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Parading Persia: West Asian Geopolitics and the Roman Triumph

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Parading Persia: West Asian Geopolitics and the Roman Triumph is an investigation into East-West tensions during the first 500 years of Roman expansion into West Asia. The dissertation is divided into three case studies that: (1) look at local inscriptions and historical accounts to explore how three individual Roman generals warring with the dominant Asian-Persian empires for control over the region negotiated with the local populations and inserted themselves into West-Asian geopolitics; and (2) how these Roman generals then presented their campaigns and negotiations to the populace of the city of Rome, via spectacular military parades called 'triumphs.' Comparing Roman narratives with local evidence shows both the Roman adoption of West-Asian expressions of empire, while revealing that the maintenance of imagined sociocultural and geopolitical borders between the East and West were the result of Roman construction and presentation of empire in the city of Rome, and the perceived threat of Asian-Persian enemies.

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List of Abbreviations

BE	*Bulletin épigraphique (Paris).*
CIG	*Corpus inscriptionum graecarum.*
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (Corpus of Latin Inscriptions).*
HA	*Historia Augusta.*
IC	*Inscriptiones Creticae*.
ID	*Inscriptions de Délos.*
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae*.
IGLR Syria I	*Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie,*
PAT	*Palmyrene Aramaic texts*
REA	*Revue des études anciennes*.
RGDA	*Res Gestae Divi Augusti*
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum.*
Sherk	Sherk, Robert K. *Roman Documents from the Greek East. Senatus Consulta and Epistulae to the Age of Augustus.* Baltimore. 1969.
SIG	*Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum.*
SKZ	Šābuhrs I. an der Ka'ba-I Zardušt. *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum.*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Recent scholarship on the Roman triumph has demonstrated that these military parades were an integral part of the Roman imperial project, constructing and expressing official Roman narratives of conquest over foreign peoples, and presenting these constructed narratives to the people of the capital through artful staging and spectacle.[1] Captives in chains, stolen booty, broken enemy weapons, and more appeared in the procession as indications of successful military conquest, followed by Roman soldiers. At the triumph's finale, the victorious general (the *triumphator*), clad in special military attire and riding in the traditional triumphal chariot appeared in a position of honor as the individual primarily responsible for the military victory.[2]

Through ceremonial pomp, the triumph presented to Roman crowds a visual representation of the defeated foreign enemy, what wealth Rome received from that enemy, and which individual Romans were responsible for the successful military campaign. For the *triumphator*, the spectacle was a high public honor, an honor that would be commemorated in a variety of public venues including monuments, coins, and funerary inscriptions.[3] For the captives, however, the parade operated as a humiliating *rite de*

[1] See particularly Östenberg (2009) 6-9, who writes, "The triumph possessed characteristics that made it particularly suited to construct worldviews. The procession not only repeated certain forceful schemes, it also frequently introduced novelties to Rome. Following each foreign campaign closely in time, the triumphal procession was in fact the public ritual that presented the outside world to Rome."
[2] Discussion of the order of display in the *pompa* Versnel (1970) 96-98; a brief discussion in Latham (2016) 13; for Roman Triumphal Paintings see Holliday (1997)130-147.
[3] For discussion of the multiple ways that triumphs were publicly commemorated, see Beard (2007) 19-31, 43-46.

passage, the ceremonial moment during which a person or a people, their homeland, and their objects became 'Romanized,' subsumed (or re-subsumed) under Roman control.[4] The images of the glorified Roman military and victorious general juxtaposed alongside the spectacle of the humiliated, chained foreigners created a simple but powerful visual narrative of successful military conquest over a specific region and a specific group of people.[5] But to what degree does the narrative of conquest and empire projected by the triumphal parade reflect, or distort, the geopolitical reality occurring in the conquered location?

Parading Persia: West Asian Geopolitics and the Roman Triumph explores the narratives of conquest and empire as presented by Roman triumphs through a series of three case studies on individual processions. Recent scholarship on the Roman triumph has emphasized the need for a more contextualized study of the institution, one that locates parades within specific temporal milieus. To that end, recent scholarship has worked towards better understanding specific triumphs, or triumphs during specific time periods,

[4] Debates and scholarly discussions on the term 'Romanization' began with Mommsen, who called the process *Romanisierung* in his discussion of the consolidation of empire beginning with Augustus: *Das werk der Hellenisierrung und Romanisierrung, der innere Ausbaus, ist ein Hauptverdienst der Kaiserzeit. Erfreulich ist ihre Betrachtunt nicht*. Mommsen (1882/3) 67; the argument was picked up by who defined the process as when conquered peoples "began to think of themselves as Roman," Harris (1971) 147; Ramsay MacMullen's definition, "how Roman civilization eventually appeared everywhere, as one single thing, so far as it was ever achieved," took a problematically ubiquitous approach to seeing the effect of the spread of Roman identity, Macmullen (2000) ix; Woolf added to Harris' viewpoints by noting that, "there was more than one kind of Roman, and the studies of provincial culture need to account for the cultural diversity, as well as the unity, of the empire," Woolf (2000) 7; Beard links the triumph to the process of Romanization, as a *rite de passage* for foreign people, which moves discussion of Romanization from considerations at local levels outside of Rome back to the center of empire. The triumph thus acts as a keystone in the Romanization project, for it becomes a ritualized way for Romans to ceremonially bring and appropriate foreign elements into Rome itself, Beard (2007) 141.

[5] For discussion of the visual impact of the triumph and methods of displaying the victor and the conquered, see Brilliant (1999) 221-229.

locating processions within their own historical and literary context.[6] Such studies revise scholarly approaches to the institution that have failed to contextualize adequately specific elements of the spectacle (such as the way captives were displayed, the type of *spolia* exhibited, or even how the *triumphator* presented himself) while showing how Roman society at the time of the parade shaped, and was shaped by, the spectacle of the triumph.[7]

Parading Persia builds on recent research, but differs from previous scholarship in two key ways. First, while scholars have contextualized triumphs by conducting temporally-focused studies on the institution, to date no monograph exists that has looked at triumphs that are diachronically linked by a similar thematic or geographic focus. Thus, I have chosen to examine individual triumphs that share a narrative of conquest over the eastern *limes* and the contemporary "Persian" empire--or rather, one of the three major dynastic empires to rule over the majority of former Achaemenid territories during Rome's West Asian occupation at different points in time: the Seleucids, the Arsacids/Parthians, and the Sasanians. The parades chosen for the study (Scipio Asiaticus' in 189 BCE; Ventidius Bassus' in 38 BCE; Aurelian's in 274 CE) appear in the material record and

[6] This includes: *Tota Illa Pompa* (2005), a monograph on the Republican triumph by Itgenshorst; *The Moving City* (2016), a volume edited by Östenberg on movement in the city of Rome; and *Der Romische Triumph in Prinzipat und Spatantike*a (2015), a volume one the sociocultural development of the triumph from the early Principate to Late Antiquity, edited by Wienand and Goldbeck. We also can add Pittenger's *Contested Triumphs: Politics, Pageantry, and Performance in Livy's Republican Rome* (2008) which focuses on Livy's depiction not just of triumphs, but of senatorial debates regarding who is awarded a triumph.

[7] Discussions of the triumph, such as Ryberg (1955), categorically present elements of the spectacle to make definitive claims about the nature of the institution *in totum*, which does not consider how those elements might change over time, or what they mean in different contexts; *Rome as a Museum* by Rutlege (2012), is not specifically about the institution of the triumph, but does look to it for evidence regarding the display of foreign objects, and at times fails to contextualize the display of certain objects in individual triumphs within their own milieu; Beard (2007) and Östenberg (2009) likewise (at times) generalize about specific elements of triumphs.

extant literary tradition as the pivotal spectacles that introduced Roman audiences to each of the three different empires ruling Persia during the first 500 years of Rome's West Asian occupation. As such, these parades are important for understanding how the geopolitical unit of Persia was constructed, presented, and redefined in Roman collective imagination, creating and affirming ethnic and geopolitical stereotypes, and establishing a narrative for the expanse of the Roman dominion in the East.

While "The East," from a Roman perspective, is broadly defined as any territory East of the Adriatic, (including all of modern-day Greece, and the area North of it into the Balkans, in addition to the modern Middle East and Asia), getting to the Roman understanding of "Persia" as a geopolitical construct is somewhat difficult to define.[8] As Edith Hall points out, the Persian people group, from the city of Persis, originated as a dependency under the Medes, whom they defeated in the 6th century. After this, the Persians took over the Lydian power foothold in West Asia, before the Persian Wars with Greece.[9] To further complicate the term "Persian" as an ethnic identifier, while the Achaemenids were labelled by Greek authors as "Persians," scholars have demonstrated that Achaemenid kings did not "insist" on identifying by a "Persian" ethnicity.[10] Moreover, while the Achaemenids fell out of power in the 4th century BCE, the term "Persian" continued into Roman written tradition, particularly when referring to later imperial people groups occupying the former Achaemenid territory in West Asia.[11]

[8] For the designation of the Roman "East," see Wheeler (2011) 235.
[9] Hall (1989) 56. For further discussion of ethnicity and Persian identity see Gates-Foster (2014)175-188.
[10] Briant (1996) 28-29.
[11] For Romans calling other empires "Persian," see Julian *Oration III* 63 a-b; see discussion in Gariboldi (2016) 48-49.

This then leads into questions of the historical Persian empires, and the concept of "Persianism."[12] "Persianism," as Shayegan defines it, refers to the "reception of things Achaemenid" in the Hellenistic to Late Antique world.[13] This reception is part of an imagined Persia, rather than referring to the historical Achaemenid empire, is part of an imaginary, constructed, or mytho-epic tradition that was, at times, adopted by later empires (such as the Seleucids).[14] Thus "Persia" in this dissertation does not refer specifically to one specific empire, but rather broadly indicates the continuation or imagined reconstruction of geopolitical structures and cultural customs that began during Achaemenid rule of West Asia. With this in mind, *Parading Persia* asks how Romans themselves came to define "Persia," after centuries of continued military conflict with several dynastic empires ruling over former Achaemenid territories; and likewise, how extant elements of Achaemenid culture and geopolitical structures Roman narratives of empire.

The second way this research differs from previous approaches to studies on the Roman triumph specifically is that I use inscriptions and coins from the relevant West Asian and Eastern Mediterranean territories to analyze cultural exchanges on-site, which provide evidence for how Romans presented themselves to and negotiated with local audiences, thereby inserting themselves into the West Asian geopolitical situation. From these negotiations, I then examine the corresponding triumph to determine the degree to which the on-site negotiations added to the pageantry of the triumphal parade back in

[12] See the recently edited volume *Persianism in Antiquity*, edited by Strootman and Versluys.
[13] Shayegan (2017) 454.
[14] Shayegan (2017) 401; for a discussion of how the Seleucids eventually adopted Achaemenid titles as part of a "new perception of Persian tradition," see Plischke (2017) 175-176.

Rome. One example of how using these West Asian epigraphic sources can add to knowledge of individual triumphs is that inscriptions tell of gifts given by Greek *poleis* to Roman general *triumphatores*--gifts which, in turn, were used in triumphs as symbols of domination over that region.[15] Gift-giving in the Hellenistic era between individual *poleis* and kingdoms, however, was part of complex public discourse of political reciprocity, related to preserving the appearance of the autonomy of individual *poleis*, while at the same time demonstrating allegiance to a king.[16] Some scholars have examined generally how Romans may have interpreted the Eastern practice of gift-giving in respect to the institution of the triumph, arguing that if it the paraded riches were in fact gifts, they may have been bestowed either under Roman threat or given freely based on misunderstanding.[17] Neither interpretation, however, adequately reflects the complexities and significance of gift-giving in the Hellenistic world.

For instance, scholars have hypothesized that some of the booty paraded in L. Scipio's triumph as recorded by Livy (34. 59. 5-6) in the 180's BCE was given as gifts rather than taken by the Romans as loot. Scholars base this theory mainly on circumstantial evidence, that is, based on similarities with other instances of gift-giving between Greek *poleis*.[18] By analyzing the language of a specific inscription in Asia Minor written by Scipio Asiaticus to the *polis* of Herakleia (Sherk 35), an inscription that has not yet been used in

[15] Östenberg (2009) 92-93 cites several instances of Roman generals accepting gifts and then parading them on triumph as though they were spoils, including Pompey receiving gifts from Mithridates' mistress (Plutarch. *Pomp*. 36.6); Grainger (1995) 27 states that the tusks paraded in Scipio Asiaticus triumph were likely also gifts. Östenberg (2009) 185 n. 341, notes that tusks were gifts used in the Hellenistic parade of Ptolemy Philadelphus: Athenius. *Deip.* 5 195 A.
[16] Gygax (2013) 51-52.
[17] For the use of Eastern gifts used as booty in triumphs, see Östenberg (2009) 92-93.
[18] See note 12.

scholarly discussions of Scipio's triumph, I strengthen the arguments which claim that paraded booty was given as a gift, rather than looted. In the inscription, Scipio thanks the township of Herakleia for its generosity (understood to be coded language for the giving of gifts), and also notes that the inhabitants, now autonomous, are allowed to keep their own possessions.[19] This gift-giving narrative on the inscription complicates the narrative of domination that a triumph implies. While the triumph depicts domination over peoples and territories through successful military conquest, and thus justifies the military campaign to Roman audiences, we see that the Eastern presentation of the same campaign can tell a different narrative, portraying Roman generals as foreign liberators of a newly autonomous *polis*, rather than conquerors of a new Roman province.[20] The multiple public interpretations of the same Roman campaign show one way that Romans negotiated an expanding empire, by varying administrative practices at local levels.[21] By presenting narratives of the same campaign that differed depending on the ideals and expectations of the audiences, Romans varied expressions of military power and political rule in the their imperial project.

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[19] Sherk *Documents* 35: "ἀποδεχόμεθα δὲ καὶ τὰ παρ' ὑμῶμ φιλάνθρωπα καὶ τὰς [πίστεις." See Ma (1999) no. 45.

[20] Roman generals adopting the language of Hellenistic policy in their dealings with other territories in the Eastern Mediterranean during the second century was not isolated. See Ferrary (1988) 99, who shows that Romans declared Corinth free during the Second Macedonian War, and in so doing, were inserting themselves into the Hellenistic geopolitical situation by adopting the principles, ideals and language of the region.

[21] Noreña (2011) 4-5: "And while the Roman imperial state did impose a degree of administrative uniformity on its sweeping territories, this never approached the sort of homogeneity that we take for granted in a modern nation-state. Indeed, the central state during the first two centuries AD never attempted direct rule over its widely dispersed human subjects, channeling the bulk of its material and human resources into the armies stationed along the frontiers and devolving most of what passed for day-to-day administration onto semi-autonomous communities. This too resulted in local and regional diversity."

Additionally, my study acknowledges the importance of the triumph as a tool for creating and enforcing Roman narratives of empire and the process of 'Romanization.' The procession, to borrow Beard's terminology, is understood as a *rite de passage* for the captured individuals into Roman society, officially making the formerly-inimical foreigners Roman by finding them a place in Roman society.[22] This practice of bringing foreign elements into the city of Rome as a method of appropriation is similar to another Roman ceremony, the *evocatio*.[23] In this procedure, just before fighting a foreign army, Romans called out to the gods of that foreign army, promising that, if the gods abandoned their own people and aided them, the Romans would set up a temple for those gods upon their triumphal return to the capital. One of the seminal attestations of *evocatio* in Roman mythology is the *evocatio* of Juno from Veii in 396 BCE, as recorded by Livy.[24] Based on this particular *evocatio,* Eric Orlin argues that the procedure had two purposes: the first, making the region easier to besiege after the gods abandon it; the second, establishing cult worship of the gods back at Rome by erecting a temple to the honor of the deity in the city.[25]

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[22] Captives who were not executed following the triumph typically were removed from their homeland and placed into Roman-controlled institutions (such as slavery, or, if the captive was an unwed noble woman, marriage).
[23] Beard (2007) 140.
[24] Livy. *Ab Urbe Condita.* 5.4.11-12.
[25] Eric Orlin (2010) 38, 92-93; At a later period, perhaps due to the increased efficacy of the Roman network and the establishment of imperial cult, the introduction of a foreign god into the Roman pantheon did not necessitate that a temple be established in the city of Rome itself, but instead, a dedicatory offering on the part of the Romans sufficed. In this way the process of appropriation was still occurring, although the location of the temples changed. Ultimately, what is significant about *evocatio* for our purposes is that it reveals that in military conquests, Romans were not bent entirely on cultural destruction, but on incorporation. Ideally, the gods, and the people who worshipped them, would become physically and ideologically assumed into the Roman world. Moreover, the gods, as Orlin notes, rather than being destroyed were respected (at least, from a Roman viewpoint), suggesting that Roman establishment of hegemony over foreign peoples depended on cultural appropriation rather than eradication. For discussion on how the *evocatio* changed in location of worship, see Beard (1998) 134.

Thus, like the *evocatio,* the triumph brought foreign elements into Rome in order to ceremonially appropriate or "Romanize" them. This does not mean that foreign captives paraded in the triumph were accepted into Roman society as citizens--indeed, if captives survived the triumph (for some were executed at the end of the procession) they were likely enslaved or (if they were elite) kept as hostages under some form of house arrest.[26] Rather, it meant that Rome created a space for those captives within its complex, hierarchical societal structure, and claimed the territory they occupied to be under the control of Rome, usually by designating it as a province, and sending a governor out to control the region directly.[27] Thus, in this manner, the triumph is significant because the institution acted as a key stage for displaying the success of Roman expansion into the East by establishing paraded individuals and spoils as officially under Roman control.

Additionally, in following the theoretical frameworks established by Östenberg and Nicolet, I understand the Roman triumph as discursive, in that it actively constructed, exhibited, and enforced the narrative of conquest and domination over foreign peoples and

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[26] Examples of executions include Pompey's triumph, Appian. *Mith.* 117, when Aristoboulus was killed; in Caesar's triumph, all captives except Arsinoe were killed, Dio . *Roman History.* 43.19; for discussion on enslavement of captives see Östenberg *Staging* 2009 128-131; Examples of captives who were kept alive include: Arsinoe, the sister of Cleopatra, Dio Cassius. 43.19.3; Zenobia, the queen of Palmyra, *HA*. Thirty Tyrants. Zenobia; CIL 6.1516; Perseus, Livy. *Ab Urbe Condita.*XXXIX.53 and Plutarch. *Aem.* 36-38; Bituitus see Florus, *Epitome.* I.37. 2-3; Syphax, Livy. *Ab Urbe Condita.* XXVII. 4.8-10, Silius Italicus 17.629.; Gentius, Livy. *Ab Urbe Condita.*XLV. 43.9.; and Tigrantes see Appian.*Mith.*117. For larger discussion on role of kings in triumphs see Östenberg (2009) 131-135; Beard (2007) 119-124.

[27] For administration of Roman provinces, see Ando (2006) 177-192. There were multiple levels of Roman provinces determined by the powers given to the governor of the province, and would vary depending generally on the Roman military presence required to keep the territory under Roman control. See, for instance, the province of Judaea. Under Augustus, Judaea was a client kingdom under the rulership of Herod, who paid tribute to Rome by establishing a festival to Augustus to be celebrated every four years. After 6 CE, however, the status of the province changed constantly during the first century, going from a province under a *praefecctus* in 6 CE and subjected to a census, ruled by the client king Agrippa I from 41-44 CE, made a province under a *procurator* from 44-66 CE following revolts, garrisoned by legion and placed under *legatus* in 70CE, and eventually turned into Syria Palaestine in the 130s CE; see Millar (1993) 44-48, 59-61, 64-69, 70-79, 107-108.

geographies.[28] This discursive approach will allow me to understand and contextualize Eastern elements of the triumph in two ways. First, one of the main discursive elements of the triumph that helped visually differentiate between Roman and foreign elements was through displaying the names of the conquered ethnic groups and geographical regions on placards called *tituli*, which were used as early as the Late Republic and remained in use up to the Late Empire.[29] As Östenberg notes, because of the power Romans attributed to the written word, the *tituli* themselves actively subjugated the captives.[30] They put a name and face to the "other" that the military campaign successfully suppressed.[31] This is partially due to the idea that, although we today understand the written word as mutable, Roman constructions of the world depended upon trust in the power of the written word--thus the written word not just constructs, but also confirms, reality. Elizabeth Meyer, in discussing the power of the written word in Roman legal proceedings, writes,

> As a necessary part of a ceremonial act, a tablet could come to embody, in a final and authoritative way, the substance of that act, but as part of such an act, it also helped to create a new reality that such an act aimed at establishing.[32]

Thus, in the triumph, the *tituli* visually displayed and confirmed subjugation of people and regions, but more than that, they both created and affirmed the reality of the conquered world. What this means for the people groups who were situated behind the *tituli* is that

[28] Östenberg (2009) 9; Nicolet's work does not specifically focus on triumphs, but does look at Roman construction and presentations of foreign peoples and geographies during Augustus' reign, focusing on the *Res Gestae*, to show that Augustus' imperial program reimagined and redefined space, Nicolet (1991) 3-4.
[29] The earliest recorded account of *tituli* is from Pompey's triumph in 61 BCE. Accounts of the last triumph this project looks at, Aurelian's triumph of 274, show the triumph also containing *tituli.*
[30] Östenberg (2009 b) 470.
[31] Östenberg (2009) 263.
[32] Meyer (2004) 9.

regardless of how they self-identified previously, Roman constructs of reality established how Romans would accept and ultimately treat these people.

A discursive understanding of the triumph also helps to contextualize the presentation of Eastern captives as discursively embodying Eastern stereotypes. Triumphs helped Romans define Rome as an imperial power against non-Roman "others," introducing foreign peoples before the eyes of the citizens of Rome by displaying ethnic stereotypes.[33] While the specific stereotypes Romans placed on Eastern peoples varied, generally speaking, Eastern peoples (including, albeit to a lesser extent, ethnic Greeks) were presented as wealthy, but morally and politically weak, favoring luxury, delicate femininity and tyranny over the opposing Roman virtues.[34] In the triumph, these stereotypes are especially prominent in the presentation of Eastern royalty. For instance, the exhibition of the Palmyrene Queen Zenobia in Aurelian's triumph as depicted in the *Historia Augusta* emphasizes her wealth and delicate femininity, stating that she was lead in triumph adorned with so many jewels that she, "was unable to bear the weight," and had to stop frequently, while a large golden chain around her neck had to be held by a Persian buffoon.[35] In the triumph, this exhibition emphasizes both Eastern wealth and physical, feminine weakness--Zenobia cannot bear the weight of her wealth, and is physically limited, and requires the help of a Persian. Interestingly enough, even within the context of

[33] Östenberg 2009 8.
[34] Isaac (2006) 491-496.
[35] *HA.* "Lives of the Thirty Pretenders." 30. 24-26: "*Ducta est igitur per triumphum ea specie ut nihil pompabilius populo Romano videretur. iam primum ornata gemmis ingentibus, ita ut ornamentorum onere laboraret. fertur enim mulier fortissima saepissime restitisse, cum diceret se gemmarum onera ferre non posse. vincti erant praeterea pedes auro, manus etiam catenis aureis, nec collo aureum vinculum deerat, quod scurra Persicus praeferebat*."

the *Historia Augusta,* we are shown that this exhibition of Zenobia in the triumph was not representative of her normal appearance, for earlier in the text we are told that at court she dressed in the style of a Roman emperor, and often rode horseback and walked with foot soldiers.[36] By changing her appearance for the triumph in a way that emphasizes wealth and frailty, the Romans used the exhibition of Zenobia to present a visual of Roman-constructed stereotypes about the East.

1.1: Research Questions

The primary research question this work addresses asks how the parade culture in West Asia influenced the pageantry and narratives of conquest and empire presented in triumphal parades at Rome over the first 500 years of occupation in Asia. While certain aspects of the performance of the triumph appear to have remained the same from the Republic to the Late Empire--such as the placement of the triumphant general in the procession--other elements, such as the inclusion of paintings and signs, changed over time and from triumph to triumph. For instance, as I demonstrate in case study 1, when L. Scipio celebrated his triumph over what the Romans at that time called "Asia," there was emphasis on the defeat of King Antiochus, the ruler from the Seleucid Greco-Macedonian dynasty that controlled major parts of the Near East from the time of Alexander the Great until the first century BCE. Yet, King Antiochus himself was not displayed in the parade, and there is no evidence for the display of different ethnic groups--*gentes* in Latin--who we know

[36] *HA.* "Lives of the Thirty Pretenders." 30. 14.

lived in the Seleucid Empire during this time.[37] The picture painted is one of Roman conquest over a Greek socio-political landscape, dominated by Seleucid-controlled Greek *poleis*, over an Eastern, ethnically Greek king who was still alive and ruling at the time of the triumph. It thus presents a distorted reflection of the Near Eastern geopolitical situation of the time, one filtered through the lens of Roman stereotypes and expectations, and characterized by the limited knowledge of the local political institutions and ethnic groups gained by the Romans during their campaign in the 180's.

It is not until later campaigns that Romans came into contact with a broader variety of Near Eastern ethnic groups and political institutions, changing the way Romans perceived the East, and how the East appeared in the triumph. Because of this, I consider and contextualize each triumph based on the Roman relationship to Near Eastern politics at that moment. For example, in contrast to Scipio's triumph, when we look at the Emperor Aurelian's triumph over the "East and West" in 274 CE, 500 years after L. Scipio's triumph, royal captives in chains appear as a focal point of the procession, while groups of captives from various *gentes* that inhabited the conquered regions were displayed, demarcated by *tituli,* or signs, that told the spectator to which *gens* each group of captives belonged.[38] Whereas Scipio's triumph of victory over the East seems to have mainly contained Hellenistic Greek elements, the presentation of the East in the third century CE included the display of groups of individuals from multiple ethnic groups, presenting an image of Roman conquest over an Eastern landscape occupied by diverse ethnic groups.

[37] According to Östenberg, the earliest evidence for the display of the names of *gentes* is in Pompey's triumph in 61, Östenberg (2009) 219-225.
[38] *HA.* "Vita Aureliani." XXXIII 4-XXXIV.

My study explores what the inclusion (or exclusion) of specific elements, such as royal captives and signs demarcating individual tribes, reveals about the Roman attitudes towards and construction of the East at the time of the triumph-- how these specific elements of spectacle relate to the perceived success of Roman expansion efforts at that time, and reflect Roman presence in, knowledge of, and conquest over these areas.

1.2: Literary and Material Sources

The two parts of this study that are informed by ancient evidence are the representations of specific Roman triumphs, and the Roman negotiations and narratives of empire presented to local audiences in the conquered territories. Ancient material and literary records of Roman triumphs are abundant, and span the period from the Republic through Late Antiquity. In following other recent monographs on the Roman triumph including those by Beard, Itgenshorst and Östenberg, this study will examine both literary accounts and material evidences when reconstructing Roman triumphs.[39] While the identification of specific sources used in the reconstruction of each triumph in each chapter can be found in the discussion of each chapter breakdown, it is important to note the different types of literary and material sources, and point out sources that will be used for more than one reconstruction.

Important literary texts helpful in the reconstruction of triumphs include texts by authors from the Republic (Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, Cicero), the Empire (Livy, Valerius Maximus, Suetonius, Cassius Dio, Plutarch, Pliny the Elder, Gellius, Josephus,

[39] Beard (2007); Itgenshorst (2005); Östenberg (2009).

Appian), and the Late Empire (*Historia Augusta,* Eutropius, Zosimus, Aurelius Victor, Zonoras, Eunapius). While these sources span various time periods and genres, the primary problem scholars have noted and dealt with pertains to reliability. For instance, many accounts of Republican triumphs come from imperial sources, like Livy, Plutarch and Pliny the Elder. As such, there is a question regarding the degree to which the sources reflect Republican or Imperial values and ideologies. The *Historia Augusta* in particular exemplifies problems of reliability. Scholars to date debate the author, the date and the very nature of the source--to what degree is it historical, and to what degree is it simply satire?[40] The text is a collection of biographies, boasting a number of different authors (although scholars speculate that it was written only by one) and contains narratives that are excessive to the point that they read more like a ribald satire of Juvenal than a serious biographical inquiry.[41] Nevertheless, as one of the main sources for emperors in the later Empire which describes triumphs, sometimes at length, it is a valuable and necessary source.

To counter issues of reliability, some scholars have approached sources by conducting analyses of these triumphs as literary triumphs, or later literary commentaries on historical events.[42] Regarding the *HA,* for instance, a dissertation by Merten titled *Zwei Herrscherfeste in der Historia Augusta,* argues that the scene of the triumph is influenced by conventions of panegyric, novels, and satire, and is thus best understood as illustrating

[40] Rohrbacher (2016) 120.
[41] For single authorship arguments see Syme (1971); Barnes (1978).
[42] Such readings are similar to Feldherr's reading of imagery in Livy in *Spectacle and Society in Livy's History.* In the monograph, Feldherr looks at the role the dramatic audience plays in Livy's narratives in the imaginary construction of spectacle; Feldherr (1991).

the literary rather than historical nature of the *HA*.[43] Beard, noting the problem of later sources depicting earlier triumphs, claims that such accounts are to be read as part of the memorialization--and often critique--of the earlier triumphs and *triumphatores*.[44] Itgenshorst acknowledges the problem of imperial rewriting of history under Augustus, and thus looks only to contemporary Republican literary and material sources to reconstruct her argument. There are two ways I address issues of literary source reliability. The first is following Mason's method of discussing Josephus' account of Titus' triumph in 71 by locating individual accounts of triumphs within both their narrative and historical (and historiographical) context.[45] This includes asking questions including: what role does the triumph as a literary spectacle play in the greater narrative of the account? what generic conventions is the author working with, and what later attitudes might the account reflect? Moreover, is the author basing his account on earlier, official records of triumphs?[46]

Second, I follow Itgenshorst's lead by looking to other forms of contemporary evidence, notably inscriptions, monuments and coins that depict or record triumphs. Inscriptions that record triumphs or memorialize victory can help reconstruct the narrative of conquest told in Rome. Inscriptions of this nature include funerary inscriptions (such as those found in the Tomb of the Scipios), the *Fasti Triumphales,* coins commemorating triumphs, and the inscriptions found on the triumphal arches of Titus and Septimius Severus. While these inscriptions provide little narrative evidence, they typically provide

[43] Merten (1968).
[44] Beard (2005) 36-41.
[45] Mason (2016) 125-176.
[46] Records were kept of the income, captives and booty brought into Rome for the triumph, but according to Beard (2005) 75, those records were often exaggerated; for more discussion of Ancient Roman treasury records and the Roman Triumph, see Kay (2014) 27, citing Cicero. II *Verr.* I. 57.

the name of the *triumphator* and the identification of the conquered foe, be it an individual king, (as we periodically find on the *Fasti Triumphales* and on an inscription in the Tomb of the Scipios), ethnic group (as we see in the *Fasti Triumphales* and in Augustus' *Res Gestae*) or an entire geographical region (seen in coins and monuments).[47] When noting the conquest of a geographical region, at times the *triumphator* will be given a *cognomen ex virtute* related to the geographical region conquered, such as Scipio "Asiaticus" or Scipio "conqueror of Asia."[48] During the reign of Aurelian, these *cognomina ex virtute* were especially common on honorific inscriptions to the emperor, and thus give us insight to how the emperor's conquest was presented to local populations who erected the inscriptions.[49] What these inscriptions do is help us identify how Romans constructed and envisioned that particular military campaign, and provide the foreign enemy--either an ethnic group or a king--that embodied the foreign other in the narrative of that campaign, helping us to answer whether the campaign worthy of honor in Roman imagination because it was against a great Eastern King or Queen, or if it was because it claimed a large portion of valuable territory for Rome.[50]

In addition to looking at how material evidence in Rome presents the Roman triumph, I also look to Eastern material sources to find evidence about the relevant

[47] For the Tomb of the Scipios, coins, and other monuments that inform triumphs, see Itgenshorst (2005) 126-147; for the *Res Gestae* see Nicolet (1991) 3-4; for the *Fasti Triumphales,* Lange (2016) 49-69.
[48] For discussion on naming conventions and *Cognomina ex Virtute*, see Salway (1994) 127 n. 27.
[49] Homo (1904) 10.
[50] One major question scholars of the Roman triumph ask is what elements were required by the senate for the awarding a triumph to a general. Pittenger's analysis of Triumphs in Livy suggests that triumphs were awarded by the senate on an individual basis, based on noteworthy achievements by individual Romans or noteworthy foes, so long as the campaign was responsible for the deaths of a certain number of enemy combatants; Pittenger (2009) 113.

campaigns. Multiple inscriptions, including those that name the *triumphatores* specifically, exist in relevant locations, although they do not always depict the same narrative of conquest as shown in the triumph. I look at multiple types of extant inscriptions, including: an inventory record on the island of Delos that mentions L. Scipio; public agreements, written in Greek, that mention either Rome or Roman individuals (specifically the letter written by L. Scipio and his brother to the *boule* of Herakleia); coins minted in West Asia; honorific inscriptions written in Latin dedicated to the emperor; and local inscriptions discussing the local, non-Roman ruler (specifically multilingual inscriptions about Zenobia found in Palmyra and around West Asia).[51] What this material evidence can do is help uncover how Romans inserted themselves into West Asian geopolitics by noting what cultural or writing conventions are made, assessing how the Romans are viewed and treated by local populations, and to what degree individual Romans adopted local customs when negotiating with West Asian peoples.

1.3 Historiography and Methods

This dissertation brings together two areas of scholarship: study of the Roman Triumph and study of Roman Eastern expansion. Recent work on the Roman Triumph calls

[51] Inventory at Delos (*ID* 442 b. 89-90) : ἄλλος στέφανος χρυσοῦς, ὃν ἀνέθηκεν Λεύκιος Κορνήλιος Σκιπίων στρατηγὸς Ῥωμαίων" (another gold crown, which Lucius Cornelius Scipio, General of Rome, set up.); For the letter written by Scipio Asiaticus and Africanus to Herakleia, Sherk 35; Ager (1997) 257. For a thorough investigation of honorific inscriptions to emperors in the East, see Kajava (2011) 553-592. The multilingual (Greek, Palmyrene Aramaic and at times Latin) nature of inscriptions demonstrates the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic makeup of the Palmyrene empire [see Southern (2008) 20; Stoneman (1994) 11]. In Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions, her name is recorded as Septimia Bet Zabbai, written as sptmy'btzby [(see *PAT* 0293); Edwell (2007) 230]; her coinage depicted her name as CEPTIMIA ZHNOBIA [see Southern (2008) 4].

into question 20th-century scholarship that focuses on the origins of the institution as a possibly Etruscan or Eastern ceremony, and which temporarily turns the *triumphator* into a king.[52] While the starting point for this study post-dates discussions on the origin of the institution, recognizing possible cross-cultural and specifically Eastern influences on the triumph can help demonstrate how the parades were shaped by foreign influences. In addition to re-examining the origins, scholars have also considered the political motivations and underlying propaganda. This relates both to examining individual triumphs and the power of the *triumphator*, as well as the transition and development of the triumph from the republic into the empire. Peter Holliday looked closely at the triumph of Claudius Marcellus in 211 BCE as indicative of a motivational shift in the institution of the triumph, from religious celebration into an ostentatious, propagandistic spectacle establishing political dominance over one's rival, using paintings of the conquest during the procession as a way by which to impress upon the viewers the glory of the individual.[53]

While the goal of this study is to locate individual triumphs within their specific cultural milieu, there are certain historical moments and trends that pinpoint shifts in presentations of power in the city of Rome. First, there is a shift in the presentation of

[52] Ryberg (1955) and Versnel (1970) both examine the origins of the triumph specifically; Alfoeldi (1970) likewise is part of this conversation, although his work looks more broadly at Eastern influences on imperial representations; Rupke (2006) critiques studies on the origins of the triumph by dating the first triumph to the fourth century BCE, effectively calling Versnel's monograph into question; Beard also critiques these studies, stating, "How those early Romans would have responded and how their ceremony itself was conducted is now practically irrecoverable. As I shall argue, most of the later Roman accounts of primitive triumphal history—from clever reconstruction to elaborate fantasies—tell us more about the period in which they were written than the one they purport to describe" Beard (2007) 6. There is likewise fruitful debate on the influence of Hellenistic processions upon the institution of the triumph, notably by Erksine (2013) who controversially (and problematically) claims that there was no influence between Hellenistic parades put on by the Egyptian king Ptolemy Philadelphus in the third century BCE, and the Seleucid king Antiochus IV in 169 BCE, and Republican triumphs.
[53] Holliday (1997) 130-147.

power that occurred during the age of Augustus, which had an effect on the frequency and presentation of triumphs. While triumphs during the Late Republic were a medium through which generals competed against each other for glory and support by putting on triumphs that boasted more and more ostentation, the introduction of Augustus as the Princeps removed the violent political rivalry that dominated the last 100 years of the Republic, and as such, focalized all successful military conquests through the figure of Augustus.[54] Additionally, after the Balbus' triumph over Africa in 19 BCE, no individual other than the emperor or a member of his family was awarded a triumph.[55] Third, over the centuries, the Emperor spent more time abroad and the empire became increasingly decentralized.[56] This accompanied new expressions of imperial power--notably the *adventus*, or imperial entrance into a city.[57] Thus, because of these historical moments and trends that altered the presentation and meaning of the triumph, studies that contextualize the institution are roughly broken down into three eras (with occasional emphasis on individual triumphs): the Republican triumph, the shift in the first 100 years of the Principate, and the Later Empire.[58]

In addition to contextualizing triumphs in their own milieu, exploring the elements of display and the visual presentation is also important to my research, as such analyses

[54] For discussions on the shift in triumphal presentation during the early Principate, see Zanker (1987); Itgenshorst (2016) 59-82; Lange (2015) 133-144.
[55] Beard (2007) 68-71.
[56] For the impacts of the decentralized empire and the moving emperor upon the institution of the triumph, see Ando (2016) 397-418.
[57] The main monograph on the *adventus* in Late Antiquity is MacCormick (1981).
[58] For Republican triumph see Itgenshorst (2005), Lange (2016); for Imperial triumphs during the first 100 years of the Principate, see Goldbeck (2016) 103-122, Itgenshorst (2016) 59-82, Mason (2016) 125-176, Lange (2015) 133-144; For later Roman triumphs, see Ando (2016) 397-418, De Blois (2016) 337-356; McCormick (1986).

provide insight into the way that the narrative of conquest was constructed and presented. Richard Brilliant in 1999 published an article that examined the triumph as spectacle and the effect it had upon the crowd, writing that, "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."[59] Another work that looks at spectacle in ancient Rome is Sumi's *Ceremony and Power: Performing Politics in Rome between Republic and Empire.* Sumi tasks himself with gauging interactions between the elite and lower classes. Working both chronologically and thematically, Sumi isolates various public spectacles, including the triumph, and examines the effect they had on the spectators. Sumi argues that influencing the people influenced the actions of the Roman elite.[60]

Ida Östenberg investigates the elements of spectacle in triumphs, looking closely at the staging of the triumph, breaking down the facade of the spectacle and compiling a comprehensive assessment of the various elements of the institution. Östenberg uses a variety of literary and material sources (including coins and inscriptions) not only to reconstruct how the institution would have appeared, but also to argue that the triumphs offer us a glimpse of how Romans perceived the world. In addition, she also uses performance analysis, which states that in performance rituals, spectators were not passive watchers, but active participants. What triumphs did that other civic spectacles in ancient

[59] Brilliant (1999) 221.
[60] Sumi (2005)

Rome lacked was further establish a patriotic connection among the spectators because of the presence of the "other" through the captives paraded in the procession.[61]

While Östenberg's analyses are valuable, one of the biggest critiques of her work (which also is a critique of Brilliant's article) is that it does not provide a fully contextualized picture of the institution. This is mainly due to the organization of the research, dividing the chapters into elements of display (captives, booty, et cetera) that are found in triumphs spanning centuries. While her discussions of these elements do note the changes in display of these elements within each chapter (her discussion of the display of foreign chariots, for instance, demonstrates a change in the type of chariot--and significance--from the early to late second century BCE), what is missing is a larger examination of how each of these disparate elements relate to contemporary geopolitics over the conquered territories, and reinforce narratives of empire that are specific to the time period in which the parade occurs, which is what my study on triumphs over Persia seeks to do.

Because my focus is on triumphs over the "Persians," I also bring into my study historiography on the relationship between Rome and West Asia, and the impact Roman military campaigns had upon the local geopolitical situation. Here, like the triumph, the focus is to contextualize particular interactions and campaigns within their own time period. As we learn from scholars such as Ferrary and Gruen, who have looked extensively at the relationship between Rome and the Greek East (which includes areas of Asia Minor), Rome's earliest interactions with people living in Asia was dominated by Hellenistic socio-

[61] Östenberg (2007) 8.

political and cultural hegemony and customs.[62] This is due to the geopolitical history of the region following the conquest of Alexander the Great, and the imperial program enforced by the Seleucid and other Macedonian kingdoms, which at various times attempted to Hellenize local populations.[63]

As Roman military presence in the area increased over time, the Romans came into contact with other, non-Greek, Eastern ethnic groups, and thus came into contact with other Eastern religious, social and political institutions. When territories were conquered through military efforts they were given an official status as a Roman province (of which there were three types: senatorial, imperial, and those run by a *praefectus* or *procurator*), and deposed local rulers who either were killed or brought to Rome on triumph were replaced with Roman governors who worked with local elites, and were protected by Roman armies.[64] Millar's extensive monograph on the Roman Near East shows the interaction with a variety of other Eastern peoples and the changing conception Romans had of the geographies and peoples from this part of the world, as well as how the geopolitics of these regions were affected by Roman presence.[65] We also see formal Roman expressions of power in these areas through the increase in Latin and transliterated Latinate words and phrases, rather

[62] Ferrary (1988) considers three themes in Roman-Hellenistic interaction during the second century BCE: the ideas of freedom and autonomy noted in reports between Romans and Hellenistic *poleis*, Greek writers' attitudes about Rome, and philhellenism at Rome; Gruen (1986);
[63] This is especially seen in the treatment of Jewish populations during the second century BCE. See Gruen (1993) 250-252.
[64] For the types of Roman provinces, see Shafer (2003) 105. See also Ando (2006) 179; Nicolet (1988) 98.
[65] Millar (1993).

than just Greek, inscriptions, which arguably demonstrate the shift away from Hellenistic hegemony to Roman imperialism.[66]

The problem scholars face when conducting studies on West Asia under the Roman Empire, as Wheeler pointed out, is that the bulk of literary accounts that describe the East and Eastern campaigns (Cassius Dio, Plutarch, Pliny the Elder) are from Greco-Roman perspectives, and as such often, present "the East as a monolithic geographical concept and military theater."[67] Warwick Ball's monograph on the Roman Near East draws attention to local Near Eastern perspectives, as an attempt to examine the Near Eastern influences in the Roman world.[68] Part of the criticism of Ball's work, however, is that its wide-ranging scope leaves out important engagements between Romans and Persians, including that of Ventidius Bassus' campaign (a lacuna which this dissertation strives to fill in case study 2).[69] Nevertheless, Ball's monograph does important foundational work in setting the stage for analyzing Near Eastern influences on Roman culture.

One question in scholarship on the Romans in West Asia involves when to begin the inquiry. Magie's timeline began in 133, with the acquisition of Rome's province. Sartre and Millar begin their inquiry in 31 BCE, whereas Ball begins with Pompey.[70] As such, all of these studies neglect the first Roman military campaign in Asia Minor to see how Romans began inserting themselves into West Asian geopolitics. To fill this gap,

[66] Millar (1993) 232-233 discussion the impact and prevalence of Latin on Near Eastern inscriptions. For other discussions on the impact of Roman and Latin concepts upon Greek linguistic conventions, see Ando (1999) 5-34.
[67] Wheeler (2011) 235; see also Scanlon (2015) 271, in which we see the idea that Greek authors were writing pro-Roman narratives that called for a unified view of the East.
[68] Ball's primary critique of earlier scholarship it lacked a Near Eastern perspective, Ball (2000) 1-2.
[69] Greatrex (2001).
[70] Magie (1950).

Dmitriev's monograph is foundational in examining the degree to which the earliest Roman presence in West Asia influenced local institutions, and he concludes that the Roman interference in Greek cities of West Asia was minimal to none.[71] However, Roman campaigns of the 180's did greatly alter West Asian geopolitics. As Chapter 2 of this dissertation demonstrates, after the Seleucids were pushed out of the territory, both literary and inscriptional evidence indicates that local allegiances were rerouted to Scipio.[72] Thus while the administrative structures may have appeared to function in the same way, it is worth reexamining how Romans inserted themselves into local contexts to determine whether or not the apparent lack of interference with administrative structures is simply due to the fact that they were adapting to local conditions.

More recent studies on the Roman Near East have become increasingly localized, taking into account smaller and smaller geopolitical territories to determine the varying degrees to which Rome adapted and manipulated local conditions. Edwell's monograph, for instance, on Roman-Persian relations conducts chronological case-studies on three borderland regions (the Middle Euphrates, Mesopotamia and Palmyra) to determine the shifts in Roman and Parthian presence, and the chart topographical impacts these two empires had on these specific areas over time.[73] Additionally, Noreña's work on Antiochene coins demonstrates an "interplay between the imperial and local," thus adding evidence for cultural exchange between West Asian polities and the Roman imperial

[71] Dmitriev (2005) 335.
[72] See Chapter 2.
[73] Edwell (2007). Other effective studies on the Rome and the Eastern Mediterranean include the study on Pergamum by Evans (2012), and the study on war Antiochus IV waged against Rome, Grainger (2002). See also Sommer (2005); Another recent monograph by Cameron (2019) demonstrates how Roman imperial writers imagined the borderland of Mesopotamia.

program, and Roman attempt at using local customs as a way to maintain imperial interests.[74] Works such as these demonstrate the importance of contextualizing how Roman individuals inserted themselves into West Asian geopolitics in specific places and times, and are careful not to overgeneralize the Roman imperial program.

1.4: Structure

I begin my study on Roman Triumphs over Persia with Chapter 2: Achaemenid Foundations and West-Asian Parade culture. In this chapter, I examine the relationship between gift-giving, parade culture, and the creation of a narrative of empire that emphasizes unity instead of military domination. By looking at Achaemenid sculptural reliefs, I trace the continuation of Persian customs into Seleucid and Ptolemaic parades, and the development of *euergetism* and festival culture in these two kingdoms. The ultimate goal here is to trace the origins of gift-giving parade culture back to its Achaemenid origins, and set the stage for how West Asian populations negotiated with empires through *euergetism*, gift-giving, and promises of autonomy.

After examining how Persian, Ptolemaic, and Seleucid parade culture was part of negotiating empire in West Asia, I move on to the three case studies that explore how Romans engaged with the local customs. Case study 1 covers the triumphal parade of L. Scipio in 189 BCE. Chapter 3, "Scipio in Asia," looks at how the Romans adapted to local customs when negotiating with *poleis* after the defeat of the Seleucid king Antiochus III, and the treaty of Apamea. Inscriptional evidence in the Eastern Mediterranean reveals that

[74] Noreña (2016) 301.

the Romans adopted local, West Asian customs that emphasized unification rather than subjugation, and as such, were gifted with a variety of crowns and other objects of honor in the same manner as a Seleucid king. In addition to Polybius' account, two Greek Inscriptions in the East help paint a fuller picture, but have yet to be brought into context with Scipio's triumph: (1) an Inventory of the Temple at Delos, which lists L. Scipio among those who gave a dedicatory offering to the temple; and (2) letter written by Scipio Asiaticus and Africanus to the *polis* of Herakleia (located in Asia Minor), discussing ratification of a treaty and which states that all Greek cities will be given autonomy.[75]

Chapter 4, "Scipio in Rome" looks at what happened back at Rome, examining Livy, along with two pieces of contemporary material evidence provide information about Scipio's triumph: (1) Coins of Scipio Asiaticus celebrating victory and (2) Burial Epitaph of Scipio Asiaticus' son commemorating victory over Antiochus. Besides these, the *Fasti Triumphales* mention Scipio's multiple triumphs over "Asia". While the *Fasti* themselves need to be problematized and contextualized, using the *Fasti* alongside contemporary inscriptions provides a helpful point of reference for the concept of triumph during the 180's BCE, albeit an anachronistic one. By looking at the material and literary sources, we can assess the different stories of conquest and exchanges of culture between the Republican Roman military and West Asian populations.

Case study 2 moves on to the age of Augustus and the first triumph over Parthia in 38 BCE. Chapter 5, "Ventidius Bassus' Triumph over Parthia," covers Ventidius'

[75] Delos inscription, ID 442 B 90, 91, 100; For the Letter Sherk 35; Holleaux, REA 19, 1917, 237-254; BE 1920:425; De Sanctis, AAT 57, 1921-1922, 242-249; BE 1924:355; SEG 2, 566;; Robert, BCH 102, 1978, 501 (PH); See also Ma (1999) 119, 365-367 for discussion of Herakleia and the Scipios, as well as the text of the inscription.

campaign in West Asia, and Chapter 6, "From Triumph to *Res Gestae*" examines events in Rome and Augustus' *Res Gestae.* I provide background both on Roman-Parthian relations at this time, recounting the loss of the standards under General Crassus at the Battle of Carrhae in 53 BCE, and Ventidius Bassus' successful military campaigns. I then provide biographical information about Ventidius Bassus that places him at the center of M. Antonius and Augustus' political rivalry.[76] I also contextualize the institution of the triumph during this time by looking briefly at Pompey's, Caesar's and Octavian's triumphs over the East, noting the aesthetic and programmatic changes to the institution, both in respect to the increase in the overall extravagance, and to the inclusion of *tituli,* or signs, demarcating ethnic groups. I also note that by this point in Roman history, following Pompey's Mithridatic wars, Rome divided the East into new provinces, and recognized the East as being occupied by multiple *gentes*.[77]

Ventidius Bassus' triumph over Parthia is recorded by several ancient accounts including the *Fasti Triumphales,* Plutarch's *Life of Antony,* and Pliny the Elder's *Natural History.* While it is significant not only because it is the first triumph celebrating victory over the Parthians, but because, as Plutarch claims, it avenged the disaster under Crassus.[78] Yet Bassus was a general under M. Antonius, and we lack records of what happened to Bassus after the Battle of Actium. As such, the victory over the Parthians, and the existence

[76] Plutarch situates Ventidius as a general reporting to M. Antonius while M. Antonius was in the East. Bassus gets credit for dealing with the Parthians, but appears to limit his involvement in order not to spur on the jealousy of M. Antonius, Plutarch. *Antony.* 33-35.
[77] Pompey was the first to set up a *simulacra gentium* or display of peoples, that allegedly showed off the ethnic groups he conquered and presumably displayed in triumph. See Östenberg (2009) 219, citing Pliny *Nat.* 36.5.41-42 and Suet. *Nero.* 46.1; for information on the division of provinces following Pompey's conquest, see Sartre (2005) 45-47; Ball (2016) 4.
[78] Plutarch. *Antony.* 33-35.

of the triumph, are part of M. Antonius's--not Augustus'--glory. Because of this I argue that the narrative surrounding Roman-Parthian relations changes quickly over time with Augustus' rise, from one of military defeat at the hands of a general under M. Antonius, to one of diplomacy, highlighted through the return of the standards as a symbolic gesture of peace, and codified via the mention of Parthia on Augustus' *Res Gestae.* The military defeat of Parthia and the triumph honoring Bassus is forgotten, and diplomacy is emphasized.

The final case study looks at the triumph of Aurelian in 274 CE. Chapter 7, "The Sasanians and Romans and the West Asian limes," explores 3rd-century geopolitics in West Asia, and looks at how Aurelian reclaimed the Eastern border. Chapter 8, "*Restitutor Orbis*" looks at how the campaign was presented to Roman audiences in both the material and literary record. The historical accounts of Aurelian's triumph, found in the *Historia Augusta,* Zosimus, Eunapius and Zonoras, and specifically focus on how the East was presented during the procession. According to these accounts, in particular the *HA,* the triumph was a massive spectacle that paraded a number of Eastern peoples and objects, and highlighted Empress Zenobia of Palmyra as one of the focal points of the parade. While scholars believe the triumph occurred, they are hesitant to rely heavily upon the depiction of the triumph in the *HA*, believing the account is exaggerated, particularly in the number of ethnic groups depicted, the display of booty, and stags pulling the triumphal chariot.[79]

[79]Beard (2007) 122, argues that this is an exaggeration, as the source in and of itself is contested. If we consider Pompey's triumph, which listed 14 tribes according to Plutarch (*Pomp.* 45.1), as accurately reflecting the spectacle, there is no reason to suspect that the number of tribes listen in the *HA* is an exaggeration.

Because the *Historia Augusta* is a problematic source, the task then falls onto scholars looking at Aurelian's triumph to determine the degree of exaggeration. I look to other sources of evidence pertaining to how Aurelian presented the East in Rome. Inscriptions from outside of Rome provide information about how the Palmyrene campaign was interpreted to audiences outside of West Asia, paying specific attention to Aurelian's *cognomina ex virtute*.[80] By looking at material evidence, we can come to a closer understanding of Roman interpretation of the geopolitical situation in Palmyra and the East during Aurelian's campaign, and note how this aligns with the narrative of conquest depicted by the accounts of the triumph.

CHAPTER 2:

ACHAEMENID FOUNDATIONS OF WEST-ASIAN PARADE CULTURE

When Romans first invaded Asia, they inserted themselves into the middle of centuries-old geopolitical and socio-cultural tensions between "Persian Asia" and "Greek

[80] *PAT* 0293; JHS 18 (1898) 324(1).

Europe." The borders drawn between Europe and Asia are, as Edward Said pointed out, imaginary, and in the ancient world served to demarcate Greeks and Europeans from an imagined and romanticized Asian 'Other'.[81] Herodotus famously dates these tensions between Europe and Asia back to the raptures of Io, Europa and Helen, saying that following the Trojan war:

> τὴν γὰρ Ἀσίην καὶ τὰ ἐνοικέοντα ἔθνεα βάρβαρα οἰκιεῦνται οἱ Πέρσαι, τὴν δὲ Εὐρώπην καὶ τὸ Ἑλληνικόν ἤγηνται κεχωρίσθαι. [82]
>
> The Persians claim Asia for their own, and the foreign nations that dwell in it; Europe and the Greek race they hold to be separate from them.

Here, Rosalind Thomas argues that the Asia-European divide is presented by Herodotus in the *Histories* as a distinctly Persian viewpoint because the historian reflects and embodies the values of Eastern Greeks living in Asia Minor who themselves did not strongly acknowledge the divisions between Asia and Europe.[83] Regardless of how the European-Asian border was initially drawn, these tensions and identity crises between Europe and Asia (and Europeans in Asia) continued to play integral roles in geopolitics of the region, particularly through the Seleucids' reign and into the Macedonian Wars.

The Seleucids worked to affirm the previously imagined geopolitical separation between Europe and Asia as a way to claim legitimacy over former Achaemenid territories in West Asia. As one of the kingdoms borne out of Alexander the Great's Eastern exploits, the Seleucid rulers negotiated power over the former Achaemenid territories as rulers of

[81] Said (1978) 55-59.
[82] "Herod. 1.4.4; transl by Godley (1920) 6-7.
[83] Thomas (2002) 100.

mixed-foreign descent.[84] One way that the Seleucids did this was to appropriate or maintain preexisting Achaemenid customs, including satrapies and the "itinerant state."[85] However, the concept of Persian kingship that was eventually adopted by the Seleucids was interpreted through a Greek lens, and as such, some contexts would get lost in translation, so to speak. Thus, this chapter explores the history of expressions of, and local negotiations with, Persian kingship in West Asia, in order to establish local customs and contexts that immediately predate the Roman invasion.

2.1: Seleucids as Asian-Persian Kings

This cultural miscommunication is particularly evident, according to Paul Kosmin, in the "assimilation of Seleucid territory to the Greek concept of Asia."[86] As Kosmin notes, the Seleucids made the Greek concept of the geopolitical unit of "Asia" and the "Seleucid Empire" terminologically synonymous in inscriptions and other imperial propaganda, and moreover adopted the title "King of Asia"--a title the Greeks used to refer to Persian

[84] The matrilineal origin of the Seleucid dynasty was Apame I, daughter of the Persian leader Spitamenes, whose role in the establishment of the dynasty allowed for the Seleucids to claim Persian descent, and was probably a holdover from Alexander's effort to mix with local peoples he conquered--although Green argues that marrying Apame had little influence on Seleucid policies; Green (1993) 319. Canepa says that Apame's descent means that the Seleucids are Iranian, though not necessarily "Persian." Canepa (2015) 69-70.

[85] Increasingly scholarship on the Seleucids looks to uncover preserved customs and experiences from the Achaemenids. While many Achaemenid customs and traditions were lost during the Seleucid reign, others were maintained; Canepa (2015), 69. The "Itinerant State" refers to the movements of the king and his large retinue around the empire. See Briant (2015) 187; for a discussion on Seleucid satrapies see Tarn (1968) 2-4. Additionally, Ghiţă's 2010 dissertation on *Achaemenid and Greco-Macedonian Inheritances in the Semi-Hellenised Kingdoms of Eastern Asia Minor*, demonstrates that the Seleucids incorporated or appropriated local religious, military and infrastructural customs and precepts from the Achaemenids.

[86] Kosmin (2014) 124.

monarchs, but not used by the Achaemenids themselves.[87] Additionally, Antiochus III eventually adopted the title of 'Great King,"—a title that the Achaemenids used, and one that demonstrates a "new memory of Persian heritage," that Antiochus was embracing in his role as Seleucid ruler.[88] Thus, the Seleucids were at times performing the role of a Persian king, but one that was envisioned by the Greeks. So on the Western front of the Seleucid empire, the separation between that which was "Asia" and that which was "Europe" was significant, not only because it played into earlier concepts of the divide between the East and West, but also because the Seleucids used this pre-existing geopolitical and sociocultural division to legitimize their rule over the territory.

In addition to assimilating and appropriating selected Persian customs, there is also evidence that suggests that the Seleucids around the third century were referred to as Persians. This reference to Seleucids as Persians comes to us in the fragments of Kallixeinous, whose historical writings are preserved in the second-century CE Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists* V 196a-202b.[89] The passage that calls Seleucids "Persians" is in the section that describes Ptolemy Philadelphus' procession in Alexandria in 280 BCE:

[87]Green argues that Persia was synonymous with Asia at the time of Alexander, although Hammond disagrees. See the "Discussion" to "The Macedonian Imprint"; N.G.L Hammond, "The Macedonian Imprint on the Hellenistic World," in *Hellenistic History and Culture*, edited by Peter Green (UC Press, 1993) 35-37. Kosmin cites the Lindos Chronicle for an instance of the Alexander referred to as "Lord of Asia," Κύριος της Ασίας; *BNJ* 532 F2 38, discussed in Kosmin (2014) note 18 in "Notes to Page 124"; for the Greeks referring to the Achaemenids as "Kings of Asia" in Xen. *Hell*. 3.5.13; Aristobolus *BNJ* 139 F 51b; Strabo 15.3.7, Kosmin (2014) notes 18 and 19 on "Notes to Page 124."

[88] Plischke (2017) 175.

[89] The exact date of Kallixeinous is unknown. Rice believes he was alive in the third century and possibly saw the procession: Rice (1983) 169-71; Thompson and Hazzard believe he was writing in the second century: Hazzard (2000), 62-64; (2000), 368; Erskine (2013) 39.

> Προσηγορεύοντο δὲ πόλεις, αἵ τε ἀπ᾽ Ἰωνίας καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ Ἑλληνίδες ὅσαι τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ τὰς νήσους κατοικοῦσαι ὑπὸ τοὺς Πέρσας ἐτάχθησαν ἐφόρουν δὲ πᾶσαι στεφάνους χρυσοῦς. [90]
>
> They bore the names of cities, some from Ionia, while all the rest were Greek cities which occupied Asia and the islands and had been under the rule of the Persians; they all wore gold crowns.

While the first thought is that "Persians" here is a reference to the Achaemenids, mentioned here in order to invoke the memory of Alexander as a way to further legitimize Ptolemy's rule by publicly linking himself with the memory of Alexander's exploits.[91] While this invocation of "Persians" likely does function on one level as a reference to the past, the contemporary geopolitical context makes it seem likely that the designation of "Persians" here also refers to the Seleucids, who at that time were under the control of the half-Persian (or, more accurately, half-Bactrian) king Antiochus II.

Ptolemy fought and defeated Antiochus in the Carian War, or the Syrian War of Succession, occurring between 280-279 BCE, which resulted in the Ptolemies ousting the Seleucids from Cilicia and Caria.[92] Indeed, around and following this war is when we first start to see honorific inscriptions in Asia minor dedicated to the Ptolemies, suggesting a tighter reign over the Asian Greeks at this time.[93] Moreover, one has to wonder how likely or plausible it would be to assume that riches in the procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus

[90] Kallixeinous (201D-E), transl. by Gulick (1927) 413. The dating of the procession is contested in scholarship; Rice (1983) 184-185, prefers a date of circa 280 BCE; and Hazzard (2000) 60 argues for a date of 260 BCE due to the designation of Ptolemy I as Soter, which he says does not appear until the 260's. Hazzard's argument, however, was disproved by Hauben (2004) 40-44.
[91] Marquaille (2008) 52.
[92] Tarn *J.H.S.* XLVI (1926), p. 155f, called it the "Carian War"; Marquaille argues that there was an attempt to organize Caria and the other Greek-Asian areas by the Ptolemies between 280-278; Marquaille (2008) 45-46.
[93] See, for instance, SEG 28, 837, an honorific decree from Halicarnassus, dating between 281-266; Frost (1971) 167-172.

that came from cities in Asia Minor that were actively under Seleucid control. In other words, it seems unlikely that the Seleucids would have permitted *poleis* to send crowns and other riches to kingdom against which they were actively waging war, if they were in control of the region and the routes between Greek Asia and Egypt. Furthermore gold crowns represent not just submission of a city to a king, but a complex negotiation of power between *poleis* and imperial centers, framed in terms of autonomy and gift-giving.[94] Logistically, therefore, the Asian Greek *poleis* who dedicated crowns for Ptolemy's parade were probably inhabitants of the regions recently removed from Seleucid control following the Syrian War of Succession.

Thus, the Seleucids, though not ethnically Persian, were possibly identified as Persian by the Ptolemies, and assimilated and adopted specific Persian customs and modes of rule in order to legitimize and maintain their power over former Achaemenid territories. Their adopted identity as "Asian Kings" strengthened their link to the Greek-imagined role of the Persian King, and they also were called Persians by the Ptolemies as an attempt to delegitimize the Seleucid claim to Alexander's empire. This means that when the Romans first invaded Asia in the 180's BCE, their introduction to the geopolitical unit of "Asia" was actually an imagined Greco-Macedonian entity that assimilated invoked the memory of Achaemenid rule to Greek concepts as a way to legitimize Seleucid claim over the territory. This also means that the first time Romans encountered Persian customs and culture in person, it was filtered through Greco-Macedonian assimilation.

[94] Ma (1999) 37.

This introduction between Romans and an assimilated perception of Asia-Persia is also evident in Polybius.[95] First, in *Histories* 1.2.2, we see that Polybius regards the Persians to be the first of the three comparable empires to Rome, and establishes the Macedonians as their successors through conquest of the territory.[96] Thus Polybius begins his inquiry by noting that the territory of "Asia" was synonymous as the former Persian domain, which then was taken over by the Macedonians. Polybius states:

> Μακεδόνες τῆς μὲν Εὐρώπης ἦρξαν ἀπὸ τῶν κατὰ τὸν Ἀδρίαν τόπων ἕως ἐπὶ τὸν Ἴστρον ποταμόν, ὃ βραχὺ παντελῶς ἂν φανείη μέρος τῆς προειρημένης χώρας. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα προσέλαβον τὴν τῆς Ἀσίας ἀρχήν, καταλύσαντες τὴν τῶν Περσῶν δυναστείαν. [97]
>
> The Macedonian rule in Europe extended but from the Adriatic region to the Danube, which would appear a quite insignificant portion of the continent. Subsequently, by overthrowing (334–330) the Persian empire they became supreme in Asia also.

While the Persians--in this case, the Achaemenids--were no longer politically in charge of Asia, there was still the idea that the territory of Asia and the rule of Persian kings were synonymous, at least until the Macedonians defeated the Achaemenids. While Polybius here emphasizes the Macedonian identity of the Seleucids, as noted previously, the Seleucids negotiated power over former Achaemenid territories by appropriating and assimilating former Achaemenid customs. They also were considered by the other Macedonian rulers to be Persian because of their matrilineal ancestry.[98] Ultimately, we see that the concept of Asia-Persia was alive in the second-century BCE when the Romans

[95] Walbank notes that the memory of the Greek-Persian wars was significant to Polybius' narrative of the rise of Rome, and his narrative of domination by the Macedonians; Walbank (1972) 2.
[96] Polybius 1.2.2.
[97] Polybius. 1.2.4-5; transl. by Patton (2010) 203.
[98] See note 10.

entered the scene, and helped to emphasize and maintain the geopolitical boundary between Europe and Asia.

Additionally, in Polybius' account of negotiations following the first Macedonian War, we see further evidence for this separation of the Seleucids as Asian kings--as opposed to European--during the Macedonian wars. It is at this point in time that Rome's involvement in West Asian geopolitics becomes solidified, and the boundaries between Europe and Asia are formally established in Roman negotiations. It was during the Macedonian Wars that Antiochus III was seeking to legitimize his claim over the Greco-Asian areas of the Hellespont, Aeolis, and Ionia.[99] According to Polybius, Antiochus desired to have control over cities along the coast of Asia Minor as it was a well-situated location for defense against a European invasion.[100] But during these campaigns Roman generals acted as protectors of European interests, freeing Greek *poleis* from monarchical rule, and rhetorically blurred the lines of the geopolitical division between the East and West that the Seleucids were currently cultivating.[101]

During the negotiations in 197 BCE that followed the Second Macedonian War, the Roman general Flamininus specifically invoked the separation between European and Asian territories, warning King Antiochus III that if he should attack Europe, Romans would retaliate by advancing into Asia.[102] But in this negotiation, Flamininus also called

[99] Kosmin (2014) 125.
[100] *κατὰ δὲ τῆς Εὐρώπηςἀμυντήριον ὑπάρχειν ἀεὶ τοῖς Ἀσίας βασιλεῦσιν εὐκαιρότατον.* Polybius 18.41.a.1.
[101] During the Macedonian wars, Romans presented themselves as liberators of Greek cities; Dmitriev (2011) 151-158.
[102] Polybius. 18.47.1-3; Livy. XVIII. 47.1-2.

for the Greek cities in Asia minor to remain "free" or autonomous, in effect trying to make West Asia a neutral territory. The Romans used the term "autonomous" in Greece, as is found in inscriptions describing the Roman's role in "liberation" during the first Macedonian wars.[103] By invoking the demarcation between Europe and Asia, Flamininus acknowledges and participates in the existing Eastern Mediterranean geopolitical tensions, inserting Rome into the East-West, Persian-Greek, Asia-Europe divide. Romans are to remain on the "European" side, so long as Antiochus remains on the "Asian" side.

King Antiochus III, however, did not recognize the neutral territory Romans attempted to establish, and the negotiations seem to have harmed Roman-Seleucid relations more than helped. According to ancient historians, when Roman ambassadors met with Antiochus to request that he relinquish control over Greek cities in Asia minor, Antiochus responded that they did not have the authority to do so, making it clear that Italy--not Asia--was the province of the Romans.[104] In Polybius' account, Antiochus ended his negotiations surrounding Asia by saying,

[103] The use of the term "freedom" on Roman honorific inscriptions during the Macedonian wars is part of a larger discussion of East-West relations, asking whether Roman expansion was especially "hostile" or diplomatic and standard? The debate begins with Harris (1979) who argues that Romans were hostile and only invested in their own imperialism. Counter to this idea we find Ferrary (1988), who looked at ideological interactions between Romans and Greeks during the Macedonian wars. Ferrary considers three themes in Roman-Hellenistic interaction during the second century BCE: the ideas of freedom and autonomy noted in reports between Romans and Hellenistic *poleis*, Greek writers' attitudes about Rome, and philhellenism at Rome. Other key works that counter Harris include Gruen (1986), who looks at how Romans adapted their policies and actions to various Eastern encounters and contexts; and Ekstein (2012), who uses political theory to argue that the warlike nature of Roman expansion was typical of the world at the time. Millar (1993) also looks at Roman presence in the Near East, but his chronological scope postdates the current question, beginning in 31 BCE. See also Dmitriev's discussion of "freedom" as understood by the Romans; Dmetriev (2011) 228-234.

[104] Appian. *The Syrian Wars.* 3.12; Polybius. 18.51.1-3.

> τὰς δ᾽ αὐτονόμους τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν πόλεων οὐ διὰ τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐπιταγῆς δέον εἶναι τυγχάνειν τῆς ἐλευθερίας, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς αὐτοῦ χάριτος.[105]
>
> And regarding the autonomous cities of Asia it was not proper for them to receive their liberty by order of the Romans, but by his own act of grace.

In Appian's narrative, what happened next is that Antiochus aligned himself with Aetolian forces, accepted from them the title of general or "strategos," entered Greece, and defeated Romans in a battle at Delium. It was this defeat that was the primary cause for the Romans to declare war.[106] Thus, the war which eventually resulted in Scipio's triumph that paraded elements of West Asian culture, was framed through the bifurcated lens of Asia versus Europe, East versus West, and strongly invokes centuries-old tensions between Persians and Greeks.

2.2: Parades and Parade Culture in West Asia

Having now touched upon the significance of Seleucids as "Asian" kings, let us look at the parades and local parade culture specifically, to see the function and context for these spectacles in Seleucid Asia, and set the stage for Roman appropriation. One scholarly debate to which this chapter contributes is looking at the degree to which Eastern processions influenced the Roman triumph. Scholars debate whether or not Romans during the Late Republic modeled the spectacles of their parades (especially Pompey's third triumph) upon "Hellenistic" models--or if the "Hellenistic" models are, in fact, modeled

[105] Polybius 18. 51. 9; transl. by Paton (2012) 228-229.
[106] This defeat is hardly discussed in ancient sources. It appears important to Appian's narrative, but is only briefly mentioned in Livy; Appian. *Syrian Wars.* 3.12,15; Livy.36.6.

upon the Roman triumph.[107] Wallisch wrote that the triumph came into fruition following the third century (and that the later annals were unreliable).[108] Versnel contended with Wallisch's argument, concluding based on an etymological study of the word *triumph* and *thriambus,* that the origins of the triumph are Etruscan (with some earlier Greek influence).[109] More recently, Erskine further argued that the parades under Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt and Antiochus IV were not, in fact, models for the Roman triumph because of context, asserting that the former is a religious parade and the latter a victory parade, thereby concluding that the two are not easily comparable.[110]

While Erskine does a convincing job of demonstrating that the processions of Ptolemy Philadelphus and Antiochus IV did not emphasize military "victory," his argument fails to take into account two important issues. First, while the Roman triumph did celebrate victory, it was also a religious ceremony, that ended with the slaughtering of sacrifices to Jupiter--a point which Erskine notes but neglects to put into conversation with the Hellenistic ceremonies.[111] The victory itself is viewed as ordained by favorable gods, and thus the military victory itself--and the triumph that celebrates it-- is embedded within a wider religious context. Second, and most important for the current chapter, at times intercultural communication between Romans and the peoples they encountered lead to

[107] Scholars still tend to use the word "Hellenistic" when referring to these parades, even though others have critiqued the term. See Cartledge (1997) 2-4. Regarding the argument of influence, scholars have made arguments on the parade of Antiochus IV, stating that it is modeling itself on a Roman triumph--however, as Strootman points out, this ignores the Eastern antecedents to the Roman triumph. See Strootman (2014) 251.
[108] Wallisch (1955) 245-258.
[109] Versnel (1970), 50.
[110] Erskine (2013) 54-55.
[111] Erskine (2013) 55.

cultural misunderstanding and appropriation, or "(re)appropriation."[112] We see cultural appropriation in the Republic, for instance, with the practice of the *evocatio*, when Romans would call upon the gods protecting their foreign, military rivals, and promise to erect temples in their honor if they were victorious.[113] How the foreign peoples interpreted and used their gods was reinterpreted before a Roman audience. Thus, even if the parades of Antiochus IV and Ptolemy Philadelphus did not emphasize victory in same the way that the triumph did, the Romans still could have imitated and appropriated West Asian parade customs and pageantry when putting on their own triumphs.

But did the Romans know enough about these parades during the second-century BCE to imitate them in their triumphs? Perhaps--but ultimately that question does not determine the degree to which Seleucid and Ptolemaic precedents influenced the pageantry of Roman triumphs during the Republic. This is because the triumph is a spectacle displaying specific cultural exchanges between foreign communities and the invading Roman army.[114] The looted or gifted objects put on display during the triumph demonstrate Roman appropriation of the paraded culture, and what we find in West Asia is that there

[112] "Re-appropriation" is the term Versluys uses when describing the Roman adoption of Egyptian Gods, because the Egyptian Gods at the time of Roman appropriation had already been appropriated by the Ptolemies. Versluys (2013) 235-259. This also relates to discussions of "Romanization," a debated term in Roman scholarship that looks to the interactions between Romans and local populations during the period of expansion. Mommsen first introduced the concept as *Romanisierung*, describing what happened under Augustus, Mommsen (1882/86); Webster critiques Mommsen, and advocates for a "creolization" model, Webster (2011), 209-225; Hingley (2005) 39, also criticizes early studies of Romanization as fitting within imperial progress narratives that stressed cultural homogeneity and ignored localized variations.
[113] Livy 5.4.11-12; E. Orlin (2010), 38; Beard (1998) 124.
[114] Beard (2007) 140: the triumph operated as the ceremony through which foreign entities became officially recognized by Romans as Roman; Östenberg demonstrates that the triumph is the way that Romans constructed and enforced their geopolitical map of the world, and their role as dominators; Östenberg (2009) 9.

was already a parade culture in place that provided a precedent to the cultural exchanges between Romans and West Asian communities, which influenced the spectacle of the Roman triumph.[115] The question, or questions, to ask are: firstly, whether the West Asian inhabitants understood the triumphal parades in Rome as spectacles boasting Roman domination and shamefully displayed conquered peoples, or if they understand the spectacles as representing and fulfilling international negotiations in another way; and, secondly, to what degree did those local precedents influence or impact the Roman triumphs. To explore this question, then, let us examine the preexisting elements of processions and parade culture in Asia minor, and identify what the parades signified, and what elements went into creating the spectacle.

The foundations for Seleucid parade culture as it pertained, not only to West Asia, but to the whole of the Seleucid empire, was based on Achaemenid precedents. The Achaemenids put on processions in individual cities under their control as a way to display power and negotiate their relationships with local *poleis*. This relates to the nature of Achaemenid governance as an "itinerant state," meaning that the Persian King traveled around the empire, and would bring with him a large retinue of thousands of state officials, military troops and royal family members.[116] Importantly, many of the literary sources that describe and provide information about these Achaemenid processions and migrations come from Greco-Roman authors. The procession of Darius III, for instance, as described by Quintus Curtius, included all the royal family of Darius, silver altars, well-dressed

[115] See note 5.
[116] Briant (2002) 187.

youths, an impressive chariot and an unusually large horse.[117] While scholars can pull information from these sources as to the movements of the Persian king and the appearance of the spectacle, the problem with the Greco-Roman source material, is that it gives us, as A. Kuhrt says, a "lopsided, one-dimensional view of the empire."[118] The way Greeks and Romans understood the Achaemenid processions is not necessarily how the Achaemenids viewed the spectacles.

What makes this Greco-Roman viewpoint particularly helpful for the current chapter, however, is that regardless of how the royal processions functioned in Achaemenid culture from the Persian perspective, the literary accounts provide the way that Greeks understood, and then appropriated for themselves, these parade customs. Thus, in the same way that as current scholars have demonstrated that the Seleucids assimilated, appropriated and incorporated other Achaemenid customs and traditions in their maintenance of empire, parades and parade culture under the Seleucids were also an assimilation of Greek perspectives of Achaemenid customs.[119] The Seleucids themselves traversed the empire, and entered and exited cities with a spectacular retinue.[120] One important aspect of these entrances into cities is the offering of gifts from the city to the King, notably crowns, elephants and other riches (though accounts tell of poor people offering more meagre gifts,

[117] See Briant's discussion of the procession, Briant (2002) 187-188; Quintus Curtius. III.3.9-22.
[118] Kuhrt (2013) 7.
[119] Kosmin (2014); Ghiţă (2010).
[120] Kosmin, however, encourages scholarship that does not draw the line of connection too closely in order to advocate for Seleucids to be examined "in their own right." Kosmin (2014) 144, 151-157.

such as water and food), and from the Greco-Roman perspective, it was shameful not to offer gifts.[121]

While gifts were given during royal entrances into cities around the empire, there also is evidence that under the Achaemenids, local gifts were sent imperial centers with envoys from the city or region. According to Xenophon, when Cyrus was in Babylon, he instructed Satraps he had sent around the empire are the sort of people who would "remember to send back here that which was fine and good in each land, so that we who remain here may also partake of that which is good everywhere."[122] In addition to Greco-Roman sources, there is also Achaemenid evidence for peoples sending riches to imperial centers, which then appear to have been paraded before the king. Sculptural reliefs from the Apadana palace in Persepolis depict different ethnic groups from around the empire--West Asia, Mesopotamia, India, and more--processing before various Persian kings, and presenting gifts (see Figure 1 and 2). In these sculptures, we find the kings being presented with gifts including silver and gold, jewelry, fabric, weapons, and animals. Each group, moreover, is depicted in local regional or ethnic attire and styles that help the viewer identify who they are--the *Sakā tigraxaudā*, or Scythians, for instance are identifiable because they are depicted wearing *kurbasia* hats.[123]

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[121] Briant (2002) 192.
[122] δεῖ δέ, ἔφη, τοὺς ἰόντας σατράπας ἐπὶ ταύτας τὰς χώρας τοιούτους ἡμᾶς σκοπεῖν οἵτινες ὅ τι ἂν ἐν τῇ γῇ ἑκάστῃ καλὸν ἢ ἀγαθὸν ᾖ, μεμνήσονται καὶ δεῦρο ἀποπέμπειν, ὡς μετέχωμεν καὶ οἱ ἐνθάδε ὄντες τῶν πανταχοῦ γιγνομένων ἀγαθῶν. Xenophon. Cyr. 8.6.6.; See Briant's discussion on the passage.
[123] Mousavi (2012), 18; Waters (2014), 144; For Scythian attire, see Lee (2015), 160.

Framed in another way, these "gifts" are often called "tributes" by scholars, being part of a larger tribute/taxation system.[124] However, the distinction between taxes/tributes and gifts is significant in the creation of an imperial narrative and negotiation of relationships. The narrative depicted in the reliefs, as Wauters shows, does not depict violence or subjugation of the ethnic groups under Achaemenid control, but instead, "sends a message of solidarity or inclusiveness".[125] What the act of sending envoys and gifts creates, therefore, is an illusion of unification and willing participation. It creates a facade that seemingly gives voice to the *poleis* and groups under Achaemenid rule. Importantly, in order to facilitate this narrative of unification, the envoys were themselves not shamed as captives (no chains appear), but were presented as willing participants, and the objects were not depicted as plunder, but as regional gifts, which is which (as demonstrated in the next chapter) is fundamentally different from how Romans treated people and objects on parade in Rome.

Furthermore, in sending gifts to a center, envoys may be given the opportunity to witness the expanse of Achaemenid reach. Seeing other groups also participating in the facade would send the message that many other groups were joined together under the Persian king--groups who in theory would fight against those who turn against the empire. Ultimately, what the Achaemenids set as a precedent for sending objects and envoys to be paraded in imperial centers was that (although compulsory), doing so indicated unification, and allowed *poleis* and peoples from around the empire to share and participate in said

[124] Wiesehofer (2001) 63-65.
[125] The sole exception, according to Waters, being the Bisitun relief of Darius I; Waters (2014) 143-44.

empire. By performing the act of paying tribute to the king in the form of "gift-giving," with shame associated with those who did not give gifts, the negotiations between local peoples and the empire depicts unity and mutually-beneficial relationships guised as respect for the king.[126]

2.3: Gift-Giving, Parades and Imperial Spectacle under the Seleucids and Ptolemies

Like the Achaemenids, the Seleucids and Ptolemies also had processions that included displaying gifts from other peoples and *poleis* in imperial centers. These spectacles maintained the aspect of displaying a unified empire through the narrative of gift-giving (as opposed to violence and subjugation), but also assimilated certain Greek customs into the spectacle; notably through the establishment of religious festivals occurring in imperial centers (as demonstrated on local inscriptions) and the implementation of *euergetism*. The continuation of presenting objects from *poleis* and ethnic groups as gifts was transmitted to the Seleucids and Ptolemies through the conquest of Alexander, as local populations appear to have been transferring their custom of offering gifts to the Persian king upon the person of Alexander, as we learn from Arrian that he and his retinue received gifts including crowns, elephants and other riches.[127] Moreover, one wonders the degree to which these local populations saw Alexander as representative of new imperial leadership, or simply continuing earlier Achaemenid control.

[126] For shame and gift-giving, see Briant (2002) 192.
[127] Quintus Curtius X.1.24, see discussion in Briant (2002) 193-194.

Thus, when Ptolemy Philadelphus established his parade in Alexandria, he appears to have assimilated the precedent of parading local gifts to Achaemenid and other imperial rulers, to which populations living in West Asia and Syria were already accustomed, with Greek religious festivals. While other Egyptian precedents may have existed to also influence the spectacle, the Ptolemies first came to rule Egypt as a recent Achaemenid territory, and as such this discussion focuses on the Greek-Achaemenid assimilation. The borrowings from earlier Greek religious and civic festivals is clearly present, to the point that it is even argued by Rice that the procession is itself part of a festival to the whole Alexandrian pantheon, not part of the *Ptolemaia*, due to the appearance and emphasis on Dionysus.[128] Greek drama masks, Satyrs, Delphic tripods and a ten-cubit high image of Dionysus all add to the Greek aesthetic of the spectacle.[129]

But the appearance of certain objects--notably crowns from West Asia--read like gifts offered from *ooleis* to an imperial center in the fashion of Achaemenid gift-giving. Indeed, as already discussed, the crowns and riches displayed from West Asia would have been given to the Ptolemies following the successful conquest of West Asia by the Ptolemies in 280. But like the reliefs depicting the Achaemenid processions in Persepolis, there is no indication that the paraded people from the West Asian territories are presented as captives in chains and shamed--rather they appear to be there as a way to give thanks and honor the Ptolemies, displaying gifts from their *polis*, rather than plunder. In this way, a unification narrative of empire is created under the kingship of Ptolemy--but unlike the

[128] Rice (1983) 186.
[129] Kallixeinos 198 A-E.

Achaemenid unification narrative, this one is strikingly Panhellenic.[130] It is not a parade of diverse ethnic groups as we found in Persepolis, but a parade of people from different Greek *poleis*, coming together in Alexandria after fighting the Seleucid-Persians.

An additional element we find in the gift-giving and processional customs as it pertains to the Seleucids and Ptolemies is the erection of Greek inscriptions indicating the gifts and envoys to be sent to imperial centers. One of the most important inscriptions related to this is the Nicouria inscription, IG XII.7 506, which details that the League of Islanders sent envoys and a crown to Alexandria, and regard the *Ptolemaia* games with events and prizes similar to the Olympics.[131] In the inscription, thanks to Ptolemy Soter for "liberating" the city is emphasized, and the goods sent to Alexandria are portrayed as offerings of thanks for services rendered.[132] While scholars have argued that the words used in this inscription suggest a reciprocal relationship between the League and the Ptolemies, the narrative created by the inscription seems instead to be another facade of reciprocity (like the Achaemenids' gift-giving custom) masking the power dynamics in order to help create a sense of imperial unity.[133] While the inscription says the islanders voted for the festival of the *Ptolemaia* to be raised to the *isolympic* status, lines 46-47, "on account of your kindness (*arete*) and goodwill (*eunoia*) to the islanders," suggest that the "liberation" of the Islanders was completely dependent upon Ptolemy Philadelphus' *arete* and *eunoia*, showing that the Islanders recognized that they were at the mercy of the king,

[130] Strootman (2014) 261.
[131] C. Constantakopoulou (2012). 49-70.
[132] This is similar to the concept of *euergetism* as defined by Veyne (1976) 20. For a discussion of this inscription and Ptolemaic euergetism more broadly in the Aegean, see Grabowski (2014) 21-41.
[133] Constantinopoulu (2012) 52.

thus suggesting that the upvoting of honors, and sending envoys and a crown to Alexandria, was more compulsory than voluntary.[134]

We also find gift-exchange customs related in inscription SEG 37.859. This inscription found on four blocks in the Temple of Athena, contains two letters to the Herakleians, one from Antiochus III and the other from his governor Zeuxis, which chronologically brings the discussion of gift-giving culture and imperial negotiations at local levels up to the eve of Scipio's invasion.[135] While other decrees honoring Antiochus III exist in Asia minor, this particular inscription is from the city of Herakleia under Latmos (modern-day Caria, Turkey), in which we find a similar inscription honoring Scipio just after the Romans invaded Asia dating to a few years later.[136] As such, this particular inscription serves as a contemporary foundation upon which to compare how Romans negotiated local interactions.[137] In the inscription, we see again the custom of sending envoys with crowns to kings:

> *[Λαοδίκ]ην καὶ τὸν υἱὸν Ἀντί[οχον πρὸς τ]αῖς π[αρ']*
> *[ὑμῶν ψηφι]σθείσαις τιμαῖς οἷς διεσαφεῖτε στέφανοις, ὁμοίως δὲ*
> *[στεφανώ]σαιτε καὶ Σέλευκον καὶ Μιθριδάτην τοὺς ἄλλους ἡμῶν υἱ-*
> *[οὺς, οὕ]ς καὶ ἀνενέγκαντες οἱ πρεσβευταί ἠσπάσαντό τε ἡμᾶς ὑπὲρ*
> *[τοῦ δ]ήμου καὶ τὸ περὶ τῶν τιμῶν ψήφισμα ἀποδόντες διελέχθησαν*
> *[καὶ α]ὐτοὶ περὶ ἑκάστων ἀκολούθως τοῖς κατακεχωρισμένοις. τάς τε*

[134] ἀρητῆς ἕνεκεγ καὶ εὐ[νοί]ας τῆς εἰς τοὺς νησιώτας. IG XII 7 506. 46-47.
[135] The inscription dates from between 197-the late 180's BCE. Wörrle (1989) 421-476, dating it from sometime between 196-193; Errington (1989) 279-288 to the late 180's, and Ma (1999) 344-345, dates it to Spring of 195 at the earliest.
[136] Letter of [Lucius Cornelius Scipio,] consul, and brother [Publius Cornelius Scipio,] to Herakleia (Lat.), on anta block; 189 BC; found at Herakleia Lat.: Ma 45; CIG 3800; Syll3 618; Holleaux, REA 19, 1917, 237-254; SEG 2, 566; Sherk 35; Robert, BCH 102, 1978, 501 (PH).
[137] Wörrle (1988) 421-470 (PH); SEG 37, 859.A.

> *[δὴ τι]μὰς καὶ τοὺς στεφάνους ἀπεδεξάμεθα φιλανθρώπως καὶ [ὑμᾶ]ς ἐπαινοῦμεν ἐπὶ τῆι προθυμίαι·*
>
> (e.g. your ambassadors have handed over the decree, according to which you wished to honour) . . . Laodik]e and our son, Anti[ochos, in addition to] the honours decreed [by you], with the crowns which you have mentioned, and that you also crowned our other sons, Seleukos and Mithridates; Your ambassadors, after handing over these crowns, greeted us in the name of the people, and after handing over the decree concerning the honours, and spoke in person concerning each of these matters, in accordance with the content of the decree. We have acknowledged the honours and the crowns with pleasure, and we praise you for your eagerness.[138]

Though we do not know if this particular crown was paraded in a specific procession, we do know that Antiochus III himself witnessed and partook in festivals that involved processions, which as Ristvet has argued, demonstrates Seleucid political performance in local religious contexts.[139] Secondly, although it post-dates the current the inscription, the Seleucid procession at Daphne in 163--in which *poleis* are described as parading crowns--suggests that displaying gifts (particularly crowns) via processions was still practiced throughout this era (though the spectacle perhaps at this time received new meaning with the increased interactions with Romans and the possible influence of aspects of the Roman triumph).[140] Thus, even if this crown was not brought to Antiochus III via a procession, we still see the act of sending a crown via envoys to an imperial center, and having said people and goods met with publicly announced appreciation from the King.

With respect to this and other similar inscriptions under Antiochus, John Ma has rightly suggested that the Greek notion of *euergetism* underlies some of the exchange,

[138] SEG 37.859 A 4-8; Wörrle A.I.4-6; Ma 31.A.I.4-6; translation by Ma (1990).
[139] Ristvet (2014) 256-259.
[140] Ma (1990) 223.

which at this point indicates a very specific dynamic between *poleis* and kings. *Euergestism* is a neologism referring to the agreement between a city and benefactor for whom, after rendering a service to the city, the city in exchange would establish honors including establishing an honorific inscription.[141] It's a concept that appears frequently in inscriptions during the "Hellenistic" period, and refers to a variety of favors bestowed by the benefactor, including paying for public buildings, putting on games, fixing necessary infrastructure, or providing other goods the citizens of the *polis* need. In the Herakleia upon Latmos inscription of Antiochus III, we see the language of *euergetism* used here to negotiate Seleucid control over the city through the facade of mutual beneficence. This negotiation, as Ma points out, means that empire is maintained not through physical domination and subjugation, but through the "camouflage" of Seleucid control over the territory in the language of benefaction.[142]

In the inscription, moreover, we see that the *polis*, through the "language of *euergetism*" negotiated for the King to act as benefactor over the region by providing them with certain infrastructural needs and gifts.[143] This list includes money for oil-anointment, repair and maintenance of water conduits, to be free from billeting and various taxes, and grain; in exchange for which local honors would be given to Antiochus and his family.[144] What we see here, therefore, is that the negotiation of power between the King and Herakleia upon Latmos began first, with the movement of ambassadors demonstrating the

[141] For the definition, see Veyne (1976) 20-22.
[142] Ma (1990) 238.
[143] SEG 37 859 A 6-10.
[144] Wörrle 1998; for further information on the implication of local cult practices this inscription suggests, see Sherwin and Kuhrt (1993) 208-209.

polis' honor of the Seleucids through the gift of a crown.[145] After this initial action, which demonstrated the Herakleians allegiance to Antiochus, the ambassadors presented their terms in the form of asking for goods that the city needed and wanted in exchange for their allegiance. These terms were accepted by the king, and the whole interaction was commemorated through an inscription placed on the anta blocks on the temple of Athena. Thus, from the perspective of Herakleians, sending a crown to the king was a gesture received with respect, and would result in receiving benefactions to help the city.

In addition to demonstrating the *quid-pro-quo* negotiations with local territories, this inscription provides a glimpse into two other components used in the maintenance of the Seleucid empire at local levels. Firstly, there is the use of intermediaries. When the Seleucids, and Achaemenids, held control over Herakleia and other Syrian territories, they did so through the use of satraps or governors. Under Antiochus, Zeuxis was the governor of cis-Tauric Asia, and it is through him that the King's interests were maintained in the region.[146] In the Seleucid inscription, Zeuxis appears as an intermediary between Herakleia and Antiochus, in which Antiochus writes, "Since we wish to show solicitude for you in the future, we confirm the grants made by Zeuxis to you."[147] In naming the governor in the inscription, the networks of negotiation are formalized at the local level, and Zeuxis is publicly acknowledged as a representative of Antiochus' interests, helping to maintain the Seleucid empire when the royal family is not in West Asia.

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[145] SEG 37.859 A 4-6.
[146] Ma (1999) 26; Eckstein (2012) 170-173.
[147] θέλοντες δὲ καὶ κατὰ τὰ λοιπὰ πο[λυ]ωρεῖν ὑμῶν τά τε ὑπὸ Ζεύξιδος συγχωρηθέντα ὑμῖν κυροῦμεν, SEG 37.859 A lines 8-9, translation by Ma (1990) 341.

Secondly, there is emphasis on the imperial family, rather than other facets of identity such as ethnicity. In the Seleucid inscriptions, the wife and children are explicitly named--the honors from the city go not just to King Antiochus, but to the entire Seleucid family: Laodike, Antiochus IV, Seleucus and Mithridates: "Laodik]e and our son, Anti[ochos, in addition to] the honours decreed [by you], with the crowns which you have mentioned, and that you also crowned our other sons, Seleukos and Mithridates."[148] The emphasis of the King's familial unit in imperial presentation, as Kosmin notes, seems to be a holdover from Achaemenid traditions, and serves a key function in the presentation of imperial strength. Having the family travelling with the king reminded the inhabitants of the Seleucid's dynastic unity--should anything happen to the King, there were others to take his place.[149] In addition, publicly acknowledging the royal family created an impression of the King's *pietas* and an idealized *oikos* or family unit.[150] Thus, inhabitants of West Asia were accustomed to publicly acknowledging not just a king, but an entire royal family, to whom allegiance and honors were owed.

1.4: Conclusion

Ultimately, what the inscription tells us is that Antiochus III in the early second century BCE was negotiating power over West Asian *poleis* by creating a narrative of unification that emphasizes an illusion of willing participation in the power relations between *polis* and king. In this way, Antiochus III was modeling his negotiation of empire

[148] SEG 37. 859 A 1-3; translation by Ma (1990) 341.
[149] Kosmin (2014) 164.
[150] Ibid.; see also Coloru (2012) 84-94.

and use of parade culture in a similar way to the Ptolemies in the previous century, and the Achaemenids before that. Thus, violence, subjugation and physical domination was deemphasized or ignored completely, in the official narrative of the maintenance of empire. West Asian *poleis*, moreover, had been accustomed to offering gifts to kings and participating in this narrative for hundreds of years, and by the time the Romans entered the area, had become additionally accustomed to negotiating with the king through the language of *euergetism*, all of which was initiated through the sending of a crown and envoys to the imperial center. Moreover, while the king was the primary person to whom allegiance was owed, local governors acted as imperial intermediaries maintaining Seleucid interests in West Asia. Additionally, the appearance of the whole royal family played an important role in local negotiations, both modelling an ideal family unit, and also demonstrating to polities the stability of the dynasty.

Thus, when the Romans entered West Asia during the Roman-Seleucid war, as the next section discusses, local polities had already established customs for negotiating with imperial powers, which involved acknowledging the royal family and imperial hierarchy, and gift-exchanges. As we will see, local populations engaged with Romans using these same modes of power negotiations, and in turn, Romans assimilated to local customs in attempt to establish domination over the region. However, in Rome, Romans had different narratives of empire, one that was centered on military subjugation and appropriation (rather than unification). As the next section demonstrates, this resulted in Romans presenting gifts and local envoys to Roman audiences as booty and captives, which created two different narratives of Roman Eastern expansion--one in Rome, and one in West Asia.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY 1: SCIPIO IN ASIA

The first large-scale representations of Asia within the city of Rome came in the form triumphal parades publicly commemorating Roman victories in the war against Antiochus III (192-188 BCE).[151] As the first war that brought Roman armies to fight on

[151] According to both Degrassi's edition of the *Fasti Triumphales,* and Itgenshorst's chronological list of Republican triumphs, the order and years of the triumphs over Asia during this time are as follows: Lucius

Asian soil, the campaign helped situate Roman interests within the Asian/Persian-European/Greek geopolitical and socio-cultural tensions that had existed in the Eastern Mediterranean and West Asia since the Persian Wars.[152] It also brought people and objects from formerly Seleucid-controlled territories into the city of Rome, to be displayed in triumphal processions as captives and booty. In Rome, the triumphal processions celebrating the Roman victories in the war with the Seleucids emphasized the geographical location of Antiochus' domain as "Asia." This emphasis on "Asia," for instance, is noted in the *Fasti Triumphales*, an Augustan-era inscription which lists Roman triumphs in chronological order, and in which the location of "Asia" as the setting for the defeat of Antiochus is emphasized.[153] Although the inscription is from the Augustan era and as such reflects the values of the early empire, scholars have argued that the list of parades on the *Fasti Triumphales* from the third-century BCE onwards reflects accounts from available archival material and thus are to be taken as historically "comprehensive and accurate,"

Aemillius Regillus in 189; Lucius Cornelius Scipio in 189 BCE; Quintus Fabius in 188; and Gnaeus Manlius Vulso in 187; this list is excluding Marcus Fulvus Nobilior against Aetolians and Cephallenia for although this triumph celebrated victory in the same conflict, the victory is not over "Asia" specifically. See the entries for 189-187 in Degrassi (1954), 103; Itgenshorst (2005) 434; for a recent reconstruction of the list of Republican triumphs, see Rich (2014) 197-248.

[152] There is an account in later Roman historiography that tells of a delegation, including Scipio Africanus, that was sent to Ephesus for negotiations with Antiochus III in 193 BCE (Livy 35.14.5; Appian. *Syr.*10; Plutarch. *Flamin.*21.3-4 and *Pyrrh.*8). According to the story, Africanus met with Hannibal, where they discussed the greatest generals of history. Stocks sees the characterization of Hannibal in Livy as a cultural, literary icon and looks at this meeting as narratively illustrative of "Rome's continuing struggle to grapple with Hannibal and his achievements," a way for Livy and Roman authors to examine the character of Hannibal after he was no longer a direct threat to Rome. Stocks (2014) 51.

[153] See Lange (2016) 59, who also cites Rich (2011) 1-43. Rich (2014) 205 looks at the list of triumphs after the third century and corroborates it with other extant material and literary sources to reaffirm the general scholarly consensus that triumphs listed in the *Fasti Triumphales* from the year 274 BCE onward ought to be taken as historically "accurate and comprehensive."

whereas triumphs from the earlier Regal period were more likely to have been remembered by oral and mythic traditions than by archival processes.[154]

One of the larger and more ostentatious of the parades celebrating victories against Antiochus III, as later ancient sources recount, was L. Scipio's triumph in 189 BCE. It was an event that both Pliny the Elder and Livy later describe as being the first moment in which "Asian luxury" was imported into Italy:

> *Asia primum deuicta luxuriam misit in Italiam, siquidem L. Scipio in triumpho transtulit argenti caelati pondo MCCCC et uasorum aureorum pondo MD anno conditae Urbis DLXV.* [155]
>
> It was the conquest of Asia[a] that first introduced luxury into Italy, inasmuch as Lucius Scipio carried in procession at his triumph 1400 lbs. of chased silverware and vessels of gold weighing 1500 lbs.: this was in the 565th year from the foundation of the city of Rome.

Livy's description of the triumph remains most detailed ancient account of the spectacle, listing: 224 military standards, 134 models of towns, 1231 tusks of ivory, 234 golden crowns, 137,420 pounds of silver, 224,000 Attic tetrachmas, 331,070 *cista*, 140,000 gold coins, 1424 pounds of silver plates, 1024 pounds of other gold items, 32 leaders (*duces*) of the King, prefects, and nobles.[156] While the next chapter deals directly with Livy's account and the numbers, the initial takeaway is clear: L. Scipio's parade was a huge spectacle that

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[154] Ibid; although Beard, while admitting that accounts of 3rd-century BCE triumphs and later likely came from archives, questions the reliability of the archives themselves, Beard (2007) 39-40, 74-75.
[155] Pliny. *Nat.Hist.* 33.148; transl. by Rackham (1952) 110-111. Livy 39.6; Roy also discusses the importation of Asian luxury into Rome through these parades in her dissertation, "Engineering Power: The Roman Triumph as Material Expression of Conquest, 211-55 BCE," Ph.D. Diss., University of Washington, 2008, Research Works Archive.
[156] Livy 37.59.

was the first to import publicly a large amount of goods and riches from Asia into Rome. Scholars have noted, but have yet to explore in detail, that one reason L. Scipio's triumph contained large amounts of riches is due to the pre-existing customs pertaining to gift-giving and parade culture under the Seleucids and Achaemenids.[157] As noted in chapter 2, customs fostered a message of unification, gift-exchange, and autonomy between West Asian *poleis* and imperial centers, which differed from the narrative of subjugation and domination presented via the pageantry of the Roman triumph. This chapter explores how Romans inserted themselves into West Asian geopolitics, and the cultural exchanges that took place there. The next chapter will then explore how these exchanges were then translated for Roman audiences.

3.1: L. Scipio and the Other Roman Generals

The Roman-Seleucid war lasted from 192 until the Battle of Magnesia in 190 BCE.[158] While ancient authors note multiple Roman generals who were a part of this campaign, and won military victories over Antiochus, ancient sources records only four generals who were awarded with triumphs back at Rome, and of these four, L. Scipio's parade is preeminent.[159] First, is the general Regillus, who fought naval battles at

[157] Östenberg, in asking if this custom was an exercise in gift-giving or submission concludes that the crowns were booty, despite the notation from ancient authors who label these crowns as gifts; Östenberg (2009) 126. Grainger believes the crowns were only gifts in name, but taken by the Romans as plunder; Grainger (1995) 27.
[158] For dating see Grainger (2002).
[159] Livy provides the most detailed account, but as scholars have noted, he tends to exaggerate his historical narrative. Appian's *Syriaca* likewise provides a detailed narrative, but runs into the same chronological problem as Livy. Polybius, who is more reliable both in terms of chronology and content, provides little to

Myonessus and Eurymedon, with the Seleucids led by Polixenidas and Hannibal respectively.[160] After Regillus, Scipio was awarded a more ostentatious triumph following the battle of Magnesia, the event that led to the Peace Treaty of Apamaea.[161] Two other generals appear to have been awarded triumphs for victories either over Antiochus or in Asia: Fabius Labeo and Gnaeus Maelius. The justification for Fabius Labeo's triumph was called into question in Livy, where Fabius Labeo's actual military glory and actions are presented as comparatively unimpressive.[162] Specifically, this triumph becomes a point of contention for the general Manlius, who defeated Antiochus' army in Thermopylae, was not awarded with a triumph. Lastly, Gnaeus Maelius is awarded a battle for victory in Asia, however by this point, the enemy Romans were fighting shifted from the Seleucids to the Gauls, demonstrating the changing geopolitics of Asia during the first decade of Rome's military action in Asia.[163]

While these four triumphs demonstrate collectively the initial introduction and wide-scale importation of Seleucid and West Asian polities, cultures and objects into the city of Rome, this case-study focuses specifically on the triumph of Scipio for three reasons. First, while Regillus' triumph celebrated naval victories during the war (thus being identified as a naval triumph) and securing the Aegean, Scipio's is the first to honor victory

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no detail about the battles themselves, instead focusing on the negotiations between key figures, and movements of armies. Grainger (2002) 312. For the Triumphs: Degrassi (1954) 103.

[160] Battle of Myonessus: Livy 37.13; Appian. *Syriaca.* 6.27; Battle of Eurymedon: Livy 37.23-24; His triumph: *Fasti Triumphales* (Degrassi 1954: 103; Livy 37.58-59.

[161] For the triumph: Polybius 21.24.17; *Fasti Triumphales* (Degrassi 1954: 103); Livy 37.59. See also: Pliny *Natural Histories.* 33.148-149; 34.34; 35.22; 37.12.

[162] *Fasti Triumphales* (Degrassi 1954: 103); Livy.37.60; 38.39: the speech of Manlius arguing in favor of his having a triumph, invokes the triumph of Labeo.

[163] *Fasti Triumphales* (Degrassi 1954: 103); Livy 39.6.3-7.7.

occurring in specifically "Asian" territory over the "King of Asia."[164] Second, it is remembered in later ancient historical accounts as being the most ostentatious of the triumphs celebrating victories during the Roman-Seleucid War, and as being the first parade to bring "Asian Luxury" into Rome, and as Lange argues, Regillus' triumph may not even have included the soldiers who fought alongside him, as they would have stayed in the Aegean to be under Labeo.[165] And third, from a Roman perspective, Scipio held a higher-ranking position than the other generals on campaign against Antiochus III, as a consul for the year 190.[166]

There, moreover, is material evidence from the Eastern Mediterranean and West Asia that suggest that local *poleis* honored Lucius Scipio with greater accolades than other generals, which suggests that negotiations with Rome were focalized through the figure of L. Scipio specifically. This especial treatment of L. Scipio at local levels is evident in four inscriptions: (1) The Letter to the Herakleians by both Scipios; (2) The Letter to the Colophonians; (3), The Inventory at Delos that mentions all the major military Roman generals, but suggests that Scipio presented himself at Delos with greater authority; (4) inscription from Assembly and Council to both Scipios and Regillus.[167] While this

[164] For discussion of the naval triumph as distinct from the triumph, see Lange (2016) 43-48; Scipio conquering "King of Asia" is how the triumph is commemorated on the *Fasti Triumphales* (Degrassi 1954: 103).
[165] Pliny. *Nat.Hist.* 33.148; Lange (2016) 45.
[166] See the *Fasti Consulares* [Degrassi, 1954, 64]; see also the prosopography by Broughton (1951-86) 349.
[167] (1) Letter of [Lucius Cornelius Scipio,] consul, and brother [Publius Cornelius Scipio,] to Herakleia (Lat.), on anta block; 189 BC; found at Herakleia Lat.: Ma 45; CIG 3800; Henzen, Ann. Inst. Corr. Arch. 24, 1852, 138-145, no. I; LW 588; Hicks 193 (non vidi); Syll2 287; Judeich, MDAI(A) 15, 1890, 255-258, no. 7; Haussoullier, RPh 23, 1899, 275-281, no. 2; Syll3 618; Holleaux, REA 19, 1917, 237-254; BE 1920:425; De Sanctis, AAT 57, 1921-1922, 242-249; BE 1924:355; SEG 2, 566; Sherk 35; Robert, BCH 102, 1978, 501 (PH); (2) Letter from Scipio to the Colophonians in the Temple of Apollo, 190-189 BC; Sherk, RDGE 36 w/ Holleaux, Études VI 34-35; SEG 1.440; (3) inscription from Assembly and Council to

discussion relates to Greek translations of Roman political and military titles, the local result is an assimilation of Roman and local customs in which Scipio fills the role of a Seleucid king rebranded in Roman terminology.

3.2: *Strategos Hypatos*

In all four of these inscriptions, Lucius Cornelius Scipio is named as the *strategos hypatos*, while other Roman generals present during this campaign are only noted as *strategos* (if anything).[168] This designation, moreover, has become a point of debate for the dating of the Delos inventory inscription.[169] While *hypatos* came to be the Greek translation of Roman "consul," how the word is understood by West Asian and other polities when dealing with the Romans becomes complicated, especially when considering that local groups were accustomed to dealing with imperial monarchies. Did *poleis* understand the

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Lucius Cornelius Scipio, Publius Scipio and Aemilius Regillus, Crete, 189 BC (A) and 189 BC (B) IC II iii A 5; (4) Inventory at Delos, 179 BCE, ID 442 side B, 85-104.

[168] Ma 45 1-2 Scipio Asiaticus described as *hypatos* while Scipio Africanus is described as his brother, ἀδελφὸς; ID 442 B. 99-104, Delos inscription names the generals who received a triumph for the campaign against the Seleucids (except for Labeo). Only two Romans are described as *Hypatos*: L. Scipio and later Publius Cornelius (consul in 181); SEG 1.440 1-2, the letter to the Colophonians follows the same format as the letter to the Herakleians, calling L. Scipio *Hypatos* and identifying P. Scipio only as his brother; IC II iii A 1-6, Crete inscription, the reconstruction adds *hypatos* after Scipio's name, but the other generals do not have a title.

[169] The first time L. Scipio appears on the Delos inventory, he is called *strategos*, which has encouraged some scholars to assume that this means he made these offerings in 193, but as Durrbach suggests, the titulature for Roman offices was at this time still new and practices were not yet uniform. As such, it seems more plausible that the earlier offerings occurred at the beginning of Scipio's campaign, before he had invaded Asia, and at a time when *strategos* was thought to mean consul, but following his campaign, Romans adopted *strategos* as the title for general, while *hypatos* was added to *strategos* to mean consul. This argument is made more convincing by the fact that Roman magistrates who appear earlier in the inscription (lines 85-89) have no titulature. Scipio is the first Roman in the inscription to be called *strategos,* and later is the first to be called *strategos hypatos.* Durrbach (1929) 164; see also Holleaux (1913) 95-96.

difference between Roman consuls and imperial kings, or did they see a consul as a type of king? This section demonstrates the latter, by looking at three pieces of ancient evidence: (1) Polybius' understanding of the term consul or *hypatos*; (2) accounts of Roman consuls in the Eastern Mediterranean before the Roman-Seleucid War; (3) and the role of *hypatos* (and *strategoi*) in West Asian (and Eastern Mediterranean) inscriptions, particularly during the Roman-Seleucid campaign. Ultimately, this section shows that in local contexts, the word *hypatos* serves to distinguish Scipio from other Roman generals present on campaign, which symbolically places him in-line with a king rather than with an elected dignitary from a representative government. While the terminology itself uses military, rather than regal, titles, the outcome of interaction is in local contexts an assimilation of how earlier kings negotiated their empire with the local *poleis*.

While inscriptional examples of *strategos hypatos* go back to the 3rd century BCE, a search for "στρατηγος ὑπάτος" on the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* shows that the earliest literary instance comes from Polybius' *Histories* (see Figure 3). In Book 6 of Polybius we find a section dedicated to examining aspects of the Roman *politeia*.[170] In Chapter 12, Polybius details the role of the consul in Roman government. After outlining the powers that the consul wields, including power to inflict punishment and spend public money, Polybius concludes that when examining the role of the consul, the Roman government seems to be, "all-together monarchical or kingly."[171] Understanding the consul as "kingly"

[170] The word *politeia* in Polybius is often defined as "Constitution," but as Erskine demonstrates, this is a limiting word that excludes many Roman customs that Polybius also addresses in this book. See Erskine (2013) 234; For more discussion on the consuls as replacements for the Roman king in the origins of the Republic, see Beck et. all (2011) 3-4.
[171] "μοναρχικὸν ἁπλῶς καὶ βασιλικόν ἐστι τὸ πολίτευμα." Polybius 6.12.9.

or "monarchical" points to a worldview accustomed to monarchical governments, and thus needing to define alternate forms of government through monarchical terms, while likewise pointing to Polybius' larger theme, exploring how the Roman system of government helped Romans defeat Eastern and Greek kings.[172] But what this passage reveals for the current question is that there were perceived similarities between consuls and Eastern kings, specifically in terms of powers each wielded. While a consul is not a king from the Roman perspective, the viewpoint as portrayed by Polybius explains the role of the consul in monarchical terms.

However, it should be noted that before Scipio invaded Asia, the title *strategos hypatos* had been used on inscriptions in Greece after the Second Macedonian War.[173] In these earlier inscriptions in Greece, Ferrary demonstrates that Flamininus was adhering to locally established customs and terminologies that emphasized local autonomy gifted through Flamininus' benevolence and local military interaction.[174] Thus, before the Roman-Seleucid War, Romans had already used the title *Strategos Hypatos* as a way to present their consular rank to the local populace. What we see in these instances is that Romans used local customs and terminology to exert influence over the local populace.[175] Moreover the message that it sends to the local population is that there was an individual

[172] This also applies to debates surrounding Polybius' perspective on Roman eastern expansion, specifically whether or not Polybius contradicts himself in understanding Roman policy towards the East. See Derow's analysis of the debates; Derow (1979) pp.1-2; for the theme in Polybius see Erskine (2013) 231-232.
[173] Syll.³ 609/610[4], inscription in Delphi, lists the consul of 191, Manius Acilius Glabirio as *Strategos Hypatos*; IG IX,2 338, 1 inscription in Thessaly (196-194), calls Titus Quinctius Flamininus *Strategos Hypatos*.
[174] Ferrary (1988) 151-152.
[175] See in particular Dmietriev's discussion of how Roman conception of "freedom" was modified to fit within local understandings of the concept as a way to exert control; Dmitriev (2011) 228-237.

who held a separate, higher authority from the other *strategoi.* Thus, because this general held a separate, higher authority, he was the individual through whom Roman imperial control was negotiated and reinvisioned in local contexts.

For example, with regards to the military hierarchy, we see that L. Scipio presents himself to the local population in ways that distinguish himself from other generals. An inscription at Crete mentions other generals (who likewise received triumphs in Rome for battles fought during the Roman-Seleucid War), Regillus and Fabius Labeo, both of whom are noted at *strategos*, while Scipio is noted as the *strategos hypatos*.[176] While this *hypatos* from a Roman perspective effectively indicated his consular rank, as distinct from a regular generalship (*imperator*), this addition of *hypatos* expressed to the local population unfamiliar with Roman political structures simply that there was a highest or supreme general (not necessarily an elected, temporary official). Effectively, it helped indicate to the local population that there was one particular Roman in charge.

One of the more telling pieces of evidence that shows that Roman generals during the Roman-Seleucid war publicly presented themselves to localities in a way that emphasized the power of L. Scipio is the inventory at Delos. In this inscription, all of the generals who received a triumph for their efforts during the Roman-Seleucid war, only L. Scipio is noted as *hypatos*, again working to fit Roman ranking and titulature within Greek customs, and simultaneously expressing military and political hierarchy to local

[176] IC II iii A, B.

populations.[177] But another way that Scipio distinguishes himself from other Romans is in the offering of crowns to the temple. The inscription chronologically records the gifts offered to the temple, and while L. Scipio made a trip to the temple perhaps at the beginning of the campaign (when he offered two crowns), however, it is the dedications offered at the end of the campaign that distinguish L. Scipio from other key players in the Roman-Seleucid War (and from other Romans who made offerings afterwards).

Maellius, Quintus Fabius, the consul Publius Cornelius, and King Eumenes of Pergamum all offered the temple a golden laurel crown of equal weight (100 coins).[178] Gold laurel crowns are common gifts to the temple at Delos, appearing in this particular inventory inscription twenty-six times, and are often (but not always) gifts from Kings or royal family members from around the Mediterranean. Scipio at this time, however, gives a golden oak crown, the weight of which is not recorded, distinguishing himself not only from the other Roman generals, but from other local kings as well.[179] In Roman military practice, there was a defined distinction between oak and laurel crowns as awards to military victors. While laurel crowns symbolized victory, oak crowns, or *corona civica*, were an especial honor, and later authors note that the honor signified that the recipient saved the life of a Roman citizen during battle.[180] Triumphant generals, moreover, either wore golden laurel or oak crowns, in addition to receiving a laurel crown.[181] While it is

[177] ID 442 B 100-102; Publius Cornelius Cethegus, the Consul in 181, is also called *hypatos*, but he did not participate in the Roman-Seleucid War.
[178] ID 442 B 100-102.
[179] Only one other oak crown is attested in the inventory of 179, ID 421, 27.
[180] McCulloch (1962) 25-27; Polybius 6.39.6; Aul. Gell. V.6.
[181] Stout (2001) 82.

unclear what the different crowns symbolized to the Roman generals offering them as gifts in Delos, what we can note is that Scipio distinguished himself from the other Romans in his choice of dedication.

According to ancient accounts, following the Battle of Magnesia, most of the territory lost by Antiochus became absorbed into the kingdom of Pergamum under Eumenes, who then, as scholars have noted, took on the role of client king for Rome.[182] This territory gained by Eumenes, however, excluded the regions of Caria and Lycia, which were given to Rhodes--with the exception of several West Asian cities, including Herakleia.[183] In these cities specifically that we see evidence of Romans adopting Seleucid customs of imperial control over local territories. Specifically, Scipio distinguished himself from other generals when presenting himself to Eastern Mediterranean and West Asian polities, with the result that his role in certain local contexts replaced the figure of the king. This is particularly apparent in the Herakleia upon Latmos inscription, which publicly documents a letter written by L. Scipio and his brother to the people of Herakleia (See Appendix 1).

In section 2.II.C of this current chapter, the letter by Antiochus to and presented in the same *polis* was discussed, with the conclusion that negotiations between the *polis* and the king were presented via the sending of envoys bearing gifts and promising to worship the king in exchange for infrastructural support. We also saw the use of a governor in overseeing these customs, and the importance of the royal family as a unit to whom honors

[182] Polybius 21.42; Livy 37.45.
[183] Baronowski (1991) 450-463.

were bestowed. In this way, the Seleucid king was maintaining earlier Achaemenid gift-giving ceremonies in the narrative of empire, in a way that de-emphasized narratives of violence. When comparing both this letter, and another contemporary letter on the same anta block from Zeuxis to the Herakleians on behalf of Antiochus (addressed in the previous section), with the letter from the Scipios, we see that the Romans also adopted similar terminology, and effectively replaced the Seleucid King with the Roman Consul.[184]

Three specific elements of comparison demonstrate that the Herakleians treated L. Scipio and the Romans as imperial replacements for Antiochus and the Seleucids. Firstly, there is the *quid-pro-quo* relationship between imperial center and *polis* evident through *euergetistic* language adopted by the Romans. In the letter Scipio acknowledges honors and gifts that the Herakleians offered the Romans, in response for which he offers autonomy:

> *συγχωροῦμεν δὲ ὑμῖν τήν τε ἐλευθερίαγ καθότι καὶ [ταῖς ἄ]λλαις πόλεσιν, ὅσαι ἡμῖν τὴν ἐπιτροπὴν ἔδωκαν, ἔχουσιν ὑ[φ'] [αὐτοὺς πά]ντα τὰ αὐτῶμ πολιτεύεσθαι κατὰ τοὺς ὑμετέρους νόμους, [καὶ ἐν τ]οῖς ἄλλοις πειρασόμεθα εὐχρηστοῦντες ὑμῖν ἀεί τινος ἀγαθοῦ [παραίτ]ιοι γίνεσθαι· ἀποδεχόμεθα δὲ καὶ τὰ παρ' ὑμῶμ φιλάνθρωπα καὶ τὰς [τιμάς, κ]αὶ αὐτοὶ δὲ πειρασόμεθα μηδενὸς λείπεσθαι ἐγ χάριτος ἀποδόσει.*[185]
>
> We grant you your liberty, just as to other cities which have entrusted themselves to us, with the right to see all your own affairs conducted by yourselves according to your laws, and in all other matters we will try to assist you and always be responsible for some advantage. We also acknowledge the favours and the [honours] from you, and we will try for our part to fall behind in nothing as concerns the returning of gratitude.

[184] Both letters appear together on four blocks from the north *anta* of the Athena temple, side A for Antiochus' letter, and side B for Zeuxis; see Ma "Letters 31," Wörrle 1988.
[185] Ma 45 10-15; translation by Ma (1990) 336.

However, instead of infrastructural needs, Romans here offer "*eleutheria*"--a term that was also used by Flamininus when negotiating with Greek *poleis* a decade earlier, and is likely used in a way to publicly foster a sense of freedom under the Romans that downplays the Roman power over the territory.[186] Thus while the Seleucids offered infrastructural needs and objects, the Romans offer freedom to rule their *polis* with their own laws. Both, however, receive honors from the *polis*, demonstrating that the city continued negotiating with these larger powers by continuing a *quid-pro-quo* relationship. However, the degree to which the *poleis* had political autonomy after the Battle of Magnesia comes under scrutiny when examining the role of the Lucius Orbius, mentioned briefly at the end of the inscription.[187]

The figure of Lucius Orbius does not appear in written histories or other inscriptions from the time, but his role in the Herakleia inscription, and his apparent presence in Caria suggests that the Romans were maintaining military control over the region in a way that resembled Seleucid satrap networks. Based on his assigned role as "protector of the city and territory," we can gather that Orbius was a general in charge of a military garrison that was stationed around Caria, and would be there for the foreseeable future.[188] The title of protector of the city or ἐπιμελησόμενον τῆς πόλεως is unusual, but has specific military connotations. While the term is not found explicitly in Polybius, it is used in Diodorus Siculus to describe a foreign general entering into a city to protect inhabitants from

[186] See note 86.
[187] SEG 37, 860, 16.
[188] Ma 45 16-17: *ἐπιμελησόμενον τῆς[πόλεως κ]α[ὶ] τῆς χώρας ὅπως μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς παρενοχλῆι.*

tyranny.[189] In a similar vein, Orbius is established as a foreign general, protecting the autonomy of the territory against the possible forces of King Antiochus. Thus, Scipio appears to have left Orbius in Caria in order to maintain Roman interests, in a similar role to that of Zeuxis in the Seleucid letter to the city of Herakleia.[190]

Furthermore, while the Romans awarded city with an "autonomous" status, the explicit presence of a Roman military force in the region does not just keep other neighboring forces at bay. It also, however, prevents or obstructs the Herakleians from working against Roman interests. There is autonomy, as the letter states, but the autonomy exists under the Romans. By stationing a military garrison nearby, there is a reminder to the Herakleians that their freedom might be taken away, if they decide to work against Roman interests. Moreover, Lucius Orbius thus not only becomes the protector of Herakleian autonomy. He also acts as a representative and steward of Roman interests in West Asian geopolitics—a figure who not only ensures that Antiochus remains on the other side of the Taurus mountains, but also keeps local communities in check.

Lastly, the Romans imitated the Seleucid customs of emphasizing a familial unit at local levels to give the impression of a dynastic rule. This is apparent in the invocation of L. Scipio's brother Africanus. Scipio Africanus appears not only in the Herakleian

[189] Diodorus Siculus 16.65.1.4; while there is no indication that Lucius Orbius was an official praetor of the territory (and it isn't until 126 that the first praetorship over Asia is officially established) it is possible that the duties performed by Lucius Orbius over Herakleia and the other cities in Asia Minor is similar to those of a praetorship. A praetor was an individual who held imperium, with lesser authority than a consul, which applies to Orbius as a general under Scipio. While the official title of praetor at this time was only allotted to six individuals over six territories that did not include Asia, the terms for ruling over the East were still being negotiated and created by the Romans in the early 2nd century. See Brennan (2001) 4-5.
[190] See section 2.3.

inscription, but also in a letter to the Colophonians.[191] While scholars have previously assumed that his presence in both inscriptions indicate a substantial military role during this war, the way he is introduced is through his familial ties to the *strategos hypatos,* not through military identity. In neither inscription is he listed as *strategos*, but rather as brother, *adelphos.* This is significant, as the role of *strategos* under the Seleucids was occupied by Zeuxis, who was a representative but not a member of, the royal family. Zeuxis could receive honors and gifts on behalf of the Seleucids, but he was not the intended recipient of said honors. As a brother, however, Scipio Africanus could be an intended recipient of local gifts.

While the Seleucid kings travelled the territories with their wives and children, the Romans did not. However, in this instance Scipio Africanus' presence as L. Scipio's brother in the inscriptions creates a sort of family unit to which the local *poleis* can give honors and allegiance. This also implies to the populations negotiating with the Romans that there exists a type of dynastic unit similar to the ones displayed by the Seleucids and Achaemenids.[192] In effect, the Scipio family assumed a position similar to that which was held by the Seleucid family, with L. Scipio appearing in the same position as Antiochus III, and P. Scipio existing as evidence of the Scipio's dynastic strength. Moreover, there is no indication on the inscriptions that L. Scipio's time as consul is limited, nor is there indication that another *Strategos Hypatos* will take his place (even though back at Rome another consul would be elected). Effectively, for Herakleia and other *poleis* who had

[191] SEG: 1:440.
[192] Kosmin (2014) 164.

similar interactions with the Romans at this time like Colophon, the Scipio *gens*, or family name, has adopted similar modes of negotiation to those used by the Seleucids.

Ultimately, for the inhabitants of Herakleia, the Scipios filled the void left by the Seleucids. They are the figures connecting the *polis* to Rome, and in welcoming envoys and gifts, they are enacting the same traditions *poleis* used when negotiating with the Seleucids and Achaemenids. Thus, envoys went to the Romans, as they had done with the Seleucids and Achaemenids, likely in order to perform allegiance through gift-giving and processions in the same way they had done for hundreds of years. Furthermore, if there was any expectation by the local inhabitants that envoys and their gifts would be displayed in a parade in Rome (as had been done by previous empires), it would likely have been anticipated that the envoys and gifts be presented at Rome under the narrative of unity under the Scipios, rather than subjugation by Romans and assumption into the Roman empire. Unfortunately, as the next chapter demonstrates, this was not the narrative presented on the Roman triumph.

3.3: Treaty of Apamea

In addition to receiving gifts and envoys which were to be transported to Rome in triumph, there also are the people and goods received under the terms for the Treaty of Apamea. The ancient accounts for the Treaty of Apamea come from ancient historians Polybius, Livy and Arrian. Moreover, according to Livy, the battle resulted in completely destroying Antiochus' army--a fact which cannot be corroborated by other ancient accounts

and events, thus demonstrating that back at Rome, narratives and memorializations of the events in Asia were manipulated.[193] According to Polybius, the Romans asked Antiochus to give to them his warships, elephants, Roman prisoners, twelve thousand talents a year, grain, and twenty hostages of a certain age.[194] The treaty also outlined other territories and bestowments to be given to other kingdoms and powers in the region.

One significant element of these negotiations that demonstrate the use of diplomacy, rather than pure military domination, is the fate of Antiochus himself. Antiochus was not killed, nor was he taken as a captive back to Rome to be paraded in triumph. In fact, Antiochus and the Seleucids, according to Polybius, became allies with the terms of the treaty.[195] While accounts of earlier Republican triumphal parades are dubious, there are two examples of defeated kings, Gaius Pontius and Britomaris, who were brought back to Rome and executed following the triumph.[196] Indeed, later in the second century, King Perseus of Macedon was brought back to Rome, and though he was not executed, he was kept as a political prisoner in Alba Fucens for the remainder of his life.[197] While Antiochus lost territory West of the Taurus mountains following the Battle of Magnesia, the Romans allowed Antiochus to remain in his territory, rather than kill him or take him back to Rome as a prisoner.[198]

[193] Livy 37.43.8; see also Grainger (2002) 329.
[194] Polybius 21.42.
[195] Polybius 21.42.1.
[196] Livy. 9. 6.1-2; Appian. *Gallic History*. 1.5.
[197] Plutarch. *Aem*. 36-38.
[198] For discussion of "client kings" see Lintott (2013) 33-34.

The most reasonable explanation for this, as suggested by Grainger, is that Antiochus in fact had the military strength to overpower the Romans--however, because he was waging wars on other borders of his empire, decided to accept these losses in West Asia in order to focus his military strength on maintaining empire elsewhere.[199] The Battle of Magnesia, though resulting in military losses for Antiochus, did not, as Livy implies, destroy Antiochus' military force, but instead created a setback in his maintenance of the Asian/European border. This means that the nature of defeat at Magnesia was not a complete conquest over a foreign king, or even over Asia as a geopolitical entity, as is suggested by the presentation of the battle in Rome (discussed in the following chapter), but rather is a military victory that resulted in the negotiated shifts in territorial control over West Asian *poleis*.

3.4: Conclusions

Ultimately, when the Romans first invaded West Asia, they entered a territory that had been the focal point for East/West, Asian/European tensions for hundreds of years. As such, the imperial exertion of control over these areas (most recently under the Seleucids) specifically created a system that had, for hundreds of years, developed a system for geopolitical negotiations between city and king, through a series of customs. The Romans in turn assimilated to these customs, adapting their conceptions of control over foreign territories into local contexts. As early as the Achaemenid period, envoys from local *poleis*

[199] Grainger (2002) 329.

travelled to heads of state in order to both offer the city's honors to the ruler, and perform allegiance through the offering of gifts in a procession, and in turn, the ruler acknowledged the city's allegiance, and might offer rights or necessities. Thus, the Romans, when entering Asia, received accolades from local polities who treated them with the same decorum practiced and performed while under the imperial rule of other kingdoms.

These customs, moreover, created specific narratives of imperial rule. Narratives of violence and subjugation over local peoples were glossed over with a facade that emphasized unity and a *quid-pro-quo* relationship between king and *polis*. Thus when L. Scipio defeated Antiochus and these *poleis* came under the protection--or control--of Roman armies, the figure of L. Scipio and the Scipio *gens* filled the void once occupied by Antiochus and the Seleucid dynasty. Local reception and understanding of the role of the Roman Consul as *Hypatos Strategos*, was that the consul held a similar role and similar powers to an imperial king--a similarity also echoed in Polybius. In accepting envoys and honors on behalf of himself and his family, and Scipio in turn created a facade of freedom--but it was a freedom gifted and monitored by the Roman army (who remained present in Asia). This narrative, as we see in the next chapter, becomes distorted for a Roman audience--ambassadors become captives, honors become loot, and the kingly figure of Scipio is demoted back into a temporary Roman official.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY 1: SCIPIO'S TRIUMPH AT ROME

The previous chapter explored the parade culture of West Asia before the first Roman invasion, noting that parades as spectacles of gift-exchange were integral to the maintenance of empire. It then looked closely at how Romans--specifically L. Scipio--adapted to these preexisting conditions to negotiate with local *poleis*. The second part of this case study considers the transportation of gifts and indemnities from West Asia into Rome for the Roman triumph in 189. The central question this chapter seeks to answer is

seeks to understand how Romans initially perceived Asia-Persia as a geopolitical entity in their imagined world geography? When examining Scipio's triumph at Rome, there are two different questions to consider: first, what campaign narrative is presented to the Roman audience? And second, what campaign narrative(s) are remembered or received in later Roman memory?

Scholars have emphasized the problematic nature of later literary sources when discussing any Republican triumph.[200] To this end, the first section, 4.1, assesses the function of triumphs in the second-century BCE and locates L. Scipio's spectacle within this context. I conclude that the Roman display of objects and people as booty and captives to be under Roman control contrasts with the previously discussed West Asian parade culture and Roman negotiations of *eleutheria*. The section then addresses the paraded objects and people within the context of a narrative of conquest. While official archival documents of what items were in the parade are no longer extant, Livy gives insight as to the specific elements of spectacle and provides numbers of the items.[201]

Section 4.2 shows that when calculating and contextualizing these elements of spectacle, we see that L. Scipio's triumph (as depicted in Livy) created a specific visual campaign narrative that depends upon the manipulation and reinterpretation of meaning of specific West Asian objects before a Roman audience. Additionally, calculating the

[200] Itgenshorst questions whether or not imperial authors can tell us anything about the reality of the Republican Triumph, while Beard is skeptical that even the sources from the 2nd and 3rd centuries BCE accurately conveyed information about the triumph; Itgenshorst (2005) 12; Beard (2007) 39-40, 74-75.
[201] The triumphal list: Livy 37.59; for references to triumphal archives, see Cicero. *In Verrem*. 2.1.56-7. The keeping of archives of triumphal booty is also discussed in Lange (2016) 4; see also Rutledge (2012) 45; Kay (2014) 27.

numbers of objects in terms of *denarii* shows that the numbers in Livy align with what we know about the exchange of goods and people in West Asia during this campaign from other ancient sources--specifically Polybius (Figure 4). From there, section 4.3 examines the memorialization of Scipio's triumph in Livy and Pliny as commemoration of the first moment of the importation of *luxuria* into Rome. Lastly, section 4.4 looks at the downfall of L. Scipio from Roman political life. Ultimately, this chapter demonstrates that L. Scipio's triumph both presented (and is remembered as presenting) the victorious campaign against King Antiochus III as the establishment and incorporation of "Asia" as a Roman-controlled territory in the Roman imagination. The triumphal parade also created the first Roman impression of "Asia" as a wealthy, populated, and militarily weak geopolitical unit--an impression that continued into the empire.

4.1. 2nd-Century BCE Triumphs

In Rome, after the Battle of Magnesia but before Scipio celebrated his triumph, the Senate oversaw two important decisions: first, to ratify the peace with Antiochus, and second, to vote to honor Scipio with a triumph. As recorded in both Polybius and Livy, envoys from Antiochus (Zeuxis and Antipater, according to Polybius) presented the terms of peace to the Senate, who then voted to ratify the treaty.[202] In this process, we learn that not only did Rome divide Asia into different regions, but also sent ten legates to represent Roman interests in the region and settle disputes--one of whom was probably Lucius

[202] Polybius 21.24.1-15; Livy 37.55.1-7.

Orbius, the "ἐπιμεληsόμενον τῆς πόλεως," noted in the letter Scipio as the Roman commander sent to watch over the inhabitants of Herakleia, discussed in the previous chapter.[203] Scipio had left Asia shortly after Zeuxis and Antipater, and according to Polybius and Livy, celebrated a triumph following the ratification of the treaty.

After the ratification of the treaty came the awarding of the triumph. Triumphs could only be awarded by the Senate, and scholarship over the past decade has explored why controlling who received a triumph was important in the 2nd century BCE.[204] There are ancient sources that indicate that in order to be awarded a triumph, certain specific conditions that had to be met--however, these sources are untrustworthy. Valerius Maximus in particular, writing during the reign of Tiberius, claimed in his *de iure triumphandi* that the triumph was only rewarded for victories that added new territory to the Roman empire, and for battles in which at least 5,000 were killed in a single battle.[205] However, scholars Dart and Vervaet have demonstrated that this rule is a "fanciful or unhistorical fabrication," looking to the *Fasti Triumphales* and other documents that show that new territorial domination could not be a prerequisite for awarding a triumph.[206] Even if Valerius Maximus' claims are false, there is an interesting moment in Livy in the awarding of Scipio his triumph over Asia and Antiochus, in which the territory and enemy Scipio successfully conquered differed from a previous battle in Thermopylae.[207] Thus, even if new territorial acquisition was not a prerequisite for every triumph throughout the

[203] Polybius. 21.24.5; SEG 37, 860, 16.
[204] For discussion of triumphs awarded by senate as a way of "policing" the victory, see Clark (2014) 100.
[205] Valerius Maximus "*de iure triumphandi*" 2.8.
[206] Dart and Vervaet (2014) 63.
[207] Livy 39.57.3-4.

Republic, in Livy there was a need for Scipio to differentiate the specifics his victory from others' before he was awarded with a triumph.[208]

Ultimately, scholars have argued that while the specifics do vary and alter over time, there appear to be certain prerequisites and regulations that determined a general's eligibility for a triumph.[209] Firstly, *triumphators* usually had to have consular power while holding *imperium*, though there were exceptions.[210] Scipio held consular powers for 190/189, with Greece as his province during the Roman-Seleucid War.[211] Secondly, not only was the Senate was the ultimate arbitrator of the honor, the hopeful general formally had to petition the Senate, which was done outside of the city's *pomerium*.[212] While there is no such discussion in Polybius regarding a debate over conferring a triumph to Scipio,

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[208] Livy 37.58.6-8: *Haud ita multo post L. Scipio ad urbem uenit; qui ne cognomini fratris cederet, Asiaticum se appellari uoluit. et in senatu et in contione de rebus ab se gestis disseruit. erant qui fama id maius bellum quam difficultate rei fuisse interpretarentur: uno memorabili proelio debellatum, gloriamque eius uictoriae praefloratam ad Thermopylas esse. ceterum uere aestimanti Aetolicum magis ad Thermopylas bellum quam regium fuit; quota enim parte uirium suarum ibi dimicauit Antiochus? in Asia totius Asiae steterunt uires ab ultimis Orientis finibus omnium gentium contractis auxiliis./* Not long afterward Lucius Scipio came to the city; he wished to be named "Asiaticus" so that he would not be overshadowed by his brother with regard to his *cognomen*. He gave an account of his achievements both in the senate and in popular assembly. There were some who claimed that the war enjoyed a greater reputation than its difficult warranted: it had been finished off with a single notable encounter and furthermore the glory of that victory had been forestalled at Thermopylae. But, to look at it fairly, the battle at Thermopylae was more with the Aetolians than the king—for it was with what fraction of his forces that Antiochus fought there? In Asia the strength of all Asia stood with him, with auxiliary troops of all its races drawn from the furthest boundaries of the east. Ed. and transl by Yardley (2018) 468-471.

[209] One of the most in-depth looks at these prerequisites comes from Pittenger (2008) who determined that in Livy, the awarding of triumphs included: approval from the Senate or peers; the need for clear *imperium*; the holding of other higher ranking offices; bringing a war to an end; enemy casualties (though these numbers are not to be trusted for reconstructing battles); and finally, the need for debate as a prerequisite to the triumph.

[210] Mommsen first demonstrated that the generals awarded triumph held a magistracy while holding *imperium*; Mommsen (1887) 1, 126–36; Richardson notes during the period between 200-170 that the rules for who was awarded a triumph changed, noting that L. Furius Purpureo was the first general to celebrate a triumph as a praetor without consular powers, Richardson (1975) 52-54; Lundgreen (2014) 27; Itgenshorst (2005) 187-188; Beard herself notes that there is no set criteria for the triumph, and suggests that Livy himself grappled with the changing standards; Beard (2007) 209.

[211] Polo (2011) 292-222.

[212] For the appeal to the Senate outside the *pomerium* see Pittenger (2009) 35-37.

we do see in Livy that a vague reference to an arbitration, that possibly occurred in the Temple of Apollo outside of the city, and ultimately deemed Scipio's victory over Antiochus as worthy of a triumph.[213] In fact, it is not until the trials of Scipio and other generals in 187 (two years after the triumph) that we see (in Livy) the specifics of Scipio's victory, and its worthiness of a triumph, is called into question, which is treated in a later section in this chapter.[214]

Thus, Scipio was awarded his triumph in 189. The question, then, is what did this particular triumph signify in Rome at the time? Notably, problems relating to later imperial sources, such as the *Fasti Triumphales*, make it difficult to discern elements of earlier Republican triumphs.[215] When it comes to the element of spectacle, scholars including Brilliant and Östenberg, have relied upon late Republic to imperial sources (and parades), which place emphasis on the glory of the *triumphator*, and recreate the battle through paintings and other dramatic displays.[216] Nevertheless, scholars have been able to identify certain aspects about the second-century Republican triumph from contemporary Republican sources.[217] Itgenshorst, for instance, identifies multiple important functions the triumph held during the Republic using only sources from the era. She argues that during the Republic, the triumph came to have the following functions: as a way for soldiers to

[213] Livy 37.59.3-4. The previous triumph awarded to Regillus was discussed by the Senate in the Temple of Apollo, Livy 37.59.1; Polybus 21.24.17.
[214] For dating, see Gruen (1995) 78; Polybius. 23.14.1-4; Livy. 38.59.
[215] There are debates pertaining to the triumphs listed in the *Fasti Triumphales* before 300; for a summary of the debate, see Lange (2016) 58.
[216] Brilliant (1999) 221-229; Östenberg goes into greater detail about the communal function of the triumph, and the importance of elements of the spectacle--however, her work does not focus specifically on the middle-republican triumph and thus many of her sources are later; Östenberg (2009) 7-9.
[217] See in particular the 2016 compilation of essays by Lange and Vervaet.

transition back into the civil sphere in Rome; as a way for the people to participate in the victory; as a way to communicate with the gods; and as a way to bring booty into the city and signify the end of the conflict.[218]

While each of these functions of the Republican triumph are important, the emphasis on the imported elements of display as war booty is specifically relevant for the current case study exploring how Asia as a geopolitical unit becomes initially incorporated into the Roman imagination. The booty, and the splendor of the triumph as presented through the display of foreign objects was used to convey specific messages about the victory. After going through the triumphal procession, some treasures were placed on display in Rome, both in public and private contexts, both as a way to commemorate the victory permanently, and to establish the successful incorporation of these foreign elements into Rome by creating a space for the objects within the Roman cityscape.[219] Thus, the objects and people presented as booty and captives in the triumph visually created a specific narratives before the Roman audience--one which both allows the audience to participate in the victory, and ceremonially establishes that which is on display as officially Roman, or under Roman domain.[220] What this means, therefore, is that in context, Scipio's parade conveyed a message of successful military victory over the armies of Antiochus IV,

[218] Itgenshorst (2005) 209-213; these are similar to the functions noted by Holliday, who writes that the three functions of the Republican triumph were to (1) acknowledge success and purify the soldiers contaminated by bloodguilt of war; (2) appease and honor the gods; (3) justify the military campaign to the people and Senate who remained in Rome; Holliday (1997) 130-147.
[219] See the discussion of the messages war booty conveyed in Rome, as well as the establishment of temples and other permanent exhibitions of booty Hölscher (2009) 40-42.
[220] Beard (2007) 141.

but more specifically one of the initial incorporation of the geopolitical territory of "Asia," along with its wealth and inhabitants, into the Roman domain.

In contrast, as we saw in the previous chapter, parade culture in West Asia was a performative spectacle of gift-exchange dating back to the Achaemenids.[221] It created a facade of peaceful unity within the empire that downplayed violent domination of territories and peoples, while emphasizing the role of the king as the figurehead through whom this peaceful unity and empire were fostered.[222] Importantly, in the case of L. Scipio, it also played into the public announcement of gifting *eleutheria* to local *poleis.* Conversely, the function of the Roman triumph in the second century indicates that in Rome during the Republic (and later), the narrative of conquest presented to the Roman audience depicted an entirely different message from West Asian parades, one that tells not just of the defeat of King Antiochus, but the incorporation of Asia under Roman domain.[223] While a crown offered, perhaps from the city of Herakleia, to Scipio in West Asia signified a gift-giving exchange as a form of negotiations between an imperial center and *polis*, there was no indication at Rome that the same crown was presented to a Roman audience as a gift in Scipio's parade.[224] Instead, the triumphal object list of Scipio's parade has the crowns appear alongside the other booty, with no indication that they may have

[221] For Achaemenid gift-exchange: Mousavi (2012), 18; Waters (2014) 144.
[222] Waters (2014) 143-44.
[223] For captives and subjugation, see Östenberg (2009) 127.
[224] In the parade of Flamininus, in contrast, Livy is sure to clarify that the crowns paraded are, in fact, gifts from cities. Livy 34.52.8; see Östenberg (2009) 122.

been gifts from cities, thereby implying that they were taken by the Romans on account of their superior military might.

What this means is that the context for triumphal parades in Republican Rome suggests that the narrative of conquest envisioned and cemented at Rome through Scipio's triumphal parade stands in contrast with the *euergetistic* promises of *eleutheria* presented to local populations in West Asia (discussed in the previous chapter). It also means that when the geopolitical entity of Asia was introduced to the Roman audience via the triumph, it was done so under the context of conquest and incorporation into Rome's dominion by L. Scipio --Asia, and the goods it offered, were now Roman-controlled. Scipio, moreover, appears in the narrative of conquest as the primary person through whom this territory was won--however his status as a Roman was that of a military general, and not a royal figure. Thus, to explore the details of how Asia as a geopolitical entity first appeared in Rome, let us consider the message portrayed by the triumph by looking at the objects on display.

4.2: Sources for Scipio's triumph: Livy

Livy's list of objects paraded in Scipio's triumph is by far the most detailed ancient account of what was displayed. However, there is a disagreement in scholarship about the reliability of Livy's numbers, particularly as they pertain to the objects imported during triumphs. On the one side of this argument we have Beard, who says that scholars tend to

overly depend upon ancient numbers in their analyses.[225] On the other side is Lange, who suggests that scholars can cautiously trust that Livy's numbers were based on some kind of official recorded archive.[226] The existence of a recorded archive of war booty is not only based on Livy, but also on Cicero, who also notes that the paraded booty was submitted to the treasury after the triumph of Publius Servilius, and a list of objects was made public.[227] As Beard herself even notes, Livy's records of triumphal booty following 200 appear to come from an official archive (although Beard chooses to distrust the archival records themselves rather than Livy).[228] Thus, while it has been shown that Livy specifically tends to exaggerate the number of soldiers and war dead (both in higher and lower numbers), Livy did not appear to exaggerate when it came to booty brought into Rome via triumphal parades, as this information was based on archival evidence available to Livy.[229]

Additionally, scholars, including Gruen, have depended upon the numbers present in Livy to make historical claims.[230] At the very least, investigation of these numbers adds to pre-existing scholarly conversations that depend upon these numbers. Additionally, such an investigation formulates a more complete understanding of Livy's text and his treatment of the Roman-Seleucid War, and provides additional information about how this specific triumph was memorialized in the Late Republic and Early Empire. However, if we approach these numbers with less skepticism, and treat the official records Livy used as

[225] Beard (2007) 39-40.
[226] Lange (2016) 3-4.
[227] Cicero. *In Verrem*. 2.1.56-7; discussed in Lange (2016) 4; also discussed in Rutledge (2012) 45.
[228] Beard (2007) 170-171; Crawford (1993) 8.
[229] For the soldiers, Grainger believes that the actual numbers are doubled what Livy reports for Scipio's army and halved what he reports for Antiochus' army; Grainger (2002) 321-322, 328.
[230] Gruen (1995) 71.

generally accurate and unaltered, we can read into these numbers the specific aspects of cultural exchange between West Asia and Rome during Scipio's triumph.[231] Thus, it is possible to conduct a layered reading of the catalogue of Scipio's triumph in Livy. The first layer is one that considers Livy's record of the catalogue as historically reliable enough to use for analysis of the spectacle of the parade in 189; while the second layer (explored further in section 4.3) looks at the memory of the parade in later Roman imagination, exploring the passage within context of Livy's narrative. Both layers depend upon understanding the significance of the individual elements of display--that is, what each element conveys to the audience (either the spectator of the historical parade, or the reader of Livy) about the narrative of the conquest of West Asia that the parade projects. As such, it is necessary to examine the catalogue critically, and place it both within historical context of 189, and literary context within Livy's narrative.

Livy's list of numbers and display features in Scipio's triumph are as follows: 224 military standards, 134 town models, 1231 ivory tusks, 224 gold crowns, 137,420 pounds silver, 224,000 Attic *tetradrachms*, 321,070 *cistophori*, 140,000 Philippians, 1423 pounds silver vases, 1023 golden vases and 32 captives.[232] The elements of the spectacle as listed

[231] Briscoe's commentary on Livy does not advocate for any textual emendation to the numbers listed in this passage; Briscoe (1981) 391-393.

[232] Taken from the following passage, Livy 37.59. 3-6: *tulit in triumpho signa militaria ducenta uiginti quattuor, oppidorum simulacra centum triginta quattuor, eburneos dentes mille ducentos triginta unum, aureas coronas ducentas triginta quattuor, argenti pondo centum triginta septem milia quadringenta uiginti, tetrachmum Atticorum ducenta uiginti quattuor milia, cistophori trecenta uiginti unum milia septuaginta, nummos aureos Philippeos centum quadraginta milia, uasorum argenteorum—omnia caelata erant—mille pondo et quadringenta uiginti tria, aureorum mille pondo uiginti tria. et duces regii, praefecti, purpurati duo et triginta ante currum ducti. militibus quini uiceni denarii dati, duplex centurioni, triplex equiti. et stipendium militare et frumentum duplex post triumphum datum; proelio in Asia facto duplex dederat. triumphauit anno fere post, quam consulatu abiit.*

here can be divided into two broad categories: those objects which could have been included in the talents given to Rome by Antiochus himself (namely, silver and gold), and everything else. The latter category includes the standards, town models, ivory tusks, captives, and possibly the golden crowns. This category contains elements of display which signify Antiochus' defeat through a combination of symbolic imagery and violent subjugation, and is important in reconstructing the narrative of the victory over Antiochus that Scipio was crafting for the Roman people. The category of display objects in Scipio's triumph pertaining to wealth, specifically the gold and silver calculated in terms of coins, would have, or could have, been the money paid to Scipio by Antiochus as his indemnity. As such, it is worthwhile to compare the calculation of the cost of these objects to the value of the silver and gold with the talents Antiochus gave Rome.[233]

According to Polybius 21.42.19, Antiochus was to give Scipio an initial down payment of 500 talents, followed by another payment of 2,500 talents as soon as the Senate agreed to the terms of peace. This was to be followed by 10 yearly installments of 1,000 talents.[234] The 2,500 talents following the ratification of the Peace was accepted by Vulso in Apamea, presumably after Scipio had already returned to Italy. While this part of the timeline is significant, it is noteworthy that according to both Polybius and Livy, Scipio did not enter Rome or speak with the Senators until after the treaty was ratified, which brings up the question: Were the Roman Senators expecting Scipio to bring into Rome 500

[233] In Polybius 21.32.8, we see that the Romans allow the Aetolians to use a combination of silver and gold to comprise a talent, and that the gold to silver ratio is listed at 1:10. The Aetolians are also told they can only substitute a maximum of ⅓ of the entire talent in gold.
[234] Polybius 21.17.4.

talents, or 3,000? This is important because, according to the timeline and the official narrative for the exchange of wealth, the maximum amount of talents Scipio could have had on him from his dealings with Antiochus was 500.[235] We might add another 1,000 to this number following Scipio's dealings with the Aetoleans--however, because the triumph of Scipio was over Antiochus in Asia specifically (and there is noted a separation between Antiochus' defeat and the Aetolean defeat), including the money for this earlier indemnity would have been problematic, confusing the narrative of victory.[236] Perhaps it is possible that Vulso, after receiving the money from Antiochus immediately sent it to Scipio in Italy, but the timing does not work smoothly. Ultimately, the timeline of when that 2,500 talents was brought into Rome--and the expectations of how much wealth Scipio was going to present--are unclear.

To complicate matters, Scipio also gifted his soldiers sums of silver *denarii.*[237] Gruen has stated that these gifts were accounted for in the 500 talents Antiochus initially gave Scipio, which roughly equates to 3,000,000 *denarii*.[238] Problematically, however, if you calculate the total amount of *denarii* given to Scipio's soldiers, using Livy's possibly inflated numbers of soldiers, the amount does not come anywhere close to 3,000,00 *denarii* (see Figure 4). Based on Livy 37.39, 59, 2200 Roman Cavalry were paid 75 *denarii* each, coming to a total of 165,000 *denarii*, 10,000 legionnaires received 25 denarii each, coming

[235] According to Polybius, the remaining 2,500 talents was not picked up until after Vulso as consul arrived to take over for Scipio in Asia, and defeated the Gauls (189); Polybius. 21.40.8.
[236] Livy 37.58.8.
[237] Livy 37.59.6: *militibus quini uiceni denarii dati, duplex centurioni, triplex equiti*. The first time a donative was silver--beforehand copper was used; Sage (1935) 476 n.2.
[238] Gruen (1995) 75; Waterfield multiplies amount of talents by 6,000 to determine total cost in *denarii*, Waterfield (2014) 245.

to 250,000 *denarii,* and if we understand there to be one centurion for every eighty legionnaires, we are looking at 125 centurions, paid 50 *denarii* each, for a total of 6,250. If from this we subtract the *denarii* from the soldiers who died in the battle, the total amount paid to soldiers only comes to 421,250 *denarii*, meaning that a large sum of money is missing from the calculation, which creates a problem: where did the remaining amount of Antiochus' indemnity go?

Scholars including Gruen have been quick to suggest that Scipio pocketed the rest of the money (although neglected to calculate how much), however have not calculated the amount of wealth included in the triumphal parade.[239] Interestingly enough, however, the total cost of everything paraded on the triumph, when added to the total sum of the donatives gifted to the Roman soldiers according to Livy's numbers, greatly surpasses 500 talents. In fact, the number equates to slightly over 3,000 talents--specifically between 18,078,115-19,340,115 *denarii* which is surprisingly close to the total amount of the first indemnity of 18,000,000 *denarii* Polybius claims Antiochus gave to the Romans (see Figure 4).[240] What this suggests is that it is possible that both Livy and Polybius were getting their information from a similar source. With these numbers in hand, several conclusions can be drawn. First, the parade of Scipio as it appears in Livy showed off wealth equating to more than 3,000 talents, putting on display more than the entire figure Antiochus gave the Romans as his initial down payment of his indemnity--which is

[239] Waterfield, like Gruen, believes Scipio kept the money; Waterfield (2014) 17; Rosensstein calculated the cost of the triumph, Rosenstein (2011) 153.
[240] 3,000 talents, see Polybius 21.17.4, which calculates out to 18,000,000 *denarii* according to Waterfield (2014) 17, 24.

problematic when realizing that it is likely that 2,500 talents of that amount was not in Scipio's possession at the time of the triumph.

One way to account for this discrepancy (in addition to the fact that the numbers come out to slightly more than 3,000 talents in total) is to suggest that if the numbers in Livy are taken from accurate archival records, then a significant portion of the wealth paraded came from somewhere else. It is likely that this extra wealth would have originated from the local *poleis* in West Asia offering gifts to Scipio specifically as part of preexisting customs pertaining to *polis*-empire negotiations in West Asia discussed in the previous chapter. We know from inscriptions examined in the previous chapter that the Scipios negotiated with polities using the same type of *euergetistm* and gift-exchange models. As such, the additional wealth paraded in Scipio's triumph likely could be the result of Scipio presenting himself to West Asian polities as a new king, representing a new imperial power, to whom local governments would offer gifts.

But the wealth, while significant in the creation of a visual representation of Asia as a territory with already portable wealth (as opposed to wealth that required mining operations to access, such as the silver in Spain), only tells part of the conquest narrative as present in Livy's account.[241] To understand the significance of each of these elements of display within Scipio's triumph, we must contextualize each part. Following Livy's order, the 224 military standards are simultaneously both the most difficult to pinpoint, and the clearest element that appeals to a specifically Roman audience. In the Republic (and

[241] None of the triumphs over Spain in the second century list coins, all wealth is listed in pounds of gold or silver, in addition to crowns. See Rosenstein (2011) 155-158.

later) *signa militaria* had value as tools of battle, and were of great symbolic importance. Töpfer's study on *signa militaria* in the Republic and Empire noted that standards were used on the battlefield as a way to identify groups and as tactical field signs demarcating divisions within the army.[242] But the importance of the standard to Romans transcended their tactical use--they, as Töpfer likewise notes, carried symbolic weight, representing power and strength (and during the empire, attained a cult-like veneration).[243] Capturing a standard was the ultimate sign of defeat.

In the Roman army during the Republic (before Marius' reforms) there were five standards per legion, and somewhere between 4500 and 5000 soldiers per legion.[244] This means that there were roughly 1,000 or so soldiers per standard in the Roman army at this time. Thus, 224 military standards would signify to a Roman watching the parade without any prior knowledge of the organization of the Seleucid military (but with knowledge of the organization of the Roman army), that Scipio defeated around 224,000 soldiers in Antiochus' army. This number surpasses even the exaggerated records of the total soldiers in Antiochus' army (70,000), and ultimately, tells us more about the narrative of victory being cultivated through Scipio's triumph, than provides accurate data regarding the defeat of the Seleucids.

The Seleucids did not use military standards in the same way as Romans (if they used them at all). Literary depictions of the Seleucid army do not note anything that

[242] Töpfer (2011) 1.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Some scholars have argued for four standards at this time. See arguments about number of standards in Matthew (2009) 52.

resembles a standard, even in ceremonial functions.[245] While there is literary evidence of Achaemenids and Greeks using objects that are similar in function to the *militaria signa* in Rome, the symbolic function of a military standard in Rome does not appear to have an exact cultural equivalent in West Asia.[246] In fact, it is difficult to establish exactly what West Asian objects were being displayed as a military standards in this particular parade. However, because Scipio's triumph over Antiochus is the first moment that the Asian military is represented in Rome *en masse*, it is unlikely that the audience of Scipio's parade would fully understand the cultural differences pertaining to *signa militaria.* Instead, a Roman audience at the turn of the century would have seen paraded enemy standards as indicating defeat of that enemy (whether or not this was actually the case on-site), and for the triumph of Scipio, that the number of enemies defeated was incredibly large.

After the standards, Livy lists 134 town models or *oppidorum simulacra.* Like the military standards, scholars are unsure what exactly these objects were--some say personifications of conquered cities, while others suggest they were some sort of 'panoramic view' of the city.[247] While we know paintings were used in triumphs of the Late Republic, it is more likely that the *simulacra* here are representative personifications, possibly in the form of statues. Notably, the usage of the term *simulacra* to refer to art in

[245] See, for instance, the description of the parade at Daphne in Polybius 31.3.
[246] In Xenophon's *Cyropaedia,* for instance, the Persian King's σημεῖον is noted as a golden staff with an eagle; Xen. *Cyropaedia.* 7.1.4; according to Diodorus Siculus, the Athenian general Conon used a red flag to give the signal to attack; Diodorus Siculus. 13.77.4.
[247] Panoramic View, see Holliday (2002) 105. As paintings see Strong (1929)58-59; For personifications, see Mattern (2002)166; for doubt on the ability to know what the *oppicorum simulacra* are, Clark (2007) 160 n. 110, although Clark does not contextualize individual instances of representations, which is a critique of broader scholarship on treatments of objects included in triumphs as a whole.

Roman literature support the suggestion that these *simulacra* were statuary personifications of the cities in West Asia.[248] Also of note is an intriguing instance of the personifications of cities used in parades is found in the procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which, like Scipio's triumph, paraded representations of cities from territories in West Asia (as discussed in Chapter 1).[249] Thus, because both parades are displaying objects from the same territory, it is possible that the *simulacra oppidum* are similar to the personifications in Ptolemy's parade.

Whether these *oppidorum simulacra* were personifications or panoramic views, the impact upon the Roman audience seeing these representations in the triumph is threefold. First, it continues in the creation of the narrative of Scipio's campaign. In context, the representations make it appear to the audience that 134 *poleis* were conquered, and added to the Roman domain (though there is no evidence that this happened on-site). Second, their appearance in the spectacle ceremonially imports these cities into Rome, moving the periphery to the center, and makes the far-off landscape of West Asia tangible for the Romans who have not travelled East. Bringing these representations into the city validates not only their existence, but their incorporation into Romain dominion. Third, the models

[248] Etymology of *simulacra* in ancient artistic contexts, see Stewart (2003) 26; in the *Pompa Circensis, simulacra* were statues depicting personified deities; Latham (2016) 45.
[249] For this comparison see Toynbee (1934) 11; however, Toynbee states that these must have been painted figures (but provides no reason for this statement). Interestingly, the personifications on the parade of Ptolemy Philadelphus were plausibly statues (ἀγάλματα) of women who were dressed up like the cities, and include the cities in West Asia which were possibly also represented with *simulacra* in Scipio's parade Athenaeus. *Deipnosophists*. 201e: "γυναῖκες ἔχουσαι ἱμάτια πολυτελῆ καὶ κόσμον προσηγορεύοντο δὲ πόλεις, αἵ τε ἀπ᾽ Ἰωνίας καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ Ἑλληνίδες ὅσαι τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ τὰς νήσους κατοικοῦσαι ὑπὸ τοὺς Πέρσας ἐτάχθησαν ἐφόρουν δὲ πᾶσαι στεφάνους χρυσοῦς." The reason to suspect that the women here are actually statues is because this is part of a longer section on statues that were a part of Ptolemy Philadelphus' parade, including ἀγάλματα of Ptolemy himself, and a statue of Priapus. Athenaus. *Deiphnosophists*. 201d.

also suggest something about the nature of the peoples conquered. The representations of *oppida* signify to the Roman audience that Asia is well-populated by peoples and contains multiple economic centers.

After the *oppidorum simulacra* come the 1231 ivory tusks, *eburneos dentes.* In context of the war with Antiochus, the ivory tusks as symbols of Seleucid war elephants represent the destruction of the King's elephant force, and perhaps invoke the recent memory Hannibal's Italian invasion (who was fighting alongside Antiochus in the Roman-Seleucid War).[250] What the tusks convey in the campaign narrative is that Antiochus' elephants have been neutralized, are no longer a threat--as Rutledge says, "metaphorically neutered."[251] This is particularly important for the narrative of conquest presented in the parade when considering that the last time elephants were paraded on triumph in Rome was during Scipio Africanus' triumph, celebrating his victory at Zama.[252] In this parade, subjugated elephants were supposed to represent the neutralization of Hannibal's army--but the appearance of Hannibal in Antiochus' court and during the Roman-Seleucid war meant that he had not been neutralized as a threat. The tusks, though perhaps not as visually captivating as a live elephant, make clear that the elephant threat posed by Antiochus--and Hannibal--are permanently destroyed.

However, the number of tusks in the triumph is misleading, and creates a sense that the elephant threat in West Asia was far larger than it was in the Battle of Magnesia.

[250] Grainger calls Hannibal a "refugee" in Antiochus' court; Grainger (2015) 154.
[251] Rutledge (2012) 285
[252] Östenberg (2014) 504.

According to Livy, Antiochus had 54 Asian elephants in the Battle, and the Romans had 16 North African elephants.[253] Thus, even if the Romans slaughtered all elephants on both sides (of which there is no evidence), the number of tusks in Livy represents a much larger number of elephants than in the battle.[254] So where might these tusks have originated, if not from the elephants in the Battle of Magnesia? We know that Apamea is where the Seleucids stabled elephants since the Battle of Ipsus, so one suggestion is that the tusks as remains from elephants since the beginning of the Seleucid empire simply came from Apamea.[255] The Seleucids, however, were also involved in the ivory trade, and it appears as though public displays of large numbers of tusks became a point of competition between Seleucids and Ptolemies.[256] Thus we ought not discount the idea that the elephant tusks came to Scipio via ivory trade networks. Ultimately, no matter how Scipio got hold of these tusks, their appearance in the triumph convey to the Roman audience two pieces of information about the campaign: the Seleucids had at their disposal a vast number of elephants, and those elephants are now dead.

The 32 captives (which notably excludes King Antiochus) put a face to the enemy and are a form of actual violence. In Livy these figures are unnamed--simply "generals, prefects, and high-officers of the king."[257] We do know that Antipater and Zeuxis were in

[253] Livy 37.39.12-13.
[254] We are, in comparison, told that Cn. Octavius maimed the elephants at Apamea during the reign of Antiochus IV; Polybius 31.2.9-11.
[255] Bar Kochva (1976) 77; Kistler (2007) 79; Trautmann (2015) 236 also puts forth that the Mauryans supplied elephants to the Seleucids at the end of the 3rd century.
[256] Barnette (1982) 66; on the increase of Seleucid ivory resources after gaining Phoenecia from the Ptolemies, see Tarn (1951) 357.
[257] Livy 37.59.5: *duces regii, praefecti, purpurati*.

Rome before Scipio arrived on triumph, but it seems unlikely that either of them were included in the spectacle as Livy makes no note of it, and according to Polybius, they were preparing to depart Rome with the ten Roman envoys (but it is not impossible).[258] What is equally frustrating is that we have no indication of the fate of these captives--not all captives on triumph were executed, and there are instances of some captives allowed to live in Roman society or return home (though these instances were rare and occurred later).[259] What we can tell from Livy is that these captives are high-ranking individuals, and while it is not much information, it is enough to analyze their role in the campaign narrative of the spectacle.

Because the individuals in Scipio's parade were high-ranking, the implication for the triumph is the destruction of Antiochus' court (*purpurati*), his army (*duces*), and his imperial network (*praefecti*). These terms used here for different branches of Seleucid upper classes are notably Roman--on inscriptions the Seleucids interchanged the term general and governor (στρατηγὸς), for instance, and we also know that the Seleucid court was a complex system of *philoi* from a variety of different ethnic groups.[260] What we thus are witnessing here is the introduction and translation of Seleucid hierarchies before the Roman public, with the implication that the powerful individuals in the Seleucid court are now under the control of Rome. This is, of course, a misrepresentation of what happened on-site. The true dismantling of the Seleucid court would have been the appearance of King Antiochus in Scipio's parade—but Antiochus remained in his kingdom. Those who are in

[258] Polybius 21.24.16.
[259] For a comprehensive discussion on captives, see Östenberg (2009) 128-167.
[260] Rajak (2007) 226; Engles (2017) 84-85.

the procession thus are stand-ins for the king, meant to portray to the Roman audience that the Seleucids have been defeated, even though the reality of the defeat did not result in Romans completely dismantling Seleucid structures.

Lastly, the 224 crowns occupy an interesting space in the triumph, and the main question here is whether or not they would have been included in Antiochus' indemnity. Scholarship on crowns, especially as described in the previous chapter, suggests that these crowns were likely gifts to Scipio from local populations, and not necessarily from Antiochus himself.[261] However, it is possible that the crowns (as gifts given to the Seleucids) were supplied from Antiochus, and as such, still worthwhile to estimate the possible value of the crowns in the triumph in order to calculate the whole cost of the wealth shown in the spectacle. While Livy lists the number of crowns, he frustratingly does not list the weight, which would have given us a better idea of calculating value. And what is more is that the size and value of Hellenistic crowns varied greatly, with ancient accounts listing one weighing as much as 150 talents.[262] For the sake of numbers, we do know from the inventory inscription at Delos that Scipio and the other generals on campaign in the Roman-Seleucid war donated golden crowns worth 100 *drachma*.[263] Earlier crown donations on the inscription list a wide array of values, worth anywhere from 3-217 drachma. Of the 53 crowns (or pieces of crowns) mentioned in the inventory, ten are listed as worth 100 *drachma*, making this the most common monetary value listed for crowns in the inventory. Thus, in order to come up with an approximation for the worth of crowns on

[261] For crowns as gifts to Hellenistic kings, see Ma (1999) 37; Strootman (2014) 159; Zollschan (2016) 79.
[262] Polybius 21.30.10.
[263] ID 442 B 100-102.

the triumph, we will use the 100-*drachma* value taken from the inventory inscription at Delos (see Figure 4 for crown cost).

When putting together all the elements of display in Livy's account of Scipio's triumph, we can piece together the parade as the initial introduction of the land of Asia into Roman visual culture and see where later stereotypes (especially those pertaining to wealth) originated, or at the very least, where Livy thought they originated.[264] The elements of the parade, however, were in part reactions to contemporary Roman expectations, and an apparent push to construct a campaign narrative that left Antiochus' army destroyed, and successfully incorporated Asian *poleis* and territory into Roman dominion (regardless of the situation on the ground in West Asia). This narrative of conquest is conveyed through the manipulated meaning of objects--gifts and possibly ambassadors--taken out of their original context in West Asia, and re--or mis--interpreted before a Roman audience as war booty and war captives.

Importantly, the person through whom this manipulated interpretation is brought to Rome is L. Scipio.[265] As the *triumphator* he not only has the glory associated with defeating Antiochus and adding Asia to Roman territory, but he also has the responsibility for properly introducing these foreign elements into Rome. What becomes problematic is that in order to secure Roman interests in Asia, Scipio had to act like a king, accepting treaties and gifts from local peoples in his name on behalf of Rome and presenting himself as an

[264] Östenberg (2009) 91; Schneider dates the import of what he calls "the Asian" into Rome during the reign of Augustus via stereotypes about Parthians, and images of Trojan princes, but the parade of Scipio shows that Asian culture was brought into Rome more than a century earlier; Schneider (2012) 81.
[265] Note that it is unclear who actually organized the pageantry of triumphal processions, Beard (2007) 250.

elevated *strategos hypatos* alongside his brother.[266] In Rome, however, the nature of these negotiations, and the need for adoption of local conditions in the securing of territory, became blurred, and eventually the wealth (and with it, the campaign narrative) became suspect, as we see in section 4.4. However, the result of these negotiations is an opulent spectacle that was remembered in later Roman writings as the event that introduced *luxuria* into Rome, and solidified the stereotype of Asian opulence.

4.3 Early Imperial Reception of Scipio's Triumph and the origins of *Luxuria*

One of the primary functions of Scipio's parade (both historical and literary) was to display the booty and captives from Asia before the eyes of the Romans, so that the city celebrated and partook in the victory. But in Livy's larger narrative, the pageantry of Scipio's triumph serves warn the reader about the misleading opulence of Eastern victory celebrations, and is loosely attached to the importation of specifically Asian *luxuria* into the city of Rome.[267] Effectively, Roman imperial authors used the opulence of the triumph as a way to critique L. Scipio. This is a similar to what Mary Beard demonstrated happened with the Roman literary reception of Pompey and his large triumph. According to Beard,

[266] The differences between Rome and West Asian conceptions of empire boil down to the figure of a king. As shown in the previous chapter, West Asian peoples negotiated with the empires in control of their territory through gift-giving exchanges, with the figure of the imperial king and his family appearing as the figureheads. As inscriptions indicate, the Romans through the figure of L. Scipio adopted these previously existing modes of negotiation, appearing as the main figure through whom peace was negotiated, introducing his brother as a stand-in for a royal family as was custom in local contexts, and thus appeared to locals as an imperial king in all but title.

[267] Feldherr (1997) 183 argues that *luxuria* and foreignness is responsible for the "denegration of Rome;" see also Gorman and Gorman (2014) 338.

imperial authors looked at Pompey's triumph over the East as a way to discuss the not just the effeminization of the general, but also to discuss his fall from political power, and even allude to his eventual, humiliating death.[268] In this way, the opulent pageantry of Pompey's triumphal procession over the East as a way to depict or prove military achievement backfired--instead it was commemorated in Roman authors as the point at which his political and personal life began to fall.

A similar phenomenon happens with L. Scipio's triumph in these later authors--however, as the first triumph over "Asia," this parade holds a specific place in the importation of Asian *luxuria* into Rome. When Livy introduced L. Scipio's triumph, he does so by comparing it with the triumph of Africanus. As discussed in section 4.2, the elephant tusks in particular link L. Scipio's own victory to Africanus' war against Hannibal. By presenting parts of dead elephants, Hannibal's threat on the battlefield has been eliminated. But Livy warns the reader not to get distracted, as the opulence of the spectacle does not correspond to the valor of the victory:

> *qui triumphus spectaculo oculorum maior quam Africani fratris eius fuit, recordatione rerum et aestimatione periculi certaminisque non magis comparandus, quam si imperatorem imperatori aut Antiochum ducem Hannibali conferres.* [269]

> His triumph was greater than his brother Africanus' in spectacle, but in the recollection of the events and in determination of the danger of the battles, it ought not be compared more than if you were to bring together the general to the general, or Antiochus as a leader with Hannibal.

[268] Beard (2007) 35-36.
[269] Livy. 37.59.2.

Thus, by comparing L. Scipio with Africanus, Livy makes it clear to the reader that the opulence of the parade is not to be mistaken for great military achievement. Additionally, Livy later notes, Roman soldiers in Asia had it relatively easy, as there were occupying a land that held luxuries and wealth, and an enemy who was easy to conquer--all of which made the soldiers, "rich rather than brave."[270] Thus, the geopolitical location, and the weak enemy that inhabited there, were what led to Scipio having an opulent triumph in Livy's narrative, rather than military might.

After Livy, Scipio's triumph continued to gain notoriety in Pliny's writings. Pliny firmly dates Scipio's triumph to the initial import of "luxury" into Italy:

> *Asia primum devicta luxuriam misit in Italiam, siquidem L. Scipio in triumpho transtulit argenti caelati pondo mille et CCCC* [1400 pounds] *et vasorum aureorum pondo MD* [1500 pounds].[271]
>
> Conquered Asia first sent luxury into Italy, since indeed L. Scipio brought over on triumph 1400 pounds of engraved silver and 1500 pounds of gold dishes.

Beard points out that ancient authors equate the import of wealth and treasures via the triumph with the perceived moral decline and increase of corruption in the Republic.[272] Problematically, however, Beard equates luxury with "hellenization" when citing this passage of Pliny specifically, which glosses over the clear geopolitical significance of

[270] "*ditiores quam fortiores exercitus faciebat*," Livy. 39.1.3.
[271] Pliny. *Natural History.* 33.liii.148.
[272] Beard (2007) 67-68.

"Asia" in this section. After all, Scipio's triumph is not the first to import the hellenized, Greek-East into Rome--but it is the first to import "Asia," and with Asia came *luxuria*.[273]

Because Pliny was writing during the empire, it is necessary to find a balance between anachronism and historical accuracy. Does Pliny's depiction of Republican triumphs reflect how the triumphs were in their own time, or are they the products of Pliny's milieu? When it comes to Pliny's own program, we see throughout the *Natural Histories* the emphasis on the origins of corruption during the Republic, and as such, a decline narrative is placed upon his recorded events. Lao specifically relates the themes of corruption and moral decline in Pliny to *luxuria*, which she defines as the "cultivation of extravagance and excess."[274] The noteworthy spot Pliny places Scipio's triumph in this decline narrative--as the first import of luxury into Italy--suggests that the memory of Scipio's triumph was significant. Because the emphasis is on decorative gold and silver items, it is plausible that this passage specifically is noting what is remembered as the initial catalyst of silver (and gold) excess in Rome.

In the list of booty from each triumph (as found in Livy) at the turn of the third to second centuries, Scipio's triumph does stand out. Firstly, the highest amount of silver listed in Livy since 200 BCE was in Cornelius Lentulus' triumph over Spain, with a total of 43,000 pounds.[275] We also see that Scipio's triumph was the first to include vases. Historically, we know two details about the appearance and movement of silver (and gold)

[273] The equation with luxury and Asia was pointed out by Östenberg (2009) 91.
[274] Lao (2011) 41.
[275] List compiled by Rosenstein (2011) 153; Lentulus' triumph figures derived from Livy 31.20.7.

in and into Rome during this time. First, silver (and gold) greatly increased in Rome during the second century, thanks in part to the massive indemnities paid by Antiochus (and subsequently, silver in West Asia became depleted).[276] Additionally, while Pliny lists that the Roman treasury held 17,410 pounds of gold by 157 BCE, the impact gold had on the Roman monetary systems would not occur until the late Republic, when gold coins were eventually minted on a larger scale.[277] Second, the focus on the decorative wares imported into Rome during Scipio's triumph demarcates for Pliny the beginning of a new aesthetic tradition, Asian "*luxuria*." Interestingly, Pliny is not wholly exaggerating this moment. As art historians have pointed out, the Eastern (and as I argue, "Asian") aesthetic was imported into Roman artwork following these campaigns at the end of the third to beginning of the second century.[278] Thus the timeline of Hellenistic influence on Roman art does roughly coincide with Scipio's triumph, and moreover, this aesthetic influence was maintained throughout the later Republic and into the imperial period.[279]

Of course, one might wonder why Scipio's triumph specifically is noted. After all, Vulso's triumph over Asia in 187 BCE is recorded in Livy as importing more silver into Rome than Scipio's triumph.[280] As has been noted elsewhere, the numbers in Pliny are unreliable as historical records, thanks both to errors in textual transmission, and to the

[276] Kay (2014) 87, 98.
[277] Woytek (2014) 214-217.
[278] This relates to discussions of "hellenization" of Rome which often encompass broad influences over multiple aspects of Roman culture, however, here the influence stated more specifically to think of the import of aesthetic on gold and silver wares. For discussion on the impact of Eastern campaigns on Roman artwork in the second century, see Zanker (2010) 1-9; Zanker (1990) 25; Pollitt (1986) 150.
[279] The Ara Pacis of Augustus, for example, is noted for the fusion of both Roman and Hellenistic aesthetics, which Conlin calls the "conscious Hellenization of Italian sculptural practices." See Conlin (1997) 2.
[280] Livy 39.7.1.

tendency of ancient authors to over exaggerate.[281] To this end, while the gold vases do not appear to align with Livy's numbers (listed at 1023 pounds in Livy to Pliny's 1500 pounds), the engraved silver at 1400 pounds is very close to Livy's number for silver vases at 1423 pounds.[282] But the point here is not to examine for the factual accuracy of Pliny, but rather to note what makes L. Scipio's triumph important. The specific importance that Pliny highlights is that the parade acts as the catalyst for the Asian aesthetic influence. So, while Vulso's triumph may have displayed more treasures, Scipio's triumph is the initial trendsetter for gold and silver *luxuria*.[283]

4.4 Scipio's Fall from Power

In spite of what the triumph portrayed, victory in West Asia was not won through pure military domination, but in part acquired through gift-giving negotiations between the Scipios, Antiochus and other West Asian *poleis*, which was a problem for politicians back at Rome who questioned the legitimacy of such a victory.[284] Importantly, the problem at Rome is not merely that the Scipios received gifts from Antiochus to secure peace, but was that the general acting on behalf of individual interests, rather than Roman interests. During the Scipio trials in 187 BCE that Roman politicians accused the Scipios of overstepping

[281] Beard (2007) 39
[282] Livy 37.39.5.
[283] For Vulso's triumph see Pittenger (2008) 213-230; in Livy 39.7.1: Vulso's triumph contained 220,000 pounds weight of silver, 2103 pounds of gold, 127,000 Attic tetrachmas, 250 *cistophori*, 16,320 golden coins of Phillipian coins (in addition to weapons and captives).
[284] See Gruen (1995) 75-76 for a summary of the charges. In addition to Livy's account there is Gellius 6. 18.11-6.19.7 who claims the politician Minucius Augurinus brought charges against Scipio;

their individual authority in representing Roman interests in West Asia. While, as Gruen says, "much ink has been spilled over this trial," it is worthwhile to revisit earlier scholarship of the Scipionic trials in light of this case study, as it demonstrates rising tensions between West Asian and Roman customs of negotiating empire, all of which become focalized upon the figure of L. Scipio.[285]

While money is at the root of why Scipio was put on trial, ancient sources indicate other critiques of Scipio as well. According the the narrative put forth by Livy, it was problematic that Antiochus was left in charge of his kingdom (having only lost the land West of the Taurus Mountains), and that peace was negotiated with exchange of money rather than taken by force:

> *At hercule in Scipione leges ipsas pacis, ut nimium accommodatas Antiocho, suspectas esse; integrum enim ei regnum relictum; omnia possidere eum uictum, quae ante bellum eius fuerint.*[286]
>
> But heavens above, Nasica continued, in Scipio's case the allegation was that the peace terms themselves looked suspiciously favorable to Antiochus. His kingdom was left untouched, it was said: he had, in defeat, everything that he had possessed before the war.

There was a tradition in Rome throughout the Republic and the empire of parading the survivors of the enemy army in the triumph, and sometimes killing them following the spectacle.[287] And while members of Antiochus' court did appear in Scipio's triumph, the missing king is a black mark on Scipio's military record.

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[285] Gruen (1995) 74.
[286] Livy 38.59.1; transl. by Yardley.
[287] The list of nobles who were executed after the triumph includes Gaius Pontius, Aristonicus, Jugurtha, Aristoboulus, Vercingetorix, Adiatorix and his son, Alexander of Emesa, Simon Bar Gorias and Britomaris; Beard (2007) 129-130; the nobles who were not killed, but still brought to Rome and paraded on triumph

However, this was by no means standard in the turn of the third to second centuries BCE--in fact, the triumph of Flamininus in 194 celebrated victory over King Philip V of Macedon, who himself did not appear in Rome on triumph, and was allowed to keep control over his kingdom.[288] Thus while this critique of Scipio's negotiations created anxiety for Romans, it does not seem to have been enough of an offence to justify imprisonment. But it does indicate that the tensions surrounding cultural divisions between Eastern and Western modes of negotiation pertaining to territorial rule were coming to fruition in Rome, and specifically, were focalized on Scipio (probably because of the wealth he brought back with him). Offering autonomy on-site in West Asia and participating in gift-exchange negotiations that treated Scipio like a king was not how Scipio would have appeared in his triumphal procession (which showed him off as a successful military general and conqueror of Antiochus, emphasizing military might and not diplomacy). Thus, the treaty with Antiochus, once evidence of his military success, now brings his reputation into question.

Then, there is the question of money, and even Livy himself is unsure how much Scipio is accused of stealing, ascribing his own confusion to scribal error in the records.[289] However, as we know from the above calculations, the money coming to the value of what

include Perseus, King of Macedon; Bituitus, King of the Arverni; Syphax, King of Numidia; Gentius, King of Illyria; and Tigrantes, King of Armenia; For Perseus see Livy. Ab Urbe Condita.XXXIX.53 and Plutarch. Aem. 36-38; For Bituitus see Florus, Epitome. I.37. 2-3. Syphax see Livy. Ab Urbe Condita. XXVII. 4.8-10, Silius Italicus 17.629.; Gentius see Livy. Ab Urbe Condita.XLV. 43.9.; and Tigrantes see Appian.Mith.117. For larger discussion on role of kings in triumphs see Östenberg 2009 131-135; Beard 2007 119-124.

[288] Polybius. 18. 34-40.

[289] Livy 38.55.

was owed to Rome by Antiochus was more than accounted for in the cost of the triumph and the extra money given to his troops. Did Scipio steal money after the triumph? It is unlikely--the treasures on parade would have been in public view and moved into the treasury. Instead, it seems plausible that the money came from another source, one not recorded in the official records--specifically, from personal gifts from local populations. This then calls into question the legitimacy of Scipio's triumphal pageantry. If the wealth on display was not won through conquest but through gift-exchange, then the narrative of conquest presented on parade misrepresents how Scipio negotiated on-site in West Asia.

4.5 Case Study Conclusion

Ultimately, Scipio's triumph in Rome gives us the foundations of Roman attitudes towards Asia as a geopolitical unit, and the rising tensions at Rome when it came to insuring a presence and foothold in the East. As for the stereotypes about Asia introduced to Rome via Scipio's triumph, we see that specifically portable wealth is a major theme. The vast amount of silver paraded in this triumph was much greater than any earlier triumph had displayed, and gives the impression of a rich land that had previously minted gold and silver coins, which contrasts with the forms of wealth provided by other regions. Additionally, the elements of display that include the *signa,* tusks, city representations, and captives give the impression of a populated, but conquerable, territory. The ruins of Antiochus' military power specifically become visually exaggerated through the paraded generals, tusks and military standards--even though the objects (and people) on parade in

Rome are being misinterpreted before a Roman audience. Removed from their West Asian context, the paraded objects are placed into a narrative of military defeat and incorporation of "Asia" into the Roman domain. This stands in contrast with West Asian parade culture, that demonstrated an interplay between localities and empire through displays of gift-exchange and unity. In essence, Scipio's triumph presented a land that had the materiality of civilization, but lacked the military force to protect it.

This attitude continued into the early empire, as Livy and Pliny both discuss the triumph in terms that critique the opulence of the spectacle. It is noted as the origin of *luxuria* into Rome, and as such is met with censure. Underplaying this is the question of legitimacy of Scipio's military victory--and to this end, later authors in fact picked up on, and reinterpreted for their own milieu, a historical tension. The necessary negotiations for Romans to acquire a foothold in West Asia--the gift-exchanges and the role of Scipio as a Roman king as discussed in chapter one--are problematic for Roman self-identity. The destruction of a foreign enemy as portrayed in the triumph meet Roman expectations about military conquest, but undermine the messages of freedom and unification that are apparent in West Asian inscriptions. These competing narratives thus cause tension, which brings negative attention to Scipio after his triumph, and call into question the very nature of his victory at Magnesia.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY 2: THE TRIUMPH OF VENTIDIUS BASSUS

The previous case study examined the triumph that celebrated the first Roman victory in Asia. The triumph not only helped establish how Romans viewed the geopolitical unit of Asia and its inhabitants, but also demonstrated that there was a tension between Eastern and Western parade cultures and the negotiation of empire, which perhaps led to the downfall of L. Scipio from Roman political life. Following the triumphs in the 180's, the *Fasti Triumphales* lists a number of other triumphs celebrating victories over peoples who inhabited Asia, through which it is possible to chart Roman eastern expansion efforts and a greater understanding of and engagement with geopolitics in West Asia.[290] This includes Pompey's triumph of 61 BCE, which stands as a watershed moment in both establishing a Roman perspective of the geopolitical unit of Asia and its peoples and creating new visual modes of triumphal display.[291]

One element that Pompey used to convey West Asian geopolitics to Roman audiences were *tituli*--signs that labelled not just the amount of spoils shown, but specifically identified multiple ethnic groups or *gentes* of people who he conquered in a

[290] This includes: M. Aquillius triumph over Asia in 126 BCE; Sulla and Licinius' triumphs over Mithridates in 81 BCE; and Pompey's triumph in 61 BCE.
[291] For information on Pompey's triumph as presenting a Roman view of the "East" see: Beard (2007) 7-31; Morrell (2017) 47; Östenberg (2009a) 288; Nicolet (1991) 37-38.

number surpassing previous triumphs (see Figure 5).[292] While the earlier triumphs celebrating victory over Antiochus showed the wealth that might come out of Asia, it was Pompey's triumph that showed to Roman audiences the multiple territories and groups of people who come from the general region. However, one group of people absent from Pompey's triumph were the Parthians, with whom the Roman general maintained friendly relations.[293]

According to the *Fasti Triumphales,* the first general who celebrated a triumph over the Parthians was Ventidius Bassus in 38 BCE for his campaigns in Syria.[294] Ventidius was a *Novus Homo*, having himself been placed in display in Strabo's triumph during the Social Wars.[295] He likewise was a proconsul under the direction of Marcus Antonius.[296] In 29, Marcus Antonius sent Ventidius to fight Labienus, a Roman defector and follower of Brutus, who had aligned himself with the Parthian king Pacorus in a quest to take over Roman West Asian territory.[297] Ventidius defeated Pacorus and Labienus at the Battle of Gindarus in 38 BCE.[298] Scholarship on Ventidius Bassus' campaigns in West Asia has

[292] *Tituli* had been used in at least two other triumphs before Pompeys: Sulla's in 81 and Lucullus' in 63. Pompey's triumph is unique not only in the sheer number of *gentes* displayed, but also operated as the first time many of these ethnic groups appeared in Roman visual culture. The number of groups listed in Plutarch. Life of Pompey. 45.2 is 15; however, the *Fasti Triumphales* lists 11, which is probably a more historically accurate number as the inscription was created within a generation of Pompey's parade. See Beard (2007) 12; Östenberg (2009b) 464 "Titulis oppida capta leget: The role of the written placards in the Roman triumphal procession." The parade, moreover, is likely the first time many of these ethnic groups appear in Roman discourse. See also Nicolet (1991) 32, in which a discussion of an inscription detailing Pompey's exploits in a passage by Diodorus 40.4, which also lists a large number of peoples conquered.
[293] Morrell (2017) 182. According to Keaveney, Pompey maintained similar *amicitia* relations with Parthia that Sulla began in the 90's: Keaveney (1981) 195.
[294] *Fasti triumphales* CIL l2 p. 50, 180 31.
[295] Dio Cassius 43. 51. 5; Gellius 15. 4; Val. Max. 6.9.9.
[296] *Fasti triumphales* CIL l2 p. 50, 180 31.
[297] Specifically, the Roman provinces of Asia and Syria, which had been annexed by Pompey in 63; Morrell (2017) 92; Tarn (1932) 75-81.
[298] Strabo 16. 2. 8; Dio Cassius 49. 20. 3; Strugnell (2006) 246.

focused on the fact that Venditius successfully ousted Parthians from the territory and avenging the death of Julius Caesar.[299] The problem, as this case study will demonstrate, is that although Ventidius successfully removed Parthian power from the territory, he failed to negotiate with the local inhabitants, which ultimately rendered his campaign as unsuccessful from a West Asian perspective.[300] This moreover stands in contrast with Augustus' inscriptions in West Asia, which reframe the relationship with Parthia in terms of *amicitia* that not only echo earlier relations with Parthia under Sulla, but also invoke former *euergetistic* language.

In Rome, Ventidius' triumph may not have been as spectacular as was, by this point, customary for the celebration. Scholarship on this parade has focused on answering two questions about the spectacle: first, was the triumph received as a celebration of Roman vengeance for Crassus' death by Parthian hands, or was it understood in context of avenging Julius Caesar's assassination with the fall of Labienus; and second does a paucity of literary sources discussing the event call into question whether or not Ventidius' parade contained the pageantry and necessary preconditions to be considered a triumph in Roman memory?[301] While material evidence demonstrates that there was a triumphal parade celebrating victory over the Parthians, scholarship demonstrates that the memory event was

[299] Wylie (1993) 129-141; Seaver (1952) 275-280, 300.
[300] This chapter continues discussions by Strugnell, who does mention Ventidius' siege of Samosata following the defeat of Pacorus as "unsuccessful," and suggests that terms of victory were "humiliating." Strugnell (2006) 247.
[301] Strugnell believes that the death of Pacorus avenged was a later thought, but the fact that the *Fasti Triumphales* list Parthia demonstrates that the parade itself was presented as a victory over Pacorus and not as a civil war, which would go against custom; a third question scholarship focuses on is the degree to which Marcus Antonius was jealous of Ventidius, as the jealousy is mentioned in Dio 49. 21.1. (see: Wylie (1993) 138). While imperial-era Roman authors notes that the death of Pacorus was framed as avenging the assassination of Crassus, Ventidius' campaign in West Asia was also seen in context of the Civil Wars and avenging Julius Caesar's assassination.

intentionally left out of later accounts of the time period because Ventidius' victory gave glory to M. Antonius, and Augustus was careful to avoid mentioning M. Antonius in his propaganda, instead emphasizing Cleopatra as Rome's enemy at Actium.[302] To add to these arguments, I add a comparison of Ventidius Bassus' triumph to the spectacles of both Augustus' triumph over the East and Tiberius' returning of the standards, and show how Augustus erased Ventidius' triumph from recent memory and rewrote the relationship with Parthia using superior visual pageantry that borrowed elements from Eastern parade-culture.[303]

This case study compares Ventidius' victory negotiations on-site in West Asia and his triumph to Augustus' West-Asian inscriptions and celebrations in the *Urbs Roma*. Part 1 examines geopolitics in West Asia specifically, using both literary and material evidence to demonstrate that while Ventidius (and M. Antonius) failed to ingratiate themselves to local inhabitants, Augustus negotiated with polities using languages and customs of imperial negotiation that were typical to the region. Part 2 then looks at how Parthians were presented to audiences at Rome. Using both material and literary evidence, this section compares the triumph of Ventidius to celebrations under Augustus to show that while it was impossible to completely write Ventidius (and through him M. Antonius) out of recent history, he was able to rewrite visually relations with Parthia using triumph-like ceremony.

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[302] Strugnell (2006) 252; the triumph of Octavian celebrating this victory in Actium, for instance, emphasized Cleopatra and not Augustus, Östenberg (2009) 142. For more on the erasure of Antonius, see H. Flower (2011) 116-121; Lott (2012) 284.

[303] While the return of the standards in Rome was a major event that cemented Augustus' message of peace with Parthia, in West Asia, the events that led to the return of the standards was only indirectly related to Roman-Parthian relations, and instead had to do with Tiberius supporting the newly instated king Tigranes III, who supported Roman interests, Suetonius. *Tiberius*.9.1.

Ultimately, by considering Parthian-West Asian-Roman relations under both Ventidius and Augustus, we can piece together a more complete picture of West Asian geopolitics, and Roman attitudes towards Parthia.

5.1: Sources

Both literary and material evidence help elucidate both the message of victory Ventidius conveyed to West Asian audiences, as well as local responses. While Ventidius Bassus' life is referenced in the works of at least twenty-six ancient authors, specific negative reactions to his campaigns from West Asian inhabitants are recorded in the works of Dio and Josephus.[304] Scholars have called out these ancient criticisms of Ventidius, not only because they are writing well after the fact, but also because they represent a "localized viewpoint."[305] However, I argue that it is precisely because of this "localized viewpoint" that makes these accounts particularly useful to gauging local reactions to Ventidius' campaign--even if these accounts only represent a later local historiographical reception and memory to the events of the 30's BCE. In both accounts, we see that Ventidius used overt physical violence as a way to subjugate Syria and Asia, which not only stands in contrast with historical modes of diplomatic negotiation in the territory, but also explains a local preference to Parthian rule and partnership both from Syrian inhabitants and elites.

[304] Seaver (1952) 275.
[305] Wylie (1993) 139.

The problem with depending wholly on literary evidence is not because of the authors' "localized" perspective, but rather is because the authors were writing in later periods.[306] This makes it difficult not only to determine the degree to which the sources represent accurate accounts of what happened, but also generally evoke later attitudes and receptions to this event. Contemporary material evidence, therefore, is also necessary to use as a way to discern both how Syria and Asia were reconquered by Ventidius, and how local inhabitants reacted to ousting the Parthians.

Specifically, this chapter uses two forms of evidence: coins and inscriptions. The use of coins in the Eastern Mediterranean at this time helps reveal the types of messages various parties wished to convey to local inhabitants--and as the next section demonstrates, the West Asian minted coins of Labienus, Pacorus and Ventidius each presented different messages and revealed different modes of negotiating with localities.[307] While we do have coins for Ventidius in West Asian, inscriptional evidence for both the general and M. Antonius is sparse in comparison with other proconsuls and triumvirs, and perhaps indicates a lack of awareness of local negotiations. What we do find are oblique references in an inscription from Antiochus of Commagene that possibly expresses discontent with Ventidius. In contrast, there are multiple West-Asian inscriptions from Augustus, including

[306] Strugnell (2006) 240, citing Syme (1939) 223–224, who notes that Dio is the most complete source on Ventidius. Other ancient authors that include these events, who Strugnell also mentions, include Valerius Maximus, Plutarch, Pliny, Josephus, Appian, Eutropius, and Aulus Gellius.

[307] Coins were used in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Second Triumvirate as a way to promote individual authority among *poleis*. Cleopatra and M. Antonius, for instance, Cleopatra's relationship with Patras in Haug (2008), pp. 405-420; for the coins of Labienus see: Hersh (1980) 41-51; Lerouge-Cohen, (2010) 176-188; Bellinger (1952) 60-63; for Ventidius' coin, see Buttrey (1960) 95-108.

the *Res Gestae*, which boast of peaceful, suppliant-style negotiations with the Parthian empire and *euergetism* with local polities.[308]

5.2: Coins

As we saw in the previous case study, West Asian geopolitics were negotiated through a ritual of gift-exchange and *euergetistic* language performed between individual *poleis* and the emperor.[309] While specific battles were fought as a way to draw borders between territories, diplomacy and *euergetism* were often used to secure the support from individual cities and from local kings. Even Pompey appears to have preferred diplomacy to military action in West Asia, in spite of the campaign narrative portrayed in his triumphal parade.[310] Local inscriptions dedicated to Pompey contain *euergetistic* language, presenting Pompey as the "Savior of Asia" emphasizing freedom from external forces, restoration, and beneficence. Moreover, the Eastern captives paraded on triumph were sent back to their homeland--an unusual move that typically has been read as Pompey attempting to promote his own mercy, as captives were typically either killed, enslaved, or imprisoned in a Roman-controlled location away from their homeland.[311] However,

[308] IGLSyr 1 1; SEG 34-1284.
[309] Veyne 1976 10; Ma 1999 182-194.
[310] Morrell (2017) 68; For the campaign narrative in Pompey's triumph, see: Beard (2007) 176; Holliday (1997) 146.
[311] Beard (2007) 12-132 argues that while this was framed as mercy, it was not common to execute captives, and Östenberg (2009) 160-163 notes that while some captives were offered Roman citizenship following their appearance in triumphal parades, they were also executed. Morrell (2017) 74, however disagrees with Beard and says that executions were typical. What neither argument considers, however, is the degree to which (a) captives would then either be immediately given status as freedmen (or even citizens) after the triumph; and (b) captives would be allowed to return to their homeland following the parade--both of which appear in Pompey's triumph and are not commonly found in other parades. Cleopatra's sister Arsinoe, for instance, was moved to a temple in Asia Minor after appearing in Caesar's triumph; also of the following kings who appeared in Roman triumph and were not executed, only Tigranes

another reading of this event that considers local West-Asian parade culture suggests that this move was not done out of mercy, but rather as a way to maintain positive Roman relations with Eastern provinces. As the previous case study explored, people in West Asia participated in imperial parades as a way to show allegiance to the Persian, Seleucid and Ptolemaic rulers to promote a message of unity, rather than military subjugation. In this particular parade, such a reading would suggest that the "captives" were only understood as such from Roman perspectives. From a West Asian perspective, it is possible that participants in Pompey's triumph were ambassadors showing thanks to the general for "freeing" and restoring the cities from other external forces. However, it was not long before the Parthians would enter West Asia and, through an alliance with the Roman defector Labienus, take claim over the region.

Coins reveal that when the Parthians (and Labienus) first gained control over West Asia, they imitated earlier Persian and Seleucid modes of expressing imperial power that pushed beyond *euergetistic* language that the Romans adopted. First, Pacorus was projecting his claim in the style of earlier Achaemenid kings, adopting the title "King of Kings" written in Greek on his coins (see Figure 6).[312] In adopting the previous terminology, Pacorus communicates his position to inhabitants in Greek-Speaking West Asia, using the language and modes of display to which they were accustomed. In addition to using coins that were modeled on previous tradition, Pacorus, along with other Parthian rulers, was constructing an empire whose infrastructure was modeled in part on the

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who appeared in Pompey's parade appears to have returned home: Perseus, King of Macedon; Bituitus, King of the Arverni; Syphax, King of Numidia; Gentius, King of Illyria; and Tigrantes, King of Armenia.

[312] for Achaemenids as King of Kings, see Waters (2014) 92.

Seleucids and Achaemenids, which included the use of satraps or "*strategoi*" as governors of territories, to represent royal authority in local spaces.[313] This is key to understanding not only the message he was presenting to local polities in Asia via his coins, but also his relationship with Labienus.

From a Roman perspective Labienus' coin using the term "Parthicus," denotes that he was a "conqueror of Parthia" (see Figure 7).[314] Why Labienus called himself Parthicus has been a source of inquiry since the time of Dio, who notes that from a Roman perspective Labienus used the term incorrectly, as he aligned himself with Parthians rather than subjugating them.[315] It also seems unlikely that Pacorus would have aligned himself willingly with Labienus if he had known that the Roman was calling himself "conqueror of Parthia." Scholarship today has argued that the coin uses Parthicus as a intentional misrepresentation of the geopolitical situation in West Asia, or perhaps is evidence of Labienus becoming "wholly Parthian."[316] While indeed Labienus had defected from Rome and aligned himself with Pacorus, this is only part of the whole picture--one which becomes clearer when taking Pacorus' imperial agenda into consideration. Labienus was actively participating in building up the Parthian empire as a general or *strategos* under Pacorus, and the coin released under Labienus was a double entendre-- one that conveniently

[313] Debevoise (1938) xxxviii.
[314] Lerouge-Cohen (2010) 186; while by the principate "Victory titles" or *cognomina ex virtute* were commonly attributed to imperial families, they did occur in the Republic as well. Sallust, for instance, notes that P. Scipio received the *cognomen ex virtute* of Africanus following his successful campaign, Sallust. *Bellum Jugurthinum*. 5.4.
[315] Dio 48.26.5.
[316] D. Magie (1950) 431.

Romans would see as indicating subjugation, but local audiences would relate to as a *strategos*.

While the inscription on Labienus' coin is written in Latin, the obverse side of the coin invokes Parthian imagery, suggesting that the coin portrays a blending together of both Parthian and Roman cultures.[317] The coin, moreover, suggests that Labienus was presenting himself to Pacorus and West Asian inhabitants as a general under the Parthians, rather than a conqueror. Since the Achaemenids, it was common for governors of the area to release their own coins.[318] In Rome, the term Parthicus can be a formal title that means "victor over Parthia," but the term can also be an adjective meaning "Parthian-like," modifying "Imperator." Additionally, "imperator" at the time the coin was produced, would have been a Latin translation of *strategos*, the Greek term also used to identify governors/satraps of the territory.[319] While to Romans the title of *Parthicus* indicates military subjugation of the Parthian people, this does not necessarily mean that the Greek-speaking inhabitants of West Asia and the Parthians would have understood the title thus, especially when taking into consideration how Persian emperors presented themselves to local populations. As we saw in Case Study 1, honorific inscriptions in West Asia use *euergetistic* language, which emphasizes a victor's role as a liberator, rather than conqueror. Furthermore, inscriptions establish a clear administrative hierarchy that has a *strategos* as operating under the direction of a King.[320]

[317] Hersh (1980) 48.
[318] Satrapal coinage dates back to the Achaemenid period. See: Metcalf (2016) 75.
[319] Lerouge-Cohen (2010), pp. 182-183.
[320] See section 3.5.

With this in mind, Labienus' coin in context of other Parthian numismatic propaganda, the Roman is not presenting himself to local audiences as a conqueror of Parthia, but rather as a general under Pacorus. This becomes evident when looking at Labienus' coin alongside Pacorus' adoption of the title "King of Kings" on his own coinage. As noted in chapter 2, "King of kings" had been a title used by Seleucid rulers adopted, and thus was a title found in West Asian material culture well before the Romans invaded.[321] By identifying himself as a general, Labienus was acting as a Parthian *strategos* under Pacorus, filling a similar role that Zeuxis performed under Antiochus III.[322] Thus, while Roman and later audiences might read the coin as indication of subjugation, at the time of conquest, West Asian and Parthian audiences would have read "*Parthicus Imperator*" to mean "Parthian general," not "conqueror of Parthia."

After defeating Labienus and Pacorus, Ventidius systematically attempted to remove any Parthian influence from the territory, which seems to have included the release of a denarius that opted for Greco-Roman imagery and lacked overt Persian elements (Figure 8). The coin, struck in an Eastern Mint in 39 BCE, on the obverse shows the bust of Antonius, with the titles IMP III VIR RPC. On the reverse, the coin features a nude figure leaning upon a long object (which some scholars misidentified as a scepter) and holding a branch, with the inscription PONT IMP P. VENTIDI.[323] The identity of the nude figure is debated in scholarship, with some identifying the figure as Jupiter Victor, a soldier, and M. Antonius in costume.[324] The figure on the coin indeed looks similar to an

[321] Section 1.3.
[322] See case study I.
[323] Buttery (1960) 102.
[324] Ibid; Cohen (1896) X; Grueber, BMCRR II. 403 X; Sydenham 1175 X; Borghesi (1864) 64.

earlier denarius of Scipio Africanus, which likewise features a nude Jupiter holding some kind of branch. Scholars have misidentified the branch on Ventidius' coin as an olive branch, which has led Vercoutre to assume that the primary message invoked by the image was of peace--however, if this were the case, one would expect a female figure typical of Pax Romana imagery to be central. The branch, however, not an olive branch, but a palm, and the nude figure on the coin is an athletic victor (for comparison, see the depiction of an athletic victor on a prize vase, Fig. 9).[325] The object in the figure's right hand, moreover, is not a scepter as was previously argued, but is of a javelin. Thus, we do see a message of Victory in the coin, but one of athletic rather than military victory.[326]

That the figure borrows from Greek athletic imagery also happens to coincide with the ways in which Antonius' negotiated with people in Asia. A fragmentary inscription in Caria dated to the 2nd/3rd century CE conveys a letter sent from M. Antonius to the Synod of sacred victors and crowned victors either in 42/41 or 33/32.[327] M. Antonius negotiated specifically with Synod priests (athletic trainers) in Ephesus using *euergetistic* language--offering privileges and grants to the group.[328] Thus, one of the ways in which Antonius extended his influence over Asian territories specifically was through athletic competition festivals and networks. The coin of Ventidius, therefore, presents an image of athletic victory that may coincide with local games. Notably, however, while the denarius conveys a clear message of victory based on a fusion of both Roman and Greek models, it lacks any overtly Persian elements. This stands in contrast with the numismatic propaganda of

[325] Thank you to Professor Tom Scanlon for this suggestion.
[326] Mattusch (1997) 16-18; see also Lunt (2009) 375-392.
[327] Keil (1911) 124–134; ID 13181.
[328] These included serving less time in military service. See: Remijsen (2015) 233.

Pacorus and Labienus, both of which leaned into the pre-existing Persian and Seleucid modes of displaying and conveying political power to local audiences. Thus, when it came to negotiating victory over West Asia, Ventidius and Antonius stuck exclusively to Greco-Roman imagery that did not contain overt Persian elements, which appears to have been part of a larger effort to eradicate Parthian influences from the territory.

5.3: Dio and Josephus

In addition, the account of Ventidius' actions in West Asia as recorded by Dio not only sends the message of eradication of Parthian influence in the territory, but also stands in contrast with historical precedent for the area tended to promote ideas of freedom. According to the text, Ventidius' decision to send Pacorus' head to cities around Asia and Syria:

> Ventidius easily brought into subjection all the rest out of Syria, which had been hesitating while awaiting the outcome of the war, by sending the prince's head about through the different cities; for the Syrians felt unusual affection for Pacorus on account of his justice and mildness, an affection as great as they had felt for the best kings that had ever ruled them.
>
> Οὐεντίδιος δὲ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα τὰ ἐν τῇ Συρίᾳ μετέωρα πρὸς τὴν τοῦ πολέμου ἔκβασιν γιγνόμενα ˙τὸν γὰρ Πάκορον ὅμοια τοῖς μάλιστα τῶν πώποτε βασιλευσάντων καὶ ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἐπὶ πρᾳότητι ὑπερηγάπων᾽ ῥᾳδίως, τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὰς πόλεις περιπέμψας, κατεστήσατο.[329]

This action uses violence to send a warning to local inhabitants who may have preferred Pacorus. Rather than promote a liberation narrative against a king from the East as Scipio

[329] Dio. 49.20.4; Transl. By Earnest Cary.

did, Ventidius enforces Roman dominance by parading the decapitated head of a king who was beloved by local populations. The move is a threat, one that warns local polities not to align with the Parthians, lest they themselves become subjected to Roman force. Of course, this account was written two centuries after the fact, and it is unclear from where Dio is receiving this particular story.[330] As such, whether or not Ventidius actually decapitated Pacorus and showed the head to outlying cities in a message of Roman dominance, one thing is clear: the received memory of Ventidius' campaign in the literary record for the region was marked by violence, which contrasts with accounts of other contemporary Roman and Persian dealings in the area. Parading the decapitated head to *poleis* stands in contrast to historical, *euergetistic* modes of negotiation in the region. Thus, Ventidius' legacy in West Asia is not one of peaceful unification and liberation, but one of violence and the eradication of Parthian/Persian influence.

After defeating Pacorus and Labienus, Ventidius extorted money from both Antigonus II Mattathias in Judaea and Antiochus of Commagene. In literary accounts describing both cases, Ventidius is presented as officially taking payments as "fines," punishing these kings for favoring the Parthians.[331] Josephus' account of the dealings with Antigonus has particularly harsh tone against Ventidius, which scholarship has disregarded because the author represents a "localized" perspective.[332] This perspective, however, helps to record how people in the area remembered Ventidius' campaign, and thus should be read because of his "localized" viewpoint:

[330] In Plutarch and Josephus, the account of Ventidius beheading Pacorus is absent, but there is a story of Antonius beheading Antigonus; Josephus. *Antiquities*. XV. 1. 2.8–9; Plutarch. *Antony.* 36.3.
[331] Wylie (1993) 139.
[332] Ibid.

> κἀν τούτῳ Βεντίδιος ὁ Ῥωμαίων στρατηγὸς πεμφθεὶς ἐκ Συρίας ὥστε Πάρθους ἀνείργειν μετ᾽ ἐκείνους εἰς Ἰουδαίαν παρέβαλε, τῷ λόγῳ μὲν Ἰωσήπῳ συμμαχήσων, τὸ δ᾽ ὅλον ἦν αὐτῷ στρατήγημα χρήματα παρ᾽ Ἀντιγόνου λαβεῖν· ἔγγιστα γοῦν Ἱεροσολύμων στρατοπεδευσάμενος ἀποχρώντως ἠργυρίσατο τὸν Ἀντίγονον. 393καὶ αὐτὸς μὲν ἀνεχώρησε σὺν τῇ πλείονι δυνάμει ἵνα δὲ μὴ κατάφωρον γένηται τὸ λῆμμα,[1] Σίλωνα μετὰ μέρους τινὸς τῶν στρατιωτῶν κατέλιπεν, ὃν καὶ αὐτὸν ἐθεράπευεν Ἀντίγονος, ὅπως μηδὲν ἐνοχλοίη, προσδοκῶν καὶ πάλιν αὐτῷ Πάρθους ἐπαμυνεῖν.[333]
>
> Meanwhile Ventidius, the general sent from Syria to keep back the Parthians, after disposing of them, made a side-march into Judaea, ostensibly to give aid to Joseph, but in reality the whole business was a device to obtain money from Antigonus; at any rate he encamped very near Jerusalem and extorted from Antigonus as much money as he wanted. Then he himself withdrew with the greater part of his force; but in order that his extortion might not be detected, he left Silo behind with a certain number of soldiers; to him also Antigonus paid court in order that he might not cause any trouble, hoping at the same time that the Parthians would once more give him help.

Ventidius in this passage appears particularly disreputable in this account, motivated by greed and concocting stratagems as a way to get money out of Antiochus, and in total the amount Antigonus seems to have paid to the Romans is 1,000 talents of silver.[334] While scholars have justified this extortion of money as fines, such an argument depends on taking the side of the Romans and ignoring local reactions. Josephus' tone suggests that at the local level, Ventidius was not remembered positively. His legacy in the territory was not one of exacting justice through monetary measures, but of depleting local coffers out of a desire for greed.

[333] Josephus. *Antiquities*. 14.14.6; translated by Marcus and Wikgren (1943) 208-211.
[334] Kasher (2008) 78.

Like Antigonus, Antiochus of Commagene also was subject to "fines" for supporting the Parthians. According to Dio, after pacifying the rest of Syria by showing Pacorus' decapitated head, Ventidius set out for Samosata:

> αὐτὸς δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀντίοχον, πρόφασιν μὲν ὅτι τοὺς ἱκέτας οἱ οὐκ ἐξέδωκε, τῇ δ᾽ ἀληθείᾳ διὰ τὰ χρήματα ἃ πάμπολλα εἶχεν, ἐπεστράτευσεν. [335]
>
> And Ventidius himself made an expedition against Antiochus, on the plea that the latter had not delivered up to him the refugees, but really because of the vast wealth which he possessed.

The similarities between the accounts of Antiochus in Dio, and Antigonus in Josephus, are worth considering. Scholars have noted that a key difference between Josephus and Dio is their individual tones--Josephus writing more explicitly, and Dio writing more implicitly.[336] What is thus noteworthy in comparing these two passages is that Dio himself adopts a treatment of Ventidius that is similar to Josephus' account of Ventidius. Ventidius is seen as dishonest, as indicated by the τῇ δ᾽ ἀληθείᾳ, pretending to be removing Parthian support from the region and exacting fines, but in truth was interested in the local wealth.

Another theme in both Dio and Josephus is a local preference for the Parthians in the face of Ventidius' invasion. According to Josephus, Antigonus hoped that the Parthians would come and help him again (προσδοκῶν καὶ πάλιν αὐτῷ Πάρθους ἐπαμυνεῖν), and in Dio we find that the Syrians believe Pacorus to be the best king who had ever ruled them (μάλιστα τῶν πώποτε βασιλευσάντων).[337] That there is documented preference for Parthian rule in both accounts is somewhat surprising, as both authors had different perspectives on

[335] Dio 49.20.5: translated by Cary (1914) 383.
[336] Eisman (1977) 666.
[337] Josephus. *Antiquities*. 14.14.6; Dio. 49.20.4.

the Parthians. In Josephus' account, the Parthians are not treated as, in Herman's words, the "real enemies"; and additionally Josephus' "account is heavily imbued with Parthian cultural influence, and reflects values in accord with the value system promoted in the ambient Parthian society."[338] Scholars have also suggested that Josephus' source for early Roman-Parthian relations was Greco-Parthian, and anti-Roman.[339]

In comparison, by the time Dio was writing, the Parthians were a well-established enemy of Rome, and in his account the Senator calls the Parthians "barbarians." On one level, such a label serves to further marr Ventidius' legacy within Dio's narrative, the implication being that Ventidius (and through him, Antonius) was so disliked by local inhabitants that they would prefer "barbarian" rule to his presence.[340] But when reading Dio alongside Josephus', it becomes evident that both authors were aware of a local preference to Parthian rule at the time of Ventidius' campaign. This puts Ventidius' move to eradicate Parthian presence from West Asia as portrayed in these literary accounts into sharp relief. It was not just the Parthian military presence that jeopardized Roman control of the territory--it was the ability of the Parthians to garner support from local populations.

5.4: Inscriptions

Inscriptional evidence in West Asia providing details about the campaign of Ventidius is scant. Instead, we find that the contemporary inscriptions that give information about Roman-Parthian relations and West Asian geopolitics are those that honor Augustus,

[338] Herman (2012) 142; instead indigenous Babylonian populations are seen as the true threat to Jewish populations.
[339] See: Feldman (1989) 380-382, who summarizes the state of scholarship on Josephus' sources.
[340] Cassius Dio 40.14.1.

and emphasize making peace with the Parthians--a move which not only goes along with Augustus' Pax Romana, but also does not alienate people in West Asia who supported Pacorus. But before turning to Augustus, let us examine the *nomos* inscription at Nemrud-Dagi, which may have a vague reference to Ventidius' siege on Samosata. The inscription, on Antiochus' great tomb-sanctuary, emphasized a combined Greco-Persian identity, and includes some insight into relations with Rome--including a reference to "great perils," which may be a reference to the events with Ventidius:

> δι' ἃ καὶ κινδύνους μεγάλους παραδό-
> ξως διέφυγον καὶ πράξεων δυσελπίστων
> εὐμηχάνως ἐπεκράτησα καὶ βίου πολυ-
> ετοῦς μακαριστῶς ἐπληρώθην.[341]
>
> By this means I have, contrary to all expectations, escaped great perils, have easily become master of hopeless situations, and in a blessed way have attained to the fullness of a long life.

It is unclear what is meant by the great perils and hopeless situations, though the siege of Samosata (and the subsequent negotiations with M. Antonius) is one of the more plausible explanations.[342] Another suggestion put forth was that the troubles refer to Pompey, and yet not only was Antiochus called a "Friend of the Romans," Φιλορώμαιος, (seen in line 2 of the inscription) but he also supported Pompey in the Civil War with Caesar.[343] Moreover, if this is an oblique reference to the events with Ventidius and the siege of Samosata, we can say not only that he is viewed negatively by locals in the region, but also that his attack on Antiochus did not stop the Commagene king from continuing to identify

[341] Dr. Sencer Şahin translation; IGLSyr 1 1 lines 20-23.
[342] Brijder (2014) 516.
[343] See discussion in Facella (2005), 94, on Antiochus being a "Friend of the Romans."

as a "Friend of the Romans." The attack, therefore, must have been seen as an outlying event, and not indicative of Roman-Commagene relations as a whole.

A second inscription, which does not name Ventidius, does mention Antonius. The document is part of a series of third-century CE inscriptions in the theater of Aphrodisias in Caria, all of which provide a glimpse into the aftermath of the war against Pacorus and Labienus. While the inscriptions in total provide evidence for positive relations with Rome, Antonius is only overtly named once in a letter from Octavian, who claims he has "recommended [the city] to Antonius," but in Antonius' absence has left care of the city to Zoilos, a freedman of Octavian. Another letter written by a triumvir to a man named Solon, son of Demetrius, could have been from M. Antonius, but scholarship agrees that the more likely author is Octavian.[344] This is because the name Solon, son of Demetrius appears in another letter on the site, Document 12, recording a different embassy to Octavian.[345] What this set of inscriptions tells us about the maintenance of Roman interests in West Asia during the Second Triumvirate is that Antonius' attempt to oversee the area was ultimately overshadowed by Octavian who had strong connections to the area, which were based on personal relationships.

Inscriptions in West Asia that honor Augustus reveal two important points about Roman-Parthian relations and local geopolitics. Firstly, inscriptional evidence for Augustus reveals that he used *euergetistic* language to maintain Roman interests with local polities in West Asia. A letter from Ephesus recorded in an inscription after the battle of

[344] Reynolds (1989) 61-67; C. Kokkinia (2015) 9-55.
[345] Kokkinia (2015) 23.

Actium, for instance, records a crown that was sent to Octavian in honor of his victory.[346] Another inscription in Cyme records a decree from Augustus and Agrippa to restore "gifts" to local cities.[347] While scholars have argued that from a Roman perspective this move would have added to Augustus' *pietas*, from a West Asian perspective, paying for local restoration efforts in exchange for public honors was part of a *euergetistic* exchange.[348] Secondly, in adopting *euergetistic* language, Augustus emphasizes peace with Parthians, rather than conquest. As we shall see in Part II of this case study, this message coincides with his propaganda at Rome. The message of peace with Parthia is seen on the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, an inscription that is likewise in Rome (and as such is also discussed in Part II). But in West Asia, an emphasis on peace with Parthia stands in contrast with the message Ventidius and Antonius spread.

The *Res Gestae* was Augustan propaganda, erected both in Rome and in West Asia.[349] Greek and Latin inscriptions found in modern-day Ankara, Turkey reveal that Augustus strove to ensure that it would be accessible to local, Greek-speaking populations in West Asia. When it comes to the way Parthians appear in the Greek text specifically, multiple points can be made:

> 1. Πρὸς ἐμὲ ἱκέται κατέφυγον βασιλεῖς Πάρθων μὲν Τειριδάτης καὶ μετέπειτα Φραάτης, βασιλέως Φράτου [υἱός], Μήδ[ων] δὲ Ἀρταο[υάσδ]ης, Ἀδιαβ[η]νῶν [Ἀ]ρτα[ξάρης, Βριτα]ννῶν Δομνοελλαῦνος καὶ Τ[ινκόμαρος, Σουγ]άβρων [Μ]αίλων, Μαρκομάνων [Σουήβων --]ρος. 2. [Πρὸ]ς ἐμὲ βασιλε[ὺ]ς Πάρυων Φραάτης Ὡρώδου υἱὸς υἱοὺς [αὐτοῦ] υἱωνούς τε πάντας ἔπεμψεν εἰς Ἰταλίαν, οὐ πολέμωι λειφθείς, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἡμ[ε]τέραν φιλίαν ἀξιῶν ἐπὶ τέκνων ἐνεχύροις. 3. πλεῖστά τε ἄλλα ἔθνη πεῖραν ἔλ[ὰ]βεν

[346] Millar (1993) 29; citing IGL Syria III no. 718.
[347] AE 1936, No. 128; Oliver (1963) 115-122; Spawforth (2011) 172-173.
[348] In the same inscription as the decree, a letter to a proconsul from Augustus details that the shrine shall be restored and say "Restored by Imp. Caesar Divi f. Augustus."
[349] Cooley (2009) 2.

> δήμου Ῥωμαίων πίστεως ἐπ᾽ ἐμοῦ ἡγεμόνος, οἷς τὸ πρὶν οὐδεμία ἦν πρὸς δῆμον Ῥωμαίων π[ρεσ]βειῶν καὶ φιλίας κοινωνία.[350]
>
> Kings fled to me for protection as suppliants—of the Parthians Tigridates and afterwards Phraates, son of King Phraates, and of the Medes Artavasdes, of the Adiabeni Artaxares, of the Britons Domnovellaunus and Tincomarus, of the Sugambri Maelo, of the Suebic Marcomanni ?-ros. 2. King of the Parthians Phraates, son of Orodes, sent his sons and all his grandsons to Italy to me, not because he had been captured in war, but requesting our friendship on pledging the children. 3. Very many other tribes besides gained experience of the good faith of the Roman people under my leadership, with whom previously the Roman people had no exchange of embassies and friendship.

Firstly, the language emphasized in the inscription is one of gift exchange, assemblies and friendship, as opposed to conquest. Augustus is not only careful to distinguish between Parthian war captives and pledges, but also calls the Parthians his suppliants, "ἱκέται."[351] While the Roman translation *supplices* has specific connotations from a Roman perspective (as discussed in the next chapter), ἱκέται was used in religious inscriptions.[352] As demonstrated by Naiden, ἱκέται, meaning literally "he who arrives" initiates a relationship between two entities and submits himself to the power of the deity he seeks.[353] Thus, by calling the Parthians ἱκέται, Augustus effectively establishes a relationship that turns him into a protective, godlike figure, and the Parthians into supplicants.

In addition, Augustus is clear to note that royal children were sent to Rome because of a Parthian desire for φιλία with Augustus. The use of φιλία n this inscription specifically is significant. φιλία is one of the oldest terms found in epigraphic texts that designates

[350] *RGDA* 32 1-3; Cooley translation.
[351]For the religious connotations of ἱκέται, see Polinskaya (2013)155; the Latin term is *supplices*, and discussed in the next chapter.
[352] *Res Gestae* VI. 32.
[353] Naiden (2005) 73-74.

political alliance, and is also careful to note that the φιλία was not brought forth because of war, "οὐ πολέμωι."[354] Thus, by using specific Greek terms Augustus creates the appearance of a friendly relationship with the Parthians as though he is their royal protector, welcoming them into his Roman domain. This nuanced message is important for maintaining interests in West Asia, as the campaign with Ventidius demonstrated local support for Parthian rule. But in reframing the relationship between Rome and Parthia in this way, Augustus is able to reinforce Roman authority in the territory without alienating those who supported Pacorus and other Parthian refugees. By emphasizing a message of peace, rather than conquest, Augustus is thus able to maintain and enforce Roman interests in West Asia.

5.5: Conclusion

Roman-Parthian relations in West Asia during the transition from the Second Triumvirate to Empire was marked by two waves of Roman engagement. The first wave, led by Ventidius Bassus acting on behalf of Antonius, strove to eradicate Parthian influence from the territory. Instead of negotiating with local populations using *euergetistic* language, Ventidius used violence backed by military support to mollify the region. The result was that he was unpopular in West Asia, to the point to where later historians remarked that local peoples preferred the Parthians to Ventidius. But this preference as noted in Josephus and Dio, likely recalls local support for Pacorus and other Parthians in the area. Local Parthian support would moreover explain why Augustus was careful in wording his relations with the Parthians in the *Res Gestae*. By promoting the idea of

[354] See Cross (2017) 5; *RGDA* 32.

friendship and supplication, in addition to participating in *euergetism* with local polities, Augustus makes it so that West Asian inhabitants no longer have to choose between supporting the Parthians and Romans.

CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY 2: VENTIDIUS BASSUS' TRIUMPH OVER PARTHIA

Part I of this case study explored Roman-Parthian relations on-site in West Asia, and concluded that while Ventidius Bassus used messages of violence to counter Parthian support in the territory, Augustus contrastingly promoted messages of peace as a way to maintain friendly relations with local inhabitants who supported Pacorus. This section explores how these Roman-Parthian relations on-site in West Asia were then presented within the city of Rome, by comparing the *fasti triumphales* and the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, two Augustan-era inscriptions erected in Rome that tell us how Parthia was paraded before Roman audiences. The *fasti triumphales*, a list of all Republican-era triumphs until 19 BCE, is the only Roman material evidence for Ventidius' triumph.[355] The *Res Gestae* shows the reframing of Roman-Parthian relations under Augustus as a way to dishonor M. Antonius in public visual culture through the return of Roman standards. Ultimately this chapter seeks answers to the two following questions: (1) how were Roman-Parthian relations presented to Roman audiences; (2) in reframing the recent past, what impact does Augustus' message have on the significance and function of the institution of the triumph.

Previous scholarship that has explored Ventidius Bassus' triumph has generally concluded that because of Augustan propaganda, the parade itself is poorly attested in the

[355] The coin (Figure 8) of Ventidius Bassus does not reference a triumphal parade. Degrassi (1954) 109.

later literary and material record.[356] As a general under the direction of Antonius, Ventidius' victory against Parthia adds glory to the Eastern triumvir, and stands in contrast with Augustus' effort to discredit Antonius' achievements from public narrative.[357] Augustus, however, did not completely remove Ventidius' triumph from official records as his name still appears in the triumphal list inscription—and moreover, while M. Antonius' name was removed from multiple public inscriptions, the record of his *ovation* was likewise never removed from the triumphal lists.[358] The challenge, therefore, was how to rewrite Parthian relations for a Roman audience in a way that would overshadow Ventidius' triumph, without dismantling the maintenance of Roman interests in West Asia. As we saw in the previous chapter, Augustus was adept at creating a narrative of Roman-Parthian relations for local audiences in his *Res Gestae* displayed in the East, which emphasize peaceful negotiations by invoking the concept of φιλία and setting himself up as protector over Parthian supplicants.[359] What this chapter adds to previous scholarship is that from a Roman perspective, as indicated in the Latin version of the *Res Gestae*,

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[356] Strugnell (2006) 240.

[357] Dio 51.19.3-5. Zanker notes that Antonius' self-presentation abroad made it easy for his rivals to critique him at Rome, and later buildings that had begun construction under his name were completed following the battle of Actium, and dedicated to Augustus; Zanker (1990) 57-65; C. Lange also discusses Augustus' triumph celebrating the victory; Lange (2016) 138-139; for the *Damnatio Memoriae* of Antonius, Lange (2009) 136-140; see also Flower (2011) 116-121.

[358] Degrassi (1954) 109: *M. Antonius M. f. M. n. Illvir r(ei) p(ublicae) c(onstituendae) ovan[s, an. DCCXIII]*. Flower argues that Antonius' name was erased from public monuments out of a desire to remove memory of a civil war, Flower (2011) 117; Lange disagrees, citing Hendrick's theory on *damnatio memoriae*, and states that the desire was not to erase the civil war, but rather to dishonor Antonius, Lange (2009) 136-137, citing Hendrick (2000) 114. Importantly, there is a difference between the calendrical *fasti* (which were altered by Augustus) and the triumphal lists on the Capitoline Hill, for which we have no evidence of *damnatio memoriae*. Moreover, this brings up a point made by Rich, is that the triumphal lists ought not be called *fasti*. The triumphal lists were called *fasti* by Degrassi in his edition of the text in 1947, but Rich notes that the term should be reserved for calendars and lists of magistrates. Rich (2014) 198; for discussion of emendations to calendrical *fasti* and the use of the term *fasti* for triumphal lists, Feeney (2007) 172, 290 n. 63; see also Salzman (1991) 178-179.

[359] Section 5.4.

Augustus imports these euergetistic negotiations into Rome using military language and redefining triumphal imagery.[360] In this way Augustus' presentation of Parthia via the return of the standards overshadows Ventidius' parade through the commemoration of an event that fuses West Asian and Roman parade cultures.

6.1: *Fasti Triumphales* and the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*

This chapter compares the presentation of Ventidius' triumph as recorded in the triumphal lists against the return of Roman standards as recorded in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*. The two inscriptions present to the Roman public contrasting versions of recent history by recording these two different celebrations at Rome. The so-called *Fasti Triumpahles* inscription was likely set up in 19 BCE in the Roman Forum, and is a record of all Republican-era triumphs (historical and mythological) up until that year.[361] Importantly, while both lists borrow visually from earlier Republican models, they are specifically Augustan, and contain elements of Augustus' revised dating system, which notes the foundation of Rome from its mythic, regal origins instead of the start of the Republic.[362] It is also likely that the triumphal lists were themselves positioned on Augustus' Parthian arch, erected in 19 BCE, as a way to celebrate the Parthian

[360] Cooley's commentary on the *Res Gestae* focuses on the Latin text, and in her discussion of this section she does not go into detail about the use of the term *supplices* or *amicitia.* For a general discussion of *amicitia* in the Roman empire, see Kemp (2018) 90.
[361] Degrassi (1954) 10; For the arch of Augustus celebrating the battle of Actium (and not Parthia) see Lange (2013) 84; other scholars argue that the *Regia* was the location of the *fasti*, see Simpson (1993) 66; however in addition to the fragments found by the arch as noted by Degrassi, the arch, as Lange notes, also is the ending location of the triumphal parade.
[362] Lange (2013) 59.

settlement.[363] In section 6.3 I address this further, arguing that their placement on the monument added to Augustus' agenda in the monument established a history of the triumphal parade that culminated in a peaceful resolution, and therefore altered the significance of the institution in society.[364]

Previous scholarship on the triumphal lists has argued that the inscription should not be treated as a wholly reliable source for triumphal record, as it was published during the time of Augustus (and on his own monument), and therefore might only reflect a version of recent history filtered through Augustan propaganda.[365] However, as this chapter demonstrates, even though this inscription was created during the Augustan era (and the entries recounting parades from the early periods of Rome ought to be viewed as historically unreliable or questionable), the entries from the Late Republic contradict Augustus' own propaganda in his *Res Gestae*, particularly when dealing with the Parthians. The *Res Gestae*, Augustus' autobiographical account of his reign that was set up in front of his own mausoleum, plays upon the conventions apparent in the *fasti triumphales* in order to construct a historical narrative that removes Antonius' (and through him, Ventidius') military achievements from history, and emphasizes Augustus' own glory in a new context.[366]

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[363] Rose (2005) 33.
[364] Section 6.3.
[365] Itgenshorst (2005) 10-11; Beard (2007) 80, argues that we cannot look to the *fasti* as evidence of historical lists, but that, "we can only guess at its relationship with the literary records of triumphal history embedded in the writing of Livy, Dionysius, and their lost predecessors." For the triumphs predating 300 BCE listed on the *Fasti*, see Lange (2016) 58, citing the argument about the triumphs before 300 between Oakley (1997), and Beloch (1926) 86-92.
[366] A. Cooley (2009) *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, Cambridge 5-7.

While literary accounts can be used to corroborate some of the information about Roman presentation of Parthia at this time, these inscriptions are uniquely important sources for understanding how Parthia was presented to Roman audiences.[367] This is in part because, as Beard and others have argued, literary accounts (particularly of triumphal spectacles) are unreliable as historical evidence for Republican triumphs, as they often represent later values, and later criticisms of Republican *triumphators*.[368] As such, contemporary archaeological sources help to elucidate not only temporal context, but evidence for the impact upon the visual culture of Rome at the time. Itgenshorst specifically has shown what analysis of contemporary (including material) sources reveal about the institution of the triumph during earlier periods of the Republic, and has thus paved the way for this current case study, which likewise uses contemporary inscriptions as a way to construct how Parthia was presented to Roman visual culture.[369]

As scholars have already noted, Augustus borrowed from triumphal imagery when introducing Parthians to Roman audiences.[370] This is evident not just in the *Res Gestae*, but in the coins distributed throughout the empire and monuments erected in the city of Rome (including the Primaporta cuirass, the Ara Pacis, the Basilica Aemilia Parthians, and the altar from the Vicus Sandaliarius).[371] When adding a reading of the *Res Gestae*

[367] As Cooley states, "inscriptions were not designed to be viewed only by the current generation. Inscribing a text upon durable material and displaying it in a public place implied the desire for it to be seen by future generations too, to influence their perception of the past. Inscriptions were *monumenta* - objects intended to recall a person or event - on a par with honorific statues, captured spoils, and ancestral portrait busts." Cooley (2000) 7.
[368] Beard (2007) 71.
[369] Itgenshorst (2005) 12.
[370] Hickson (1991) 138; Rose (2005) 21-75.
[371] Rose (2005) 21-75.

alongside the *fasti triumphales* to this previous scholarship, it becomes evident that Augustus borrowed not just images but also language conventions from records of the triumph in his propaganda. The comparative reading reveals that Augustus established a more nuanced approach in his public narratives of foreign relations and the importation of foreign *gentes* into Roman domain. This is important because prior to this, the primary (if not only) way that foreign people and territories were officially acknowledged as being under Roman domain was through the celebration of military victory via the triumphal parade.[372]

While it is unclear when historically it first became common for *triumphators* to identify *gentes* in their victory celebrations using *tituli*, literary accounts demonstrate that Pompey's triple-triumph as a watershed moment in the display of foreign peoples into the city of Rome.[373] As mentioned in the beginning of the previous chapter, ancient authors note that Pompey used *tituli* to identify multiple *gentes* in a number that surpassed the numbers recorded for all previous triumphal parades.[374] Interestingly, in none of the entries on the triumphal lists is the term "*gentes*" directly stated.[375] Instead there is a focus on either the names of kings, or the territories conquered. Pompey's entry, for instance, lists 10 territories along with a reference to pirates (which was certainly understood as a people group, though perhaps not a *gens*): "[ex Asia, Ponto, Armenia, Paphla]gonia, Cappadocia), [Cilicia, Syria, Scytheis, Iudaeeis, Alb]ania, pirateis."[376] This does not automatically mean

[372] Beard (2007) 123; Östenberg (2009) 229; (2009b) 470-471.
[373] See note 285.
[374] Beard (2007) 12; Östenberg (2009b); Nicolet (1991) 32, K. Morrell, (2017) 47.
[375] *RGDA* 32.3; For *gentes* and Augustus, see Nicolet (1991) 20-21, 46; for the difference between *gentes* and *provinces* in the *Res Gestae,* see Whitaker (2004) 40.
[376] Degrassi (1954) 61.

that the later depictions of Pompey's parade were incorrect when they wrote about the spectacle as featuring *gentes* demarcated with *tituli*. It does, however, make the contrast between the triumphal list and the *Res Gestae*, which lists a number of eastern and western *gentes*, as a way of presenting and recording Roman foreign relations even sharper.

The way kings are mentioned in the *Res Gestae* also shows that Augustus diverges from the conventions set in the triumphal lists, particularly in mentioning *amicitia* achieved without warfare.[377] While emphasis on friendship on-site in West Asia appealed to local ideologies (as we saw in the previous chapter), in Rome Augustus reframes such negotiations by using overt military terminology in order for such negotiations to be held on equal footing with military conquest. Importantly, kings do not appear often in the triumphal lists, but do appear throughout the 2nd-century entries.[378] It seems by the 70's at the latest, however, it was no longer standard to name the conquered kings--for certainly if naming kings was still done, we would have expected to see Mithridates, Tigranes, and Antiochus appear under Pompey's third triumph entry. The records do indicate, however that conquering kings was seen as a part of earlier Roman triumphal history. In addition, by this point in time, client-king relationships as defined through *amicitia* had historically been an important way for Romans to maintain interests with provinces throughout the republic, even though they were not acknowledged on the triumphal list entries for those years.[379] Thus, in naming kings on his *Res Gestae*, Augustus recalls earlier convention and makes his successes in dealing with foreign kings reminiscent of a triumphal past.

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[377] Nicolet (1991) 20-21, 46; For *amicitia* see Kemp (2017) 85-90.
[378] The last apparent entry for victory over a *rex* appears in 81--however, the lines are damaged, and this is based on a reconstruction.
[379] Braund (1984) 157.

Augustus also plays with triumphal convention in using the term supplicant (*supplices*) to describe multiple kings, including the Parthians. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Greek term used here is ικέται, a word used on inscriptions that express devotion to a deity.[380] In Rome, however, the role of the supplicant had specific military connotations for dealing with foreign enemies.[381] As we see in Julius Caesar's commentary, for example, *supplices* would appear on the battlefield when defeated armies wished to surrender to Roman forces:

> *Compluribus iam lapidibus ex quae, quae suberat, turri subductis repentina ruina pars eius turris concidit, pars reliqua consequens procumbebat cum hostes urbis direptione perterriti inermes cum infulis se porta foras universi proripiunt ad legatos atque exercitum supplices manus tendunt.*
>
> After a number of stones had been removed from the adjacent tower, there was a sudden collapse and part of it gave way. The remainder consequently began to lean forward. The enemy, terrified by the prospect of a sacked city, rushed as one out through the gate, unarmed and wearing fillets. They stretched out their hands for mercy to the officers and army.[382]

Therefore, what the invocation of *supplices* does in the *Res Gestae* is formally define the subservience of these foreign kings to Augustus in the same manner as a foreign army would surrender to Romans. Braund states that *supplices* refer to kings in the *Res Gestae* and should be translated as "refugees" seeking shelter at Rome.[383] The *Res Gestae* does note that some of the foreign kings fled to Augustus (*confugerant*), but the context in which

6; Mommsen (1887) 590, 645; Matthaei (1907) 185.
[380] Section 5.4.
[381] *RGDA* 29.II, 32.I.
[382] Caesar. *De Bellum Civile* . 2.11.4; transl. by Peskett (1914) 140-141.
[383] Braund (2013) 157.

royal members of the family came to Rome in the *Res Gestae* was not to act as refugees seeking safety in Rome.[384] Instead, the word used is *pignora*, meaning a child of a foreign leader who would grow up educated in the *domus* of Augustus, occupying a role that was "integral to Augustus' plan for a hegemonic global realm."[385] In addition to the *Res Gestae*, it is also worth noting that the Prima Porta statue depicts a posture of *amicitia* between a Parthian and a Roman representative.[386] Thus, in acting as *supplices*, foreign kings and *gentes* concede victory to Rome, thereby adapting the same model of surrender as foreign enemies did to Julius Caesar on the battlefield, only without the battlefield. By calling the kings *supplices*, Augustus is thus able to add client-kings to his list of conquered foes, but without actually partaking in battle or jeopardizing his position in West Asia.

While we have seen that gift-giving and local diplomatic negotiations were used to maintain Roman interests in the territory since the time of L. Scipio on site in West Asia--at Rome, the spectacle of the triumph was meant to display a narrative of conquest (even if the military action was exaggerated).[387] Moreover, because the triumph in the Republic acted as the formal ceremony that inducted foreign groups, individuals, and territories into Roman domain that had been conquered by Roman armies, parades celebrating victories over West Asian peoples could lead to misconstructions of how Romans operated in West

[384] *RGDA* 32: *Phrates Orodis filius filios suos nepotesque omnes misit in Italiam, non bello superatus, sed amicitiam nostram per liberorum suorum pignora petens.* Phrates, son of Orodes, sent all his sons and grandsons into Italy, not because he had been conquered in war, but seeking our friendship through the pledges of his children.
[385] Kleiner and Buxton (2008) 59.
[386] Östenberg (2009 c) 65.
[387] Östenberg (2009 a) 8-9.

Asia, as we saw with the triumphs over Antiochus in the previous case study.[388] By the late Republic, the institution had undergone specific changes to the pageantry, becoming increasingly visually stunning.[389] With this in mind let us now turn to Ventidius' triumph in contemporary Roman context.

6.2: Ventidius' Parade

Venditius was sent back to Rome in 38 BCE, after meeting with Antonius in Syria.[390] As we saw in the previous chapter, this was following alleged attempts to extort wealth from local kings for supporting Parthians.[391] Upon being relieved of his command and sent back to Rome, Ventidius was awarded a triumphal parade by the Senate.[392] Due to a lack of literary descriptions of the parade, it is difficult to comment on the specifics of its pageantry--however, in comparison to earlier parades celebrating Roman victory in West Asia (Pompey's celebration in particular), the pageantry must have been relatively lacking in opulence. For starters, Ventidius the parade would have lacked soldiers, as Antonius relieved him from his post and did not accompany him to Rome, meaning that the troops would have remained in West Asia.[393] In addition, the only enemy defeated that the *Fasti* lists is the Parthians. While it was common to present only one foreign *gens* on

[388] Lange dates the change in the Republican triumph to Marius, Lange (2016) 27; for the ostentation of Pompey's triumph, see Beard (2007) 9; for the increasing competition between Roman *triumphators* in the Late Republic, see Sumi (2010) 29-30; for general discussion of the spectacle of triumph, see Brilliant (1999) 221-229.
[389] This is particularly evident in the rise of paintings in triumphal parades in the Late Republic. See: Holliday (1997) 130-147.
[390] Wylie (1993) 137.
[391] Dio 49.20.5.
[392] Plut. *Life of Antony*. 34.4; Wylie (1993) 137.
[393] Sumi (2010) 201.

parade, particularly at this time, Pompey's parade some 23 years earlier had presented a vision of West Asia as a territory that was populated by a large number of *gentes*. In addition, the parade would have lacked the defeated king, which was a common visual trope in triumphal parades--Caesar himself famously paraded (and executed) Vercingetorix at the end of his triumph.[394] Ventidius did not choose to keep Pacorus alive however, instead choosing to decapitate him and send his head around West Asian cities.[395] It is, of course, possible that Ventidius preserved the head of Pacorus to parade at Rome--but there is no evidence for this, and what's more, if was more traditional to execute captives at the end of the parade rather than show their remains.[396] Thus the parade lacked multiple troops, and lacked a royal enemy.

There is also the question of booty, and one also must ask the degree to which riches were paraded on Ventidius' triumph. There are no extant inscriptions in West Asia that note a crown or any other honors being given to Ventidius by ambassadors on behalf of a *poleis* (as we found both with Scipio and Augustus). Moreover, as we saw in the previous chapter, there is no evidence that Ventidius participated in euergetistic arrangements with local populations, and he did not appear seek ambassadors to appear on procession in Rome. Instead, any evidence we have regarding wealth extracted from West Asia was from extorting Antigonus and Antiochus, before Antonius came to relieve Ventidius of his

[394] Dio. 40.41.2-3; Östenberg (2009a) 131.
[395] Dio. 49.20.4.
[396] For discussion on why select kings were executed in triumphs, see See Beard (2007) 129 who gives a summary of previous thoughts; Rupke (1990) 210-211 believes it is a transgression of *iure Bellum* although does not provide analysis of examples to back up his claim; for preserving human remains in the ancient world, see Brenner (2014) 316-44.

command.[397] This leads us to question the amount of this wealth Ventidius was able to keep for his parade--how much (if any) did Antonius let him keep?[398] While we cannot answer this question with any certainty, it is plausible that the amount of wealth Ventidius paraded did not compare to that of his predecessors, due in part to his ineffective diplomatic strategies in West Asia. Thus, while we do not have descriptions of the parade, analysis of the ways in which such elements would have been obtained on-site suggests Ventidius' parade likely lacked much of the spectacular elements present in other triumphs of the Late Republic.

While descriptions of the pageantry of the triumph are not available in extant sources, what does appear of the legacy of Ventidius' parade in Roman historiographical discourse appears not to have focused on the Parthians, but instead on his role as a triumphator who was himself paraded on triumph as a captive in Strabo's triumph in 89 BCE.[399] This is unique in the history of the institution, as Ventidius appears to have been the only Roman in history to have appeared in a triumphal parade both as captive and as *triumphator*. Beard uses this as evidence of the triumph's role in society as the ceremony through which foreigners effectively became Roman.[400] While this was an impressive climb up the Roman social ladder, at the time many contemporary writers viewed Ventidius' low-birth with indignance, which seems to have in part overshadowed the

[397] Dio 49.20.5; Josephus. *Antiquities*.14.14.6.
[398] Antiochus settled with Antonius for 300 talents, but this was after Ventidius had left West Asia; Seaver (1952) 280.
[399] Appian. *Bell. Civ*. 15. 4; Dio Cassius 43. 51. 5; Val. Max. 6. 9. 9; Pliny. *NH* 7. 43; In spite of these descriptions, Strugness states that Ventidius' position in Strabo's triumph is "conjecture"; Strugnell (2006) 242.
[400] Beard (2007) 141.

military success and campaign narrative.[401] Thus, the memory of Ventidius' triumphal honor often does not get used in later literary accounts to invoke images of Rome's conquest of Parthia, but rather, to critique or discuss Ventidius' social station. Thus, the main elements we can parse together about parade itself is that it celebrated defeat of Parthia, and likely lacked many elements of pageantry. As the next section demonstrates Augustan propaganda effectively removed the glory of Ventidius' triumph by reframing Roman-Parthian relations, which can likewise be read as part of the larger *damnatio memoriae* against Antonius.[402]

6.3: *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* and the Parthian settlement

In the last chapter, I examined the local, West-Asian context for the section on Roman-Parthian relations in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, and demonstrated that by ignoring Ventidius' (and M. Antonius's) campaigns and recasting the relationship as peaceful (but subservient to Rome), Augustus found a way to welcome local populations who supported the Parthians back under Roman rule. However, back in Rome, Ventidius' triumph had already taken credit for Parthian conquest--a fact that Augustus did not, or could not, erase from public record.[403] Thus instead, we find in the *Res Gestae* the "augusteische Partherpolitik"-- the peace made with king Phraates, an event which was commemorated at Rome with festivals, coins and monuments.[404] Effectively, in 20 BCE,

[401] Strugnell (2006) 242-243.
[402] For the *damnatio* in Dio and Plutarch, see Babcock (1962) 30-32.
[403] In agreement with Lange (2009) 136-137.
[404] Timpe (1975) 155–69; While Augustus refused triumphal honors, he did allow for an altar to Fortuna Redux to be erected in his honor, and the day of his return (October 12th) was celebrated with *feriae* and

Augustus travelled to the East to negotiate with Phraates, regained the lost Roman standards and negotiated peace.[405] To announce this to local audiences, Augustus borrowed triumphal visual modes, but presented a narrative that celebrated diplomacy rather than military conquest.[406] In so doing, the return of the standards as commemorated by the *Res Gestae* brings narrative elements of West Asian parade culture and *euergetism*, with emphasis on unity and peace, into the parade culture of Rome, while simultaneously signaling to Roman audiences a military feat, even though there was not one.

As discussed in section 6.1, the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* used pre-existing triumphal language and methods of recording the induction of foreign *gentes* and territories into Rome (as indicated on the *fasti*), but introduced diplomacy as an acceptable alternative to military action as a way to increase Roman domain. This shift moreover coincided with a change in who was awarded triumphal honors--following 19 BCE, it appears as though the honor was only given to members of Augustus' household who had previously been awarded *ornamenta triumphalia*.[407] Limiting who received the award after 19 BCE perhaps would have added to the idea that the Parthian resolution stood as the culminating point of triumphal historical tradition, which Ash cited as a way to explain why the *fasti triumphales* appear on the Parthian arch.[408]

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the establishment of Augustalia, see Rich (1998), 72-74; the Parthian Settlement as the "defining moment of the principate," Ash (2015) 140. For Dio's description of the festivities: Dio 54.8.2-4.

[405] The standards were likely placed in the temple to Mars Ultor in 2 BCE, Ash (2015) 345 n. 7; however Rich (1998) 79-97 argues that the temple was never built; Rose, however, makes claims in favor of the temple's existence despite the lack of archaeological evidence by citing the Temple of Jupiter Feretrius, Rose (2005) 22 n. 12.

[406] This is particularly evident by the *Fasti Triumphales*' placement on Augustus' arch, which Rose states resulted in the viewer getting the sense that the Parthian settlement was itself a culmination of all earlier triumphs into a lasting peace. Rose (2005) 33.

[407] Sumi (2011) 87-88; for the *ornamenta triumphalia* see Boyce (1942) 130-141.

[408] Ash (2015) 140.

In addition, diplomatic resolutions that have triumphal resonances specifically are from events when leaders of foreign kings or *gentes* offer friendship, or come to Augustus in supplication.[409] In this section, we do see the Parthian kings Tiridates and Phrates mentioned by name--in contrast to the *fasti* record of Ventidius, which does not mention the Parthian kings by name:

Res Gestae:

> Ad me supplices confugerunt reges Parthorum Tiridates et postea Phrates regis Phratis filius. [410]
>
> Kings of the Parthians, Tiridates, and later Phrates, the son of King Phrates, took refuge with me as suppliants.

Fasti Triumphales:

> P. Ventidius P.f. pro co(n)s(ule) ex Tauro...monte et Partheis [411]
>
> P. Ventidius, Proconsul, from Mount Taurus and the Parthians

Of course, as previously noted, by the time of Ventidius' triumph, names of kings were not included in later records on the *fasti.* Thus, by including the name of the Parthian king here, and the reference to his role as a suppliant, Augustus reframes how Romans understood their relationship to Parthia: as a kingdom that recognizes and bows down to the authority of Augustus, in the way that a defeated enemy on the battlefield would surrender to a Roman army. Moreover, Parthian peace becomes a beacon of Roman triumphal history--

[409] See section 6.1.
[410] *RGDA* 32.1.
[411] Degrassi (1954) 109.

the historical point in which the glory of Roman conquest turned into a peaceful negotiation of *amicitia*.

To emphasize this relationship with Parthia, Augustus recalls in his *Res Gestae* the return of the standards to Rome, an event likewise commemorated in the building of multiple monuments and coins.[412]

> Parthos trium exercitum Romano rum spolia et signa reddere mihi supplicesque amicitiam populí Romaní petere coegi. Ea autem signa in penetrálí, quod est in templo Martis Vltoris, reposui.[413]
>
> The Parthians I compelled to restore to me the spoils and standards of three Roman armies, and to seek as suppliants the friendship of the Roman people. These standards I deposited in the inner shrine which is in the Temple of Mars Ultor.

The three standards refer to standards lost by both Crassus and Antonius.[414] The return of the Parthian standards and the Parthian settlement was thus celebrated not just in an ephemeral ceremony (like Ventidius' triumph), but was cemented clearly into multiple spaces of the visual culture of Rome and invoked triumphal imagery.[415] Coins, with the phrase *signis receptis*, depicted various images including (on some) a triumphal quadriga.[416] The temple of Mars Ultor also deserves consideration here, which (if it was built) allegedly housed the returned standards.[417] Whether or not the temple was actually built is up for debate, but there is ample evidence that suggests that some sort of temple

[412] This includes the Prima Porta statue which Cornwell convincingly argues is a memorial to the return of the Parthian standards. Cornwell (2017) 150 n. 78
[413] *RGDA* 29.
[414] Cooley (2009) 242.
[415] Rose (2005) 45.
[416] Rowan (2018) 146; Rose (2005) 33; see Figure 6.
[417] See note 36.

(even if just a temporary structure) did exist.[418] Mars Ultor moreover is noteworthy, as Julius Caesar was planning to build a temple to Mars before his assassination, and gives evidence for the type of relationship Augustus was attempting to define with the Parthians.[419]

What we therefore have in the *Res Gestae* is two different messages embedded within the same text, that would have different connotations to different audiences. In West Asia, as the previous chapter showed, a peaceful relationship with Parthia that kept Rome as the authority made space and allowances for local populations who had supported Pacorus--a juxtaposition with Ventidius Bassus' violent exploits in the territory that attempted to eradicate Parthian influence from the territory. The same passage at Rome, however, uses language that from a Roman context hints at military triumph. By calling kings supplicants, the term used to refer to the role of the individuals on the battlefield who officially surrender to Roman armies, Augustus hints at their subservient role and his own military strength, without even needing to declare war against the Parthians. Images of the return of the standards in Rome likewise, though never calling Augustus a *triumphator*, clearly borrowed from triumphal visual modes.

This likewise forces us to rethink the role of the triumphal lists in Augustan propaganda. While scholars have argued about how the *Fast Triumphalesi* exists within an Augustan agenda, the different narratives of Parthian-Roman relations between the *fasti* and the *Res Gestae* creates multiple narratives.[420] Instead of altering the information on the

[418] Rich (1998) 82.
[419] Ibid. 87.
[420] See note 6.

fasti, what Augustus did is reframe what the triumph meant in society and in foreign relations, which is verified in the narrative presented in his *Res Gestae*. In doing this, Augustus does not rewrite the triumphal past *per se*--but he does change the broader cultural significance and function of the Roman triumph as an institution. This moreover helps to put into context the passage in which Augustus refuses additional triumphs voted to him:

> 1. [*b*]*is ovans triumphavi* tri[s *egi*] *curulis triumphos et appellatus sum viciens semel imperator.* [*decernente pl*]*uris triumphos mihi sena*[*t*]*u, qu*[*ibus omnibus su*]*persedi. L*[*aurum de f*]*asc*[*i*]*bus deposui in Capit*[*olio votis, quae*] *quoque bello nuncupaveram,* [*sol*]*utis. 2. Ob res a* [*me aut per legatos*] *meos auspicis meis terra ma*[*riqu*]*e pr*[*o*]*spere gestas qui*[*nquagiens et q*]*uinquiens decrevit senatus supp*[*lica*]*ndum esse dís immortalibus. Dies a*[*utem, pe*]*r quos ex senatus consulto* [*s*]*upplicatum est, fuere DC*[*CCLXXXX. 3. In triumphis meis*] *ducti sunt ante currum meum reges aut r*[*eg*]*um lib*[*eri novem*]. [421]
>
> Twice I have celebrated triumphal ovations and three times I have driven triumphal chariots and I have been hailed twenty-one times as victorious general, although the senate voted me more triumphs, from all of which I abstained. I deposited the laurel from my *fasces* in the Capitoline temple, in fulfilment of the vows which I had taken in each war. 2. On account of affairs successfully accomplished by land and sea by me or through my deputies under my auspices the senate fifty-five times decreed that thanksgiving should be offered to the immortal gods. Moreover, the days during which thanksgiving has been offered by degree of the senate have amounted to 890. 3. In my triumphs nine kings or kings' children have been led in front of my chariot.

Here, Cooley suggests that the reason Augustus refused further triumphs was to keep within traditional limits--however, as Cooley herself points out, Caesar (among others with the title of dictator--a title Augustus was offered but refused) had been awarded more than

[421] RGDA 4.1-3; Cooley translation.

three triumphs.[422] By considering how Augustus emphasizes *amicitia* in the document, however, an additional reading to this section suggests that he was making a broader point about the function of the institution as a whole. When military conflict resulted in victory, a triumph could still operate as the ceremony through which foreign entities were formally inducted into Roman domain--however, with Augustus' diplomatic solution--triumphs were no longer the only way to accomplish this.

6.4: Conclusion:

Ventidius' victory over Parthia on-site in West Asia, and subsequent triumphal parade in Rome presented audiences with a clear message of Roman military victory over Parthia. The triumph, however, was likely unimpressive, and poorly attested in literary tradition. This is likely because after the Battle of Actium, Augustus' agenda sought to remove Antonius' achievements from public record--which included the triumph of his general Ventidius. The triumphal lists, however, were exceptions to this *damnatio memoriae* against M. Antonius, including both the triumvir's *ovatio* and Ventidius' triumph on the list of spectacles. Instead of erasing this entry, Augustus uses monuments celebrating his successes to reframe the significance of the institution of the triumph in Roman society, and presents *amicitia* as an alternative option for adding new territories and *gentes* into Roman domain.

Interestingly, in both the case of Ventidius and Augustus, we find that the presentation of West Asian geopolitics in Rome aligns more closely with what is occurring

[422] *RGDA* 4.1.

on-site than in the previous case study. Ventidius' military campaign was successful in defeating both Labienus and Pacorus, and in using military forces and violence to remove Parthians from West Asia. Unlike the triumph of Scipio, Ventidius was more effective in defeating the foreign enemy in battle, as the Parthian king himself was even killed (and in comparison, Scipio did not capture of kill Antiochus). Euergetistm was not used on-site for local negotiations, and his achievements were brought into effect through successful warfare. But while such military successes could be celebrated in Rome, West Asians showed a preference to Parthian rule, and Ventidius' tactics did not do a successful job of maintaining local support for Roman interests.

Augustus, however, did more successfully maintain local interests by embracing Parthians with *amicitia*. By erecting the *Res Gestae* in both West Asia and Rome, and having both Latin and Greek translations, Augustus seeks to present what seems to be the same message to two audiences in these two locations, thus representing in Rome exactly what he is doing in West Asia. While in West Asia such a move creates a space for local Parthian sympathizers, in Rome Augustus needed to rehaul completely Roman triumphal spectacles, and introduce an alternative way to add *gentes* into Roman domain through *amicitia.* To do this, he borrowed from triumphal imagery and language to indicate to Roman audiences the Parthian supplication to Roman power.

What we thus find here is evidence of West-Asian style negotiations influencing culture and policy in the city of Rome. Misrepresentations of local geopolitics led to tensions after Scipio's triumph in the 2nd century BCE, and the aftermath of Ventidius' campaign indicates that Roman military culture was not an effective way to maintain

interests in West Asia. What Romans had to do, therefore, was adopt West Asian customs not just on-site, but import them into Rome as well. Parthians thus become introduced and then re-introduced into Roman visual culture between 38-19 BCE via two different programmatic agendas that reflect key shifts in how West Asian geopolitics was renegotiated under Roman rule. Parthia as an entity is represented first as a conquered *gens*, and then as a willing supplicant bowing to Augustus' power. However, this facade of peace did not last. As we shall see in the next chapter which explores the Sasanian Empire and Aurelian, Romans continue to view Parthians as an important enemy, even after they are no longer pose a threat to Roman imperialism in West Asia.

CHAPTER 7

CASE STUDY 3: SASANIANS, ROMANS AND THE WEST ASIAN LIMES

The Sasanian Empire rose to power in the third century, defeating Parthian and Roman forces in West Asia and thus altering the geopolitical landscape of the region. The *Shapur K-Z* inscription erected under Sasanian King Shapur I, which describes the deeds of Shapur in a way that scholars have stated is reminiscent of Augustus' *Res Gestae* discussed at the end of the previous case study, details these victories over Roman forces:[423]

> Ud im āwand šahr ud šahrðār ud pādgōsbān harw amā pad bāž ud bandagīf awestād ahēnd, ud kaδ naxwišt pad šahr awištād ahēm, Gōrdanyos Kēsar až hamag Frōm, Gōt ud Garmāniyā šahr zāwar hangāwišn kerd; ud ō Asūrestān abar Ērānšahr ud amā āγ[a]d, ud pad Asūrestān m[arz] pad Mišīk paddēmān wuzurg zambag būd. Gōrdanyos Kēsar ōžad, Frōmāyīn zāwar *wānād, ud Frōmāyīn Filip(p)os kēsar kerd. Ud Filip(p)os Kēsar amā ō nemastīg āγad, ud gyān goxn (?) dēnār 500 hazār ō amā dād, pad bāž awestād. [424]
>
> 5. And all these numerous lands and rulers and regions were made tributary and subject to me. 6.And when I first became established in the land, Gordian Caesar drew together an army from all the land of Rome, Gothia, and Germany; and to Asurestan (=Babylonia) he came against Iran and [against] me, and at the boundary of Asurestan at Mishik there was a great face-to-face battle. 7. Gordian Caesar was killed, and the army of the Romans was destroyed, and the Romans made Philip Caesar. 8. And Philip Caesar came to me for supplication, and for their souls gave 500,000 dinars in blood money to me, and he was established as a tributary.

The inscription, erected in Persis between 260-262, was a trilingual inscription, composed in Middle Persian, Parthian and Greek, speaking to the multilingual audiences residing under Sasanian rule. It likewise provides a valuable account of geopolitical struggles over

[423] Rostovtzeff (1943) 17-20; Rubin (2002) 267; Dignas and Winter (2007) 56.
[424] *SKZ* 5-8; Translated by Nabel (2014); the Greek term used for "land" is *ethne*.

rule in West Asia, during a period from which there are limited contemporary sources. While parades are not overtly discussed, the mention of a tributary here, and the description of the various "*ethne*" that fell to Shapur in other sections of the inscription, suggests a continuation of earlier tributary customs, which involved members from specific regions or ethnic groups offering tribute to the king.[425]

While the comparison with Augustan propaganda is not misplaced, it does not adequately portray the complexity of Sasanian propaganda, which demonstrates that by the late third century, there was a fusion of pre-existing, local parade customs, and the adoption of Western Roman triumphal visual culture occurring in Asia.[426] The previous two case studies explored how specific Roman victories and negotiations via gift-giving and parade culture in West Asia were translated for Roman audiences in triumphal processions, which not only operated as the wide-scale material introductions of the Seleucid and Parthian empires into the city of Rome, but also created and fed into Roman stereotypes about Asia as a geopolitical unit, and the "East" more broadly. Importantly, the Roman parades used to convey the message of foreign conquest came into conflict with the West Asian customs, creating a tension between differing expressions of imperial power between the capital in the West and the East. The final case study looks at Roman-Sasanian relations in the early 270's CE, comparing the situation in West Asia in 272 and the existing parade culture at the time, and the emperor's triumphal parade celebrating this victory in 274 CE. The current chapter focuses on the geopolitical situation in West Asia, while the next chapter

[425] *SKZ* 2.
[426] For the critique of the term *Res Gestae* see Rubin (2002) 267; For fusion of Eastern and Western visual sources see Canepa (2017) 72.

looks at Aurelian's triumphal parade in Rome as a response to similar Sasanian propaganda.

This chapter is divided into three sections exploring parade culture and the clash of empires in West Asia in the third century. Part 7.I begins by examining parade culture of the Sasanians celebrating victories over West Asia, looking at the reliefs and inscriptions of Shapur I that convey images of gift-giving, unification parades, the military subjugation of Rome, and the Persian conquest of cities and peoples in West Asia (see Figure 10 and 11). The propaganda established by Shapur I uses parade imagery on sculptural reliefs to invoke both Roman and traditional Achaemenid displays of power. Part 7.2 then looks at how empires drew and redrew borders in West Asia through siege warfare, and notes the Palmyrene rebellion in the 260's-270's as a reaction to its geopolitical status as a buffer zone between the Roman and Sasanian Empires. In this light, we see that the importance from the Roman perspective in reclaiming and strengthening the Eastern *limes* from the Palmyrene's in the third century was, in part, a response to the growing Sasanian Empire.

Part 7.3 then looks at the Roman campaign under Aurelian, first using mapping software to reconstruct his route, and second, looking at how Aurelian worked with Christians to take advantage of a growing religious network (Figure 12 and 13). 7.4 explores how Aurelian presented his reconquest to West Asian populations using extant West Asian inscriptions, demonstrating that honorific inscriptions used standardized Latin *cognomina ex virtute* and titulature. Ultimately, this chapter does is set up the geopolitical situation in West Asia at the time of Aurelian's campaign, and demonstrates that Roman narratives of empire, parade culture, and modes of negotiating with local polities were in

use in the late 3rd century CE, which differ from the gift-giving and unity narratives seen in the previous two case studies. The next chapter then compares these accounts to the ways in which West Asian geopolitics were presented to Roman audiences, both in the historical parade of Aurelian, and in the memory of his parade as constructed by the author of the *HA*.

7.1: Sasanians, Empire and Parade Imagery

One of the most significant events relating to Roman-Persian relations in the third century is the capture of Roman emperor Valerian by Shapur I, an event that is recorded in both Sasanian and Roman sources alike.[427] The contemporary Sasanian account of the affair in the *Res Gestae* of Shapur I is the earliest source that mentions the capture of Valerian and other Roman officials, stating, "Valerian Caesar was captured by [my] own hand, and the rest, the praetorian prefects and the senators and the officers who were the leaders of this army, were all captured and led into Persia."[428] Roman authors likewise noted the capture of Valerian, however many of the sources providing the Roman perspective, as Daryaee has indicated, were filtered through a Christian viewpoint that painted Valerian as an anti-Christian persecutor.[429] In this light, Valerian's defeat becomes

[427] For a discussion of sources including the *Res Gestae* of Shapur, the 13th Sibylline oracle, the *Historia Augusta*, and Julian's *Caesars*, see Caldwell (2017) 336-345.
[428] *SKZ I* 22, translated from the Parthian by Jake Nabel.
[429]Daryaee (2009) Locations 476-478, citing Lactantius, *de mortibus persecutorum* 5; Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastics*, VII, 13, and Orosius, *adversus paganos*, Also see Dodgeon and Lieu (1991) 58–65. The 13th Sibylline Oracle also discusses Valerian, although downplays his role in order to show favor to Odenaethus. See Potter (1990) 155-164; Barcelo (2011) 23-24; and Bleckmann (1992) 97-129.

part of a pro-Christian historical narrative, shifting focus from a Roman failure to non-Christian one.

After Valerian was captured, Shapur publicly celebrated the victory by erecting large sculptural reliefs that display the Roman defeat, and the success of the Sasanian empire.[430] Notably, the sculptures present processional imagery and are reminiscent of both Roman triumphal motifs and earlier Achaemenid sculptures, demonstrating that the Sasanians were fusing together Eastern and Western parade cultures in their displays of power.[431] While three reliefs were erected in the time of Shapur I, it is Reliefs 2 and 3 that most clearly depict parade culture and a display of power (Figure 10 and 11).[432] Relief 2 depicts a victory processions that have imagery comparable to Roman artwork that depict triumphal parades, such as the sculptural reliefs on the Triumphal Arch of Titus. Moreover, the similarity this relief has with Roman sculpture is not a coincidence. As Warwick Ball states, the craftsmanship of the relief is more similar to Roman rather than Persian reliefs, suggesting that it was constructed by Romans who may even have been prisoners of war, forced "to depict their own humiliation."[433] If this is the case, the relief not only further humiliates the captives responsible for its construction, but using Roman modes of expression of power means that the sculpture speaks directly to audiences familiar with Western imagery of triumphal procession, power and victory.

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[430] Canepa (2017) 72.
[431] Shapur I incorporated multiple elements of Roman visual culture in his palace complex at Bishapur. See Canepa (2017) 75-78.
[432] The first relief is in poor condition, and depicts emperors Gordian III and Philip, both of whom are displayed as submissive to Shapur. This relief is likely a copy of a relief erected under Shapur's father Ardashir.
[433] Ball (2016) 140.

Let us then look closely at the Roman triumphal elements within this sculpture to demonstrate that the image here is a Sasanian interpretation of a Roman triumph. Beginning with the central panel, we see that King Shapur appears as a triumphal general astride his horse. Typically in the Roman triumphal parade, the *imperator* would appear at the end of the procession in a chariot led by four horses (or, in select cases, elephants) and in this way there is a difference between standard Roman triumphal processions and the victory presented in Bishapur.[434] In Bishapur, the captive Roman emperors--likely representing Gordian III, Valerian and Phillip, all appear in various forms of submission, one trailing behind Shapur, one on bended knee in supplication before Shapur, and the third trampled beneath the hooves of Shapur's horse.[435] Again, this is arguably a major difference from the standard pageantry found in the Roman triumph, as captives were often placed ahead of the *triumphator* in the procession. However, I argue that these differences, instead of indicating a sharp divergence from the Roman triumph, in reality more clearly impresses upon the viewer the same type of relationship between victorious general and captives that the Roman triumph also displays, and as such is not a sharp divergence--rather, the difference comes down to narrative structure.

The narrative structure of the traditional Roman triumphal procession begins with captives, booty and soldiers, building up to the celebration of the *triumphator* as the person through whom the victory was secured, the person to whom the whole pageantry of the parade is credited. The narrative presented in the procession in the Bishapur sculpture lacks

[434] Östenberg (2009) 183.
[435] Ball (2016)136; Canepa (2017) 68, 71-75; Macdermot (1954) 76-80.

the same form of narrative buildup as is found in a triumphal parade, but nonetheless evokes the same message of both military conquest and incorporation of a foreign enemy into the domain of the empire. The image, therefore, demonstrates not only military success over the Roman army, but also the incorporation of Rome into Sasanian dominion, in a similar way that the Roman triumphs indicate both military conquest and successful introduction of foreign territories under the aegis of Rome.[436] The main difference is that instead of the parade narrative ending with the *triumphator* as is the case with depictions of triumphs, here in Shapur appears in the center of the procession, with figures walking towards him, rather in a single-file line. While this disrupts a linear narrative buildup culminating with the *imperator*, the placement of Shapur and the defeat of Roman emperors still impresses upon the viewer the central importance of the Sasanian king in bringing together an empire through the victory over the Romans.

While the second relief displays a Sasanian interpretation of a triumph, the third relief in Bishapur, which is comparable to the Achaemenid sculptures discussed in Chapter 2, depicts what appears to be a wide variety of different ethnic groups offering gifts to the king in procession (Compare Figure 1 and Figure 10). The comparison between this image and earlier Achaemenid processional images is noted in scholarship, and relates to debates about whether or not the Sasanians saw themselves as successors to the Achaemenids.[437] For current discussion, whether or not the Sasanians saw themselves as Achaemenid successors, the processional imagery in Relief 3 shows a ceremonial procession similar to

[436] Beard (2007) 141.
[437] Canepa (2016) 42; Daryaee argues that it is possible that the Sasanians might have looked at the Achaemenid monuments as earlier kings of Persis, no necessarily as ancestors; Daryaee (2009) Locations 866-869.

those depicted in Persepolis. In both the Sasanian and Achaemenid reliefs, there are processions of tribute bearers, adorned in traditional clothes from their region to indicate the location and ethnic group to which they belong. Some groups are the same in both monuments, but the sculpture to Shapur has a panel that may arguably show Roman tribute-bearers.[438] What this relief indicates is that the Sasanians were adopting local, pre-existing parade culture customs from West Asia and Persia in their imperial propaganda.

The fusion of East-West parade culture in Sasanian imagery is significant for the development of the Roman triumph in this period for two reasons. First, it indicates that Roman modes of expressing victory and empire through triumphal parades had spread into Asian territories, in this case, at the hands of Roman artisans under the orders of the Sasanian king. This fundamentally changes the significance of triumphal imagery, one from Romans expressing their imperial gains over foreign peoples, to Romans themselves expressing their own subjugation at the hands of a Persian king. What this also demonstrates is that Roman constructs of building empire, that of military subjugation as depicted through triumphal parades, had spread into Asia, and were being used non-Romans outside of Rome. But more importantly, this triumphal procession imagery occurring in Persia incorporates local tributary customs as well. Altogether this a new kind of spectacle, one that contains both European and Asian modes of expressing empire. Therefore, the military triumph under Shapur becomes a triumphal tributary parade, showing military conquest of those who rise against the Sasanians (specifically, the

[438] Canepa (2016) 72.

Romans), incorporation of foreign entities into the empire, and a willing unification indicated through gift-giving ceremonies.

7.2: Siege Warfare in 3rd century West Asia under the Sasanians and Palmyrenes

The geopolitical messages contained within this Sasanian propaganda is that by the 260's West Asian territories and Rome itself have become tributaries to the Sasanians. This message is even more prominent when looking at the *SKZ* inscription, in which Shapur claims to have successfully laid siege against 73 cities in West Asia.[439] This inscription not only indicates the Sasanian message of geopolitical control over West Asia, but also tells us how the conquest of the territory looked. In the third century, the way in which the Eastern borders were redrawn through the invasion and sacking of individual cities in West Asia.[440] Siege warfare in this manner was not a new method of warfare as kings such as Demetrios Poliorketes in the Post-Classical Greek era, and earlier, had also used siege warfare.[441] As discussed in the previous case study, Ventidius Bassus had also attempted (but ultimately failed) to conduct siege warfare in the territory in order to oust the Parthian influence from the region, and extort wealth from local kings.[442]

It was nonetheless still important for third-century West Asia, and indicates a change in the way that Romans drew borders in the territory since the beginning of Roman interference in West Asian Geopolitics. In the 180's, as discussed in chapter 3, Scipio fought only one battle with the Seleucid army, and negotiated for the redrawing of borders

[439] *SKZ* 5-9; 12-15.
[440] Lee (2013) 714-715.
[441] For development of siege warfare technology during the Late Greek period, see Chaniotis (2008) 99.
[442] Section 5.3.

in Apamea after winning the battle.[443] *Poleis* would send gifts and ambassadors to Scipio in order to pay homage to the Roman army, who did not need to lay siege warfare by moving from city to city. In the third century, however, Sasanian armies redrew borders through their marches within West Asia, sacking or negotiating with individual cities in order to get their allegiance before moving forward. Because many individual cities in West Asia, moreover, lacked the individual military power to ward off these armies, the result was that borders were constantly redrawn.

The type of siege warfare Shapur used to capture West Asia for the Sasanian empire, as discussed in the *SKZ* inscription, is also used in West Asia by the Palmyrenes in the mid to late 260's in their efforts to take control of the region. The Palmyrenes were situated between warring Roman and Persian forces, and had economically depended upon merchants travelling through the region from cities under Roman and Persian control.[444] During Roman occupation of West Asia, the status of Palmyra as a territory under the Roman empire changed from the first through fourth centuries. During the reign of Tiberius, Palmyra was part of the province of Syria and in the third century, under the Severans it was made a *colonia* of Rome.[445] The city continued to rise in prominence during the 3rd century, as members of the ruling class of Palmyra eventually became part of the Roman imperial system.[446]

[443] Section 3.3.
[444] See discussion of Rome, Parthia and Palmyra in Sourthern (2008) 33-35.
[445] Smith (2013) 24, 130.
[446] See discussion of Roman identity in Palmyra in Smith (2013) 130-132.

The Roman reclaiming of Eastern Borders from Shapur in the 260's was led by the Palmyrene general Odenathus, who held Roman consular status.[447] After successfully pushing back the Sasanian army, Odenathus was given a number of formal titles, including *restitutor totius Orientis* and "King of Kings."[448] The 13th Sibylline Oracle, which recount the wars between the Persians, Romans and Palmyrenes, describes Odenathus as a savior of the territory, having witnessed the wars between the Roman and Persian armies:

> αὐτὸς δὴ ὁλόκληρος ἀλώβητος καὶ ἄπληγος ἄρξει Ῥωμαίων, Πέρσαι δ' ἔσσοντ' ἀλαπαδνοί. ἀλλὰ ἄναξ, βασιλεῦ κόσμου, θεέ, παῦσον ἀοιδὴν ἡμετέρων ἐπέων, δὸς δ' ἱμερόεσσαν ἀοιδήν [449]
>
> Fame will attend him; perfect, unblemished, and awesome, he will rule the Romans and the Persians will be feeble.
> But king, lord of the world, god, put an end to the song of my words, give them a charming song.

After his death, the Palmyrene Empire under the leadership of Queen Zenobia, wife of Odenathus, rebelled against Roman control over the region.[450] In a few short years the Palmyrenes were able to gain control over a large amount of territory in West Asia, the Saudi peninsula, and down into East Africa.[451] The farthest north the Palmyrene army appears to have successfully taken is the city of Ancyra.[452] Scholars have provided multiple reasons for this rebellion, including indigenous rebellion against invading colonizers

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[447] Smith (2013) 177.
[448] ibid.
[449] Sybilline Oracle XIII 170-173, ed and transl Potter (1990) 176-177.; the XIII Sybilline Oracle is dated to the 3rd-4th century, and is of Jewish origin. See Bartlett (1984) 41-42.
[450] For discussion of the role of Odenathus as a Roman commander fighting Shapur, and theories pertaining his planned rebellion against the Romans, see Smith (2013) 175-178; and Southern (2008) 61-74; For the Palmyrene rebellion and the height of Palmyrene geopolitical control, see: Smith (2013) 180; Ball (2002) 82; Millar (1993) 334; Watson (2004) 64-66;
[451] Sommer (2017) 161; Southern (2008) 101; Ball (2016).
[452] This is based on corroborating ancient accounts of Zosimus 1. 50.1 and the *HA* Aurelian 22.5, in addition to IGR III 38-39. See Nakamura (1993) 135-140 and 136 n. 16.

(Stoneman); ethnic opposition (Alföldi); political pragmatism (Nakamura); economic stability (Smith); and contending for the Roman throne (Ball).[453] Still, even if the rise of the Palmyrene empire was born out of attempts by the local elites to strengthen the borders against the Sasanians, the Romans saw Palmyrene invasions into Egypt and Asia Minor, and the adoption of imperial iconography by Zenobia and her family, as a threat to their *limes*, which required military intervention.

7.3: Aurelian in Asia Minor:

In the early 270's Aurelian set out on his Eastern campaign in which he recaptured the Eastern Roman borders that had been lost to the Palmyrene forces, and thereby strengthened the Roman geopolitical position in respect to the Sasanian empire.[454] The primary literary source we have for Aurelian's campaign comes from the *Historia Augusta*, which is not only an unreliable source, but also is rather vague as to the details of Aurelian's campaign.[455] The only specific pieces of information the *Historia Augusta* provides regarding the route is the names of a few cities Aurelian invaded during his campaign, and a detailed digression on the siege of Tyana.[456] Therefore, it is necessary to seek other evidence and methodologies for assessing and reconstructing Aurelian's campaign—which is why I turn to mapping software and inscriptions. While West Asian inscriptions can indicate the expanse of Aurelian's influence over local networks (if not his actual presence)

[453] Alföldi (1970) 178; Ball (2002) 82; Nakamura (1993) 133; Stoneman (1992); Smith (2013) 178.
[454] For a brief discussion of Aurelian's march across Asia minor, see Watson (2004) 71-72.
[455] Discussion of reliability of the *HA*: Rohrbacher (2016) 12-14.
[456] *HA.* Aurelian. 22.5-23.5.

mapping software provides possible routes Aurelian may have taken when reconquering the Eastern *limes*.

According to the Orbis software, which is The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World, the fastest route into Palmyra from Byzantion would have been by sea, however, ancient accounts on Aurelian's Eastern campaign--specifically the problematic *Historia Augusta*-- indicate that he moved through Asia Minor going from city to city. Although the *Historia Augusta* is to be treated with skepticism as an accurate historical source, geographical evidence about the locations of the Palmyrene rebellion and the borders of the Palmyrene empire suggest that it would be logical for Aurelian and his army to move from city to city down the interior of Asia Minor. Therefore, to re-secure the Eastern *limes*, it would make sense that Aurelian would more closely follow the route of the Palmyrene Rebellion, which extended up the coast of Syria and into the central and eastern Asia Minor. The most northern city the Palmyrenes forces were able to take was Ancyra, as Bithynia stayed loyal to Aurelian.[457]

According to the mapping software, there are two possible land routes for a military excursion into Palmyra from Byzantion and Bithynia: the fastest and cheapest extends far into Eastern Turkey, and reaches the city of Palmyra to the East. The second route, which is geographically the shortest, runs through the cities of Tyana and Antioch, both of which

[457] Ball (2016) 86; Watson (2003) 71; Honorific inscriptions from the region around Ancyra not only indicate the loyalty to the Roman emperor, but provide information about how Aurelian presented himself to local populations. These inscriptions demonstrate that honors were being presented to Aurelian by local communities, emphasizing the relationship between individual *poleis* and the emperor at this time. Since the 180's and into the Late Roman era, honorific inscriptions honoring Roman elites in West Asia represented a "give-and-take between community control and elite affirmation," Ma (2013) 297; further discussion of honorific inscriptions, see section 7.4

appear in ancient accounts of Aurelian's campaign, and is thus noted as the purple route on shown on Figure 12. Thus, it seems more likely that this is the route taken by Aurelian's army when re-securing the Eastern borders. It also is likely that this is the route the Palmyrene army used when extending their control into Asia Minor. From this route constructed using Orbis, we can compile a list of the cities Aurelian would have passed through (Figure 13). To this list, I also add the ancient city of Kinna, which does not appear in Orbis' database, but whose longitude and latitude according to Google Maps place it roughly along the path (Figure 13). By determining Aurelian's route into Palmyra, we can determine not only where he went, but who the army encountered. Comparing this route to the Western campaign narratives and Aurelian's triumphal parade (discussed in the next chapter) reveals the ways in which points of contact and cultural exchange occurring on-site in Asia was reinterpreted for European audiences.

While on campaign, Aurelian entered into regions that had a growing Christian population, and the Christian network was spreading into the contested borderland territory in West Asia.[458] As Anna Collar in her work exploring Roman religious networks states, "the empire was formed and held together by a web of different mechanisms of control that encompass both physical and abstract aspects: trade routes, roads and bridges, communications systems, citizenship, the Imperial Cult, and so on."[459] During the first three centuries CE in West Asia, various types of networks are evident. Trade networks

[458] The use of network theory and connectivity in the study of the Mediterranean began with Braudel (1949). Horden and Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea* revised Braudel's model to focus on the Mediterranean as interconnected micro-regions. Scholarship since H&P has used this focus on connectivity and networks as a model for understanding the ancient Mediterranean. In 2016, a compilation *Across the Corrupting Sea* demonstrated the efficacy of analyzing movement of texts and ideas via ancient networks.
[459] Collar (2013) 43.

moving through Syria connected the East and West through material goods, as evidenced by an inscription in the city of Palmyra in the second century showing that merchants from Persian and Roman cities came into the territory to negotiate.[460]

Recent research on Christian networks in the Near East has increasingly uncovered specific geographical points in which Christianity was practiced during the third century. A recent publication by Breytenbach and Zimmerman, for instance, explores Christianity in Asia Minor, and discusses how the Roman road networks helped Christianity expand throughout the region.[461] It likewise looks at inscriptions to show not only the growth of Christians in the region, but analysis of the inscriptions themselves reveal the blending together of Christian ideas with local, pre-existing religious beliefs and practices.[462] This work on Christian networks in Asia Minor, therefore, demonstrates that Christianity was expanding throughout the region during the third century, and moving into Cilicia, Galatia and Cappadocia at this time. Thus, when examining Aurelian's relationship with Christians, it is worthwhile to ask if he came into contact with Christian communities during his campaign into Palmyra. To analyze this, we first must chart his route through Asia Minor, which is possible to do using current geospatial software. After recreating Aurelian's route, we then can compile a list of the cities he would have passed through, and then see if Christian populations and networks in the third century are evident or passed through these cities.

[460] PAT 1414; Yon 227, dated to 138 CE.
[461] Breytenbach and Zimmermann (2018).
[462] Ibid., 811.

First, let us look at the cities of Ancyra and Kinna, which were the northernmost location of the Palmyrene rebellion, and the first Palmyrene-controlled stop along the route. We know that by 314, Ancyra was the site of an ecclesiastical council (the Synod of Ancyra), but how much of a Christian population was present at the time of Aurelian's invasion in the 270's?[463] According to the ICG database, there are 56 Christian inscriptions from Ancyra, 21 of which could be dated to as early as 200. In Kinna there are 6 Christian inscriptions that could have been made in the third century. Breytenbach and Zimmerman's work on Christian networks, moreover, place both Ancyra and Kinna within a specific network within the South-Eastern region of Axylon, in which Christian inscriptions from the 3rd-century indicate a strong Christian influence on local beliefs. Some inscriptions indicate that individuals might have included those from wealthy and educated families in the region, and inscriptions also note Christian officeholders.[464] Thus Aurelian entered Ancyra and Kinna at the time when Christianity was expanded into the region, influencing local beliefs, and possibly being practiced by upper-class inhabitants. So, when Aurelian entered Ancyra specifically, as the first Palmyrene-controlled stop along his campaign, he crossed paths with the burgeoning local Christian network.

Along this route, Aurelian would have also entered Tarsus in Cilicia, the birthplace of Saint Paul. Despite Paul's origin from Tarsus, evidence indicates that Christianity did not spread throughout this particular region until later, during the late second and third centuries, likely as a result of Ephesus' Christian influence over this particular branch

[463] For the Synod, see Parvis (2001)197-203.
[464] Breytenbach (2018) 369, 380.

within the Christian network.[465] Although archaeological evidence suggests that it would not be until the fourth century that Christians would erect buildings in the region, by 250, Eusebius mentions a bishop of Tarsus, Helenus.[466] We also know that by 314, the Christian network included a branch that extended from Tarsus to Ancyra, as the Bishop of Tarsus was part of the Synod of Ancyra at this time.[467] Thus, Aurelian's campaign into Palmyra would have continued to bring him into cities that had Christian populations in the third century. By the time he entered Antioch, the contested regions along the eastern border that he reclaimed were likewise home to a growing Christian population and part of an extending Christian network. If Aurelian was at all aware of this growing influence, his engagement with the church of Antioch might have been a reaction to witnessing the expanse of Christianity, and a political move to secure Roman interests over the region through Roman Christians

Another important piece of evidence that details Aurelian's interaction with Christians in West Asia is Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical Histories*, in which also we see evidence for the growing Christian population was growing in influence over the region. The scholarly discussion of Aurelian's relationship with and treatment of Christians greatly depends on Eusebius' account of Aurelian's interaction with the Christians in Antioch as depicted in his *Ecclesiastical Histories*.[468] It is this account in which we find what is possibly the earliest record stating that Aurelian was planning a persecution (the other early

[465] Breytenbach (2018) 69.
[466] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.46.7.
[467] Parvis (2001) 200.
[468] Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical History*. 7.30.19-20.

account found in Lactantius).[469] While the time of publication of the *Ecclesiastical Histories* is debated, the time frame is somewhere between the end of the third century up to as late as 314.[470] Nevertheless, even if the text was altered by Eusebius in the early 4th century, this is still arguably the earliest extant historical account that claims Aurelian was planning a Christian persecution.

Scholars reading Eusebius, however, have argued that this claim about persecution is likely a later fabrication projected onto the memory of Aurelian as a non-Christian emperor--a product of Constantinian propaganda; that does not reflect the reality of Aurelian's relationship with Christians.[471] Part of the impetus for reading the persecution as a later textual addition and Constantinian propaganda is that within Eusebius' account of Aurelian is a more positive account of interaction with Christians in Antioch. According to the *Ecclesiastical Histories,* the church of Antioch was having a dispute about the position of bishop.[472] The church had tried to remove Paul from Samosata from power, however Paul refused to give up the building, so Aurelian was asked to arbitrate.[473] In order to settle the dispute, Aurelian ordered that the Antiochenes to abide by the decision of ἐπίσκοποι from Rome and Italy, which included Pope Felix I, who subsequently ordered that Paul be removed from the station.

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[469] Lactantius. *De Mortibus Persecutorum*. 6.1-3.
[470] The argument for an early edition at the end of the third century was proposed by Laquer and Barnes: Laqueur (1929), 3–4;121–23; 210–12; Barnes (1980): 191–201; (1984): 470–71; (1992), 637. Tabbernee argues that the first edition of the work was completed after the Great Persecution in 303, but published in 313; Tabbernee (1997): 319-334, 319-20, 326; Hurley follows Tabbernee for a later composition after the Great Persecution, but suggests that edits, including the line about persecution, were added while under the patronage of Constantine; Hurley (2012) 87.
[471] Hurley (2012) 89.
[472] Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical Histories*. 7. 30.1-19.
[473] Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical Histories*. 7.30.19

Scholars have debated on how to interpret Aurelian's role in this event. One reading argues that Paul of Samosata was a *ducenarius* of Zenobia, and that the church's appeal to Aurelian had geopolitical motivations--as Zenobia's enemy, Aurelian would want to remove those in her favor from positions of power in the territory.[474] Millar, however, argues that this narrative is overstated, that calling upon the emperor was simply going along with pre-existing modes of negotiation for the region.[475] Millar thus concludes that historians need not search for underlying political motivations as to why Aurelian was called upon to arbitrate. While indeed Millar is correct that calling upon Roman emperors to arbitrate is not novel by Aurelian's time, from a geopolitical perspective, the move does ultimately reinforce Roman-centered authority over Christian networks within the territory.[476] This then calls into question the political efficacy of persecuting Christians. While Eusebius simply says that Aurelian changed his mind, influenced by certain, unnamed advisors, overseeing a Christian Persecution could jeopardize his own hold over the Eastern networks and risk destabilizing Roman control. This, however, would depend upon Aurelian maintaining friendly relations with Christian bishops, and a continued willingness on the part of Christian bishops to work with the emperor.

In addition to entering territories with an increasingly Christian population, part of Aurelian's campaign seems to have intersected with Shapur's campaign into West Asia against Valerian. According to the *SKZ* inscription, during this campaign Shapur conquered

[474] Hurley (2012) 80-81; see also note 12 in Millar (1971) 2.
[475] Millar (1971) 17.
[476] Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical Histories.* 7.30.8.

the cities between Samosata and Iconium, bringing the Sasanian army into Cappadocia and Cilicia.[477]

> "And Syria, Cilicia and Cappadocia we burned, ruined and pillaged. In that campaign we conquered of the Roman Empire the town of Samosata,4 Alexandria on the Issus, Katabolos, Aegaea, Mopsuestia, Mallos, Adana, Tarsus, Augustinia, Zephyrion, Sebaste, Korykos, Anazarba ([Agrippas]), Kastabala, Neronias, Flavias, Nicopolis, Epiphaneia, Kelenderis, Anemurion, Selinus, Mzdu- [Myonpolis], Antioch, Seleucia, Dometiopolis, Tyana, Caesarea [Meiakariri], Komana Kybistra, Sebasteia, Birtha, Rakundia, Laranda, Iconium, altogether all these cities with their surroundings 36."[478]

While Shapur's army appears to have made it farther West during his campaign against Valerian than the route of Aurelian's campaign, both Sasanian and Roman armies entered the same cities, specifically those lying between the route of Tyana and Antioch. The Sasanians did not remain in the cities for long, and Odenathus is credited with securing the region in the 260's and hailed as a savior of the territory.[479]

Thus, while Aurelian did not come across active Sasanian garrisons during his campaign into Palmyra, his route did intersect with areas that had in the previous decade experienced war between the Sasanian and Roman armies. Instead of finding aid from the Roman emperor at the time, however, the Palmyrene Odenathus became the savior as the region. This perhaps explains why, there may have been pushback against the Roman emperor in Tyana (if there is any truth behind the dramatized account in the *Historia Augusta*).[480] We therefore see the securing of the Eastern route not only as a way of taking back control of the region from Zenobia, but as a way to reclaim the territory once

[477] For Christian Networks see Bretyenbach and Zimmerman (2017) 51.
[478] SKZ 11-15; translated by Soward.
[479] Drinkwater (2005) 44-46; Sibylline Oracle XIII 228-232.
[480] *Historia Augusta*, Life of Aurelian, 22-24.

conquered by Shapur's armies. It also marks the first time that a legitimate Roman emperor entered the territory since the capture of Valerian.[481] Thus, in this light, from a Roman perspective, Aurelian's Eastern campaign has two advantages: it quashes a local rebellion, and it secures the borders between Roman and Persian territories.

7.4: Aurelian's inscriptions in West Asia

In addition to Christian texts, inscriptions provide information about how Aurelian presented himself to local populations. This section examines two different inscriptions that mention Aurelian: milestones and a votive inscription found in Salata.[482] According to recent archaeological surveys, milestones were the "commonest display of Roman power in the ancient world," as archaeologists have documented the existence of over 7,000 milestones throughout the empire.[483] While milestones in the Republic began as markers of distance, they eventually became a core part of imperial propaganda (beginning with Augustus).[484] By the Severan period, milestones began referring to the emperor in the dative (rather than nominative), which demonstrated, "testaments of personal and communal loyalty" to the emperor and thus, "had become a means to engender and a vehicle to express a wider sense of belonging."[485] Importantly, by the third century CE, the appearance of milestones did not necessarily indicate the presence of the emperor (or army) in the city, and furthermore, the appearance of milestones dedicated to emperors were more

[481] This is excluding Macrinus the Usurper.
[482] CIL III *Supplem*., 14.184/3.
[483] See: Destrephen (2018) 173.
[484] Belltran Lloris (2015) 94.
[485] Ando (2013) 323; Rathmann (2003)126-127. Belltran Lloris (2015) 94; Destrephen (2018) 174.

common at the beginning of their reigns than at their end.[486] Thus, third-century milestone inscriptions were honorific--ways for local populations to express their loyalty to the emperor.

There are multiple extant milestone inscriptions dedicated to Aurelian throughout West Asia, written in Latin and referring to the emperor in the dative, thus implying the milestone inscriptions are honorific.[487] Two milestone inscriptions around Ancyra, which are complete, are similarly worded, called the emperor *pius*, *felix*, and *invictus*:

> *F (Bonum Factum or Bona Fortuna) D(omini) n(ostri) Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) L(ucio) Dom(itio) Aureliano p(io) f(elici) invicto Au(gusto).*[488]
>
> *B.F. D(omini) n(ostri) L(ucio) Do(mitio) Aureliano p(io) F(elici) invicto Aug(usto).*[489]

Unlike the earlier inscriptions of Augustus and Scipio, these inscriptions represent a one-sided relationship between local community and emperor. As described in case studies 1 and 2, Scipio's letter and Augustus' *Res Gestae* both provided the direct words from the Roman leaders, giving messages that described the nature of the relationship between empire and community, defined in both cases by a unification narrative. These milestones, on the other hand, though prolific in West Asia, do not provide an imperial voice. We do not know from these inscriptions how Aurelian would have related to the local populations, nor if any promises were made to them. The language of *euergetism* and gift-giving, the

[486] See the discussion in Destrephen (2018) 174-176.
[487] Including in Ancyra: CIL III 313; CIL III *supplem.* 6902; Arabia: CIL III *Supplem*., 14.149 (18); Homo (1904) 359.
[488] CIL III 313; edited by Homo (1904) 359.
[489] CIL III *Supplem*., 6902; edited by Homo (1904) 359.

narrative of peaceful unity of empire, is thus not present. Instead, these inscriptions simply make clear the presence of local loyalty to the emperor.

In addition to the milestone inscriptions, a votive inscription in the ancient site of Salata (now Sadak, Turkey) provides insight into local presentations of Roman-Persian relations. This inscription, erected after Palmyra fell, is greatly damaged, however a reconstruction based on extant text demonstrates that the *cognomina ex virtute* noted on other inscriptions throughout the empire were acknowledged in the Eastern Roman territories[490]:

> Imp. Caes. L. Dom. Aur[el](iano)
> P(io) F(elici) invicto Aug. pontif. Ma[x.]
> [Ger. Max., Got. Max., P]ar. Ma[x.]
>
> vv 4 lines
>
> …divo…
> v 1 line [..numini mai-]
> esta[tiq. ejus..]
> vv 2 lines [491]

Line 3 of the inscription is badly damaged; however, Mitford's reconstruction suggests that the evident letters ARMA are a fragment of *Parthico Maximo*. The other option for reconstruction would be *Carpico Maximo*—however, Aurelian was awarded the title of *Carpicus* after *Parthicus*, thus chronologically it would make more sense that it be reconstructed *Parthico*.[492] If this is the case, then what we see is that a shift in the way Parthian-Roman relations are displayed to local audiences, and therefore. While Augustus'

[490] For a greater discussion of Aurelian's *cognomina ex virtute*, see chapter 8.X.
[491] CIL III 14184/3.
[492] Mitford (1997)139.

Res Gestae establishes a relationship with the Parthians that deemphasize military strength and focus on unity and supplication, the *Parthicus Maximus* combined with the title of *invictus* seen in this inscription (and in the Ancyra milestones) demonstrates that the local population not only recognizes Aurelian's military might, but their willingness to use one-sided honorific language to convey their attachment to Rome.

7.5: Conclusion

In this chapter, we have looked at Aurelian's Eastern campaign in light of Shapur's capture of West Asia and Valerian. The capture of West Asia was key to Sasanian propaganda, as seen in the *SKZ* inscription and the Relief sculptures at Bishapur, in which we likewise see that Shapur fused together imagery of Eastern and Western parade culture to promote his construction of empire. While it is likely that Aurelian did not come into contact with the Sasanian militia during his campaign, it was the wars between the Romans and Persians that had created a space for the Palmyrenes, who had been fighting on behalf of Rome, in order to claim independence from both empires. One group that Aurelian would have come into contact with during his campaign were Christians, whose presence in and influence over the Eastern *limes* was growing. In the next chapter, we explore how this campaign was interpreted before European audiences, and demonstrate how Sasanian parade culture as depicted in Shapur's reliefs appears to have influenced the triumph of Aurelian in 274.

CHAPTER 8

CASES STUDY 3: *RESTITUTOR ORBIS*

The previous chapter examined Aurelian's conquest of West Asian territories and explored Shapur's imperial project as depicted through Sasanian parade imagery. The current chapter explores how Aurelian's eastern campaign is presented to Western audiences, looking at inscriptions and his triumphal parade as recorded in the *Historia Augusta*, with specific emphasis on contextualizing the appearance of Eastern *gentes* and other Sasanian elements. Part 8.1 of this chapter looks at the presentation of Aurelian's Eastern campaign on inscriptions in West Asia. This chapter considers the extant inscriptions located in the West--Italy, Gaul and Spain, which show the Eastern *cognomina ex virtute* that were awarded to Aurelian.[493] As shown in the previous case study, the awarded *cognomina ex virtute* noted on inscriptions relate to the narrative of conquest presented by the corresponding triumphal parade. Thus, because of a lack of extant inscriptions from Rome that would tell us about Aurelian's triumph, extant inscriptions from the West more broadly conceived can be used to explore how Aurelian presented his campaign to Roman audiences.

8.2 then turns to the *Historia Augusta* and introduces a reading of this depiction of the spectacle as a literary, rather than historical, triumph. In 8.3 I explore the description of the parade in depth and argue that the text reads like the gift-giving parades that were depicted on the Sasanian reliefs of Shapur (described in the previous chapter). This

[493] The Eastern *cognomina ex virtute* in Aurelian inscriptions from Europe include: *Persicus, Parthicus, Arabicus, Palmyrenicus*, and *Carpi.* See Figure 14 for chart and inscriptions; for a complete list of inscriptions of Aurelian see Homo (1904) Appendice III; See also Dodson and Lieu (2002) Appendix 4.

similarity suggests that Aurelian's parade both acts as a response to Persian imperial and anti-Roman propaganda, and acts as a moment in which Aurelian embodies the pageantry of Persian kingship in front of a Roman audience. In the narrative of the *Historia Augusta*, this reading cements Aurelian's reputation as not only the Restorer of the World, but as the first emperor to successfully fuse the East and West through the pageantry of a new type of spectacle that consciously blends together Roman and Persian elements, and is therefore fundamentally different from the traditional Roman triumph analyzed in the earlier case studies.

8.1: Aurelian's *Cognomina Ex Virtute*

As noted in the previous case study, *cognomina ex virtute* awarded through military victories corresponded with campaign narratives displayed in triumphal parades.[494] Thus, to reconstruct any sort of historical parade in the case of Aurelian, we ought to turn to the extant inscriptions listing the emperor's *cognomina ex virtute*, as these awarded titles can tell us how the East was presented to Roman audiences in the late third century, at least at the time of the triumph, if not in the parade narrative itself. Third-century inscriptions in Europe that note Aurelian's *cognomina ex virtute* awarded for his Eastern campaign provide a way to access how West-Asian geopolitics were presented to Western audiences and can help determine how his victory may have been celebrated in Rome in 274. In total, the compiled list of Eastern *cognomina ex virtute* as seen in inscriptions are: the Parthians, the Persians, the Palmyrenes, the Arabians, and the Carpi (Figure 14 for a list of European

[494] See discussion in Linderski (1990) 159-161.

inscriptions with Aurelian's Eastern *Cognomina ex Virtute*).[495] In Rome, the only recorded inscription that contains an Eastern *cognomen ex virtute* for Aurelian is CIL VI 1112, which is an honorific inscription dedicated to the emperor by the prefect of the city, Virius Orfitus. This inscription dates to 274, the same year his triumph is thought to have taken place, and calls titles Aurelian as *Parthico Maximo* and *Carpico Maximo*.[496] While the inscription does not directly state information about the triumphal procession, the appearance of Parthians in this inscription demonstrate that at Rome, Aurelian's campaign over the East was presented as victory over this group specifically. It is likely that triumphal celebrations would have presented the Eastern victories as victories over the Parthians.

However, the *Parthicus Maximus cognomina ex virtute* as noted in this and several other contemporary inscriptions in Europe creates a historical problem. By the middle of the third century, the Parthians were no longer a geopolitical power in West Asia, having been removed overthrown by the Sasanians, and thus posed no major political or military threat to Roman control over West Asia when Aurelian invaded.[497] To resolve this problem, scholars have suggested that the designations of *Persicus* and *Parthicus* were used in imperial *Cognomina ex Virtute* interchangeably throughout the third century, and that both terms are referring to the Sasanians.[498] Moreover, this conflation of Persian identities is

[495] Kettenhofen adds other *cognomina* including *Armenicus*, but is basing this on the *Historia Augusta*'s account. When it comes to inscriptional evidence in Europe, the only Eastern *cognomina* listed are *Parthicus, Persicus, Palmyrenicus, Arabicus, Carpicus*; Kettenhofen (1986) 138-146.
[496] CIL VI 1112; for Aurelian's triumph see 16 Eutropius, *Breviarium* 9.13; *HA* Aurel. 33-4.
[497] Daryaee (2009) Location 331-333.
[498] Gariboldi (2016) 48; Chauvot (1989) (1992) 115-125; Drijvers (1999)171-182; Morley (2016) 11-12

discussed in fourth-century Roman writings of Julian, who states that the Sasanians and Parthians are one and the same people.[499]

But even if the Romans conflated the Sasanians and Parthians by the fourth century, the designation of *Parthicus* still does not wholly align with Aurelian's Eastern campaign in the third century. For while Aurelian did come across Sasanians as noted in the previous chapter, the bulk of his campaign was to reclaim West Asian territories from the rebelling Palmyrenes. Additionally, a Northern Italian inscription from the year of Aurelian's triumph, which is the only instance of *Palmyrenicus* as the *cognomen ex virtute*, adds another level of complexity.[500] In this inscription no other Eastern group is mentioned. This suggests that, in addition to *Persicus* and *Parthicus, Palmyrenicus* was also an interchangeable *cognomina* used to describe Aurelian's victory over the East. It furthermore demonstrates that there was a wider knowledge of the conquest of the Palmyrene empire, and cements the idea that outside of Rome the *cognomen ex virtute* attributed to Aurelian in respect to his West-Asian campaign was inconsistent.

The inconsistencies, moreover, reveal that there were local and regional variations in how European audiences understood not only Aurelian's campaign, but more broadly West Asia as a geopolitical unit in the 270's. The inconsistencies for the Eastern *cognominae* specifically are that *Parthicus, Persicus,* and *Palmyrenicus* appear to be interchangeable, as no extant inscription lists more than one of these titles.[501] This claim comes into question, however, when considering Dodgeon and Lieu's edition of inscription

[499] Julian *Oration III* 63 a-b; see discussion in Gariboldi (2016) 48-49.
[500] CIL V 4319.
[501] See Figure 14.

CIL XII 5561, which shows the inscription as listing both *Persicus* and *Parthicus*.[502] However, the word understood by Dodgeon and Lieu as *Parthicus* seems instead to be a misreading of CAR[P] for *Carpicus*, an honorific title appearing on most of Aurelian's European inscriptions and often appearing alongside *Parthicus*.[503] Thus, the titles *Parthicus* and *Persicus* (or *Palmyrenicus*) never appear together in any one inscription, confirming what other scholars have suggested--that in European inscriptions Parthians, Persians, and Palmyrenes refer to the same group of people.

While scholars have argued that the interchanging of *Parthicus, Persicus*, and *Palmyrenicus* are evidence of conflation, Canepa, in examining this as intentional imperial propaganda, offers another suggestion. Instead of conflation, Canepa argues that Aurelian was intentionally misidentifying the Palmyrenes as Parthians and Persians, as naming these groups was a "grandiloquent and ideologically useful" choice for his imperial propaganda, and thereby created an "erstatz Persia" through Palmyra.[504] According to Canepa, the reason for Aurelian's decision to present Palmyra as Persia, was to present to Roman audiences a victory over Shapur I that would add to his message of "restoration." In addition to choosing a more widely-recognized enemy, I argue that another benefit to framing the conquest of Palmyra as a Parthian conquest is that it downplays the narrative of insurrection and rebellion, and would allow for Aurelian to celebrate a grander and more legitimate (according to traditional standards) triumphal procession at Rome.

[502] Dodgeon and Lieu (2002) 336; Homo writes *Carpicus*, L. Homo (1904) 105; 105 n. 2.
[503] According to Watson, *Carpicus* appears 14 times; Watson (2004) Ch. 10 n. 63; for frequency next to *Parthicus*: Homo (1904) 110 n.4.
[504] Canepa (2018) 83.

This brings us back to the inscription at Rome, CIL VI 1112, which listed *Parthicus* as Aurelian's *cognomina ex virtute* awarded for his West-Asian victories. While this inscription does not overtly mention the triumphal parade of 274, it does tell us that public commemoration of Aurelian's campaigns emphasized victory over Parthians, as opposed to Palmyrenes. The Parthians as a well-established enemy of Rome, in contrast with the Palmyrene leaders, who were in fact, Roman citizens of Syrian heritage. This creates a problem when presenting the campaign in a triumphal procession.[505] Traditionally, Romans tended not to advertise the conquest of other Romans in their victory propaganda. As we saw in the previous case study, Augustus' triumph over Egypt and his *Res Gestae* avoids mention of M. Antonius, instead focusing on Egypt and Cleopatra. While an individual might become a citizen after he was captured and paraded on triumph (like Bassus), citizens were not paraded in triumphs. This is because triumphs had traditionally become the ceremony Romans adopted as a way to bring conquered foreign peoples into the city of Rome, and formally to declare and present the successful addition of the territory and its inhabitants into Roman dominion.[506]

If Zenobia from Palmyra and Tetricus from Gaul were paraded in Aurelian's triumph (as is stated in the *Historia Augusta* and other works) their appearance would have flown in the face of tradition, which does not allow for Roman citizens to be displayed on parade.[507] But by looking to contemporary inscriptional evidence, we might assess that the presentation of the Eastern elements in the parade in Rome, including Zenobia if she had

[505] Odenaethus' Latin name indicates that the family acquired citizenship under the Severans; Stoneman (1994) 78.
[506] Östenberg (2009)145; Beard (2007) 141.
[507] *HA. Life of Aurelian.* 34.1-3.

been there, seems more likely to have been framed as a war against Persia/Parthia rather than a rebellion of a Roman-controlled territory. Even if Zenobia herself was not placed on parade, it is likely that the display of any Eastern peoples would have been under the *titulus* of Persian/Parthian, rather than Palmyrene. Similarly, the part of the parade that was dedicated to Aurelian's conquest of the West and the downfall of the Gallic Empire, which likewise poses the same problem as parading Palmyrenes, and perhaps explains why *Gothicus* and *Germanicus* appear as the Western *cognomina ex virtute* in the inscription in Rome.[508] But for the East, the presentation of the campaign as a conquest over Parthians and Carpi, rather than Palmyrenes, shifts the narrative away from a rebellion of Roman citizens, to a recapturing of the Eastern provinces from the well-established Persian enemy (who, in reality, no longer posed a geopolitical threat at the time). Thus, while Canepa is correct in asserting that the conflation of Palmyra, Parthia and Persia would give a "grandiloquent" narrative to Aurelian's campaign, it had the added benefit of maintaining the traditional elements of triumphal ceremony that celebrate conquering foreign enemies instead of rebellious Roman citizens.

Ultimately, however, Aurelian's rebranding of the Palmyrenes as Parthians was unsuccessful, as is evident not only in the Northern Italian inscription, but also in the *Historia Augusta*'s later account of Aurelian's conquest and propaganda. In fact, not only does the memory of Aurelian and his parade depict him as an emperor who reconquered

[508] Other inscriptions displaying *Gothicus* and/or *Germanicus* include: CIL VIII, 9040; CIL III 7586; CIL XII 2673; CIL XII 5456; CIL XII 5549; CIL XII 5561; This presentation of the Palmyrene and Gallic empires as non-Roman also features in the *Historia Augusta* narrative describing the clothes. Tetricus specifically is shown wearing pants, which would have indicated to the crowd that he was a German or Gaul, rather than Roman. In the same way that the *cognomina ex virtute* create a narrative of foreign conquest, the attire likewise creates a similar narrative in the spectacle.

former Roman territories and peoples, but also as the historical figure through whom the East and West is successfully integrated. This fusion of East and West specifically is made evident through the ostentatious parade in 274, which is a combination of both a western Roman triumph, and Eastern Persian tribute-bearing procession.

8.2: Persian Triumphs in *The Historia Augusta*

While Zosimus, Eunapius, and Zonoras all mention Aurelian's triumph, the *Historia Augusta* (*HA*) gives the most detailed account of the pageantry of the spectacle. As a historical source, however, the *Historia Augusta* and this passage in particular ought to be approached with caution. While as a whole the *HA* is one of the main literary sources covering the emperors of the third century, the work is riddled with satirical fabrications and historical inaccuracies. When it comes to the pageantry of Aurelian's triumph, scholars most frequently argue that the description is satire. Watson calls the triumph a product of "the author's fertile imagination," and Beard states it as evidence of the "semi-fictional excesses of late Roman biography," that nevertheless "exposes some important truths at the heart of Roman culture."[509] Other studies, including *Zwei Herrscherfeste in der Historia Augusta* by E.W. Merten, take the stance that the *Vita Aureliani*, including this scene, is influenced by conventions of panegyric, novels, and satire, and is thus best understood as illustrating the literary nature of the *HA*.[510]

[509] Watson (2004) 179; Beard (2007) 122.
[510] Merten (1968); See also: Pausch, who argues that the *Vita Aureliani* specifically echoes motifs seen in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodorus; Pausch (2010) 116; Cameron states that the *HA* is the work of an author who, "discovered a genuine talent for fiction," and drew inspiration from sources including the *Alexander Romance* and Juvenal. Cameron (2011) 759, 779.

To address concerns of historical reliability, this chapter analyses the triumph passage depicted in the *HA* as a literary spectacle portraying images of remembered imperial propaganda. As a literary triumph, I follow Andrew Feldherr's approach towards literary imagery in *Spectacle and Society in Livy's History*. According to Feldherr, the imagery of spectacle within Livy was intended to have two audiences--the internal audience of the spectacle demonstrating how Romans perceived events at the time, and the reader as audience.[511] When reading a historian's construction (or reconstruction) of visual historical spectacles, the reader, through their internal gaze, participates in the same affirmation of social identity and political order as they would have had they viewed the spectacle in reality. But the reader also has the ability to critique the pageantry within the work's larger historical narrative. In this way, the audience of the literary triumph in the *Historia Augusta* is, in effect, the reader of the *HA*. The author provides the reader with a narrative of the campaign within the work, showing how the campaign is presented to Rome via Aurelian's triumph, and thus is able to critique the pageantry of the spectacle within a larger framework.

To understand the significance of Aurelian's triumph in the *HA* it is first important to address how the author portrays other similar spectacles, specifically the triumph of Alexander Severus, the games of Philip, and the *decennalia* of Gallienus.[512] Beginning chronologically, the *Historia Augusta* claims that Alexander Severus celebrated a triumph

[511] Feldherr (1991).
[512] Following Dessau's argument for a single author, which scholars continue to accept: Dessau (1889) 337–92; for author as "rogue *grammaticus*": Syme (Oxford 1968) 207; for recent studies on authorship, see Stover and Kestemont (2016); Rohrbacher (2016) 3-6.

over the Sasanians at Rome.[513] While there are scholarly arguments as to whether or not the historical parade even occurred, the details of the triumph as described in the *Historia Augusta* is from the Late Antique imagination.[514] When reading the role of the spectacle as a literary device in the narrative of the *Historia Augusta*, we see that it is not a triumph over Persia, but rather a fabricated anti-triumph that inverts the traditional norms of the spectacle in order to question the legitimacy of Alexander Severus' military victories.

The reading of Alexander Severus' triumph as a device that calls the emperor's military victories into question comes through in part via the omission of key elements of triumphal processions, and as such is suspicious. Traditionally, as we have seen in previous case studies, triumphal processions would at the very least display the spoils of war, the captives (typically bound in chains), Roman soldiers who participated in the campaign, and the general (or emperor) at the end of the procession in a triumphal chariot. The parade as described by Alexander Severus' own speech to the senate in the *Historia Augusta*, however, reveals none of these traditional elements and provides excuses for the lack of pageantry:

> "*Persas, p. c., vicimus. longae eloquentiae opus non est, tantum scire debetis, quae illorum arma fuerint, qui apparatus. iam primum elefanti septingenti idemque turriti cum sagittariis et onere sagittarum. ex his triginta cepimus, ducenti interfecti iacent, decem et octo perduximus. falcati currus mille DCCC. adducere interfectorum animalium currus ducentos potuimus, sed id, quia et fingi poterat, facere supersedimus. centum et viginti milia equitum eorum fudimus, catafractarios, quos illi clibanarios vocant, decem milia in bello interemimus, eorum armis nostros armavimus. multos Persarum cepimus eosdemque vendidimus. terras interamnanas, Mesopotamiae scilicet, neclectas ab inpura illa belua recepimus. Artaxerxen, potentissimum regem tam iure quam nomine, fusum fugavimus,*

[513] *HA*. Severus Alexander. 3.56.1-10.
[514] Haake (2016) 361. Bertrand-Dagenbach (2013) 341–346 does not believe the triumph occurred.

> *ita ut eum terra Persarum fugientem videret, et qua ducta fuerant quondam signa nostrorum, ea rex ipse signis effugit relictis. haec sunt, p. c., gesta. eloquentia opus non est: milites divites redeunt, laborem in victoria nemo sentit. vestrum est supplicationem decernere, ne dis videamur ingrati*." [515]
>
> "Conscript Fathers, we have conquered the Persians. There is no need of lengthy rhetoric; you should know, however, this much, namely, what their arms were, and what their array. First of all, there were seven hundred elephants provided with turrets and archers and great loads of arrows. Of these we captured thirty, we have left two hundred slain upon the field, and we have led eighteen in triumph. Moreover, there were scythed chariots, one thousand eight hundred in number. Of these we could have presented to your eyes two hundred, of which the horses have been slain, but since they could easily be counterfeited we have refrained from so doing. One hundred and twenty thousand of their cavalry we have routed, ten thousand of their horsemen clad in full mail, whom they call cuirassiers, we have slain in battle, and with their armour we have armed our own men. We have captured many of the Persians and have sold them into slavery, and we have re-conquered the lands which lie between the rivers, those of Mesopotamia I mean, abandoned by that filthy monster Artaxerxes, the most powerful of kings, in fact as well as in name, we have routed and driven from the field, so that the land of the Persians saw him in full flight, and where once our ensigns were led away in triumph, there the king himself fled apace leaving his own standards. These are our achievements, Conscript Fathers, and there is no need of rhetoric. Our soldiers have come back enriched, and in victory no one remembers his hardships. It is now your part to decree a general thanksgiving, that we may not seem to the gods to be ungrateful.

After this speech, we are additionally told that Persian Tunics were dedicated at a temple (*tunicis Persicis in templo locatis*) , and that Alexander Severus' triumphal chariot was drawn by elephants, in the style of Pompey.[516] Thus, in total, parade seems only to have contained elephants, possibly tunics (though it's unclear if the tunic is actually in the parade or only appears in ceremonies afterwards), and Roman soldiers wearing Persian, rather than Roman, armor.

[515] HA. *Alexander Severus*. 56. 1-10. Translated by Magie.
[516] HA. *Alexander Severus*. 57. 1, 4.

Right away, the image of Roman soldiers wearing Persian armor is suspect, as part of the purpose of triumphal parades was to emphasize Roman as victorious over a foreign entity. While there is not much ancient evidence discussing the appearance of Roman soldiers in the parades, there were clear visual distinctions made between the Roman soldiers and foreign captives, which included emphasis on image of the foreign enemies as distinct from the Roman victors.[517] In some instances, foreign arms and armor might be shown as part of the spectacle alongside war booty.[518] But in Alexander Severus' triumph, the Roman soldiers adorn the Persian armor, visually transforming themselves into Persian soldiers. Thus, instead of parading disarmed Persian captives, the Roman visually make themselves appear like the people they claim to have conquered.

Additionally, when it comes to displaying the expected spoils of war, the reader instead encounters a number of excuses as to why these elements of display are absent: the Sasanian captives are absent (allegedly having been sold off to slavery), King Ardashir or "Artaxerxes" was not captured after he fled the battle scene, and Alexander Severus claims that chariots are not present as such objects could have been "counterfeited."[519] By offering excuses as to why these key elements are missing from the spectacle in his speech, the character of Alexander Severus serves to make their absence even clearer the to the reader. Additionally, at the end of the passage Alexander Severus says that the soldiers are "laden with riches," but those riches are not part of the catalogue of the triumph the emperor himself sets forth. Overall, the passage itself, rather than provide an image of a triumphal

[517] Östenberg (2009) 8; Beard (2009) 242.
[518] Östenberg (2009) 20-29.
[519] *HA*. "Severus Alexander." 56.7.

Roman emperor returning from war against the Persians, appears as a way that questions Alexander Severus' own claims to victory and Roman identity. Alexander Severus as an Emperor who was born in the East, is guarded by men in Persian garb, and his chariot is pulled by elephants rather than horses. Without captives and spoils, his triumph does not carry evidence of a military victory, but rather trappings of an Eastern spectacle.

After Alexander Severus, Gordian III also won a victory over the Sasanians and was planning to celebrate a triumph not only over Persia, but also in the Persian manner, "Persico triumpho."[520] When describing a triumph over a geopolitical location, traditionally a preposition of *ex* or *de* is required, as in *ex Asia* or *de Saleis*.[521] In the Passage at hand, however, the author plays with convention to indicate that Gordian was not merely celebrating a victory over the Persians, but also emulating them:

> His in senatu lectis quadrigae elephantorum Gordiano decretae sunt, utpote qui Persas vicisset, ut triumpho Persico triumpharet.[522]
>
> After this was read to the senate, chariots drawn by four elephants were decreed for Gordian, in order that he might have a Persian triumph inasmuch as he had conquered the Persians.

That the parade is celebrating a victory over the Persians is clearly indicated in the clause "*utpote qui Persas vicisset*," which means that the adjectival use of "*Persicus*" is either redundant and misusing earlier conventions, or (as is more likely) playing with the nuances of the word *Persicus* as both the *cognomina ex virtute* that can also indicate "belonging to" or "coming from."[523] The kind of triumph that Gordian here wished to celebrate was one

[520] *HA*. "The Three Gordians." 26. 9.
[521] For example, Pompey's triumph in the *Fasti Triumphales*: Degrassi (1954) 61.
[522] *HA*. "The Three Gordians." 27.9.
[523] Allen and Greenough 249; 412b.

not merely over the Persians, but specifically in the manner of Persians. And here, what that seems to means in this passage, is the use of elephants (rather than horses) to pull the chariot.

While replacing horses with elephants in the triumphal chariot had been first used at Rome by Pompey to celebrate his victory over Africa, it is likely that by the time of Aurelian (and certainly by the time of the composition of the *HA*), scholars have argued that elephants were culturally associated with the Persians.[524] Sasanians were using war elephants against the Romans by the third century, at which time there was also a correlation between elephants and Sasanian kingship.[525] Thus, although Rome had previously seen elephants paraded on triumph in relation to African campaigns, during later centuries, elephants had come to be also associated with Persian modes of kingship and warfare, which would explain why the use of elephants pulling the quadriga makes the triumph uniquely "Persicus."

Gordian never successfully celebrated his Persian triumph, as he was killed before reaching Rome.[526] According to the *HA*, the spoils in the form of foreign animals that were intended to be part of the pageantry of Gordian's triumph were allegedly still put on public display in Rome--not as part of a triumphal spectacle, but rather appeared as part of games celebrating Rome's 1,000th birthday.[527] This appropriation of triumphal *spoilia* adds to the author's overall negative treatment of Philip, who is blamed for the death of Gordian.[528]

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[524] Daryaee (2016) 37.
[525] Ibid.
[526] *HA*. "The Three Gordians." 30.8.
[527] *HA*. "The Three Gordians." 33.2; for a narrative of the games, see Potter (1990) 238.
[528] *HA*. The Three Gordians. 31.4-7; on the historical debate on Gordian's death, see Potter (1990) 210-211, who argues that Philip was not involved in the death of Gordian, basing his conclusions on the preservation

In the context of the *Historia Augusta*, the result at Rome was that the Sasanians were not introduced to the Roman audience through triumphal procession celebrating Gorian. Instead, the Sasanian objects or peoples were brought into Rome during the reign of Philip the Arab, they appear in the city in the context of Rome's millennalia, rather than for a triumphal procession celebrating Persian victories. Within the context of the *HA*, the use of Persian spoilia from Gordian's campaign used by Philip.

Lastly, there is the *decennalia* celebration under Gallienus that celebrated Odenaethus' victories against the Sasanians in triumphal style.[529] The spectacle presented in the narrative of the *Historia Augusta* calls into question the narrative of victory Gallienus presents to the audience, as the author clearly calls out the elements of the spectacle that create a false narrative of victory over the Persians and claims that instead of defeating foreign enemies, he in reality slaughtered Roman soldiers:

> *Interfectis sane militibus apud Byzantium Gallienus, quasi magnum aliquid gessisset, Romam cursu rapido convolavit convocatisque patribus decennia celebravit novo genere ludorum, nova specie pomparum, exquisito genere voluptatum.Iam primum inter togatos patres et equestrem ordinem albato[s] milite[s] et omni populo praeeunte, servis etiam prope omnium et mulieribus cum cereis facibus lampadis praecedentibus Capitolium petit. Praecesserunt etiam altrinsecus centeni albi boves cornuis auro iugatis et dorsualibus sericis discoloribus praefulgentes; agnae candentes ab utraque parte ducentae praecesserunt et decem elefanti, qui tunc erant Romae, mille ducenti gladiores pompabiliter ornati cum auratis vestibus matronarum, mansu[a]etae ferae diversi generis ducentae ornatu quam maximo affectae, carpenta cum mimis et omni genere histrionum, pugilles flacculis, non veritate pugillantes. Cyclopea etiam luserunt omnes apenarii, ita ut miranda quaedam et stupenda monstrarent. Omnes viae ludis strepituque et plausibus personabant. Ipse medius cum picta toga et tunica palmata inter patres, ut diximus, omnibus sacerdotibus praetextatis Capitolium*

and honoring of Gordians memory under Philip's reign; for further discussion see also Ando (2012) 113-116.

[529] For information on the historical evidence for the *decennalia* celebrations, see Goltz and Hartmann (2008) 270.

petit. Hastae auratae altrinsecus quingenae, vexilla centena praeter ea, quae collegiorum erant, dracones et signa templorum omniumque legionum ibant. Ibant praeterea gentes simulatae, ut Gothi, Sarmatae, Franci, Persae, ita ut non minus quam duceni globis singulis ducerentur.Hac pompa homo ineptus eludere se credidit populum Romanum, sed, ut sunt Romanorum facetiae, alius Postumo favebat, alius Regiliano, alius Aureolo aut Aemiliano, alius Saturnino, nam et ipse iam imperare dicebatur. Inter haec ingens querella de patre, quem inultum filius liquerat, et quem externi utcumque vindicaverant. Nec tamen Gallienus ad talia movebatur obstupefacto voluptatibus corde sed ab his, qui circum eum erant, requirebat : "Ecquid habemus in prandio ? Ecquae voluptates paratae sunt? Et qualis cras erit scaena qualesque circenses ?" Sic confecto itinere celebratisque hecatombiis ad domum regiam redit conviviisque et epulis decursis alios dies voluptatibus publicis deputabat. Praetereundum non est haud ignobile facetiarum genus. Nam cum grex Persarum quasi captivorum per pompam - rem ridiculam - duceretur, quidam scurrae miscuerunt se Persis, diligentissime scrutantes omnia atque unius cuiusque vultum mira inhiatione rimantes. A quibus cum quaereretur, quidnam ageret illa insolentia, illi responderunt : "Patrem principis quaerimus." Quod cum ad Gallienum pervenisset, non pudore, non maerore, non pietate commotus est scurrasque iussit vivos exuri. Quod populus factum tristius, quam quisquam aestimat, tulit, milites vero ita doluerunt, ut non multo post vicem redderent.[530]

Now Gallienus, after the slaughter of the soldiers at Byzantium, as though he had performed some mighty feat, hastened to Rome in a rapid march, convened the senators, and celebrated a decennial festival with new kinds of spectacles, new varieties of parades, and the most elaborate sort of amusements. First of all, he repaired to the Capitol with the senators and the equestrian order dressed in their togas and with the soldiers dressed all in white, and with all the populace going ahead, while the slaves of almost all and the women preceded them, bearing waxen flambeaux and torches. There preceded them, too, on each side one hundred white oxen, having their horns bound with golden cords and resplendent in many-coloured silken covers; also two hundred lambs of glistening white went ahead on each side, besides ten elephants, which were then in Rome, and twelve hundred gladiators decked with all pomp, and matrons in golden cloaks, and two hundred tamed beasts of divers kinds, tricked out with the greatest splendour, and waggons bearing pantomimists and actors of every sort, and boxers who fought, not in genuine combat, but with the softer straps. All the buffoons also acted a Cyclops-performance, giving exhibitions that were marvellous and astonishing. So all the streets resounded with merry-making

[530] *HA*. Gallieni. 7.4-9.8; transl. by Magie.

> and shouts and applause, and in the midst the Emperor himself, wearing the triumphal toga and the tunic embroidered with palms, and accompanied, as I have said, by the senators and with all the priests dressed in bordered togas, proceeded to the Capitol. On each side of him were borne five hundred gilded spears and one hundred banners, besides those which belonged to the corporations, and the flags of auxiliaries and the statues from the sanctuaries and the standards of all the legions. There marched, furthermore, men dressed to represent foreign nations, as Goths and Sarmatians, Franks and Persians, and no fewer than two hundred paraded in a single group. By this procession the foolish man thought to delude the people of Rome; nevertheless — for such is the Romans' love of a jest — one man kept supporting Postumus, another Regalianus, another Aureolus or Aemilianus, and another Saturninus — for he, too, was now said to be ruling. Amid all this there was loud lamentation for the father whom the son had left unavenged and for whom foreigners had tried, in one way or another, to exact a vengeance. Gallienus, however, was moved to no such deed, for his heart was dulled by pleasure, but he merely kept asking of those about him, "Have we anything planned for luncheon? Have any amusements been arranged? What manner of play will there be tomorrow and what manner of circus-games?" So, having finished the procession, he offered hecatombs and returned to the royal residence, and then, the banquets and feastings having come to an end, he appointed further days for the public amusements. One well-known instance of jesting, however, must not be omitted. As a band of Persians, supposed to be captives, was being led along in the procession (such an absurdity!), certain wits mingled with them and most carefully scrutinized all, examining with open-mouthed astonishment the features of every one; and when asked what they meant by that sagacious investigation, they replied, "We are searching for the Emperor's father." When this incident was reported to Gallienus, unmoved by shame or grief or filial affection, he ordered the wits to be burned alive — a measure which angered the people more than anyone would suppose, but so grieved the soldiers that not much later they requited the deed.

There are several scenes within the passage displaying triumphal motifs.[531] Gallienus adorning the triumphal toga, the named foreign groups, and the presentation of Persian

[531] De Blois goes into great detail about the triumphal aspects of the *Historia Augusta*'s account of the spectacle, and how the author uses the spectacle to undermine Gallienus' reign--particularly in dealing with the Persians: L. De Blois, "Two Third-Century Triumphal Decennalia" in *Der römische Triumph in Prinzipat und Spätantike*. Edited by Fabian Goldbeck, Johannes Wienand, (Walter de Gruyter, 2016) 344-352; Merten also describes the scene as a combination of multiple types of Roman processions: Merten (1968) 99-100.

"captives," all of which the author of the *Historia Augusta* notes with disdain, as a fabricated elements that create an overall visual narrative of conquest and victory that creates what de Blois labels as a "mock-triumph."[532] The author goes even further to state later that the parade itself was a triumph that is attributed to Odaenathus' Eastern victory, which more broadly calls into question both the tenets of the imperial triumph, and Gallienus' ability to claim Eastern victory.[533] Triumphs, by the imperial period, were awarded only to the emperor and members of his family.[534] By giving the military credit to Odaenathus, the author makes clear that Gallienus' military prowess was weak, allowing space for someone who the *HA*'s author would label as a "pretender."[535]

What this spectacle in particular does, therefore, is set the stage for Aurelian as *restitutor orbis*, who is presented within the context of the *Historia Augusta* as having the first legitimate triumph over the East (but one that, as discussed further down, is still not technically over the Sasanians). We can see that in setting the stage for Aurelian, the *HA* notes an important change in the function of institution of the triumph that occurred since Bassus' triumph over Parthia, as is discussed in chapters three and four. As demonstrated in the cases of both Bassus and Scipio, the triumph operated as the ceremonial moment of introduction and importation of specific foreign peoples and geopolitical entities into Roman domain. For Aurelian's parade and the Sasanians as remembered in the *Historia Augusta*, this seems not to be the case. Romans had probably already been introduced to Sasanian objects and peoples through the games of Philip the Arab. What this means for

[532] De Blois (2016) 352.
[533] *HA*. Gallieni. 10.5
[534] Beard (2007) 69.
[535] *HA*. "Thirty Pretenders." 15.

Aurelian's triumph, therefore, is that the appearance of the Sasanians in the spectacle do not represent a newly conquered enemy, but rather add to Aurelian's message of reconquest of the Eastern *limes*. In addition, we also see a change occurring in the pageantry of the triumphal procession itself through the adoption of Persian elements of display in such a way that presents the Romans themselves as adopting Persian customs and putting on a Persian parade.

8.3 Aurelian's Triumph in Context of the *Historia Augusta*

Thus, the stage is set for Aurelian's parade. How does Aurelian's display of Persian and Asian elements in his parade differ from the previous instances? Furthermore, what political orders, social identities, and Eastern stereotypes are being constructed and affirmed in the presentation of Eastern *gentes* and Persian gifts? While scholars have deemed elements of the parade as fantastical or imaginative, the portrayal of eastern ethnic groups specifically does not only reflect satirical exaggeration, but also resembles Sasanian images of tributary parades contemporary to Aurelian, which are explored in the previous chapter. In this way, we can see a progression of Persian pageantry in a triumphal context performed at Rome within the *HA* itself, and Aurelian fuses together Roman, Western, and Persian spectacle more successfully than previous emperors noted in the *HA*, cementing his role as the emperor to restore the East and West through pageantry at Rome.

While the spectacle contains elements of display from both Eastern and Western conquests, the Eastern elements--specifically the appearance of *gentes* and the focus on gifts--create a processional image related to Sasanian tribute-parades depicted in Shapur

I's reliefs. In the triumphal catalogue passage as follows, we find that Eastern elements demonstrate excess and opulence, following along earlier traditions of triumphs celebrating victory over the East:

> *Non absque re est cognoscere, qui fuerit Aureliani triumphus; fuit enim speciosissimus. Currus regit tres fuerunt, in his unus Odenati, argento, auro, gemmis operosus atque distinctus, alter, quem rex Persarum Aureliano dono dedit, ipse quoque pari opere fabricatus, tertius, quem sibi Zenobia composuerat sperans se urbem Romam cum eo visuram; quod illam non fefellit, nam cum eo urbem ingressa est victa et triumphata. Fuit alius currus quattuor cervis iunctus, qui fuisse dicitur regis Gothorum. Quo, ut multi memoriae tradiderunt, Capitolium Aurelianus invectus est, ut illic caederet cervos, quos cum eodem curru captos vovisse Iovi Optimo Maximo ferebatur. Praecesserunt elephanti viginti,ferae mansuetae Libycae, Palestinae diversae ducentae, quas statim Aurelianus privatis donavit, ne fiscum annonis gravaret; tigrides quattuor, camelopardali, alces, cetera talia per ordinem ducta, gladiatorum paria octingenta—praeter captivos gentium barbararum—Blemmyes, Exomitae, Arabes Eudaemomones, Indi, Bactrani, Hiberi, Saraceni, Persae cum suis quique muneribus, Gothi, Halani, Roxolani, Sarmatae, Franci, Suevi, Vandali, Germani, religatis manibus, captivi utpote. Praecesserunt inter hos etiam Palmyreni, qui superfuerant, principes civitatis et Aegyptii ob rebellionem. Ductae sunt et decem mulieres, quas virili habitu pugnantes inter Gothos ceperat, cum multae essent interemptae, quas de Amazonum genere titulus indicabat: praelati sunt tituli gentium nomina continentes. Inter haec fuit Tetricus clamide coccea, tunica galbina, bracis Gallicis ornatus, adiuncto sibi filio, quem imperatorem in Gallia nuncupaverat. Incedebat etiam Zenobia, ornata gemmis, catenis aureis, quas alii sustentabant. Praeferebantur coronae omnium civitatum aureae titulis aminentibus proditae. Iam populus ipse Romanus, iam vexilla collegiorum atque castrorum et catafractarii milites et opes regiae et omnis exercitus et senatus—etsi aliquantulo tristior, quod senatores triumphari videbant—multum pompae addiderant. Denique vix nona hora in Capitolium pervenit, sero autem ad Palatium*.[536]
>
> It is not without advantage to know what manner of triumph Aurelian had, for it was a most brilliant spectacle. There were three royal chariots, of which the first, carefully wrought and adorned with silver and gold and jewels, had belonged to Odaenathus, the second, also wrought with similar

[536] *HA.* Aurel. 33.1-34.5, transl. by Magie iii 259-63, *in The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars AD 226-363: A Documentary History*, edited by M. Dodgeon, S. Lieu (Routledge, 2002) 92-9.3

> care, had been given to Aurelian by the king of the Persians, and the third Zenobia had made for herself, hoping in it to visit the city of Rome. And this hope was not unfulfilled; for she did, indeed, enter the city in it, but vanquished and led in triumph. There was also another chariot, drawn by four stags and said to have once belonged to the king of the Goths. In this — so many have handed down to memory — Aurelian rode up to the Capitol, purposing there to slay the stags, which he had captured along with this chariot and then vowed, it was said, to Jupiter Best and Greatest. There advanced, moreover, twenty elephants, and two hundred tamed beasts of divers kinds from Libya and Palestine, which Aurelian at once presented to private citizens, that the privy-purse might not be burdened with the cost of their food; furthermore, there were led along in order four tigers and also giraffes and elks and other such animals, also eight hundred pairs of gladiators besides the captives from the barbarian tribes. There were Blemmyes, Axomitae, Arabs from Arabia Felix, Indians, Bactrians, Hiberians, Saracens and Persians, all bearing their gifts; there were Goths, Alans, Roxolani, Sarmatians, Franks, Suebians,Vandals and Germans — all captive, with their hands bound fast. There also advanced among them certain men of Palmyra, who had survived its fall, the foremost of the State, and Egyptians, too, because of their rebellion. There were led along also ten women, who, fighting in male attire, had been captured among the Goths after many others had fallen; these a placard declared to be of the race of the Amazons — for placards were borne before all, displaying the names of their nations. In the procession was Tetricus also, arrayed in scarlet cloak, a yellow tunic, and Gallic trousers, and with him his son, whom he had proclaimed in Gaul as emperor. And there came Zenobia, too, decked with jewels and in golden chains, the weight of which was borne by others. There were carried aloft golden crowns presented by all the cities, made known by placards carried aloft. Then came the Roman people itself, the flags of the guilds and the camps, the mailed cuirassiers, the wealth of the kings, the entire army, and, lastly, the senate (albeit somewhat sadly, since they saw senators, too, being led in triumph) — all adding much to the splendour of the procession. Scarce did they reach the Capitol by the ninth hour of the day, and when they arrived at the Palace it was late indeed.

The presentation nineteen *gentes* in total, ten of which come from Eastern borderlands.[537] were divided into nineteen groups that represented various conquered

[537] Those listed are the: Blemmyes, Axomitae, Arabs, Indians, Bactrians, Hiberians, Saracens, Persians, Goths, Alans, Roxolani, Sarmatians, Franks, Suebians, Vandals, Germans, Palmyrenes and Egyptians, as well as Gothic women who were labelled as Amazonians. The Blemmyes, Axomitae, Arabs, Indians, Bactrians, Hiberians, Saracens, Persians, Palmyrenes and Egyptians are all from territories the Romans considered as Eastern.

tribes. While scholars have argued that the *Historia Augusta,* the source that provides this list of tribes, exaggerates the number of tribes, the way the author describes how captives were displayed, divided into tribes indicated with *tituli*, reflects standard ways tribes were presented in other processions—notably Pompey's.[538] According to the *Historia Augusta,* these nineteen *gentes* were signaled by *tituli,* so the spectator would see a sign bearing the name *GERMANI* followed by a group of individuals who, in accordance with Roman ideas of ethnicity, appeared German, and the subsequent *gentes* would be presented in the same way. Should the spectator be illiterate, Ovid tells us that the signs would have been read aloud by an announcer, who would likewise describe the captives or spoils that followed the *tituli*.[539] Thus, the display of conquered people involved two elements: the people themselves, and their Roman-assigned *gens* as presented on the *tituli.* While the appearance of *tituli* in the *Historia Augusta* suggests that the signs were still affiliated with processional spectacles into Late Antiquity, we see the continuation of using this type of placard in triumphal processions into much later periods.[540]

Assigning a Latinate *gens* to a foreign ethnic group is, as we have already seen, an integral part of the process of Romanization of foreign peoples. The *cognomina ex virtute*, as discussed previously, relates to this process of assimilation--however, as we previously saw in inscriptions from the 3rd century, Aurelian did not adopt names of nineteen *gens* as his *cognomina ex virtute*. One therefore my draw the conclusion that, as Mary Beard said,

[538] Beard (2007) 129, 12, 25, for instance, argues that the is an exaggeration, a "fictional excess" typical of the genre of Late Imperial biography. However, Pompey's triumph allegedly included 14 *gentes*, which suggests that the number, though larger than Pompey's, is not specifically unique to Late Antique biography.
[539] Ovid. *Tr*. 4.2.19-28 discussed by Östenberg (2009b) 463.
[540] McCormick notes the appearance of *tituli* in an 8th century triumphal parade; McCormick (1990) 258.

the passage is merely "excess," a satirical fabrication typical to the *Historia Augusta*.[541] That, however, is only considering Roman-centric perspective of the spectacle at hand which dictates that if Aurelian were parading a triumph that only displayed those people he conquered, it would follow that he would only display ethnic groups he claims to have conquered.

The parade depicted in the *Historia Augusta* does not just depict a Western Roman triumph, but instead shows off a new type of spectacle combining Eastern and Western modes of imperial expression. As we saw with Alexander Severus and Gordian, the progression of the Roman triumphal pageantry in the *Historia Augusta* was slowly building towards Aurelian's spectacle. Notably, with the Eastern ethnic groups, there is a focus on giving gifts, rather than displaying captured booty. This passage demonstrates an important nuance in Aurelian's triumphal pageantry, and a change from previous narratives depicted on the triumph. While, as we saw earlier, riches and excesses paraded in triumph indicated to a Roman audience that the objects on display were war booty, taken from successful conquest. For L. Scipio's triumph, this created a tension, as Eastern imperial parades at the time displayed gifts from peoples and *poleis* to portray a message of unification rather than conquest.

The riches from the East in Aurelian's parade, however, are not interpreted as war booty, but rather as diplomatic gifts. This relates to Sasanian mode of diplomacy, which was similar to the Achaemenid tribute-offerings discussed in chapter 2. Textiles and other goods (mentioned both in Aurelian's triumph and Goridan's almost-triumph) were part of

[541] Beard (2007) 122.

the Sasanian tribute offerings.[542] This demonstrates that by the time the *HA* was composed, there existed a greater cultural understanding between Eastern and Western pageantry and modes of imperial expression, which is made all the more clear when looking at contemporary tribute-bearing imagery created for Shapur. As is discussed in the previous chapter, the images on the monuments for Shapur show not just a triumph-like victory over Roman emperors, but also grand gift-giving procession.

But what makes the Persian tribute-offering elements particularly evident is the contrast with the ways that the Western peoples are portrayed in the spectacle. While the Eastern *gentes* appear as envoys with gifts in the fashion of a Persian tributary procession, the Western tribes are clearly captives in chains, thus upholding the traditional pageantry of the Roman triumph with emphasis on military victory. Unlike Alexander Severus' triumph which lacked any apparent captured foe, Aurelian's triumph has them in abundance. Thus, Aurelian's triumphal procession of 274 is both a triumph, a Roman spectacle celebrating military conquest over other European *gentes*, as well as a Persian tributary procession that emphasizes diplomacy and unity over military conquest. In this way, the Aurelian of the *Historia Augusta* demonstrates his power as emperor to reflect the multiple ideals of rulership that exist in multiple areas under Roman domain in the third century. What is more is that by combining the two different and conflicting modes of imperial expression, the writer of the *HA* has created an entirely new ceremony at Rome. The parade still functions the official medium that introduces and incorporates the

[542] Canepa (2016) 95.

borderland territories to and into the capital, but through this spectacle, has expanded to include multiple messages of how that incorporation occurred.

8.4: Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to explore how the celebration of Aurelian's victory in West Asia was presented to European audiences, both in the 270's, and as commemorated through the triumphal narrative in the *Historia Augusta*. While no extant inscriptions describe Aurelian's parade, analysis of contemporary *cognomina ex virtute* provide insight into the narrative of victory presented at Rome--one which de-emphasized the campaign as quashing a rebellion and rebranded the Palmyrenes as Parthians. But in spite of the attempt to alter the narrative, the *Historia Augusta* creates an Aurelian who was remembered as defeating the Palmyrenes, and reinventing the Roman triumph into a new spectacle that incorporated multiple modes of imperial expressions.

What this case study has shown is that by the late third century, Eastern and Western expressions of empire as shown in parade imagery and performed in parade culture were fusing together. Shapur's reliefs, discussed in the previous chapter, were the first examples to fuse together Roman triumphs and Persian tributary parades. The geopolitical entity of West Asia in Sasanian propaganda becomes an important part of the campaign narrative, as the fall of the formerly Roman-controlled territory to Shapur's army gives the king an opening to claim Rome as a tributary to the Sasanians. In response to this propaganda, we find Aurelian's triumph commemorated in the *Historia Augusta* as another example of a

fusion between a Roman triumph and a Persian tributary parade. Importantly, the role of the Palmyrenes in both pushing back Shapur and rebelling against the Romans is downplayed. Inscriptional evidence about Aurelian's campaign as presented to European audiences casts the Palmyrenes as Parthians, and in Aurelian's parade described in the *HA*, the Palmyrenes are simply one of the multiple conquered Eastern groups, and Zenobia appears as a generic Eastern queen.

Neither of these parade images, however, accurately depict the events as happened on-site. Both the Sasanian and Roman campaigns were waged taking over the border city-by-city. While allegiances of individual cities were still important in defining Roman borders, the presence and successful siege of an imperial army in the *poleis* was the primary factor that determined the border along the route from Ancyra to Antioch. This was a change from the 180's, when ambassadors from cities would send gifts to the general in exchange for protections following the defeat of Antiochus. Thus, the message of military conquest that underplays the Roman triumph as an institution was in some ways more accurate in Aurelian's parade than in Scipio's. Aurelian did participate in siege warfare as a way to reclaim the borders, whereas Scipio fought one battle, ratified a treaty with Antiochus, and negotiated with local polities. However, West Asia as a geopolitical unit was still manipulated before the eyes of Romans, both as evident in contemporary inscriptions that conflate Sasanians and Palmyrenes with Parthians, and in the memory of Aurelian's reign as depicted in the *Historia Augusta*.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

"On the 19th of Rajab 1045 (1635 CE) the illustrious emperor made his entry into Constantinople with a splendour and magnificence which no tongue can describe nor pen illustrate. The populace who poured out of the city to meet the emperor had been dissatisfied with the Ka'im-makam Bairam Pasha, but, gratified by the sight of their emperor, they became animated by a new spirit. The windows and roofs of the houses in every direction were crowded with people, who exclaimed, "The blessing of God be upon thee O conqueror! Welcome, Murad! May thy victories be fortunate!" In short, they recovered their spirits, and joy was manifest in every countenance. The Sultan was dressed in steel armour, and had a threefold aigrette in his turban, stuck obliquely on one side in the Persian manner: he was mounted on a Noghz'ii steed, followed by seven led horses of the Arab breed, decked out in embroidered trappings set with jewels. Emirguneh, the khan of Erivan, Yusuf Khan, and other Persian khans walked on foot before him, whilst the bands with cymbals, flutes, drums, and fifes, played the airs of Afrasiab. The emperor looked with dignity on both sides of him, like a lion who has seized his prey, and saluted the people as he went on, followed by three thousand pages clad in armour. The people shouted "God be praised!" as he passed, and threw themselves on their faces to the ground. The merchants and tradesmen had raised on both sides of the way pavilions of satin, cloth of gold, velvet, fine linen, and other rich stuffs, which were afterwards distributed amongst the Solaks, Peiks, and other servants of the Sultzin. The old Solak bashi told me that his guards alone had carried home silk tents to the value of 7,000 piastres. During this triumphant procession to the serai all the ships at Seraglio-point, at Kizkala' (Leander's tower), and at Topkhzineh, fired salutes, so that the sea seemed in a blaze. The public criers announced that seven days and nights were to be devoted to festivity and rejoicing. During this festival such a quantity of rich presents were brought to the Sultan that not only the treasury but even the koshk-khzineh (garden house) was filled with them. The next day being Friday, the Sultan repaired to the mosque of Eyyflb, and was much gratified to see the new buildings as he went along the harbour, and on his return by the Adrianople gate."[543]

While *Parading Persia* concludes with the memory of Aurelian's third-century CE spectacle, empires throughout the world continued to adopt Romano-Persian inspired

[543] Çelebi 130-131, transl. by Hammer.

triumphal imagery and customs in their own presentations of military might. The passage above from Evilya Celebi's eyewitness account of Sultan Murad IV's procession into Istanbul in 1635 CE, for instance, blends together Persian and Eastern Roman pageantry in a procession that celebrates the Sultan's victory against the Safavids.[544] Moreover, Murad's procession is one of multiple noteworthy examples of Early Modern through twentieth-century versions of triumphal parades, including Napoleon's military parades, and Adolf Hitler's *Triumph of the Will*.

While further study might examine the Romano-Persian elements of triumphal parades in later spectacles, the goal of *Parading Persia* is to demonstrate how parade cultures in West Asia influenced or disrupted the pageantry and narratives of conquest and empire, as presented in triumphal parades at Rome. To do this, I examined three specific parades from key moments in time, each of which corresponded to decisive and foundational military campaigns against the three major empires ruling over former Achaemenid territory during Rome's Eastern expansion: the Seleucids, the Parthians, and the Sasanians. These three case studies specifically explore how triumphal parades in Rome established a Roman perspective of "Persia" at specific points in time, and demonstrate that the campaign narratives presented through the pageantry of these triumphs did not always reflect the ways in which Romans at the time inserted themselves into West Asian geopolitics and negotiated victories with local populations.

The conclusions we can draw from reading these three case studies side-by-side are relevant to three different areas of Ancient Roman scholarship: the symbolic and aesthetic

[544] Zarinebaf (2014) 173--183.

changes to the triumphal parade from 2nd century BCE- 3rd century CE; how Romans engaged with people on-site in West Asia and changes to local parade culture; and how "Persia" or "Persianism" was imported into Rome and specific moments and (re)presented to Roman audiences.[545]

Looking at these three case studies together tells us that West Asian customs did indeed influence the aesthetics of Roman triumphal parades, which may have helped shift the symbolism of the ceremony in Roman society. Parades in West Asia, first under the Achaemenid rule and later under the Seleucids, celebrated narratives of empire that unified various ethnic groups under the leadership of a sole ruler and his family and gift-giving ceremonies. When Scipio first paraded Asia for Roman audiences, the narrative of empire and conquest his triumph presented did not have space celebrating the coming together of various groups and gift-exchange culture that happened on-site--instead, the focus was on riches presented as war booty and captured cities. Furthermore, the Asia presented on Scipio's parade geopolitically appeared to be populated by Greek cities (and not ethnic groups or *gentes*). It was not until after Pompey's parade over the East, foreign *gentes* became an integral part of triumphal parade aesthetics, and shifted how Romans imagined and presented the Eastern border.

By the first century BCE, Romans was no longer saw the East as a geopolitical landmass housing series of Greek-speaking *poleis*, but one that also contained a vast number of ethnic groups (as presented first in Pompey's triple-triumph). The Parthians, first conquered and presented to Roman audiences by Bassus as one such *gens*, became a

[545] Shayegan (2017) 454.

centuries-long competitor with Rome for control over West Asian territories. Although Parthia was no longer a geopolitical power in West Asia by the 270's CE, the Romans presented Zenobia as a Parthian in Aurelian's parade, in which the *HA* tells us we also find gifts offered to Rome from the Sasanian king.

Additionally, when comparing specifically the depictions of Scipio's triumph in Livy with Aurelian's triumph in the *HA*, we see that riches from the East are no longer merely classified as loot in Latin discourse. While again these renderings of triumphal parades may not have reflected the real parade on-site, the inclusion of the word "gift" when referring to specific pieces of wealth offered to Aurelian by the Persian kings differs from earlier depictions of wealth as booty. Additionally, multiple (but not all) Eastern people appearing in Aurelian's triumph are recognized as envoys instead of captives. Of course, captives did still play a role in this parade--Zenobia and the Western tribes were both bound in chains as visual confirmation of their military defeat. But, by acknowledging Eastern envoys, unchained and bearing gifts, the spectacle itself expands into new narrative territory. While Scipio's triumph in Livy simply lists the wealth taken from the East, Aurelian's parade presents an exchange discourse with Persia and other peoples from the East as a way of restoring Rome's West Asian *limes*. The parade itself contains multiple narratives of empire.

While scholars have debated the requirements necessary for the senate to reward an *imperator* with a triumph, comparing these three parades reveals that over the centuries, the only real visual elements required to put on such a parade are a *triumphator* and soldiers--the appearance of an enemy (either a king or queen, a *gens*, or both) and loot,

though typical staples of a Roman triumph, were not ubiquitous. Although each of the three parades examined here represented a victory over an army under the control of a monarchy, the only Eastern ruler to appear on parade of the three examined is Zenobia in Aurelian's triumph. Antiochus did not appear in Scipio's parade (although his defeat was commemorated in triumphal inscriptions), and it is unclear that Bassus' triumph even acknowledged the existence of a Parthian king, as the *fasti* list only the Parthian *gens*. *Gentes* also show up in Aurelian's triumph, however, Scipio's parade predates the appearance of *gentes* in the institution. When it came to wealth, literary evidence suggests that both Scipio and Aurelian's parade showed riches from West Asia, however there is no such evidence for Bassus, and M. Antonius's arrival in Syria suggests that whatever wealth was extorted from local kings did not end up in Bassus' parade (and therefore, possibly went to Egypt instead of Rome). Thus, what this diachronic comparison of parade pageantry tells us is that the *triumphator* and soldiers were the only real visual similarities from parade to parade.

While the presence of soldiers and a *triumphator* tell of a military victory, the inclusion of different visual elements from parade to parade results in different narratives that similarly focus on imperial expansion through military conquest, and the eventual adoption of Persian-inspired narratives of empire in Roman triumphal parades. In Scipio's parade, we see a clear narrative of conquest over "Asia" here depicted as a land filled with wealthy *poleis* under the control of a wealthy monarch. By recasting the gifts as booty and emphasizing the defeat of Antiochus, Scipio's parade creates an image of West Asia as defeated by military strength and under the control of Rome. Bassus' parade continues the

narrative of military victory--however the focus is on defeating the Parthians, which adds another *gens* from the East to the triumphal list of peoples conquered by Roman forces. The Parthian *gens*, however, becomes more clearly presented as a monarchy in Augustus' *Res Gestae*, wherein we begin to see Romans embracing alternative narratives of empire, one created through diplomacy and unity, particularly when it came to dealing with the Parthian king. Finally, when we see Aurelian's triumphal parade depicted in the *Historia Augusta*, we find a blending of both imperial conquest (vis-a-vis the captives and booty) alongside a Persian-inspired parade focusing on unity through the presence of clearly demarcated foreign ambassadors (rather than captives) and gifts. Thus, the narratives of empire as presented through triumphal parades celebrating victories on the Eastern border shifted during the 500 years of Roman eastern expansion, and eventually led to the inclusion of Persian-inspired narratives of empire alongside traditional Roman narratives of military conquest.

How these parades depicted Persia, and the Eastern border more broadly, likewise cements Roman imperial narratives that celebrate and justify control over these territories to audiences in Rome. At first, triumphs showed that imperial control over territories was only celebrated through successful military conquest; there was no space within the parade narrative to display diplomatic negotiations or a willingness to cooperate with Rome. With Augustus' *Res Gestae* published publicly at Rome as a way to rewrite Parthian-Roman relations and redefine the importance of a triumph in the process of Romanization, a shift occurs. Augustus demonstrates in Rome alternative ways of spreading empire, ways that embrace diplomatic cooperation and gift-giving are presented as equally justifiable

methods of imperial expansion as military conquest. By embracing alternative narratives of empire that echo Achaemenid parade culture in West Asia, Romans thus adopted and imported back to Rome customs found in the territories they conquered, as a way to maintain their Eastern border both back in Rome and on-site.

This had serious on the cultural significance of the Roman triumph as an institution of Romanization and enforcement of imperial narratives, as new modalities for spreading empire into the East were now formally recognized and embraced in the city of Rome. While scholarship on the Roman Triumph has long recognized the importance of Augustan propaganda on the institution's function in society, citing (if nothing else) the fact that triumphs were no longer celebrated by individuals outside of the imperial family, the *Res Gestae* as a public monument celebrating Parthian-Roman relations through diplomacy re-defines how Romans perceived the spread of their empire. Through Augustus' propaganda, the triumph of Bassus is recast as an inadequate representation of Roman-Parthian relations, as diplomacy and supplication become celebrated alternatives to creating a unified empire when dealing with specific *gentes*.

In West Asia, the modalities through which Romans negotiated with local populations over the 500 year period does not demonstrate a consistently enforced program of spreading empire, but does indicate an "interplay" between imperial and local, similar to that which Noreña uncovered with Augustan coins in Antioch.[546] As demonstrated in case studies 1 and 2, Scipio and Augustus both adopted local terminology and themes of unity in their inscriptions as a way to maintain Roman interests in the territory. Thus while

[546] Noreña (2016) 301.

Parading Persia does not invalidate this previous scholarship on the Roman Near-East, it does introduce earlier Roman engagements in West Asian geopolitics into the scholarship exploring the Romanization of the Near East (which often focuses on Pompey or Augustus as a starting point).[547] While Dmitriev's scholarship on the 2nd century Greek city-states of West Asia might lead one to conclude that Romanization was not happening at an administrative level, the presence of Roman generals on the geopolitical landscape in the 180's tells us that Romanization did not happen as the immediate disruption of local structures, but as insertion into locally-defined, pre-existing cultural exchanges.

What these three case studies show, therefore, are moments in the slow process of Romanization that occurred in specific points in West Asia. At first contact, Romans worked to adapt to local conditions, even when doing so was at odds with expected and standard expressions of empire and negotiations back at Rome. By the end of the first century BCE, we see more clearly defined Roman modes of imperial and political expression at play, both in the use of Latin on the coins of Labienus, and in Ventidius Bassus' overt threats of violence. But Augustus' inscriptions still speak to local audiences using their terms, both in using Greek and in embracing local narratives of empire that emphasize unity and exchange as a form of subjugation (instead of violence and military defeat).

By the end of the third century, however, the battle for control over West Asia between the Romans, Sasanians, and Palmyrenes meant that the borders were constantly being redrawn with siege warfare. Inscriptions for Aurelian tracing a line down the Roman

[547] Ball (2000); Millar (1993); Sartre (2005).

Eastern border were written both in Greek and Latin. In contrast, Palmyrene and Sasanian inscriptions in West Asia were written in Aramaic, Parthian and Middle Persian. Moreover, the *euergetistic* tones and themes of unity we find in Scipio's and Augustus' inscriptions are not clearly stated in Aurelian's inscriptions. Instead, the extant inscriptions we have for Aurelian simply appear as generic honorific inscriptions, which are similar to those found throughout the empire (including Europe and Africa). This moreover suggests that, in the case of Aurelian, the interplay between imperial and local may have been somewhat less dependent upon local variation than it had been in earlier periods.

Gift-giving parade culture, however, was not completely erased from West Asian culture. The Sasanian reliefs depict Achaemenid-style processions showing gift-giving in a way that emphasized a narrative of exchange in the maintenance of empire. However, next to the gift-giving procession, we find reliefs of military parades that depict subjugation of Roman emperors, in a fashion that is similar in message to the traditional Roman triumph. Parade culture in West Asia no longer solely or mainly emphasizes exchange and unity, but now enforces ideas of military domination over the Romans. Furthermore, the likely creation of these reliefs by the hands of conquered Romans, moreover, speaks to a type of spread of Roman cultural customs, but a spread that is controlled by Sasanian kings and not Roman emperors.

From a Roman perspective, as military campaigns moved further to the East and South over time, the representation of what constituted "The East" changed from primarily Greek-Speaking cities under along the coast of Asia Minor, to a combination of *poleis* and ethnic groups. The introduction of *gentes* as the way to display conquered peoples in the

first-century BCE did not disrupt the idea that the East had *poleis*--as we see in the *Historia Augusta*, city crowns were still a part of triumphal imagery in the Late Antique imagination. It did, however, shift attention away from the conquest of civic structures to the conquest of peoples, defined by ethnicity rather than *poleis*. While the conquest of a city would lead to a crown being offered by that city for display in the procession, conquest of a *gens* would lead to display of individuals representing that *gens*. This not only created a sense of the Eastern territories as encompassing various identity structures that go beyond civic affiliation, but in the context of the triumph, it cemented the idea that the Roman empire has expanded into the far reaches of the world, not just by taking over cities and conquering rulers, but by absorbing the identities of the people who live along the borders into its domain.

Additionally, we see that the stereotype of the wealth of Persia formed in the 5th-century BCE Greek imagination was a theme that continues well into the writers of the Later Roman Empire. The *Historia Augusta*'s depiction of Aurelian's triumph, emphasizing the gifts and jewels from the East, was thus part of a longstanding attitude in Greco-Roman discourse that was solidified in the Roman imagination with the earlier triumphs of L. Scipio and Pompey.[548] What this means here is that it did not matter which group was, in fact, geopolitically dominant. Both Antiochus III and Zenobia, though from different dynastic empires, were represented as wealthy. Thus, wealth was not tied to a specific group or dynasty. Instead, in the Roman imagination, wealth was intrinsically linked to the territory itself.

[548] Hall (1989) 80.

There then is the question of how the term Persia is introduced into Roman conceptions of and constructs on the East. The word "Persian" does not appear in Augustus' *Res Gestae*, which describes the Arsacid empire as "Parthian." We do see that by the time of Aurelian, though the word "Persian" is being used in inscriptions, it is used inconsistently, at times referring to the Parthians, and at times referring to the Palmyrenes. This suggests that either the Romans did not acknowledge a difference between the Palmyrenes and Parthians. In contrast, in the *Historia Augusta* we see the author differentiating between "Persian" groups and "Parthian," showing an awareness that the Sasanian dynasty as separate from the Arsacid. Effectively, in none of these case studies do we see Romans betraying a clear awareness for who or what "Persian" is and what it means.

While the term "Persian" was not clearly defined in the case studies presented today, extant Achaemenid parade culture and early stereotypes about "Persians" made their way into Roman triumphal parades even before Romans used the epithet "Persian." Continued conflict with the dynastic empires occupying former Achaemenid territory eventually led to new modalities of expressing empire on-site in Rome. In turn, West Asian parade culture eventually became more militaristic as *euergetism* and exchange narratives mingled alongside images of Sasanian parades celebrating military defeat. Thus, what emerges over 500 years is evidence for the eventual blending together of two narratives of empire, one emphasizing military domination, and the other emphasizing exchange, playing out in the imaginative construction of the West Asian geopolitical landscape.

Figures

Figure 1: Sculptural relief of Arachosians offering gifts to the king. Persepolis, Apadana, East Stairs, southern part. Photo by Marco Prins: https://www.livius.org/pictures/iran/persepolis/persepolis-apadana/persepolis-apadana-east-stairs/persepolis-apadana-east-stairs-southern-part-arachosians/

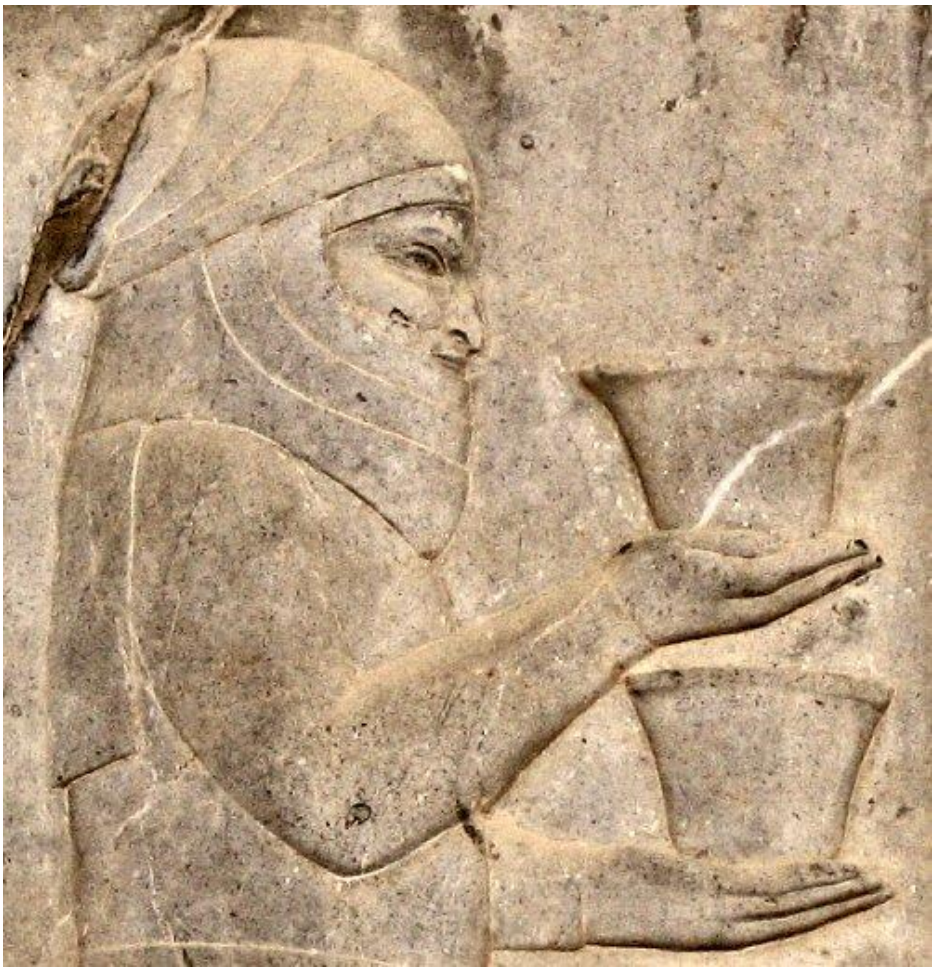

Figure 2: Sculptural Relief of Parthian offering gift to Achaemenid king. Note the head covering is different from the Arachosians (fig. 1). Photo by Marco Prins: https://www.livius.org/pictures/iran/persepolis/persepolis-apadana/persepolis-apadana-east-stairs/parthian/

Figure 3: Screenshot of the results from TLG search (July 28, 2019).

Calculating cost of Scipio's Triumph

A. 2200 Roman Cavalry paid 75 *Denarii* each = 165,000
10,000 legionnaires 25 denarii each + 250,000
125 Centurions (1 centurion/80 legionnaires) 50 *Denarii* each = 6,250
Subtract soldiers who died according to Livy:
300 infantry = 7,500 and 49 cavalry = 3,675
Total Gifted to Soldiers: 421,250 *Denarii*

B. 224 Gold Crowns on triumph
Gold crowns at Delos gifted by generals on Roman-Seleucid campaign = 100 Drachma
1 Drachma = 1 Denarius, calculations by Waterfield (2014) 245
Total Crown Worth in *Denarii*: 22,400

C. 137,420 pounds Silver on triumph
(divided by 80 for pounds/talent in Polybius) = 1717.75 talents
1717.75 talents x 6,000 (Waterfield's calculations of denarii/talent)
Pounds of Silver worth in *Denarii*: 11,543,280

D. 224,000 Attic tetradrachms on triumph
1 tetradrachm = 4 Drachma
1 Drachma = 1 Denarius; Waterfield (2014) 245
224,000 tetradracms X 4
Rosenstein (2011) 153 estimates 896,000
***Tetradracms* in *Denarii*: 894,000-896,000**

E. 331070 *cistophori* on triumph; calculations done by Rosenstein (2011) 153
***Cistophori* in *Denarii*: 963,210**

F. 140,000 Philippians (gold pieces), on triumph assuming they are Stater Coins (which were common in West Asia at this time)
1 stater coin = 26-33 denarii; Harl (1996) 291-292.
Rosenstein (2011) 153, estimates 3,360,000
Philippians in *Denarii*: 3,360,000-4,620,000

G. 1423 pounds silver vases; 1423 pounds=17.8 talents x 6,000
Silver vases in *Denarii*: 106,725

H. 1023 Golden vases on triumph
When calculating talents owed to Rome, in Polybius we see an allowance for up to 1/3 of the total being made in gold (so must make sure total sum of gold must be less than 1/3 of total)* and that gold:silver is valued at 10:1 [Polybius 21.32.8]. This tells us that the intrinsic value of gold during this period of the Republic was relatively low—this aligns with findings by Woytek (2014) 215.
1023 pounds (divided by 80 for talents)= 12.8 talents (x 6,000) = 77,800 (x 10 gold:silver ratio)
Gold Vases in Denarii: 767,250

Triumph Treasure total, in Denarii: 17,655,865-18,918,865
Add to this, the extra amount given to soldiers (based on Livy 37.39):

TOTAL COST OF EVERYTHING: 18,078,115-19,340,115 Denarii

Figure 4: cost of Scipio's triumph

Figure 5: Sculptural Relief of triumphal parade on Titus' Arch, featuring *tituli*. Photo by Laurel Lodged: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arch_of_Titus#/media/File:Carrying_off_the_Menorah_from_the_Temple_in_Jerusalem_depicted_on_a_frieze_on_the_Arch_of_Titus_in_the_Forum_Romanum.JPG

Figure 6: Pacorus' coin: ΒΑΣΙΛ[ΕΩΣ] ΒΑΣΙΛΕ[ΩΝ] [ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ] [Ε]ΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ.
Coin from Wiki Commons
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacorus_I#/media/File:Coin_of_Pacorus_I_of_Parthia.jpg

Figure 7: Labienus' coin, Latin text reads: *Parthicus Imp. P. Labienus*. Source: Wikipedia commons
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quintus_Labienus#/media/File:Quintus_labienus.jpg

Figure 8: Coin of Ventidius Bassus
Source: Wiki commons:
https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Publio_Ventidio_Basso#/media/File:Marcus_Antonius_-_RCS63_-_2710044.jpg

Panathenaic prize Amphora, 363–362 B.C., attributed to the Painter of the Wedding Procession. Nike crowns the winner of a boxing match. The J. Paul Getty Museum, 93.AE.55. https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/the-getty-villa-guide-to-the-ancient-olympics/

Figure 10: Relief 3 at Bishapur, featuring parade of ethnic groups offering gifts to the king. Photo taken by Jona Lendering http://www.livius.org/pictures/iran/bishapur/bishapur-relief-3/bishapur-relief-3-general-view/

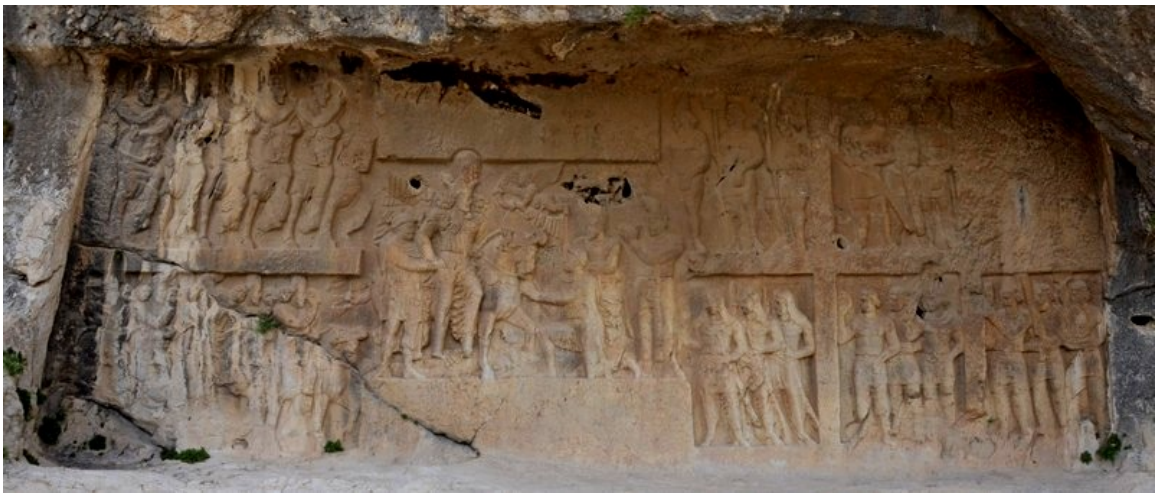

Figure 11: Bishapur Relief 2, featuring subjugation of Roman emperors under Shapur. 260 CE–272 CE, photograph taken by Jona Lendering http://www.livius.org/pictures/iran/bishapur/bishapur-relief-2/bishapur-relief-2-general-view/

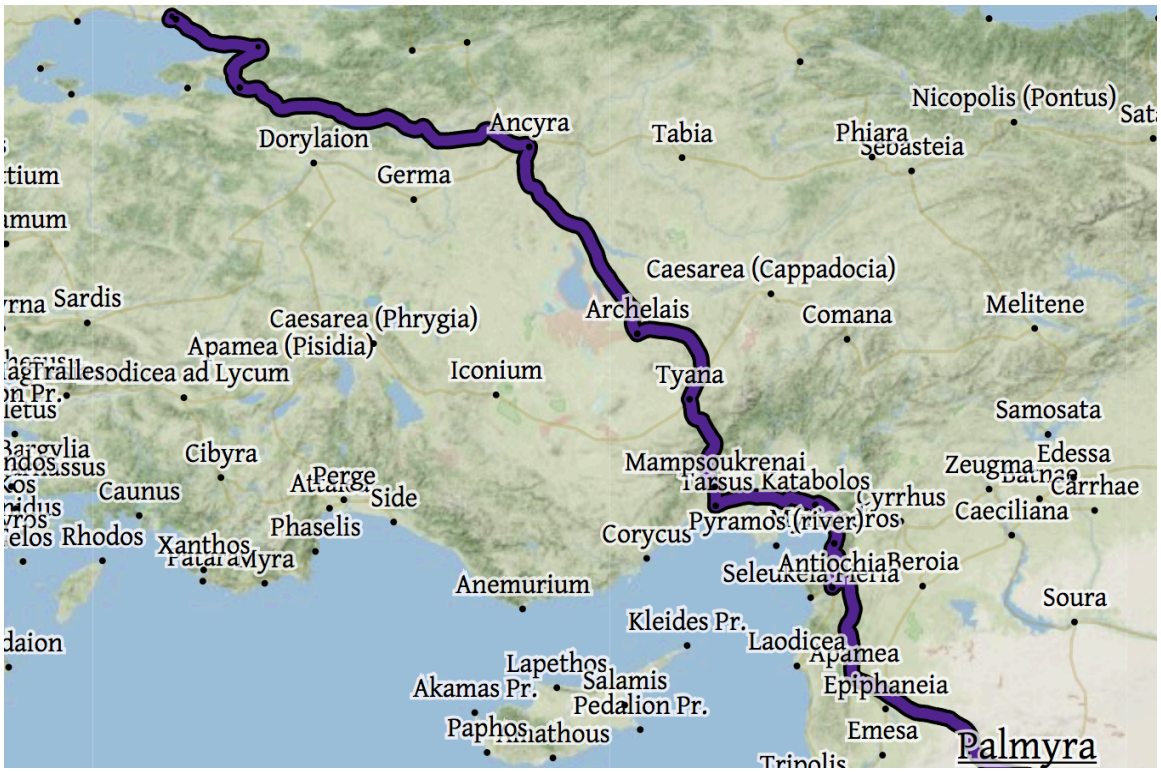

Figure 12: Aurelian's Route into Palmyra according to Orbis software: http://orbis.stanford.edu/

Figure 13: Cities along Aurelian's route (seen in Fig. 12)

Ancyra
Cinna* flagged on Google Maps on right
Archelais
Tyana
Mampsoukrenai
Tarsus
Katabolos
Myriadros
Antioch
Apamea

	Aurelian's Eastern *Cognomina ex Virtute*				
		Parthicus	*Persicus*	*Palmyrenicus*	*Arabicus*
Location of Inscription	Rome	CIL VI 1112 (274)			
	Italy			CIL V 4319 (274)	
	Spain				CIL II 4506
	Gaul	Orelli-Henzen 5551 (275); CIL XII 2673 (274); CIL XII 5456; CIL XII 5549	CIL XII 5561		

Figure 14: Aurelian's *Cognomina ex Virtute*, based on Homo (1904) Appendice III.

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