history, and Plutarch’s biographies, we have seen that the triumph, and one’s relationship to the triumph, is a reflection of Romanness. If, then, the triumph is a measure of Romanness, then Rome’s love poets prove that Romanness can have many different measures and can be defined in many different ways. These poets disavow the idea that the triumphing general is the ultimate type of Roman, and they redefine ‘Roman’ in its relationship to the triumph as not ‘successful military general,’ but instead as ‘grand lover.’ This chapter will focus on two such love poets, Propertius and Ovid, and by examining how they respond to the logic of the triumph, explore how they triumph over the triumph by appropriating it and redefining it in their own terms. In the world of Roman love elegy, love becomes the battlefield and the poets triumph over love by taking over the language of the triumph and using it to describe their own successes (and sometimes defeats) in love, not war. In other words, the love poets approach the triumph in a different way; they recognize that the triumph is a
measure of one kind of Romanness – the military, march-in-the-triumph, soldier-for-the-good-of-Rome kind of Romanness – but then the poets identify themselves as representatives of another kind of Romanness – the civilian, poet, lover, watch-the-triumph-from-the-crowd-with-my-girl kind, a Romanness that is just as valid as the triumphal one.  

5.1: The Triumph on Stage: Plautus on the Triumph

Before turning to the love poets, however, let’s first consider the triumph as it appears in another kind of poet, the playwright Plautus.  Plautus, although he himself was not a love poet, nevertheless deals with the subject of love and young lovers, and he too takes over the language of the triumph while not discussing true military successes.

In his play *Bacchides*, he characterizes Chrysalus, the clever slave, more as a strategic general waging war than a slave helping his young master with his love-life.  In this

233 Cf. Ross (1975) p. 113: “We may expect, too, that during the few years when poetry at Rome was speaking for the national character with singular intensity, the elegists would have something to contribute.” Also, cf. Griffin (1985), who calls for a rereading of Latin poetry, in particular love poetry, within its historical context and as a reaction to/reflection of that context. Galinsky (1969) hints at the triumph in elegy as being used as a way to justify the poet’s way of life, but goes no further.

234 The justification for discussing Plautus within a chapter that focuses on the triumph in the work of the love poets is twofold. First, in the *Bacchides*, (the play which we will consider here), mention of the triumph occurs in the context of love (the slave, Chrysalus, is helping his master to win the girl). Secondly, the fact that Plautus, as I will argue, works toward subverting the idea of the military triumph as a reflection of a ‘good Roman’ indicates that there was a poetic counterculture that fought against the main-stream notion of military success = good Romanness early in the literary history of Rome.

235 Cf. Hanson (1965) p. 67: “If it is not quite true in Plautus that ‘militat omnis amans,’ it is still conquest of hearts or of money that motivates most of the heroism.” In the *Bacchides*, both love and money are the motivating factors. Also, cf. Anderson (1993) p. 61: “Plautus…sabotaged the love plot and its amatory themes and upstaged the comedy with an emphasis on humour derived from intrigue, rougery, wit, and outright romantic parody.” For a discussion of recurring story patterns and characters in Plautus, see Konstan (1983).
play, Mnesilochus needs money to save his mistress from the soldier she has been sold to. Chrysalus helps his young master by tricking his master’s father, Nicobulus, out of the money. When Chrysalus talks about his tricks and schemes, he often uses the language of battle and conquest, and also of the triumph:

\[\text{Hunc hominem decet auro expendi, huic decet statuam statui ex auro; nam duplex facinus feci hodie, duplicibus spoliis sum adfectus.}\]

This man ought to be paid in gold, there ought to be a statue made of gold for this man, for I have accomplished a double crime today, and I have been endowed with double spoils.

Chrysalus describes the trick he has played on his young master’s father as the spoils of a war. Here, war and the triumph, and all that they normally represent, are distorted. In the world of comedy, the actions that merit spoils and triumphs are very different from the military victories displayed in Rome’s ‘real’ triumphs. Chrysalus, a slave who otherwise would, of course, never win his own triumph, earns a double helping of spoils for his efforts – and his efforts are not in the form of victories in battle; his spoils are a reward for his crimes (facinus). And these ‘crimes,’ in turn, are ‘waged’ for the cause of love, not for military war.

The language of battle continues to appear in Chrysalus’ dialogue as he lays out his attack strategy against Nicobulus with his co-conspirators, which include the young lover, Mnesilochus:

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236 For the structure of this play and its relation to the Greek original, see Clark (1976). Cf. Anderson (1993), who compares this play to the Menander’s original play.

237 For a brief discussion of the father-son relationship in this play, see Lacey (1979).

238 For a discussion of Plautus’ use of language in his plays, see Anderson (2001).

239 Plautus Bacchides 641-642.
Ah, placide volo
unumquidque agamus: hoc ubi egero, tum istuc agam.
de ducentis nummis primum intendam ballistam in senem;
ea ballista si pervortam turrim et propugnacula,
recta porta invadam ex templo in oppidum antiquum et vetus:
si id capso, geritote amicis vostris aurum corbibus,
sicut animus sperat.  

Ok, I want us to do everything peacefully: when I’ve done this, then I’ll do that. First I’ll stretch the catapult against the old man for the 200 coins; if I destroy the tower and the ramparts with that catapult, than I’ll straightaway attack the gates into the ancient town. If I capture it, carry the gold in baskets to your friends, just as your spirit hopes.

Chrysalus sets out, act for act, how he plans to get the money his master needs to rescue his mistress, and he describes these actions as though he were planning an attack. His plan is to trick the money out of the Mnesilochus’s father, Chrysalus’ master. In his description, the old man is portrayed as an ancient city, and the clever slave, in the part of a general of an army, plans to besiege the city, destroy its tower and ramparts, and take it by force. The plunder, then, will be the money that Mnesilochus needs for his mistress. The battle language culminates at the end of the play, when a successful Chrysalus revels in his victory with the audience:

hoc est incepta efficere pulcre: veluti mi
evenit ut ovans praedae onustus cederem;
salute nostra atque urbe capta per dolum
domum reduco integrum omnem exercitum.
sed, spectatores, vos nunc ne miremini
quod non triumpho: pervolgatum est, nil moror;
verum tamen accipientur mulso milites.  

240 Plautus Bacchides 707-713.

241 For a study of master-slave relations in Plautine comedy, see McCarthy (2000). Cf. Beacham (1991) p. 37: “Indeed, according to Donatus, it was forbidden for Roman slaves to be depicted in plays as cleverer than their masters; Plautus’ slaves could do so since all the plots and characters are, notionally, set safely and unthreateningly in Greece…”

242 Chrysalus isn’t the only one who believes he is a general leading an assault; Pistoclerus, Mnesilochus’ friend, calls him an honorable leader in reference to the slave’s plan: o imperatorem probum! (759). For the slave as military general in Plautus, see Anderson (1993) p. 91ff. and Hanson (1965) p. 62ff.

243 Plautus Bacchides 1068-1074.
This is the undertaking brought beautifully to a close: It’s worked out for me just as if I were marching along in an *ovatio*, laden with booty. With me safe and the city captured by a trick, I’m leading my whole army back home in one piece. But, spectators, don’t be surprised because I’m not leading a triumph: they’re too common, and I pay no attention to them; but nevertheless, the soldiers will be received with honey wine.

Chrysalus says that his success is as if he were marching triumphantly (*ovans*) loaded down with spoils. The use of *ovans* recalls the *ovatio*, a lesser honor than the triumph, but still a procession through the city. He made it through the adventure safely, and he captured the city (the old man), and now he’s leading his troops (Mnesilochus and his friend, Pistoclerus) back home safely as well. He then addresses the audience directly, telling them not to worry that he wasn’t leading a triumph; he doesn’t want a triumph because they’re too common. With a one-liner, the slave turns the world of the Roman nobility upside down.\(^{244}\) The greatest military honor that Rome could provide a general is reduced to an everyday, too common experience that even a slave gets bored with and rejects.\(^{245}\) This comment by Chrysalus dregs up all the repressed desire for the triumph by the Roman elite, and a character in a comedy reveals the triumph for what it ‘really’ is: from the perspective of a Roman slave, the triumph is still a display of Romanness, but not the Romanness of military *virtus* and conquest. Instead it becomes a display of the

\(^{244}\) Cf. Segal (1968) p. 101: “But Plautus is, in almost every sense, the most ‘saturnalian’ comic playwright of them all; he turns everything topsy-turvy” (emphasis original to the author).

\(^{245}\) What makes this speech even more unique is that Chrysalus exits the stage after these words, never to reappear, with over 100 lines left in the play. For a discussion of exit-monologues in Plautus in general, see Prescott (1942). For Chrysalus’ unexpectedly premature exit, see Slater (1985) p. 112ff.
Romanness of Cicero’s letters, the (sometimes poorly) hidden desire for the honor that causes it to become so common that it begins to truly represent no such honor. Chrysalus will stick to the lesser honor, because the triumph no longer holds any honor at all.\textsuperscript{246}

It seems, then, that Chrysalus (and therefore Plautus) gets closer to the true sense of the triumph than any other Roman author – the triumph for this clever slave is a means of displaying not just Romanness, but the hidden desires that make up that Romanness. In a certain sense, Chrysalus’ off-hand rejection of the triumph is also a reflection of his status as a slave in the world of Plautine comedy. Accepting a triumph and celebrating one, as we have seen in the works of other authors, means submitting to certain social rules, both official and unofficial. Part of the logic of the Plautine slave is to be as free as possible from social rules by accepting and submitting to as few of them as possible, and then playing one’s own game within those socially restricting boundaries.\textsuperscript{247} Therefore, Chrysalus, by rejecting the triumph, seems to be doing one of two things (and possibly

\textsuperscript{246} Cf. Anderson (1995), who sees the clever-slave-as-military-victor over his Greek master as, ‘representative of contemporary Greek political failure, of a culture which Cato and other Roman politicians were deploring for its destructive effects on Roman \textit{virtus}’ (p. 179). Cf. Anderson (1993) p. 92: ‘…in the Latin terms Plautus employs to epitomize his comic ethical paradox, the clever intriguing slave, whose character can be summarized by the word \textit{militia} (badness), aims at a goal which in conventional Roman terms is the proud one of military conquest of a despised enemy, the highest achievement of manliness (\textit{virtus}).’ Also, cf. Gruen (2001) p. 87ff., who argues that Plautus is referring to and poking fun at the increased demand for triumphs by generals in Plautus’ day. In particular, p. 89: ‘The comedies, in short, take definite notice of concern over the effects of expansion...the plays had a contemporary resonance that reached beyond the fantasies of the stage. They mocked ambition, lampooned exaggerated claims, deflated conquerors, and likened the acquisition of plunder to the duplicitous guile of slaves.’

\textsuperscript{247} Cf. Slater (1985) p. 174: “Chrysalus in the \textit{Bacchides} is...theatrically self-creating, in ways that delineate his reaction against the confines of his stock role.” Also, cf. Anderson (1993) p. 89-90: “The deceivers, like the slave Chrysalus...come from the lower ranks of the social order and can be declared ‘bad’ in social terms by those above them, their victims. But what is more important, for Plautus’ presentation, is that social inferiority goes hand-in-hand with (and to some extent, stimulates) a striking indifference to strict ethical limits; an adaptability to conditions; an energetic curiosity; basic cunning and enjoyment of deception; a combative anarchic attitude towards life; and total indifference to such ordinary things as property rights, duty, responsibility, truth, or authority...”
both at the same time): either he is rejecting the triumph because he knows that he can, as a slave, never have one anyway, or he is rejecting the triumph (*non triumpho*) and triumphing at the same time (*veluti mi evenit ut ovans praeda onustus cederem*). In either case, Chrysalus (and thus Plautus) appropriates the idea of repressed desire for the triumph as a way to gain honor as a Roman, and toys with this social ‘rule’ by cashing in his repressed-desire chips without risking anything in return (either he rejects what he can never have or he rejects the triumph and celebrates it too). This, then, reinforces the idea that the poetic counterculture of the love poets works against the logic of the triumph – even as early as Plautus’ time – by appropriating it and redefining its importance and meaning.

5.2: Love Conquers War: Propertius on the Triumph

Thus, the poetic tradition of subverting the social importance of military success and the triumph on Romanness is a fairly early one in Rome’s literary history. By Propertius’ time, then, the idea of the poet as a lover, not a fighter seems well-established.\(^{248}\) In *Elegies* 3.4, Propertius sets out his place as a poet within the world of

\(^{248}\) There is, as we shall see, not just the dichotomy between lover and fighter, but also that of soldier of love and soldier of war. The latter is, in fact, the more common of the two. For a survey of war imagery in the Roman love elegists, see Murgatroyd (1975). Also, cf. McKeown (1995) p. 297: “Military imagery had been used sporadically in earlier love-poetry, but almost always it served as a merely decorative figure of speech. The elegists, however, developed the metaphor of love as warfare into a symbol of their non-conformist way of life.” For a detailed treatment of Propertius’ style and the structure within his poetry, see Benediktson (1989). For a discussion of realism and the character(s) of the narrator in Propertius’ poems, see Sharrock (2000). For Propertius’ relationship to the reader of the poems, see Warden (1980) p. 85ff.
military ventures and triumph in Rome, and he does so by praising a hopefully-soon-to-be-triumphing Caesar, while at the same time qualifying his praise by distancing himself from those who value the triumph as a worthy pursuit:  

Mars pater, et sacrae fatalia lumina Vestae, 
ante meos obitus sit precor illa dies. 
qua videam spoliis oneratos Caesaris axis, 
ad vulgi plausus saepe resistere equos, 
inque sinu carae nixus spectare puellae 
incipiam et titulis oppida capta legam, 
tela fugacis equi et bracati militis arcus, 
et subter captos arma sedere duces! 
ipsa tuam serva prolem, Venus: hoc sit in aevum, 
cernis ab Aenea quod superesse caput. 
praeda hit haec illis, quorum meruere labores: 
me sat erit Sacra plaudere posse Via.  

Father Mars, and the fated lights of sacred Vesta, I pray that before my death the day will come on which I will see Caesar’s chariot loaded with spoils, and his horses often stopped by the applause of the crowd, and I will begin to watch, leaning on the breast of my dear girl, and I will read the names of the captured towns on the plaques, I’ll see the weapons of the fleeing cavalry and the bows of the trousered soldiers, and the captured leaders sitting under their arms! Venus, preserve your own offspring: let this head, which you see is descended from Aeneas, live to old age. Let this reward be for those whose labors have earned it: it will be enough for me to be able to applaud on the Sacred Way.

The poet proclaims that he hopes to live long enough to see Caesar triumph, and goes on to describe what he hopes to see: the spoils of the victory, the captured enemy in their strange clothing, the enemy’s weapons, and Caesar himself on his triumphal chariot. But then he pictures himself in the scene of the triumph, not as a soldier who fought for Caesar in battle, but watching from the sidelines, with his girl in his arms. This situates the poet and his interests firmly in place, and his place is not with Caesar fighting wars,

\[249\] For an analysis of the structure of this poems, see Stahl (1985) p. 193ff.

\[250\] Propertius  \textit{Elegies}  3.4.11-22.
but with his girlfriend, writing love poetry.\textsuperscript{251} He even states this distinction more clearly a few lines later, when he comments that triumphs should be given to those who deserve them, but Propertius himself is not interested in earning a triumph. It’s enough for him to stand among the crowd (of love poets?), with his girl, watching the victorious general pass by.\textsuperscript{252}

Propertius not only emphasizes the fact that he does not follow Caesar’s military lifestyle; he also hints at the idea that Caesar is influenced by love more than the poet is influenced by the allure of war. He does this by bringing to the audience’s mind the link, cultivated by Caesar himself, between Caesar and Venus, goddess of love. Propertius prays that Venus will protect her descendant and let him live to old age. So, according to this poet, a triumph is an fine thing to pursue, but it’s not for everyone, including himself, and, in fact, his own pursuit is perhaps more powerful than Caesar’s goal of a triumph, since Propertius, the lover/poet, is not at all influenced by the sight of Caesar’s triumph to want one for himself, but Caesar, the military type, is also tied to the influences of love as well.

\textsuperscript{251} Cf. Galinsky (1969) p. 80: “…the relevant passages suggest that Propertius deliberately was drawing on the triumphal theme to express the contrast between res publica and res private.” Cf. Sullivan (1976) p. 56: “So in proclaiming a preference for making love, not war, the elegist must self-consciously set himself at odds with the premises of his society, even though he cannot become a radical dissenter disrupting the military machine.” Also cf. Commager (1974) p. 38: “But it remained for Propertius to invert the traditional hierarchy of values in a manner as strident as it was unremitting. Himself perhaps the son of an eques, he might have been expected to take his social opportunities, not to say obligations, seriously. Yet the respectable amenities of a military, political, or legal career attracted him no more than they did his successor Ovid…”

\textsuperscript{252} Cf. Commager (1974) p. 37: “The notion that one might make a career out of being a lover, and a recorder of that love, was scarcely calculated to recommend itself to Roman sensibilities.” Also, cf. Sharrock (2002) p. 150: “In the decades immediately before Ovid wrote his love poetry, Propertius and Tibullus (and Gallus and Catullus before them) developed an elegiac genre in which the speaker is enslaved to a mistress, and chooses a life of decadence and devotion rather than civic and military success.”
Propertius, then, plays with the function of desire in the triumph. A triumphing general should suppress his desire for a triumph, but Propertius draws attention to Augustus’ link to Venus and thus highlights the Caesar’s innate desire: through his family link to Venus, Augustus inherits the desire that he should hide. Propertius himself, though, has none of this desire for a triumph; like Plautus’ Chryusalus, he rejects it without, it seems, a second though. Instead, he turns his desire toward other objects, such as young girls and their sinus.

Outright refusal of a triumph is just one way in which poets work to subvert the common construct of the triumph and the ideas about Romanness that it portrays. They also take over the language of the triumph and use it to describe their successes in love as triumph of their own. Indeed, Propertius himself is not always content to sit and watch triumph from the sidelines; in Elegies 2.14, he claims to have celebrated his own triumph:

Non ita Dardanio gavisus Atrida triumpho est,
cum cadens magnae Laomedontis opes;
nece sic errore exacto laetatus Ulixes,
cum tetigit carae litora Dulichiae;
nec sic Electra, salvum cum aspexit Oresten,
cuius falsa tenens fleverat ossa soror;
nec sic incolorem Minois Thesea vidit,
Daedalium lino cum dux rexit iter;
quanta ego praeterita collegi gaudia nocte:
immortalis ero, si altera talis erit…
pulsabant alii frustra dominamque vocabant:
mecum habuit positum lenta puella caput.
haec mihi devictis potior victoria Parthis,
haec spolia, haec reges, haec mihi currus crunt. 253

The son of Atreus didn’t rejoice this much in his triumph over the Dardanians, when the great strength of Laomedon fell; nor was Ulysses this happy when his wanderings were over and when he touched the shores of his beloved Ithaca, Electra wasn’t this happy when she saw that Orestes was safe, while she, as a sister, held and wept over what she though were his bones. The daughter of Minos wasn’t this happy when she saw that Theseus was safe, after she guided him through the Daedalian path with a thread as the leader. I have obtained all these past joys in one night: I will become immortal if there

The poet claims that he’s happier about the triumph that he has gained than Agamemnon was about defeating Troy, than Ulysses was about coming home, than Electra was about her brother being alive, and than Ariadne was about Theseus escaping the labyrinth. In fact, his joy is greater than all these combined, and his triumph was gained in just one night. Propertius’ triumph is that Cynthia chose to stay in bed with him all night and not to answer to any of her other lovers’ calls. The lists of ‘triumphs’ that the poet compares his triumph with is intriguing. The first item is what one might expect in such a list: Propertius claims to be more excited over his love-triumph than Agamemnon was over his military victory. This comparison keeps in line with the metaphor of love as a war in which triumphs can be earned. However, the rest of the list progresses from this military example to an example of a soldier coming home from war to his wife (a move from war to love), to one of sisterly/brotherly love (no war at all here), and finally to a girlfriend happy to find her lover safe. Propertius slowly evolves the series of triumphs from military in character to his own kind of triumph, a triumph of love. However, Propertius is not claiming to have triumphed over Cynthia. Cynthia, in fact, represents the spoils of Propertius’ victory over Cynthia’s other potential suitors, who, besiege, so to speak, the two lovers’ room, to no avail. Propertius is, moreover, triumphing over a successful defense, and not a conquest, a triumph that would never be allowed outside the world of
love elegy. In fact, even this victory is scarcely attributable to the poet himself; his triumph relies solely on Cynthia’s choice to stay with him and not to answer the calls of her other lovers. This triumph, then, is far from a simple matter of violent mastery and possession on the part of the triumphator. Unlike the circumstances of a ‘real’ triumph, in the triumphs of the love poets, violence has no place. This is a triumph that celebrates a kind of Romanness that does not lay claim to violence and military-style mastery; it is a Romanness, again, that embraces desire and rejects strife.

Propertius then turns the poem back to the comparison between love and war, by claiming that his triumph over Cynthia is greater than a triumph over the Parthians (i.e. it’s greater than a really great military triumph). Once again, for Propertius, love is more powerful than war, and so its triumphs are greater than the triumphs of war. Indeed, Propertius claims that one more triumph like this will make him immortal; the warnings of the slave whispered in the triumphing general’s ear have no use here. Thus Propertius takes over the language of the triumph to talk about love, and claims to have invented a better triumph in doing so.

For Propertius, the triumphs of love are not always about winning, about being the triumphing general. In fact, Propertius describes a whole war, complete with triumph, between his girlfriend and himself, in which his girl comes out on top, so to speak, and the poet doesn’t seem to mind being conquered:255

254 A triumph could be celebrated only over newly conquered peoples/lands, not over defended or recovered property.

Here my Cynthia was carried by sheared ponies: the cause was Juno, but the real cause was Venus. Appian Way, I ask that you tell, since you were a witness, what a triumph she led while driving her wheels over your cobblestones!...Since there had so often been offences to our bed, I wanted to move camp to another bed...Without delay, Cynthia threw back the double doors, and although her hair had been disheveled, she was still very becoming in her rage. My cup fell through my fumbling fingers, and my lips went pale, even though they were soaked with wine. Her eyes shined and she raged like a woman, and it was no less a spectacle than a city being captured...Cynthia rejoiced in her spoils and, as a victor, she ran back to me and slapped my conquered face, and made marks on my neck and drew blood with her bite, and, in particular, hit me in the eyes, which deserved the punishment...Then finally I surrendered to a peace treaty with supplicating hands...And so when all of the bed sheets had been changed, I responded, and we made peace using the whole bed.

Cynthia leads a triumph in her chariot over Propertius along the Appian Way, and she’s triumphing over the fact that she knows she’ll catch him with another lover (the enemy?). The poet tells us that he was discontent with Cynthia betraying him with other lovers, and so he finds another girl himself. He describes this change of mistresses as a change in camps – he defected to the enemy camp, and General Cynthia is not pleased. She bursts in on the new couple, catching them unaware – a surprise attack – and Propertius likens her rage to the spectacle of an attack, and capture, of a city. Cynthia emerges as the

triumphing general, and Propertius is her spoils. Notice that she punishes her captive in the proper way – bites on the neck are the appropriate battle wounds for lovers, as Ovid teaches us in his *Amores*. Again, in the triumphs of love, violence is only playful; ‘real,’ physical violence has no place in the elegiac love-triumph. The war ends with the poet surrendering and working out the details of the peace treaty in their newly made bed. Unlike the wars waged by other soldiers, the poets fight battles in which surrender and captivity aren’t the worst outcome, wars in which women can be generals who are just as shrewd as their male, military counterparts. Unlike in the context of ‘real’ wars, winning certainly isn’t everything.

And so, Propertius takes over the language of the triumph and uses it to talk about desire. The desire he discusses, however, is not the desire that needs to be suppressed, the desire that generals have to be a *victor Romanus*, a triumphing hero. Instead, it is a desire that strives toward peace treaties as the goal of the battle instead of conquest and mastery. This, then, is Propertius’ version of the *Pax Romana*: for Propertius, the best part of a triumph is ‘making peace’ later and thus it does not matter whether you are the triumphator or the one being triumphed over.

5.3: Love *Is* War: Ovid on the Triumph

So Propertius distinguishes his place as a love poet in Rome from those who place importance on the military triumph. At the same time, though, he claims the triumph for his own, in the name of love, and defines himself as a soldier of love while redefining the

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257 See *Amores* 1.7, discussed below.
triumph as well. Ovid, like Propertius, also uses the language of war and the triumph to talk about love.\textsuperscript{258} In fact, in \textit{Amores} 1.9, he sets out in detail in what ways a soldier and a lover have such similar lives:\textsuperscript{259}

\begin{verbatim}
Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido;  
Attice, crede mihi, militat omnis amans.  
quae bello est habilis, Veneri quoque convenit aetas.  
turpe senex miles, turpe senilis amor.  
quos petiere duces anomis in milite forti,  
hos petit in socio bella puella viro:  
pervigilant ambo; terra requiescit uterque;  
ille fores dominae servat, at ille ducis.  
militis officium longa est via; mitte puellam,  
stennus exempto fine sequetur amans;  
ibit in adversos montes duplicataque nimbo 
flumina, congestas exteret ille nives,  
nec freta pressurus tumidos causabitur Euros 
aptaque verrendis sidera quaeret aquis.  
quis nisi vel miles vel amans et frigora noctis 
et denso mixtas perferet imbre nives?  
mittitur infestos alter speculator in hostes;  
in rivale oculos alter, ut hoste, tenet.  
ille graves urbes, hic durae limen amicae 
obsidet; hic portas frangit, at ille fores.  
saepe soporatos invadere profuit hostes  
caedere et armata vulgus inerme manu.  
sic fera Threicii ceciderunt agmina Rhesi,  
et dominum capti deseruistis equi.  
nempe maritorum somnis utuntur amantes  
et sua sopitis hostibus arma movent.  
custodum transire manus vigilumque catervas  
militis et miseri semper amantis opus.  
Mars dubius nec certa Venus; victique resurgunt,  
quosque neges umquam posse iacere, cadunt.  
ergo desidiam quicumque vocabat amorem,  
desinat: ingenii est experientis Amor.\textsuperscript{260}
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{258} For an account of the literary history of military themes in love poetry and Ovid’s place therein, see Thomas (1964). For a general overview of the \textit{Amores}, see Fränkel (1945) p. 10-35. For Ovid’s style of writing in the \textit{Amores}, see Kenney (2002). For Ovid’s character in the \textit{Amores} as a Protean figure who takes on various roles – including, then, the role of triumphator – see Davis (1989), especially p. 57ff.

\textsuperscript{259} For a discussion of this poem’s function within the structure of the book as a whole, see Olstein (1980) p. 291ff.

\textsuperscript{260} Ovid \textit{Amores} 1.9.1-32
Every lover is a soldier, and Cupid has his own camp. Atticus, believe me, every lover is a soldier. The age that is fit for war is also suitable for Venus: old men make shameful soldiers, and old love is shameful too. The spirits that generals seek in a brave soldier is also sought by a pretty girl in a friendly man: both stay up all night, each one sleeps on the ground; that one guards the door of his mistress, this one guards the door of his general. The duty of the soldier is a long road: send the girl ahead and the vigorous lover will follow without end. He will go into hostile mountains and rivers enlarged with rain, he’ll tread through heaped-up snow, and, about to set sail, he won’t use the swollen East wind as an excuse, and he won’t ask what stars are appropriate for skimming the waters. Who, except for a soldier or a lover, would endure the cold of night and snow mixed with thick rain? One, as a scout, is sent against the hostile enemy, and the other holds his eyes against a rival as if he were the enemy. That one besieges harsh cities, this one besieges the threshold of a harsh lover; this one breaks down gates, that one breaks down doors. It’s often helpful to attack the enemy while they’re sleeping and to murder an unarmed enemy with an armed hand. Thus fell the wild battle lines of Thracian Rhesus, and you, captured horses, deserted your master. Without a doubt, lovers enjoy the sleep of husbands and move their own arms while the enemy sleeps. It is always the work of the soldier and the miserable lover to pass by bands of guards and companies of vigilant men. Mars is doubtful, nor is Venus certain: the conquered rise up, and those whom you think are never able to fall, fall. Therefore, whoever calls a lover lazy, let him stop: Love is of an active nature.

Ovid here takes the link between soldier and lover one step further than Propertius. According to Ovid, all lovers are soldiers, serving in Cupid’s camp. The rigors of love are the same as those of war, and proof of this can be found in the list of similarities he provides for us: neither love nor war are for old men; both generals and girls look for the same qualities in their men, and so on. So lovers are just as much soldiers as, well, soldiers are: they face the same dangers (lovers can be ‘shot down’ just like soldiers), and they endure the same hardships for their respective generals. Ovid appropriates the language of war and makes it the language of love, and in doing so, he defends the honor of the lover. He challenges those who call lovers lazy to do so in the face of such evidence that links them to the honorable military profession.

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261 Cf. Cahoon (1988) p. 293: “…whereas Propertius seriously considers the conflicting claims of love and war in a number of poems, Ovid evades the problem by denying the conflict: militat omnis amans (1.9).” Sharrock (2002), interprets militat omnis amans in this way: “that is, every lover enters into a discourse of erotic imagery in dialogue and in conflict with his society, literary, social, and political” (p. 150).
Here too, as in Propertius’ view of the triumph, the violence of Ovid’s battles is
only the metaphorical violence inherent in the appropriated military language. One
besieges the house of a harsh lover like a soldier besieges a town, but, while a ‘real’
soldier murders the enemy in his sleep, the lover loves while his enemy sleeps.262 And so
Ovid, like Propertius, doesn’t simply borrow the language of war and triumphs
wholesale; instead he transforms that language into the language of love. In fact, from
this point in the poem, Ovid moves to a second tactic of defense for lovers and turns the
tables of love and war:

ardet in abducta Briseide magnus Achilles
(dum licet, Argeas frangite, Troes, opes);
Hector ab Andromaches conplexibus ibat ad arma,
et, galeam capiti quae daret, uxor erat;
summa ducum, Atrides, visa Priameide fertur
Maenadis effusis obstipuisse comis.
Mars quoque deprensus fabrilia vincula sensit:
notior in caelo fabula nulla fuit.
ipse ego segnis eram discinctaque in otia natus;
mollierant animos lectus et umbra meos;
impulit ignavum formosae cura puellae,
iuscit et in castris aera merere sui.
inde vides agilem nocturnaque bella gerentem:
qui nolet fieri desidiosus, amet.263

Great Achilles burned for the stolen Briseis (break the Argive strength, Troy, while you
can); Hector went to arms from the arms of Andromache, and it was his wife who put the
helmet on his head; it is said that the son of Atreus, highest of generals, when he saw
Priam’s daughter, was struck dumb by her Maenad-like hair. Mars too was caught by
and sensed the craftsman’s chains: no story was more notorious in heaven. I myself used
to be lazy and was born into an easy-going leisure; the couch and the shade softened my
spirit. The care for a pretty girl compelled me, a sluggard, and ordered me to serve in the
camp as a soldier. From this you see that I am agile and I wage nighttime wars: he who
doesn’t want to be lazy, let him love.

262 For the, I believe, inaccurate opinion that Ovid is attacking his girl in this poem, see Olstein (1980). Cf.
Cahoon (1988) p. 297: “The rivalry for love is violent, and the lover lays siege to a woman and breaks into
her. This breaking in is surely at least as suggestive of rape as of seduction.” This argument seems forced
and, indeed, inaccurate. As we shall see, the poet/lover in fact rarely attacks the girl, but instead, the
imagery of battle mainly is used to describe the fending off of the girls’ relatives and other suitors. For a
similar view of the theme of violence in Latin love elegy in general, see James (2003), especially p.184ff.

263 Ovid Amores 1.9.33-46
Ovid begins the poem with an argument for why lovers are soldiers. Now he takes his defense of lovers one step further. Not only are lovers soldiers, but some of the greatest soldiers have been lovers at heart, and were great warriors, or caused great losses in battle, because they were in love. Here Ovid not only re-reads/re-writes the language of war as the language of love, he also re-reads/re-writes past wars as battles of love as well.\textsuperscript{264} The poet lists Achilles as first and foremost a lover, and implies that his love for Briseis nearly caused the Greeks to lose the Trojan War. Then he moves to the Trojan side, and gives his audience a glimpse of Hector the Lover. Behind every great warrior is his mistress, and Ovid reminds us that it was Andromache who placed the helmet on her husband’s head. Even the leader of the Greek forces was not immune to the forces of love – indeed, he was attacked (\textit{obstipuisse}, “struck dumb”) by Cassandra. So even the soldiers on both sides of the famous Trojan War were lovers as well as soldiers. And the argument goes even further – love and war are naturally attracted to one another. What better proof is there of the power of love over war than the story of Mars and Venus being caught in bed together by Vulcan’s chains? So Ovid’s apology for the lives of lovers, a poem on how lovers are soldiers too, becomes, in the end, a treatise on the strength of love even over soldiers. Ovid ends the poem that starts out arguing that lovers

\footnote{\textsuperscript{264} Cf. Harrison (2002) p. 79: “Ancient genres are often classified by features such as metre and vocabulary, thematic concerns, and generic codes and models; in all but the first, the Ovidian elegiac output shows a remarkable and highly self-conscious variety. Here as so often, Ovid’s work confounds and subverts conventional categories.” Also, cf. Tarrant (2002) p. 13: “Whatever the form with which Ovid is engaged, his eye takes in the full sweep of Greco-Roman poetry, and the story he tells about his work is always being rewritten. If ‘literary history’ connotes a stable record of writers’ careers and of their relations to one another, Ovid is an anti-historian, who delights in reshuffling the data and producing constantly new accounts.”}
are not lazy, as some think they are, by invoking those who want to stop being lazy to
cure their infirmity by becoming soldiers of love. Ovid appropriates the language of war,
transforms it into the language of love, and then, finally, converts the old soldiers into a
new kind of soldier, the warrior of love.

So, according to Ovid, all lovers are soldiers. It’s not surprising, then, that he too,
like Propertius, leads a triumph over love:

Ite triumphales circum mea tempora laurus:
vicevus; in nostro est ecce Corinna sinu,
quam vir, quam custos, quam ianua firma (tot hostes!)
servabant, ne qua posset ab arte capi.
haec est praeceipuo victoria digna triumpho
in qua, quae etque est, sanguine praeda caret.
non humiles muri, non parvis oppida fossis
cincta, sed est ductu capta puella meo.
Pergama cum caderent bello superata bilustri,
ex tot in Atreidis pars quota laudis erat?
at mea seposita est et ab omni milite dissors
gloria, nec titulum munera alter habet:
me duce ad hanc voti finem, me milite veni;
ipse eques, ipse pedes, signifer ipse fui.
ecas casum fortuna meis inmiscuit actis:
huc ades, o cura parte Triumphi mea.
ec bellis est nova causa mei: nisi rapta fuisse
Tyndaris, Europae pax Asiaeque foret.
femina silvestris Lapithas populumque biformem
turpiter adposito vertit in arma mero;
femina Troianos iterum nova bella movere
impulit in regno, iuste Latine, tuo;
femina Romanis etiamnunc urbe recenti
inmisit socris armaque saeva dedit.
vidi ego pro nivea pugnantes coniuge tauros:
spectatrix animos ipsa iuvenca dabat.
me quoque, qui multos, sed me sine caede, Cupido
iussit militiae signa movere saue.\footnote{Ovid \textit{Amores} 2.12}

Come, triumphal laurels, encircle my head: I have conquered; look, Corinna is in my lap,
whom her husband, her guardian, and the firm doors (so many enemies!) were defending,
so that she couldn’t be capture by any skill. This is a victory especially worthy of a
triump, because the spoils were taken without bloodshed. No lowly wall, no city
surrounded by little walls, but a girl was captured by my generalship. When Pergamum
fell, overcome by a 10-year war, out of so many men, what part of the praise went to
Atreus’ son? But my glory is isolated and not shared with any soldier, and no one else

\footnote{Ovid \textit{Amores} 2.12}
holds the title of duty. I came to the end of my wish with me as the general and me as the soldier; I was my own cavalry, infantry, and standard-bearer. Nor has fortune mixed chance into my deeds: you are here, triumph, obtained by my own care. The cause of my war isn’t new: if Helen hadn’t been stolen, there would have been peace between Europe and Asia. A woman turned the woodland Lapiths and the two-formed people shamefully to arms, with wine as a second instigator; a woman pushed the Trojans to war again in your kingdom, Latinus; indeed, a woman sent fathers-in-law against Romans when the city was still young, and gave them arms. I have seen bulls fighting over a snowy wife; and she herself, as a spectator, gave spirit to the bulls. Cupid, who has drafted many men, has ordered me too to take up his own military standards, although my orders come without bloodshed.

Ovid’s triumph is Corinna; more specifically, Corinna is the spoils of a triumph over husband, guardian, and the front door, whom Ovid describes as the conquered enemies. While Propertius argues that his triumph is more appreciated than other triumphs, Ovid argues that his love-triumph is more deserved than military triumphs, because, unlike the latter, he earned his victory (and triumph) without any bloodshed. Again, violence has no place in a poet’s/lover’s triumph: here, his proud claim of non-violent victory frames the comparison in the poem of Ovid’s triumph to ‘real’ triumphs.\textsuperscript{266} The poet then expands on just why his triumph is greater than regular triumphs: instead of capturing a town, Ovid says that he captured a girl, which, apparently, is a more difficult and daring feat than defeating a city. Ovid’s triumph is also better than other triumphs because he doesn’t have to share the glory of victory with anyone, unlike Agamemnon, who had to share the defeat of Troy with the rest of the Greek forces.

\textsuperscript{266} Cf. Cahoon (1988) p. 293-294, 298: “…Ovid’s manipulation of military imagery…suggests that the love of the \textit{Amores} is inherently violent…Again, as in 1.9, Corinna is like a town to which the \textit{amator} lays siege.” Also, cf. James (2003) p. 173: “This poem celebrates the military triumph of the lover-poet in gaining sexual access to Corinna…and it may be assumed that his goal, after an arduous campaign, take no other form than to have sex with her.” Again, this seems to be an overly simplified, and therefore inaccurate interpretation of the poem. In fact, the poet does not triumph \textit{over} the girl, but instead over those who stood between him and his girl, and therefore, the sexual violence that these scholars find in these poems is in fact not actually there in the starkly black-and-white way in which they believe it to be.
As we have seen Ovid do before, here he shifts the force of his argument, and changes from describing his triumph over love as better than the triumphs of war, to arguing that, in fact, all triumphs, even military ones, are triumphs that involve love, and that wars are usually caused by and fought over women. He returns to Troy for evidence of his point. Again, as in Amores 1.9, Ovid re-reads/re-writes past literary battles and triumphs into battles and triumphs of love: the Trojan War would never have happened, of course, if Paris hadn’t lusted after Helen and acted on that desire. The famous battle of the Lapiths and the Centaurs was instigated by a woman. He addresses Latinus, and says that the Trojans fought yet another war over yet another woman in his land. He names the Sabine women as the cause of war between their fathers and their new Roman husbands. And he claims that even bulls battle over cows, and that the cows urge them on. So love as a cause of war is nothing new, according to Ovid, and thus triumphs over love are just as common as (and in fact are the same as) triumphs over war. So, again, the triumph over love is portrayed as not only equal in merit to military triumphs, but, in fact, are argued to be even more deserved and celebrated over more spectacular conquests. Poets wage their battles of love more skillfully than generals fight their wars over Roman enemies, even while these wars may be caused by love itself.

Notice that the first evidence Ovid gives of his triumph is that Corinna is in his embrace (in nostro est ecce Corinna sinu). Like Propertius, Ovid claims that this is where the poet/lover, belongs, either leaning on his girl’s sinus267 or holding her in his. For Ovid, though, the argument has progressed from Propertius’ idea that the

267 Cf. Propertius Elegies 3.4, discussed above.
poet’s/lover’s place is in the audience watching the triumph in his girl’s embrace, to
Ovid’s conclusion that the poet/lover still belongs in the girl’s *sinus* (or visa versa), but
the way to get there is through his own kind of triumph, and this triumph of love is better
than any military version.

Ovid, Propertius, and other poets appropriate the triumph and even claim that
their triumphs over love can be more deserved and more honorable than the more popular
kind of triumph. On certain occasions, then, the poets revel in their triumphs, but just as
in war, so too is it true that love is hell, and these conquests of love sometimes turn out
differently than the poet/lover might have hoped. Ovid, in *Amores* 1.7, describes a fight
with his girlfriend that ended with the poet striking the girl. In his guilt over his loss of
temper, he imagines leading a triumph over this shameful act:

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{i nunc, magnificos victor molire triumphos,} \\
& \text{cinge comam lauro votaque redde Iovi,} \\
& \text{quaque tuos currus comitantum turba sequetur,} \\
& \text{clamat 'io, forti victa puella viro est!'} \\
& \text{ante eat effuso tristis captiva capillo,} \\
& \text{si sinerent laesae, candida tota, genae.} \\
& \text{aptius impressis fuerat livere labellis} \\
& \text{et collum blandi dentis habere notam.} & 268
\end{align*}
\]

Go, now, victor, and set in motion your splendid triumph, encircle your hair with laurel
and return the vows to Jove, and the crowd of companions which will follow your chariot
will shout, ‘io, a girl has been conquered by the strong man!’ Let the sad captive walk in
front with her hair disheveled, completely white, if her injured cheeks allow it. It would
have been more appropriate to discolor her pressed-upon lips and for her neck to have a
mark of a caressing tooth.

This triumph, like any other, has the triumphator riding in a chariot, with companions
/soldiers marching behind him, and the captive(s) on display. But this isn’t a triumph that
celebrates the victory so much as it is one that laments the defeated and the rashness of

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268 Ovid *Amores* 1.7.35-42.
the conqueror. The ‘triumphant’ poet’s followers, whose job in a ‘real’ triumph is to make jokes and sing songs at the general’s expense, shout the ritual chant and congratulate the victor for being strong enough to defeat a helpless girl. In the previously cited poem (Amores 2.12), Ovid claims that winning over a girl is a much more impressive feat than overcoming a city, but here, he turns this same argument against himself, and he feels ashamed at having ‘defeated’ her. The difference between these two triumphs is that, in the previous one, Ovid triumphs in a battle of love, so to speak, and wins Corinna as his spoils. But here, Ovid and his mistress actually fight, and Ovid defeats her by hitting her, and this is what is so shameful. Here, then, the reoccurring theme of violence in the triumph is brought to the fore. In both Propertius’ and Ovid’s poetry, we’ve seen that there is no place in the lover’s triumph for physical violence. Recall that in the triumph in 2.12, Ovid prides himself on triumphing without bloodshed; actual fighting has no place in battles (and triumphs) of love. Therefore, when the boundary between poetic triumph and military triumph is crossed, the result is a hybrid, deformed, and distorted triumph. In fact, the triumph that Ovid describes here is the only triumph of the poems we’ve examined that a poet leads over a girl.\(^{269}\) The girl herself is described as the captive led in Ovid’s triumph; she’s sad and her face stands out red against the rest of her white features. She is the personification of—and display of—Ovid’s crime against love.

\(^{269}\) Cf. Cahoon (1988) p. 296: “The disproportionate expression of his repentance in extravagant epic language reveals his insincerity…” Also, cf. Greene (1998) p. 84: “In 1.7, the speaker’s cavalier attitude about assaulting his mistress and his use of the event as an opportunity for an extravagant display of his poetic talents not only expose the amator’s sanctioning of violence in amatory affairs but also show the pleasure and self-enhancement he derives from subjugating his mistress.” Again, I feel that this is a misreading of the theme of violence in Ovid.
Nowhere is the lover better portrayed as a captive led in a triumph than in Ovid’s *Amores* 1.2, in which he describes the ultimate love-general, Cupid, in his own triumph:

> en ego confiteor, tua sum nova praeda, Cupido; 
porrigimus victas ad tua iura manus. 
nil opus est bello: pacem veniamque rogamus; 
nec tibi laus armis victus inermis ero. 
necte comam myrto, maternas iunge columbas; 
qui deceat, currum vitricus ipse dabit; 
inque dato curru, populo clamante triumphum, 
stabis et adiunctas arte movebis aves. 
ducentur capi juvenes captaeque puellae: 
haec tibi magnificus pompa triumphus erit. 
ipse ego, praeda recens, factum modo vulnus habebo 
et nova captiva vincula mente feram. 
Mens Bona ducetur manibus post terga retortis, 
et Pudor, et castris quidquid Amoris obest. 
omnia te metuent, ad te sua bracchia tendens 
vulgus 'io' magna voce 'triumphe' canet. 
Blanditiae comites tibi erunt Errorque Furoque, 
adsidue partes turba secuta tuas. 
his tu militibus superas hominesque deosque; 
haec tibi si demas commodo, nudus eris. 
laeta triumphanti de summo mater Olympo 
plaudet et adpositas sparget in ora rosas. 
tu pinnas gemma, gemma variante capillos 
ibis in auratis aureus ipse rotis. 
tunc quoque non paucos, si te bene novimus, ures; 
tunc quoque praeteriens vulnera multa dabis. 
non possunt, licet ipse velis, cessare sagittae; 
fervida vicino flamma vapore nocet. 
talis erat domita Bacchus Gangetide terra: 
tu gravis alitibus, tigribus ille fuit. 
ergo cum possum sacri pars esse triumphi, 
parce tuas in me perdere victor opes. 
adspice cognati felicia Caesaris arma: 
qua vicit, victos protegit ille manu.\(^{270}\)

Cupid, I confess that I am your new spoils; I extend my conquered hands to your laws. There's no need for war: I ask for peace and a pardon; your stepfather himself, for whom it is right, will let you borrow his chariot; you will stand in the borrowed chariot and the people will shout ‘triumph’ and you will move by the skill of the yoked birds. The captured young men and girls will be led along: this procession will be your noble triumph. I myself, a recent war-prize, will carry my freshly-made wound and I will bear my new chains with a captive’s mind. Conscience will be led with her hands twisted behind her back, and Modesty, and whatever is opposed to the camps of Love. All things will fear you, and the people, stretching their arms toward you, will sing with a great voice, ‘io triumphe.’ Flatteries and Error and Madness will be your companions, a crowd that will constantly follow your faction. With these troops you conquered both men and

\(^{270}\) Ovid *Amores* 1.2.19-52.
gods; if you take away these helpers, you will be naked. Your mother on Olympus will be happy for you as you triumph, and she’ll clap for you and sprinkle roses on your face. Your wings will be adorned with gems, and so will your hair, and you will go along, you yourself golden on golden wheels. Then too you’ll burn not a few, if I know you well; then too as you pass by you’ll give many wounds. Your arrows couldn’t stop even if you wanted them to; the hot flames are harmful with their nearby heat. Such was Bacchus when he domesticated the land of the Ganges: You are dreadful because of your birds, he was dreadful because of his tigers. Therefore, since I’m able to be part of your triumph, spare, as a victor, your strength against me. Look at the lucky weapons of your relative, Caesar: he protects those he conquers with the same hand with which he conquered them.

Ovid willingly and freely admits that he is a captive to Love, and he’s the spoils over which Cupid will lead his triumph.\(^{271}\) Again, the link between military battles and the battles of love is stressed, this time through Ovid’s mention of the chariot in which Cupid will ride: it’s his stepfather’s, Mars, god of war. Along with Ovid, the other captives led in the triumph will be not foreign kings captured in battle, but young men and women, whom Cupid has overcome with love. Ovid has completely surrendered to being a victim of Love’s war, and says that he will carry his fresh love wound and wear his chains with the mind of a captive. Again, for the love poets, winning isn’t everything. Here, Ovid seems quite content to be led as a captive in Cupid’s triumph. A triumphing general’s reputation as a good Roman general depends upon his image within the triumph as a victor over his captives and spoils. For the love poets, however, their image as lover/poet

\(^{271}\) For the view that Ovid exploits the role of *servus amoris* and, “shatters the fiction of the male narrator as enslaved and the female narrative subject as his enslaver,” (p. 68), see Greene (1998) p. 67ff. For the view that Ovid’s choice of Cupid’s companions is indicative of a rejection of Augustus’ regime, see Phillips (1980). For a discussion of the personification of Love in this poem, see Hardie (2002) p. 37ff. For Ovid’s relationship with Cupid in this poem in particular and in the *Amores* as a whole, see Habinek (2002) p. 47ff. Cf. Boyd (2002) p. 95: “With the discovery of a new love in 1.2, Ovid embarks upon a poetic exploration of what it means to be an elegiac lover.”
(and perhaps even as Roman) is independent of their role in their love triumphs: triumphator or defeated captive, it doesn’t matter – all roles in the triumphs of love are acceptable ones for the poet/lover.

Conscience and Modesty are victims of this campaign as well, and, according to the poet, anything else that stands in Cupid’s way will fall to him too. Love, again, becomes more powerful than any Roman general, since he is unconquerable and everyone/thing fears him. Indeed, Ovid says that he won’t stop waging his war even during the procession; throughout the triumph he will shoot his arrows and claim more lovers as victims. Instead of soldiers, Cupid’s legions are made up of Flattery, Error, and Madness, weapons more useful in the battles of love than in other kinds of war.

However, Ovid nods to old-fashion military techniques, and begs Cupid to take a lesson from Augustus, who protects those he conquers. Once again, love and war are intricately linked: even though Augustus may have something to teach Love about the ethics of conquest, Ovid also reminds us that Augustus, the great military leader, cannot escape his link to love – Cupid is his cousin. The triumphs of love may not be as popular as Rome’s other kind of triumph, but, according to the poets, they are more powerful than their military counterparts and influence even the most celebrated military generals.

In Ovid’s description of this triumph, Cupid himself perhaps represents a potential link between the military triumph and the poetic triumph of love. In the figure of Cupid Triumphator, Ovid mixes the inherent desire and violence of the ‘real’ triumph and redefines them in terms of the conquests of Love. He then links Cupid with Augustus

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272 Cf. Miller (1995) p. 290: “[Ovid] defines his vision of the pudgy brat of Olympus triumphing not only with the measuring stick of the institution itself but also against the background of contemporary elegy.”
and thus Augustus himself with this poetic kind of triumph. By claiming that Augustus conquers yet protects, Ovid gives us a portrait of an Augustus who brings in a new age of the triumph, a new age of Rome. He gives us an Augustus who represents a potential link between love and war, and brings the promise of bringing the two kinds of triumph together.\(^{273}\)

So, again, Ovid appropriates the language of the triumph and transforms it into the language of love. Moreover, through this transformation, a wholly new kind of triumph (and Rome?) is envisioned: a triumph (and a Rome) in which love and war, *victor* and *victus*, poet and general find a common ground and a common Rome.

On the other hand, Cupid’s violence seems dangerously close to crossing the boundaries of love and military war. Perhaps instead of learning from Augustus, Augustus is influenced by Cupid’s apparent lack of mercy – Ovid’s Roman utopia of love elegy and epic, love and war in harmony dissolves as its creator is banished by the very man to whom he appeals for help in bringing it to life.

Thus the love poets take on the logic of the triumph and struggle against the meaning of the triumph as a symbol of Romanness through military mastery. Their means of working to subvert the mainstream view of the triumph is to appropriate the language of the triumph (the language of conquest, spoils, triumphators, and defeated enemies) and transform it into a language that describes their own literary focus: love.

\(^{273}\) For the parallels between Cupid and Augustus in this poem, see Buchan (1995) p. 64ff. Cf. Cahoon (1988) p. 295: “Like a Roman victor, Cupid subjugates and enslaves the conquered; Roman love demeans and enslaves the lover. Thus, the final lines of the poem ominously equate Caesar and Cupid, despite the polite surface request that Cupid should learn from Caesar’s kindly example.” This seems a bit heavy-handed.
However, by the very act of this appropriation, the love poets prove that, as a
Roman, it is impossible to escape the logic of the triumph. Although they struggle
against it and work toward escaping the ideals of military mastery as Romanness, by
using the language of the triumph for their own purposes, in the very act of using the
triumph language, they prove that they cannot escape that language. Indeed, the
counterculture Roman lover has no choice but to triumph even as he struggles against the
notions of the triumph itself.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In the past, the Roman triumph has been studied for the importance of its religious aspects, and for the details of the procession itself (the exact parade route, the costume of the triumphator and its historical and religious significance, for example). This line of scholarly inquiry, although not without merit or importance, still has missed the larger significance of the triumph as a spectacle that reflects how the Romans viewed themselves as Romans, how they defined Romanness. The present work has been an attempt to explore this otherwise unvisited aspect of the triumph through an examination of the texts of several ancient authors and their descriptions of and attitudes toward the triumph. Through the letters of Cicero, the historical and biographical prose of Livy and Plutarch respectively, through the comedy of Plautus and the love poetry of Ovid and Propertius, I hope to have shown that the triumph was to the Romans an important social and political show, in which the general’s status as a Roman was put on display for all of Rome. With this important aspect of the triumph in mind, then, we can learn more about what it meant to the Romans to be Roman.
In Cicero’s *Letters*, in fact, we can see that the spectacle of the actual procession was not the only display involved in the celebration of a triumph. Cicero lays out for us the ‘unofficial’ rules to obtaining a triumph, both in his conversations about other Romans and their behavior towards getting a triumph and in his deliberations about how to get a triumph of his own. In other words, Cicero gives us a behind-the-scenes look at the triumph, and how a Roman general had to put on many different shows for Rome just to be voted a triumph. The most important of these spectacles involved the general’s desire for the honor of a triumph and his ability to hide that desire from those Romans who would vote a triumph for him. According to Cicero, one had to put on a show of not wanting the triumph at the same time as one was canvassing his fellow Romans for the honor. So the reflection of Rome that we see when we hold up the triumph to the mirror of Cicero’s *Letters* is a Rome in which everyday life is a spectacle, and one in which an honor such as the triumph is the ultimate spectacle, a reward not only for the spectacle of military success, but also, and perhaps more importantly, for the success of one’s other, everyday social and political spectacles.

A second reflection of Rome that we see through the triumph in Cicero’s correspondence shows us a Rome about to be torn apart by civil war. Just as Cicero struggles to save his chances at a triumph in his letters, so too does he struggle with how to cope with the Republic that is crumbling before him. And so the triumph is again a measure not only of a Roman, but of Rome itself as well. Through his letters, we can watch Cicero watching his chances for a triumph being destroyed by Caesar at the same time as he watches his beloved Republic being razed by the same man.
From Cicero at the end of the Republic, we move to the span of Roman history from the perspective of Livy. The perspective that we get from Cicero is more of an inside look at the triumph from someone who tries to gain the honor for himself. Livy’s view of the triumph is much more of a purely spectator’s view of the spectacle. Livy’s take on the triumph is in some ways, though, very similar to Cicero’s. He shows us a Rome in which, just as in Cicero’s Rome, spectacle(s) are an important part of a Roman’s social and political life, and the triumph, for Livy, is a socio-political spectacle of the first rank. Again, as in Cicero’s Letters, we see in Livy’s treatment of the triumph that desire, and a general’s ability to mask this desire, play a large role in the spectacle of the triumph. In fact, as we have seen, Livy gives us tales of Roman generals who have gained as much or even more honor from rejecting a triumph (the ultimate display of suppressing desire) than they might have gained from actually celebrating one. Also, as for Cicero, so too for Livy, the spectacle of the triumph and its influence of one’s status as a Roman stretched much farther that just within the procession itself. For Livy, the character of a Roman is affected by the triumph they celebrate (and their behavior during that triumph) long after the parade is over. In fact, for the rest of his life as a Roman, a general could be judged (and in some cases is by Livy himself) by the spectacle(s) he performs during, before, and after the triumph. In other words, for Livy (and, I believe, for Romans in general), there is no ‘moment’ of the triumph. Instead, the triumph lives on long after the fact, and can influence how others see you as a Roman forever afterwards.
Livy himself, then, realized that the triumph was a spectacle that reflected the spectacle of Rome itself. He also shows us that the triumph was, too, a reflection of how the Romans perceived their relationship between themselves and those they conquered and triumphed over. More specifically, Livy describes the Romans as defining their enemies through the triumph, but, again, not just within the triumph itself. For example, as we have seen, in the various battles between the Romans and the Samnites, the Romans define the Samnites more as soon-to-be-triumphal spoils, and they perceive their armor as eye-catching displays for a triumphal procession, instead of as frightening enemy weapons. According to Livy, again, the triumphal display begins long before the actual procession, in the minds of the generals and soldiers on the battlefield; the enemy is defined by their display-ability in a triumph, and are, in a sense, thought of by the Romans in Livy’s text as already spoils, already conquered.

Just as Cicero’s trouble with the triumph reflects the trouble in Rome at the time, so too does Livy reflect the troubles experienced by Rome by describing them in terms of a distorted version of the triumph. When the Samnites disrupt the Roman view of them as always-already triumphal spoils, and instead defeat a Roman army, Livy portrays the tremendous confusion and grief of the Romans through a description of their defeat that in many ways echoes a language of the triumph, but in this case a triumph gone wrong. And so, yet again, we see in Livy’s text the triumph as an important measure both of a general’s status as a Roman and also of the status of Rome itself.
Plutarch understands the triumph as functioning in much the same way as does Cicero and Livy. In his Lives, the triumph again reflects the state of a Roman and of Rome. Yet again, the triumph in Plutarch’s biographies is not a short-lived, one-time-only display; instead, it is a spectacle that lives on in the lives of the triumphing Roman generals and can affect their reputations for years afterwards.

As in Livy’s work in particular, the triumph, for Plutarch, reflects the relationship between the conquering Roman general and the conquered enemy. More specifically, Plutarch saw that the show of the general in the triumph and his relationship to those he was triumphing over was a reflection of this relationship outside of the triumph as well. However, Plutarch’s view of this relationship and how it is reflected in the triumph is slightly more complex than Livy’s. This aspect of the reflections of the triumph onto Roman life is nowhere more clearly set out in Plutarch’s work than in his Life of Aemilius Paulus. In his portrayal of the spectacle of the relationship between Aemilius Paulus and the Macedonian king whom he triumphs over, Perseus, in the triumph, Plutarch shows us that, although the triumph in some ways functions to define the boundaries between victorious Roman and defeated enemy, at the same time it displays the intricate bond between the two. This complex relationship between Aemilius and Paulus, Roman conqueror and conquered enemy, spills out into the Life as a whole, and throughout the work, Plutarch stresses the strong link between the two enemies and how the status of Aemilius as a Roman and the status of Perseus as a Macedonian strongly depend upon and are linked to each other. Plutarch then shows this same complex relationship through his description of the triumph which Aemilius leads over Perseus, in part by closely
paralleling and linking Aemilius’ spectacle within the triumph to Perseus’ own appearance in the triumphal procession. Thus for Plutarch, just as for Cicero and Livy as well, the triumph is an important part of Roman life in that it serves as a measure of the Romanness of the triumphing general and also serves as a reflection of Rome and the way the Romans perceived themselves in relation to those outside of Rome.

Finally, we turned from prose accounts of the triumph to the version of the triumph found within the Roman love poets, which is in some ways very different from the view of the triumph we’ve seen thus far, and in some ways surprising similar. For the love poets, the triumph is still a measure of Romanness, but their ideas about how to define Romanness is very different from the mainstream, military success = Roman virtus meaning of Romanness. For the lover/poet, the triumph becomes a tool for re-defining Romanness in their own terms, and in order to re-define Romanness, they re-define the triumph as a celebration of the successes of love, not of war. So the love poets, Ovid and Propertius in particular, appropriate the language of the triumph and use that language to talk about love. More importantly, these love poets represent a counterculture in Rome that struggles against the accepted, military version of the triumph as a measure of Roman virtus, and they work to subvert this version of the triumph and of Romanness by taking over the language used to describe the triumph and creating with that language their own kind of triumph, the triumph of love. Ovid tells us that all lovers are soldiers too, and so the triumphs of the love poets are just as Roman as the military kind, and indeed, in some cases, even more so.
In a sense, then, the love poets triumph over the triumph by appropriating and claiming it for their own. However, in another sense, in that act of appropriation, the love poets succumb to the very logic of triumph that they work so hard to escape. In a culture in which spectacles, especially the spectacle of the triumph, are so important to one’s image and reputation and definition as a Roman, even the counterculture lover/poet must triumph in one form or another. As he struggles to escape the logic of triumph, the poet’s only recourse is to use the language of the triumph itself and so is trapped by that triumphal language and is pulled back down into the triumphal culture.

And so, from the view of past scholarship that the triumph was an isolated, mainly religious ritual with no greater, overall importance to the understanding of Rome and Roman culture, the triumph emerges, from the close study of such ancient authors as Cicero, Livy, Plutarch, and the love poets, as not only a procession that celebrated a general’s success as a Roman, but, more importantly, as a strong force in Roman life, a spectacle that could affect a Roman’s life long after the parade was finished and that could reflect the health (or sickness) of Rome itself, and its relationship to those who lived outside its walls. Indeed, not only was the triumph an integral part of the life and spectacle of Rome, it was such an important part of the Roman world that it was, in fact, inescapable. In all of the authors examined in this work, the triumph plays an important role in how the author views the world of Rome and how the Romans were perceived within that world. For Cicero, the triumph is an essential part of his (and other

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274 Cf. Handelman (1990) p. 16: “If public events are constructs that make order, then the logics of how they are put together is crucial to how they work, as so to that which their designs enable them to accomplish. To enter within such forms is to be captured by, and caught up within, the logic of their design – and so to be operated on by the event, regardless of why it came into being, or for whatever motives it is enacted.”
Romans’) social and political life and reputation, and for those authors for whom the triumph isn’t something to acquire for themselves, but who instead present themselves chiefly as observers of Rome (Livy and Plutarch), the triumph is nonetheless an important tool for thinking about and discussing the ways and lives of the Romans. And again, the greatest example of the inevitable nature of the triumph as a part of all Roman life is found in the love poets and the fact that they attempt to escape the logic of the triumph but ultimately cannot break free even from the language of the triumph itself; by triumphing over the triumph, they themselves are triumphed over by it.

By establishing that, for these ancient authors, the triumph was an important tool for measuring Romanness and Rome, I hope to have pointed out the usefulness and importance of the triumph to modern studies of Roman culture as a means by which to learn more about how the Romans defined themselves as Romans and how they saw themselves as measured against others. The next step in the study of the triumph should be to examine how other ancient authors treat the triumph, and if their views differ from those found in the present authors. Also of importance is the tradition of the triumph in Roman art and architecture, in particular the triumphal arches and columns. Although the span of the present work does not allow for such a study, nevertheless, an examination of how the triumph is portrayed in the context of art and whether or not this portrayal is similar to or different from the literary views of the triumph will prove, I believe, to be an interesting and important advance in the further understanding of both the Roman triumph and the Romans themselves.


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