

THE REPUBLICAN IMPERATORIAL SALUTATION

THE ROMAN REPUBLICAN IMPERATORIAL SALUTATION:

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The Roman Republican imperial salutation was an influential ritual during the late Republican period. This ritual has received little attention over the last 50 years since Robert Combes released his now seminal book on the title of *imperator*. In this thesis, I argue for why multiple of the topics covered in that book require a re-examination, in particular the arguments surrounding the possible first salutations. This encompasses a thorough examination of the potential salutation of Quinctius Poenus, Combes' arguments concerning the salutation of Scipio Africanus, and my own theory as to who the recipient of this ritual acclamation was. This thesis covers the second century BCE and how the socio-economic, political, and military changes of that period were reflected in the growth and increasing popularity of the imperial salutation. Finally, it delves into the first century BCE and the effects that the major figures of that time had on the development of this ritual as it changed along with Rome's transition from a Republican system to a principate.

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Declaration of Academic Achievement

The author declares that the content of this thesis has been completed by Michael Ostroff, with recognition of the contribution of his supervisory committee, which consisted of Prof. Claude Eilers, Prof. Spencer Pope, and Prof. Michele George, during the research and writing process.

Introduction

The Roman Republic spanned a period of roughly 500 years, from when Lucius Brutus and his colleagues overthrew the last king of Rome and established the Republic in 509, making Brutus the first consul in the process, until Octavian became Augustus and established the principate in 27 with the first constitutional settlement. Throughout their history, the Romans were an ordered and superstitious group, consistently developing new rituals for every aspect of their society, in military, religious, social, and political life. Many of these rituals developed progressively over time, and some only formed later in the Republic's development. One of these, the history of which is difficult to uncover, and which had considerable influence that only grew as Roman society changed and developed, was the imperial salutation.

Although its beginning is unclear and debated, the first and second centuries BCE were when the imperial salutation gained traction and became increasingly popular. In the first and second centuries BCE, the list of titles often included *imperator*, referring to a “victorious general who was spontaneously acclaimed on the field of battle by their soldiers.”¹ As the second century progressed, it became increasingly normal to hail a victorious general as *imperator* if his soldiers thought him to be deserving of it. Frustratingly, there are limitations to the knowledge of this ritual that we can construct from the extant sources. For example, there is little to no information that survives that describes the ritual itself. We do not know what the salutation actually entailed, whether

¹ Combès (1966), 73.

it was highly ritualized in its process or if it was different every time but only with certain consistent elements. It is nearly as rare for ancient authors to provide details of the attribution of the title. They do not explain what was required in order to receive one nor do they provide what the use of the title was. It is a fortuitous occasion when they choose to include that one transpired at all, particularly because few of those who received them were writers, or at least their writing does not survive, like the memoirs of Sulla which were never published.

Since the sources do not explicitly provide a description of the acclamation itself, several scholars have taken it upon themselves to attempt to unravel that mystery. Most notable of whom are Mommsen and Combès, the latter focusing on the arguments made by the former. Mommsen had a major influence on the study of the title of *imperator* in general and this subject in particular, which matches his influence in many areas of study in Classics.² The first stipulation that is at the heart of the imperatorial salutation is that it be carried out spontaneously on the initiative of the troops, as it is foremost their ritual, or possibly in exceptional circumstances that it originates from the people. This is supported by both evidence from literary sources that refer to the soldiers as the agents and the fact that the conventional form for the salutation in Latin is in the passive, '*imperator appellatus*'. It is also the case that the Senate merely sanctions the act of the troops but is

² Combès (1966), 2. Mommsen's theory on the meaning of the title *imperator*: Mommsen (1887), I, 143.

not the source of the salutation itself, according to Combès, but they were certainly involved.³

The details of the ritual may be shrouded in mystery, but the importance of it is unquestioned. This acclamation stood at an intersection between the military and political spheres, although the two overlapped often in Roman society, as it could affect the political career of the leader being saluted moving forward and was carried out by his soldiers in the field. The military was an important part of Roman society, and it had been closely intertwined with the political sphere for many centuries; one justification for this view, among many others, is that there was a minimum requirement, in theory, of ten years of military service in order for a candidate to run for political office.⁴ This was also apparent in the overlap of responsibilities of Roman officials, whose positions often included military, civic, and often legislative powers, like those of the consul and praetor.

Despite the lack of evidence concerning the procedure of the salutation and the scope of its meaning, the development and history of the act may be ascertained. By

³ Caesar, *De Bello. Civili*, 2.32.14: *vos me imperatoris nomine appellavistis*; Tacitus, *Ann.*, 3.74.5: *gaudio et impetus exercitus.*; Diodorus Siculus, 36, fragment 14: ἔθος ἦν τοῖς Ῥωμαίων στρατιώταις... ἰμπεράτορα αὐτὸν ἀναγορεύειν καὶ ἀποκαλεῖν; There is only one piece of evidence that attributes a salutation to the people: Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 5.31: αὐτοκράτωρ ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου προσαγορευθεὶς ἐπὶ τὸν Καίσαρα ἐχώρει; The Senate's involvement is evident in Cicero's that, "if someone had killed one or two thousand Spanish... according to custom, the Senate would have called them *imperator*."": *si quis Hispanorum aut Gallorum aut Thraecum mille aut duo milia occidisset, illum hac consuetudine, quae increbuit, imperatorem appellaret senatus.*; Combès (1966), 73-78.

⁴ Polybius, 6.19: πολιτικὴν δὲ λαβεῖν ἀρχὴν οὐκ ἔξεστιν οὐδενὶ πρότερον, ἐὰν μὴ δέκα στρατείας ἐνιαυσίους ἢ τετελεκώς.

studying its various appearances in the literary sources that survive, as well as the epigraphical record of the second century, and, beginning in the first century, using numismatics to establish or at least estimate the number and frequency of salutations that occurred during the Republican era, the past and progression of the salutation may be deciphered. This study will focus on the Republican version of the imperial salutation, as it not only changes drastically after Rome transitions to the rule of emperors, but it is also necessary to do so in order to focus on its origin.

In order to better understand the usages discussed throughout this work and to allow for a clearer picture of the implications of the findings, the various definitions and uses of the title will be outlined here. It is important to understand that by all rights anyone with *imperium* in the Republican period should have held the title of *imperator*, but this was not the case, and at a certain point it was given to only those victorious in battle.⁵ In the first and second century, the title signified the general of an army, and the only certain attestation surviving that dates from before the second century is the epithet Jupiter Imperator.⁶ It is believed to have been normal for the soldiers to refer to their generals as *imperator* even prior to victory. As such, at times it would seem that the title simply referred to one who would command the soldiers, in that it functioned as the nominal version of the verb *imperare*, ‘to command,’ therefore it was not necessarily referring to one with *imperium*, the official power to command troops. Combès argued that this was not meant as a technical military term but rather was used as a way to refer

⁵ Combès (1966), 2.

⁶ Combès (1966), 9.

to a Roman leader as ‘one who commands.’⁷ Within that broader definition, there seem to have been more specific uses for the title, which Combès outlines in detail.⁸ This does not mean that *imperator* was the only word that the soldiers could use to refer to or address their commander. The victorious leader was also sometimes referred to as *dux*, although there is little evidence of this.⁹ *Dux* was also used to designate the head of the army, but this was the case only later in the Empire. During the Republic, the leader of the army would have been a *praetor* and referred to as such.¹⁰ Therefore, at this point, neither *dux* nor *imperator* were official titles given to military leaders, but rather the noun forms of verbs meant to signify a leader.¹¹

The title of *imperator* was extra-legal and not expressly military either. Combès argued for this because the title does not appear in the legal record, and its use as a blanket term for one who commands does not seem to be limited to only field use or to have been an official designation for generals. He counters dissent by explaining that although Plautus referred to a character as *summus imperator*, this does not prove that it was a legal title. The reason that some would argue that it was legal is that ‘*summus*’ is a superlative, which is an adjective type that was often used to denote placement in a hierarchy. This is the case at least in part because all legal titles of that sort, those which

⁷ Combès (1966), 10-11.

⁸ Combès (1966), 3-28

⁹ This is the case in Cicero, *pro Murena*, 18.38: *...hoc duce castra cepimus, signa contulimus...*

¹⁰ This is attested by Servius in his commentary of Aeneid VIII, 678. Cicero discusses this as well in *Cic. Verr.*, II, 1, 14, 36. The Latin for both of these sections are provided in chapter 2, footnote 26.; Combès (1966), 12.

¹¹ *dux* was the nominal version of the verb *ducere* in the same way as *imperator* was for *imperare*.

have a superlative, use the adjective *maximus*.¹² When Cicero uses this same term, Combès argues that it has a “laudatory” meaning rather than a legal one.¹³ Another weakness of the legal argument is that the first official document that scholars know of that uses the term *imperator* is one that refers to a promagistrate who is enforcing a senatorial decree, *senatus consultum*, and is from the first century BCE.¹⁴ As for the title’s use in surviving sources, it frequently appears as ‘*imperator populi Romani*’ in literary texts, but it is rarely present in epigraphy, and when it does appear it is most often referring to one who was a general and then became governor.¹⁵

During the Imperial period in Rome, the use of the title changed significantly, given that it became the official designation of the emperor by order of Vespasian, and the ritual was used to appoint new emperors when the succession was in question. After being used as title for the emperor, however, the only innovation was that it became a name also. The title obviously had importance in the society and to those in power given that until Vespasian declared the title of *imperator* to be accorded to the *princeps* permanently, the emperor still monopolized the designation of the title for his own purposes and self.¹⁶

This study is necessary because the last in-depth work that was done on this topic was written 50 years ago. It was a work by the scholar Robert Combès, titled *Imperator*,

¹² Plaut., *Mil. Glorios.*, 15; *Pseud.*, 1171; *Amph.*, 504; Combès (1966), 13-14.

¹³ Cicero uses *summus* in this way frequently, see Combès (1966), 13, n.10.

¹⁴ *S.C. de Amphiarai Oropii agris* ln. 36; as it appears in Combès (1966), 24.

¹⁵ Combès (1966), 16, 20.

¹⁶ Combès (1966), 3-4.

and was not focused primarily on the salutation but on the title *imperator* itself. There are some arguments that were made in that study that I disagree with, and others that I will argue were not expounded upon sufficiently. This analysis will be accomplished with the benefit of the scholarship that has been written in the intervening years. Because of its seminal status, this book will be used throughout in order to provide comparison and context for many of the arguments provided. Throughout this study, which will move from pseudo-mythological salutations to those that are more certain, I will demonstrate how the imperatorial salutation developed from pre-existing Roman rituals that either became or greatly influenced this type of acclamation. I will argue for the fact that this ritual served to empower the soldiery, providing them with greater influence in the political sphere. This trend will be illuminated as it becomes apparent throughout the various attested salutations and the circumstances surrounding them. Examining these histories could also provide some insight into how the Romans themselves viewed this title and ritual. Although it would not explain the feelings of the contemporaries of the earliest salutations concerning this practice, given the sources discussed, it would allow for a better understanding of the Roman attitude towards it from the first century BCE onwards.

In order to establish the chronology of the development of the imperatorial salutation, I will begin with an in-depth examination of the various candidates for the possible first salutations to have occurred. The first chapter will cover the salutation of Quinctius Poenus that is attested in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* and the other early sections that include phrasing that is reminiscent of the imperatorial salutation. In this

investigation, I will argue that Quinctius Poenus' salutation was not in fact the first to have occurred, or even a salutation at all. By drawing comparisons between the event in question and an ancient ritual that Aulus Gellius discusses in his *Noctes Atticae*, I will demonstrate that this was likely the same process being used in a military context as opposed to the religious one that Gellius describes. Although this argument is in line with those made by previous scholars, those authors did not attempt to understand the implications of the connection between the two rituals, they only made the connection and ended their analysis there.

Following the arguments against Quinctius' salutation, I will focus on the circumstances surrounding the supposed salutation of Scipio Africanus, who is often considered to have been the first to have received this honour based on a separate section in Livy's work. By examining the evidence used by previous scholars to argue for his primacy and taking into account other sections of Livy that are relevant but have been overlooked, it will become apparent that Scipio Africanus was not the first to be saluted as *imperator*, and that he likely was not saluted at all. Despite his apparent 'imitators,' the evidence for Scipio's salutation will be examined and disproven.

The most prominent 'imitator' of Scipio Africanus was Aemilius Paullus, for whom I believe there is stronger evidence of being the first to be saluted as *imperator* than there exists for Scipio. Citing primarily epigraphical evidence, this argument will be part of a larger discussion of the second century salutations, which demonstrate a trend of increased popularity and use. In order to provide a more thorough understanding and study of the events in question, I will then discuss at length the socio-political, economic,

and military circumstances of the second century and argue for how the two correlate, and how the imperial salutation provided an avenue through which the lower classes could have greater effect on elite society in Rome. I will also include an explanation of the ties between this acclamation and the Roman triumph because that connection is pivotal to the influence that the salutation provided for the soldiers.

Because the imperial salutation is already an established ritual as of the first century, and then it rapidly changes into its distinctly different form that is present in the imperial era, I will conclude this work with a description of the state of Rome as it neared the end of the Republic. This will be intermixed with further arguments that cement that which has been established throughout the rest of the study regarding the role of soldiers in politics and how that was reflected in the imperial salutation. It will cover the time of Sulla and how he drastically altered Rome and in so doing affected the soldiers and their rituals. It will then briefly deal with Pompey and Caesar, as they are important historical figures, but they do not have a drastic effect on the development of the salutation. Finally, Augustus will serve as the finale of the work, as he was the source of many of the changes to the imperial salutation that resulted in its altered imperial use.

Chapter 1:

Quinctius Poenus

In light of extant information and sources, the Romans themselves seem to have known little about the history of their own rituals. Only two surviving sources discuss the history of the title of *imperator*. Cassius Dio in his history reports that Caesar had been the first to be called *imperator* in a new way, as an emperor in the way of the emperors that were to come after him. This is mostly a mischaracterization, as this title had not yet come to mean what Dio implies. However, Dio follows this with a brief discussion of the history of the title of *imperator*. In earlier times, he reports, imperators were generals “saluted as a result of their wars,” and those “who received some independent command or authority.”¹⁷ Both of these uses of this honorific are attested in our ancient evidence, but this passage provides little information regarding the actual development of the title and ritual or any sort of timeline, although Dio does make clear that the older and the newer uses of the title existed side by side.¹⁸

¹⁷ Dio, 43.44.2: τό τε τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος ὄνομα οὐ κατὰ τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἔτι μόνον, ὥσπερ ἄλλοι τε καὶ ἐκεῖνος πολλάκις ἐκ τῶν πολέμων ἐπεκλήθησαν, οὐδ’ ὡς οἱ τινα αὐτοτελεῖ ἡγεμονίαν ἢ καὶ ἄλλην τινὰ ἐξουσίαν λαβόντες ὀνομάζοντο, ἀλλὰ καθάπαξ τοῦτο δὴ τὸ καὶ νῦν τοῖς τὸ κράτος ἀεὶ ἔχουσι διδόμενον ἐκεῖνῳ τότε πρώτῳ τε καὶ πρώτῳ, ὥσπερ τι κύριον, προσέθεσαν.

¹⁸ Ibid., 43.44.4-5: οὐ μέντοι καὶ τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἐκ τούτου κατελύθη, ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ἐκάτερον: καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ δεύτερον ἐπ’ αὐτῶν ἐπάγεται, ὅταν νίκην τινὰ τοιαύτην ἀνέλωνται. οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο αὐτοκράτορες ἅπαξ τῇ προσηγορίᾳ ταύτῃ, ὥσπερ ταῖς ἄλλαις, καὶ πρώτη γε χρῶνται: οἱ δ’ ἂν καὶ διὰ πολέμων ἄξιόν τι αὐτῆς κατορθώσωσι, καὶ ἐκεῖνην τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρχαίου προσλαμβάνουσι, καὶ τούτου καὶ δεύτερόν τις καὶ τρίτον πλεονάκις τε, ὡς ἂν παράσχη οἱ, αὐτοκράτωρ ἐπονομάζεται.

Tacitus also provides a brief history of the imperial title. In book three of the *Annales*, which focuses on Tiberius' reign, Tiberius allowed Blaesus to be hailed as *imperator* by the legions as a reward. Tacitus describes this as “an ancient honour conferred on generals who, for good service to the state, were saluted with cheers of joyful enthusiasm by a victorious army, without pre-eminence above their fellows.”¹⁹ According to Tacitus, Blaesus was the last individual to receive such an acclamation, which probably holds if members of the imperial family are excluded.²⁰ Again here, similar to Dio's description, Tacitus provides little insight into the historical use of the title and its progression; he does not furnish the reader with any concrete historical dates or people with which one could build a history of the imperial salutation and better understand its development.

There are few sources that discuss the title of *imperator* in any detail, and those that do, as has been made evident, are lacking any significant amount of information that can be built upon. This shows that already by the time of Tacitus little is known about this ritual, despite its popularity and importance during the Late Republican period, which further demonstrates the necessity of this study.

¹⁹ Tacitus, *Ann.* 3.74.5-6: *sed Tiberius pro confecto interpretatus id quoque Blaeso tribuit ut imperator a legionibus salutareretur, prisco erga duces honore qui bene gesta re publica gaudio et impetu victoris exercitus conclamabantur; erantque plures simul imperatores nec super ceterorum aequalitatem. concessit quibusdam et Augustus id vocabulum ac tunc Tiberius Blaeso postremum.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*; For Tacitus, this differed from the contemporary title, ‘emperor’, and it is noteworthy that he felt compelled to explain to his readership the change in usage, as it implies a distinct shift in the understanding and use of the term during the Imperial era. This is a topic that has merit and could be explored, but it is not the focus of this work, as it goes beyond its intended scope.

I will begin this study with a discussion of the records of the earliest instances of the imperatorial salutations that survive. These salutations, which can be considered to be pseudo-mythological, may provide a better understanding of the development of the title of *imperator* and the rituals surrounding it, as well as allow some insight into the history of its various uses. The first of these salutations was that of T. Quinctius Poenus that reportedly occurred in the 4th century B.C.E., according to Livy. This chapter will examine this passage by discussing the implications of this event if it was in fact a salutation, arguing why it likely was not one, and attempting to put forward suggestions as to what this event might be instead and the possible importance of that. I will then examine some of the other less important instances of the title's use in Livy's early books, focusing on how they are different with arguments as to how they should be interpreted.

T. Quinctius Poenus was dictator in 361 B.C.E. and is described by Livy, in *Ab Urbe Condita* 7.39, as being saluted as *imperator* in 342 B.C.E.; however, the ritual was not "carried out with the same enthusiasm" with which the Romans acclaim a victorious general, despite using the same vocabulary.²¹ Quinctius was hailed as *imperator* when a Roman army, after having freed Capua from the hostilities of the Samnites, did not wish to return the city to the Campanians. Instead, upset at the prospect of the Campanians controlling and inhabiting a city that they could not even defend, the Roman soldiers began plotting amongst themselves to take the city. One of the consuls, through his

²¹ Combès (1966), 52; cf. Combès (1966), 88-89; Livy, 7.39.15: *Imperator extemplo adveniēns appellatus, insigniaque honoris exterrito subitae rei miraculo deferunt et ad urbem ducere iubent.*

tribunes, discovered the plot and began to slyly send home the conspirators so as to stop the plot from being carried out. One cohort figured out what the consul was doing and so moved to intercept those who had been dismissed and grew to considerable size in the process. Only lacking a general, this army then went to the home of T. Quinctius Poenus, a respected and successful former military leader whom they discovered living nearby. Giving him no choice in the matter, the soldiers hailed him as *imperator* and dragged him, “*pertraxerunt*,” back to their camp. The language in this section can be quite misleading because of its similarity to later salutations; it reads: “*imperator... appellatus*.”²² This is the same vocabulary used when Livy details Scipio Africanus’ salutation, at which point he writes, “*nomen imperatoris... appellassent*.”²³ It is not unreasonable to assume, at first glance, that this similar phrasing is indicative of there being a similar, if not identical event that is being presented although how to interpret Scipio Africanus’ salutation is an issue of its own, which will be discussed later in this study. This section could be important for two possible reasons, depending on how trustworthy Livy is, either this is the first recorded case of an imperatorial salutation, or this is Livy making a mistake, in which case it is likely an instance of some other practice. Combès supposes that it could refer to a process that is out of the ordinary, ancient, or not still a part of the military or political process in Rome.²⁴

²² Livy, 7.39.15 (For the Latin text, see previous footnote).

²³ Livy, 27.19.4: *tum Scipio silentio per praeconem facto sibi maximum nomen imperatoris esse dixit, quo se milites sui appellassent; regium nomen alibi magnum, Romae intolerabile esse.*

²⁴ Combès (1966), 53.

If we take the description that Livy provides of Quinctius being chosen to be *imperator* as entirely accurate, then it is the oldest known instance of an imperatorial salutation, predating any other extant example of this ritual by at least 100 years. This would imply that the ritual started in the early Republic and therefore was not a byproduct of, or even related to the socio-political situation in the late third and early second century B.C.E., a facet of the salutations that will be discussed later in this study. Instead, this would imply that this practice was actually developed as a result of early Republican conditions or those of a time before the Republic when Rome was ruled by kings; however, that is where such a study must end given the paucity of evidence from that period. Nevertheless, although the importance of this passage as a function of early Republican influences would be interesting to consider, treating Quinctius' salutation as part of the same tradition and process as those that were common in the Late Republic is tenuous at best.

I argue, in line with other scholars, that this event is not correctly described by Livy as an imperatorial salutation. Combès argues that this attribution is anachronistic and so is a mistake on Livy's part, and Seager agrees.²⁵ Develin, who takes a different approach, does not argue that the other scholars are wrong, but rather that they are misunderstanding exactly what Livy is attempting to describe. Develin argues that Livy is

²⁵ Combès (1966), 52; Seager (1968), 260.

trying to show that these soldiers wished to have Quinctius as their general, and so they were not hailing him as *imperator* in the same manner as was done in Livy's time.²⁶

There are multiple reasons for why Quinctius' salutation cannot be taken as accurate. There are certain criteria of the late Republican salutation that must be met in order for Quinctius' case to be considered one of that type, and those are not present in the section. First, Quinctius must have won a battle, but he has not; in fact, the soldiers hailing him are essentially recruiting him for a battle with this action. Second, he is not yet the leader of the army, whom the soldiers would be then hailing in this way. These inconsistencies result in further questions regarding Livy's understanding of the meaning of the salutation and the purpose for wording this passage the way that he does.

At the time that Livy lived and was writing, he would have been well acquainted with the late Republican version of the imperatorial salutation. This ritual was reserved for victorious generals, they were much sought after honours and often led to a triumph.²⁷ As such, it is curious that Livy would have blatantly misunderstood or misattributed a salutation in a situation like that of Quinctius. It is not simply a matter of him thinking that there was a salutation when there could not have been, but that his inclusion of that phrase here would rely on his thinking that there could have, or might have been one in a situation where it would have made no sense. With Quinctius not having won a battle, and not even being the general prior to the hailing itself, it seems that there is either a

²⁶ Develin (1977), 112.

²⁷ Beard (2007), 273: This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3 as the discussion focuses on the later type of salutation and its effect on the aristocracy.

fundamental issue with Livy's understanding of imperial salutations, or there is something more complicated here than just a mistake. I argue that Livy understood that Quinctius was becoming *imperator* by means of the act he described, although a different type of *imperator* from that of Livy's own time, and that this was being accomplished using a ritual with which Livy was unfamiliar. He used this phrasing to describe what was happening because it was the only comparable ritual that he knew of. Although pushing the idea further, this argument is in line with those of both Combès and Develin and works well within the framework of its various uses that Combès established for the title of *imperator*.²⁸

In Combès' book *Imperator*, he strove to demonstrate that the title of *imperator* was one which had many uses, and whose use changed over time. One of the more prominent uses of this title was that of 'one who leads an army.'²⁹ Not only was this a known use for the title and one of the older ways in which it was employed, but it was also, as Combès himself explains, not only utilized when referring to someone who had *imperium*, but also used as a nominal version of the verb *imperare*.³⁰ In this meaning, it was simply meant to represent a leader who was commanding or had the ability to command. With this having been established, Quinctius fit within the confines of the early meanings of the term *imperator*; he was one who commands. He did not necessarily

²⁸ For a listing of the various uses of the term see Combès (1966), 1-28.

²⁹ Combès (1966), 22.

³⁰ Combès (1966), 11; in this case, I am referring to the military aspect of *imperium*, which is the official power given by the Roman government to a consul or high-ranking official that invested in them the authority to command armies on Rome's behalf.

require *imperium* to be given this title, and he did not have it, nor did he need to have already led an army or been victorious in a battle. The only pre-requisite was that he be one who could command. In this circumstance, the soldiers were not hailing Quinctius because Livy incorrectly believed him to have fit these criteria, but they were rather calling on him for a duty which they wished him to perform, and one that was encompassed by this appellation. Develin even argues that it was normal for this to happen, and that its presence here is meant to represent that, however, I think that a compelling argument regarding its normalcy would require more evidence than this alone to be convincing, regardless of how intriguing the idea may be.³¹

Combès claimed that Livy's attribution of this section, as being an imperatorial salutation, was anachronistic. He argued that Livy read a passage in his sources in which Quinctius received powers that are poorly understood in a ceremony of which the true nature escapes both us and, according to Combès, Livy. Livy then attached to this unknown ritual a title and phrasing that he could understand better, giving it the form of a Republican imperatorial salutation. The other half of Combès' argument for the section's illegitimacy was that the use of the title generally, and the ritual specifically, disappears for roughly 100 years after that mention. It is important to note though that he did concede the point that the sources for this period are so incomplete that this absence cannot be taken as indicative of there being no use of the title, or even the ritual during

³¹ Develin (1977), 112-113.

this gap.³² One weakness of Combès' argument is that he was selective regarding what aspects of this section he chose to accept as truth, believing that Quinctius was in fact forced into the role but not that he was hailed to show this, without explaining why one aspect was acceptable when another was not; however, this viewpoint is supported by other evidence found in Livy concerning a different Quinctius being chosen as dictator that will be discussed in this chapter.

In order to better understand the passage being discussed, I must first establish that Livy's section in question was not completely invented but was actually him misunderstanding something he read, and so he altered it and replaced it with something he was comfortable with, namely an imperatorial salutation. This argument is concordant with the scholarship on the topic, which suggests that he misunderstood and so misrepresented his source, rather than his description being a complete fabrication.³³ From there, I will provide a possibility for the ritual to which he is referring, which was similar, if not identical to a ritual that Aulus Gellius describes in his *Noctes Atticae*. There is a section from Aulus Gellius concerning an ancient Roman ritual that can potentially be the key to understanding what is truly at play here. Gellius describes a ritual in which Vestals, Flamen Diales, Pontifices, and augurs were 'taken' by the Pontifex Maximus; I argue that a comparison can be made because Quinctius is placed into his new role/position not of his own accord in much the same way as Gellius'

³² Combès (1966), 53-54; from my own research, I have found no mention of the title from 293-221, and no mention of the ritual from 342-221.

³³ Combès (1966), 52-54; Seager (1968), 260; Kienast (1961), 404-405; Develin (1977), 112-113.

example.³⁴ Combès argues that there is a connection between these two ceremonies because it is the same basic process that is evident in both cases, but neither we nor Livy fully understand its meaning. On account of this, Livy describes the event, replacing his source's original phrasing with a ritual that he knows, that being an imperatorial salutation. Although Combès does make this connection between Livy's mystery ritual and the one which appears in Gellius, he ceases his examination of the comparison there. He does not attempt to further analyze what the meaning of the ritual that Livy altered, or glossed, might have been. This example may be important given its clear similarities to the later salutations, which are evident even when Livy's possibly erroneous vocabulary choices are accounted for.

In a discussion of the veracity of this section, it must be noted that Livy also questions his own information, in 7.42, when he states that he is unsure whether it was T. Quinctius who was attacked and then given the leadership (literally, “seized and made their leader”) or if it was actually G. Manlius, as Livy claims that other sources attribute this whole event to Manlius.³⁵ On one hand, this makes the dating of this event more difficult and possibly would alter when the ‘first salutation’ happened, assuming that this was a true salutation. On the other hand, whether this was the case of a mistaken salutation or not, the historical person to whom this is attributed is of minimal

³⁴ Aul. Gell. 1.12.13: *“Capi” autem virgo propterea dici videtur, quia pontificis maximi manu presa ab eo parente in cuius potestate est, veluti bello capta, abducitur.*

³⁵ Livy 7.42.4: *nec in T. Quincti villam sed in aedes C. Manli nocte impetum factum eumque a coniuratis comprehensum ut dux fieret; inde ad quartum lapidem profectos loco munito consedissee.*

importance, as well as the exact date when it transpired; it is the fact that it happened at all at so early a date that is noteworthy. Regardless of whether this happened to Manlius or Quinctius, the existence of an older ritual in which someone is ‘taken’ for a position in a military context could help us understand the development of the imperial salutation.

I will return to the Gellius section shortly, but first I must discuss certain key sections in Livy’s early books the phrasing of which is reminiscent of either the imperatorial salutation, the Pontifex ‘taking’ ritual, or both. In *Ab Urbe Condita* 3.26, when Livy is discussing L. Quinctius Cincinnatus, he uses the phrase, “*dictatorem eum... consultant,*” which can be translated as, ‘they saluted him as dictator.’³⁶ This section takes place in the year 458 B.C.E., when the Sabines were attacking the Romans. In their attack, they almost made it to the walls of Rome itself, and so the Romans sent out two armies to stop them. One of these was successful, but the other, led by Minucius, was besieged in their camp by the enemy and therefore sent riders to Rome for help. In response to this, with the Romans being terrified, they sent for the other consul, but, believing that he would be insufficient for the task, they ‘unanimously,’ “*consensu omnium,*” decided that Quinctius Cincinnatus would be dictator.³⁷ When the envoys found him on his farm, they immediately hailed him as dictator and summoned him to Rome. The title *imperator* is not used here, so it is obviously not that type of salutation,

³⁶ Livy 3.26.6-12; the quote is found in section 10: *qua simul absterso pulvere ac sudore velatus processit, dictatorem eum legati gratulantes consalutant, in urbem vocant, qui terror sit in exercitu exponunt.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.26.6: *in quo cum parum praesidii videretur dictatoremque dici placeret qui rem percussam restitueret, L. Quinctius Cincinnatus consensu omnium dicitur.*

but this might be another instance of the same ritual practice as that which is apparent with Quinctius Poenus. In both cases, the individual took on that role after having it thrust upon them by others, and Livy also describes both using the same verb. This would seem to indicate, assuming that he is incorrect in using this verb and is consistently using it as a placeholder for the same ritual, that this might have been a comparable situation to that of Quinctius Poenus that Livy came across in his sources and so described it using the identical term. An important distinction to be made in this instance is that the recipient of the position only takes on the role after being ‘taken’ for it or, as Livy describes, being saluted as such. This serves as further proof that there was an ancient Roman tradition, likely from the early Republic, in which someone had a role placed upon them in much the same way as the imperial salutation of the late Republic. As such, this strengthens the argument that this was a possible precursor of the later type of salutation.³⁸

I must note that there is another example of someone having the position of dictator thrust upon them. This is present in the earlier books of Livy, when Camillus is named dictator, with the phrase “having been called dictator,” or “*dictator... dictus*” and “*dictator... diceretur.*” In this same section, a form of the title *imperator* appears, although here Livy uses the title *imperatorem* to make clear that Camillus would be the

³⁸ See Combès (1966) p. 53 for a brief discussion of this event although only in the context of Livy being mistaken in his wording regarding Quinctius Poenus’ salutation.

commander of the soldiers after his appointment.³⁹ In 390 B.C.E. while Rome was under siege by the Gauls, the Romans in Veii were attacked by the Etruscans despite the fact that the Romans had recently saved them from the Gauls. Being desperate, the Romans required a leader, and so they recalled Camillus from exile and appointed him dictator in a strictly legal order of events, as Livy points out. Not as much can be used to make a comparison between this and the Quinctius event as with the others because it does not use the same language as the other cases nor are the circumstances similar, but, at their cores, there are commonalities. In Camillus' case, the entire affair was carried out with him being absent and so the description of events is significantly different, despite this discrepancy, this is still an early Republican account of someone having a title conferred upon them and possibly being 'taken' for the role. The fact that Livy includes the statement that this was all done 'strictly legally' implies that this was a process that, although undertaken under abnormal conditions, had legal precedent. If this is then understood to be part of the same or a similar tradition as the Pontifex 'taking' ritual, then perhaps this is evidence of a legal process in which the 'taking' occurred in a military setting, not only a religious one.

Certainly, Quinctius Poenus' example seems out of place, and that might be an indication of a problematic retelling of events; however, this should be taken as neither a

³⁹ Livy 5.46.6-11; the quotations provided are from sections 10 and 11: *accepto inde senatus consulto uti comitiis curiatis revocatus de exilio iussu populi Camillus dictator extemplo diceretur militesque haberent imperatorem quem vellent, eadem degressus nuntius Veios contendit; ... lex curiata lata est dictatorque absens dictus.*

reason that Livy's statement is entirely wrong, nor that there is nothing that can be learned from it. The other instance in Livy of a Roman being saluted or, 'taken,' could represent a pre-existing ritual that was used in Rome, however common or uncommon it may have been, which was re-purposed in the case of Quinctius Poenus. His situation might be evidence of an older practice being used in conjunction with a newer title, in this case *imperator*. This is not to say that this title is new, but that this ritual is not normally used with this title. The evidence suggests that one who was given command was referred to as *imperator*, so it is possible that, by saluting him in this way, the soldiers are conferring on him this power.⁴⁰ As such, it is arguable that this is a proto-version of the later imperial salutation, while at the same time being a newer use of an older convention. If this is the case, then one can see these earlier rituals as being a conferral of power summarized by the title given, and the later salutations as being an affirmation of that same power along with a conferral of a title.

Both in Livy's retelling of the events of Quinctius Poenus' situation and in the late Republican salutation, the soldiers are the ones who bestow the title and power of an *imperator* on their commander and soon-to-be commander. This commonality should be taken as further proof that Livy described a precursor to the imperial salutation, in that they were both carried out in the same basic manner. This can be seen regardless of the title used as well, as is evident in the case of Quinctius Cincinnatus' being made dictator, and Quinctius Poenus becoming an *imperator* by means of the same practice. It

⁴⁰ Enn. *Ann.*, 565.5; Cic., *de prou cons.*, 3. 5; Caes., *Bell. Gall.*, 6.37.7; Cic., *Cat. Mai.*, 20.73; Liv., 21.3.

is possible that it was not necessary for so drastic a measure as making a Roman dictator every time, and so we see the appearance of this same act but with an *imperator*. It could also be the case that the practice changed over time and that this new version became an option, or even the norm. What Combès takes only as an anachronism, I believe can just as easily, and with the same evidence, be taken as a step in the evolution of Roman practices that may have influenced, or been an earlier iteration of, the imperial salutation.

In chapter 12 of the first book of Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae*, he describes the taking of Roman citizens for religious roles by the *Pontifex Maximus*. That chapter focuses on the laws surrounding the taking of a Vestal Virgin and their origins, discussing how old some of these laws are, and how accurate they may be. He argues that most believe that the verb 'to be taken,' '*capi*,' is used in this circumstance because the Vestal was grasped by the hand by the *pontifex maximus* and led away from her parents, as if she were taken in a war.⁴¹ Gellius states specifically that most believe this to be a practice that only applied to the Vestals, but that they are mistaken, and that it applies to other priesthoods as well, such as the *Flamen Dialis* and the augurs.⁴² He supports this statement by citing as evidence Lucius Sulla's *Autobiography*, which claims that "Publius

⁴¹ Aul. Gell. *Noctes Atticae*. 1.12.13: (For the Latin text, see footnote 17).

⁴² Ibid. 1.12.15: *Plerique autem "capi" virginem solam debere dici putant. Sed flamines quoque Diales, item pontifices et augures "capi" dicebantur.*

Cornelius, the first to receive the surname Sulla, was taken to be *flamen* of Jupiter.”⁴³

Gellius then quotes Marcus Cato, in his accusation of Servius Galba, who wrote,

“I myself at the present moment wish a thorough knowledge of pontifical law; shall I therefore be taken as chief pontiff? If I wish to understand the science of augury thoroughly, shall anyone for that reason take me as augur.”⁴⁴

There are, however, no extant sources that explicitly describe this type of ritual taking place with a non-religious position involved, except for possibly Livy. On one hand, this is not to say that Romans would have viewed a difference between a religious post and a military or political one in the same way that we do today, but there is certainly a difference here that cannot be ignored. Therefore, it could be argued that this was only done, or allowed to be carried out by the *Pontifex Maximus* and so did not apply to other positions. On the other hand, given what has been discussed previously about the phrasing of the giving of important military roles to Romans, it is possible that we can see this practice, or at least distorted versions of it being used in other non-religious spheres as well. Combès agrees with this argument, suggesting that perhaps Livy is confusing, or mislabeling the Quinctius Poenus event as a salutation when it was in fact a similar ritual to what Gellius describes in his work.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid. 1.12.16: *L. Sulla rerum gestarum libro secundo ita scripsit: "P. Cornelius, cui primum cognomen Sullae impositum est, flamen Dialis captus."*

⁴⁴ Ibid. 1.12.17: ... *"Tamen dicunt deficere voluisse. Ego me nunc volo ius pontificium optime scire; iamne ea causa pontifex capiar? si volo augurium optime tenere, ecquis me ob eam rem augurem capiat?"*

⁴⁵ Combès (1966), 53.

If we choose to accept this proposed interpretation of this section, then there is valuable information that can be taken from it, both about Livy and concerning the evolution of the salutation. This provides us with a possible precursor or proto-version of the imperatorial salutation, in that the one being ‘taken’ became ‘x’ or ‘y’ upon being taken, a distinction which will become even more important when discussing the supposed salutation of Scipio Africanus. It is the soldiers who are the ones who assign the position, and it is that conferral of the title that makes the recipient an *imperator*; they are not *imperator* by virtue of some position which they already hold, one which grants them *imperium*.

In the religious examples, the one being ‘taken’ is taken by their superior, for example, the Vestals are taken by the *Pontifex Maximus*, but in the case of Quinctius Poenus, this is done by his inferiors, by his soldiers. In the example of the dictator being ‘taken,’ the act is carried out by the Senate, and so in that case, it is one’s equals and a governing body that is superior to the individual that are performing the deed. This could mark, or at least be an example of a shift in the use of this practice. Regardless of whose decision it was to give this power to a Roman, it is a ritual that empowers the soldiery, as it puts them in control of the position and the actual conferral of it.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ There is one other instance of the term *imperator* being used in the early books of Livy. In Livy 9.46, he describes a temple being dedicated by a *pontifex maximus*. In his speech, he clarifies that this process is not the norm, and that this dedication ought normally to be carried out by an ‘*imperatorem*.’ This is believed by scholars to be a term that is meant to summarize the various different uses of the title and not to be a reference to one who was previously a recipient of an imperatorial salutation. (Combès (1966), 70; for a listing of the various uses of the term, see Combès (1966), 1-28; cf. introduction, pg. 4). There is also an

Livy chose to describe Quinctius Poenus becoming a general of an army with the phrase “*imperator... appellatus.*”⁴⁷ This phrasing was both a mistake and a deliberate word choice. Livy had encountered a ritual for which he had no exact contemporary equivalent, and so he chose to replace it with something with which he was more comfortable, an imperial salutation. But what Livy had encountered was an ancient Roman ritual, normally used for religious positions, that was being carried out for a military purpose in this case. He had come across similar rituals before, but they had previously only referred to the taking of a dictator. Although his description may not have been accurate, the similarities between the process that he was reading of and that of the Republican imperial salutation are striking, and so it is understandable why Livy would have made that connection. In fact, when taken along with other ritual trends that appear around that time, it seems that the link between these two may be more than merely Livy’s inaccurate phrasing. Gellius’ ‘taking’ ceremony fits well as an alternative for what actually happened with Quinctius Poenus and explains what the true ritual source of this may have been. But what is most important is that in both the Quinctius example and the later Republican ones it is the act of hailing or saluting the Roman that makes them *imperator*. It is not by virtue of having command that they are being called this but because of the ritual act of the title being given to them. Therefore, Quinctius

example of the word *salutationem* being used in 7.42, in the battle for which Quinctius was taken as general, the soldiers ‘make a salutation,’ although it is believed to be to one another. This is then not the case of an imperial salutation, but of a post-battle celebration among soldiers that does not seem to involve their generals.

⁴⁷ Livy, 7.39.15 (For the Latin text, see footnote 5).

Poenus was not the first to be the recipient of an imperatorial salutation, but he instead seems to have been a part of a ritual that predates but also directly relates to it. It is by these same criteria that another early example, that of Scipio Africanus, must be judged so as to ascertain whether it is in fact the first, or at least the first recorded imperatorial salutation.

Chapter 2:

Scipio Africanus

There are no significant references to possible imperatorial salutations that occur between the time of Quinctius Poenus and that of Scipio Africanus. The only possible hint of one is found in one of the Plautine plays which uses the term *imperator* to refer to an event that took place in 221 B.C.E., but he seems to be using the term to simply refer to a commanding general, not a hailed *imperator*.⁴⁸ Aside from this minor note, the next possible salutation is that of Scipio Africanus. The primary focus of this chapter is to argue against the contention of Combès and other scholars that Scipio Africanus was the first to be hailed as *imperator* in the way of the Late Republican acclamations. This may not have been an actual account of a salutation, but Scipio Africanus' attitude and deeds did have an impact on Roman society moving forward, although it is unlikely that he was the only figure to trigger changes at this time. It was a point in Roman history when there was increasing loyalty to the general rather than to Rome itself. This begins to become prominent here with a hero figure like Scipio, but this same idea develops throughout the second century with figures such as the Gracchi brothers and Marius, and into the first century, eventually resulting in colossal characters such as Sulla, Caesar, and Augustus. The development of the salutation reflects this change as it progresses, but Scipio himself does not seem to be a part of that evolution. This progression will continue to be examined in the following chapter.

⁴⁸ Combès (1966), 54; Plaut., *Poen.*, preface.4: *Audire iubet vos imperator histricus.*

There were three wars fought between the Romans and the Carthaginians, collectively known as the Punic Wars. The Romans considered the Carthaginians to be a powerful enemy and with good reason, as they were one of the great powers in the Mediterranean at the time particularly with regard to their navy. The first of these wars lasted from 264-241 B.C.E. and ended with Rome expelling Carthage from Sicily and with the signing of a treaty between the two competing states. The second war began roughly twenty years later in 218 B.C.E. when Hannibal Barca, a young Carthaginian general and son of Hamilcar, a respected general of the first Punic war, marched out from New Carthage on a war path to Rome. Hannibal was surprisingly successful in his battles, as he repeatedly defeated and pushed further through Northern Spain and Italy, through the Alps, and moved closer to Rome itself.

On the other side of the conflict was a young man named Publius Cornelius Scipio, who would come to be known as Scipio Africanus at the end of the war for his successes therein.⁴⁹ He hailed from one of the more powerful and influential patrician families in Rome with multiple generations of consuls having come before him. In 216 BCE, he held a military tribuneship and in 213 a curule aedileship. In 211, his father was killed in Spain during the war. The following year, when Rome decided to send reinforcements into Spain, supposedly no one volunteered, and so Scipio put his own name forward and was given *imperium pro consule* by the Senate and People, which meant that he had the authority to command troops, despite not being or having been a

⁴⁹ From this point on, he will be referred to most often as Scipio Africanus or sometimes simply Scipio.

praetor or consul.⁵⁰ The purpose of this assignment was to stop Hamilcar, a Carthaginian general and brother of Hannibal, from reaching Hannibal, who had already gone as far as Northern Italy, with reinforcements and drive the Carthaginians out of the Spanish peninsula. As Scipio himself says, in Livy book 26, “but now then we must move and prepare with the good graces of the gods, not to maintain our own position in Spain, but to not let the Phoenicians maintain theirs.”⁵¹ Once he had arrived in Spain in 209, Scipio assessed the spread of the Carthaginian armies and decided that his first target would be New Carthage. Although not providing an easy passage to Africa, the city had a large and significant port, considerable wealth, and supplies. Helped by what seemed like divine intervention, attributed to the favour of Neptune, Scipio managed to take the fortified city, gaining much in terms of material goods as well as boosting the morale of his troops.⁵² In 208, Scipio followed this with another important victory at Baecula over Hasdrubal himself. After the battle, upon discovering that Hasdrubal was fleeing to meet Hannibal, the young Roman general decided that it would be near impossible to stop him and so focused on his primary mission in Spain, the removal of the two remaining

⁵⁰ Livy, 26.18; Scullard (1973), p. 54, 66: Scullard argues, citing Mommsen as well, that it is unlikely that no one volunteered, and he instead puts forth that Scipio had been chosen by the Senate for this role already because of his pedigree and experience despite his age (24 at the time).

⁵¹ Livy, 26.41.6: *sed cum iam benignitate deum id paremus atque agamus, non ut ipsi maneamus in Hispania, sed ne Poeni maneant.* The translation used here is my own.

⁵² Scipio arriving in Spain, assessing the situation, planning to besiege, and laying siege to New Carthage: Livy, 26.42-47.

Carthaginian armies there. It is after this battle that many have argued an imperatorial salutation to have occurred, and it is this event that this chapter will focus on.⁵³

The dates of these two battles, New Carthage and Baecula, are problematic in the sources; Livy claims that the potential salutation occurred in the summer of 209 BCE. after the victory at Baecula, but he acknowledges that this is a debated point.⁵⁴ It is now, however, generally accepted that the victory at Baecula occurred in 208 and the victory at New Carthage was in 209. It is unclear whether this acclamation happened after the former or the latter given the confusion of dates, but it is believed that it happened after one of these two.⁵⁵ After the victory at New Carthage, Livy describes Scipio giving out thanks, praise, and rewards to his troops, but there is no mention of a salutation, despite it being the more impressive victory of the two in terms of scale.⁵⁶ On one hand, the salutation could have easily taken place at this point, it would have fit in with the process, resulting in some measure of ‘give and take’ of praise between Scipio and his soldiers. The victory at Baecula, on the other hand, was more of a gamble and arguably more important, as its goal was to stop Hasdrubal from reuniting with Hannibal, although Scipio did not succeed entirely, a fact that Combès takes as further justification for

⁵³ Scipio leaves Tarraco to battle Hasdrubal, battles him at Baecula, and convenes with the Spanish afterwards: Livy, 27.17-19.

⁵⁴ Livy, 27.7.5-6: *Carthaginis expugnationem in hunc annum contuli multis auctoribus, haud nescius quosdam esse qui anno insequenti captam tradiderint, quod mihi minus simile veri visum est annum integrum Scipionem nihil gerundo in Hispania consumpsisse.*

⁵⁵ Combès (1966), 59.

⁵⁶ Livy, 26.48.

Scipio's use of a new ritual celebration.⁵⁷ The battle at Baecula allowed Scipio to demonstrate his considerable military and tactical genius as "the tactics (he) employed... were a complete break with the traditional movements of a Roman army."⁵⁸

The events after the battle at Baecula and the following conversation went as follows. According to Livy's account, after the battle at Baecula, Hasdrubal marched along the river Tagus towards the Pyrenees. With the enemy's camp unoccupied, Scipio took possession of it and gave the loot to his soldiers. He tallied the number of captured Africans and ordered the quaestor to sell them. He then freed all of the captured Spaniards, sending them home without ransom. With this act, all the Spanish people that were around hailed him as king, and after silencing the crowd, he responded that his greatest title, "*maximum nomen*," was *imperator*, the title with which his soldiers had hailed him, "*nomen imperatoris... appellassent*." He said that the title of king was not tolerated at Rome, and if they thought being like a king was the most splendid aspect of the nature of man, then they should think so quietly and abstain from saying it aloud.⁵⁹

Polybius' account is slightly different from that of Livy. He includes that Scipio dealt with the prisoners, and the numbers in both accounts are the same. Where the two accounts differ is when he reports that Scipio had been called king before by the freed

⁵⁷ Combès (1966), 59-60; Hasdrubal escaping: Livy, 27.19.1.

⁵⁸ Scullard (1969), 73.

⁵⁹ Livy, 27.19.1-5; Scipio's speech is in 27.19.4-5: *tum Scipio silentio per praeconem facto sibi maximum nomen imperatoris esse dixit, quo se milites sui appellassent; regium nomen alibi magnum, Romae intolerabile esse. regalem animum in se esse, si id in hominis ingenio amplissimum ducerent, tacite iudicarent; vocis usurpatione abstinerent.*

Spanish but had ignored it up until then. It was only when they came together and called him king as a collective that he chose to call a meeting with the Spaniards. It was at this gathering that he addressed this issue; he told the assembled people that he appreciated the sentiment, but that he had no desire to be a ‘king’ nor to be called one, and he bade them call him ‘general’ instead, “στρατηγὸν αὐτὸν προσφωνεῖν.”⁶⁰ I will continue to examine these two sections shortly, but first, I must address the points of view and potential bias of the authors in question.

Scipio went on to many victories eventually defeating Hannibal at the famous battle of Zama, which would become the defining conflict of his career. In doing so, Scipio ended the Second Punic War and was given the name Africanus to commemorate his deeds. I include events after those that will be central to this chapter because the knowledge of them would have been foremost in the mind of any ancient historian writing about the life of Scipio Africanus. It is doubtful that they could have or would have distanced themselves from the later stories of Scipio’s deeds when recounting his earlier exploits. These heroic and, by the time of Livy, semi-mythical achievements would have defined and coloured any description that was given of the general and his life. This bias is apparent when reading either of the two primary sources for the supposed salutation. In Livy’s account, he claims that, after refusing the offer from the Spaniards of kingship, even the barbarians were in awe of Scipio’s magnanimity,

⁶⁰ Polybius, 10.40.1-5; Scipio’s response is in 10.40.5: διὸ καὶ συναθροίσας τοὺς Ἰβήρας βασιλικὸς μὲν ἔφη βούλεσθαι καὶ λέγεσθαι παρὰ πᾶσι καὶ ταῖς ἀληθείαις ὑπάρχειν, βασιλεύς γε μὴν οὐτ’ εἶναι θέλειν οὔτε λέγεσθαι παρ’ οὐδενί. ταῦτα δ’ εἰπὼν παρήγγειλε στρατηγὸν αὐτὸν προσφωνεῖν.

“*magnitudinem animi*,” amazed that he should refuse a title that would astound any other mortal.⁶¹ This entering the mind of the on-lookers provides Livy with an outlet to demonstrate Scipio Africanus’ remarkable and impressive nature, but this practice is also inherently untrustworthy because Livy is pretending to know what a group of ‘barbarians’ were thinking 200 years prior to his writing. It is in this way that Livy makes his bias clear, and it is for this reason that those studying this section must be cautious of drawing too much from it. The Romans had a long-standing distaste for the idea of having a king, as Scipio demonstrates with his response. It is this contrast that Livy is attempting to focus on with this section. He is demonstrating that Scipio is an *imperator* first, not a king. This is meant to imply that he considers being a Roman to be important above all else, and it is those Roman virtues, often summarized as *Romanitas*, that Livy is bringing to the fore here.

Polybius’ account of this event is more blatant in its hero-worshipping portrayal, although he does not attempt to hide this as Livy does. He openly states that this is a demonstration of Scipio’s good character, an aspect of his nature that becomes even more apparent in his later life.⁶² Nearly half of this chapter of Polybius’ work is focused on how great of a person Scipio Africanus became and always had been. There is an argument to be made for Polybius’ accuracy despite his obvious leanings though. We are

⁶¹ Livy, 27.19.6: *sensere etiam barbari magnitudinem animi, cuius miraculo nominis alii mortales stuperent, id ex tam alto fastigio aspernantis.*

⁶² Polybius, 10.40.7: *πολὸν δὲ μᾶλλον ἂν τις θαυμάσειε τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς περὶ τὸν ἄνδρα μεγαλοψυχίας, βλέψας εἰς τοὺς ἐσχάτους τοῦ βίου καιροῦς.*

told that Scipio wrote a letter to the king of Macedon, Philip V, in 190, that outlined his operations in Spain, a letter which was never published but that Polybius saw.⁶³

There are two important factors to consider that must be addressed immediately as they illuminate problems with Scipio's speech being a reference to a salutation. First, neither Livy nor Polybius give any indication of what he may have been hailed for, if he was at all. Both sources only mention Scipio wanting to be called *imperator* in reference to his refusal of kingship. This could be as a result of multiple things, whether it was a situation akin to that of Quinctius Poenus, and Scipio was accepted by the soldiers as their leader in some archaic ritual and so became *imperator*, or they called him that regularly because it was his title or it was tradition to do so. Second, if he was given a salutation, then it was not explicitly his being hailed that made him an *imperator*, he was already an *imperator* when he was hailed, he held no magistracy, and so he was hailed by his only possible title, which was specifically meant to be in contrast to 'king' in this speech. He did, however, choose to embrace this title, whether or not this act accompanied it, which only demonstrates that he wished those dealing with him or hearing of him to be mindful of his past deeds and virtue.

The majority of the arguments based on these sections are concerning the wording used. The phrasing in Livy's account would lead one to believe that he is referring to a salutation that had already occurred, "*nomen imperatoris... appellassent.*"⁶⁴ He uses the

⁶³ Scullard (1969), 11.

⁶⁴ Livy, 27.19.4.

technical wording for an imperial salutation, which is ‘*imperator appellari*.’⁶⁵ With that being said though, Livy could be making the same mistake here as he made with Quinctius, as he uses the ‘technical phrasing’ there as well, “*imperator... appellatus*.”⁶⁶ Quinctius’ ‘salutation’ has already been thoroughly addressed, and it has been shown that it was not what it seemed to be but was likely a precursor to the late Republican acclamation. It is possible that Livy was making the same mistake here again. He may have been misrepresenting the actual events either on purpose, or because he did not understand either them or his source; however, the circumstances of this are significantly different from Quinctius’ example. The first step to ascertaining the truth of the matter is to see if any other sources corroborate Livy’s phrasing. Polybius reports something similar, although not with the exact same wording.⁶⁷ As was mentioned previously, Scipio tells those assembled to call him ‘general’ after refusing to be called king, but Polybius uses the word στρατηγός instead of αὐτοχράτωρ, which is the direct Greek equivalent of *imperator*, and he does not say anything that would imply he was hailed as such.⁶⁸

The Greek term αὐτοχράτωρ, as an equivalent to the term *imperator*, appears for the first time referring to Sulla. There are earlier translations of the title *imperator* into Greek, one that calls M. Minucius Rufus by that title, and uses the Greek term τόν

⁶⁵ Combès (1966), 55.

⁶⁶ Livy, 7.39.15.

⁶⁷ Polybius, 10.40.5.

⁶⁸ Combès (1966), 55-56; Aymard, A (1954), 121-128.

Ῥωμαίων, which means consul. There is another that appears in a document from 82 that transliterates the word, instead of translating it, using the term Ἰμπεράτορα to refer to L. Licinius Murena.⁶⁹ The Greek term αὐτοχράτωρ is old, predating Scipio Africanus, and has certain connotations, based on its usage by Classical Greek authors such as Demosthenes and Xenophon. Xenophon uses it to describe the exceptional power given him over other officers, and Demosthenes chooses this term to describe Philip of Macedon's superiority and his uniquely powerful position in Greece in the mid-300s.⁷⁰ On account of how late this translation began to be used, Combès argued that Polybius' choice of vocabulary cannot serve as justification for the dismissal of this event being a true salutation, and Scullard agrees that Polybius undoubtedly was referring to Scipio's being an *imperator*.⁷¹

I argue that the focus that has been placed on Polybius' use of the term στρατηγός instead of αὐτοχράτωρ is misplaced, and that the attention concerning word choice ought to be shifted to Livy. It must be considered that Livy was using *imperator* for this section, likely in part because that is what his source used, but also because that is the best word for the situation. It may have been included because of its Late Republican connotations, in that Livy was trying to have his readers think of a salutation when they read this and so equate the two. He may have also included it because Scipio and Livy used the ancient

⁶⁹ Combès (1966), 111; M. Minucius Rufus: C.I.L., I², 692: *M. Minucium Q.f. Rufum imperatorem*.

Μαρκόν Μι]νυκίον Κο[ίντου υἱόν Ῥοῦφον ὕπα] τον Ῥωμαίω[v...; L. Licinius Murena: I.G., 5, 1, 1454: Λεύκ[ιο]ν Λικίνιον.. Μουρήναν Ἰμπεράτορα...

⁷⁰ Combès (1966), 112; Xen., *Anab.*, 6.1.21; Dem., *Corona*, 235.

⁷¹ Combès (1966), 56; Scullard (1969), 76.

equivalent for ‘general’ as just that, him being a general, and not in reference to a post-victory salutation. Frankly, there is no other word that could have been used and still been functional in the context. It is true, a military leader was also sometimes referred to as *dux*.⁷² That is problematic though, because *dux* only became officially used for the title of the head of the army later in the Empire. In the Republic, the leader of the army would have likely been a *praetor* and referred to as such.⁷³ Therefore, at this point, neither *dux* nor *imperator* were official titles given to military leaders, but rather the noun forms of verbs meant to signify a leader.⁷⁴ In Scipio’s case, by virtue of the power granted to him, he was a proconsul, but he had not held a consulship prior to that. But in this section Scipio and Livy are trying to emphasize his position as a Roman leader, who it referred to as such by his troops. The goal of this phrasing was not to demonstrate where Scipio stood in the Roman hierarchy, particularly because he was addressing non-Romans, but to bring attention to his *Romanitas* and his rapport with his troops.

It is also reasonable to accept that Scipio would have called himself *imperator* in this speech. Assuming there is some degree of accuracy to the speeches that Livy reports, there is another instance in an earlier chapter prior to this, at which point there was no chance for a salutation to have occurred. In book 26, arriving at the mouth of the Ebro,

⁷² Cic., *p. Mur.*, 18.38: *hoc duce castra cepimus, signa contulimus.*

⁷³ Combès (1966), 11-12; ‘praetor’ was the proper term to address a commander according to Servius in his commentary of Aeneid 8. 678: *nam Antonius consulare sibi tantum detinuit imperium, in quo sola est potestas iubendi. ille enim ducit exercitum qui habet in potestate castra praetoria*; Cicero discusses this as well in Cic., *Verr.*, 2.1.14.36: *veteres... omnem magistratum, cui pareret exercitus, praetorem appellaverunt*; cf. Introduction, p. 4-5.

⁷⁴ Combès (1966), 12.

before beginning the assault on New Carthage, Scipio gives a long-winded and rousing speech to his troops regarding their obligations to one another, him and the troops, and reassuring them of his merit and ability. In the speech, Scipio addresses the veterans directly, telling them that in the battle they will think him to be his father either reborn or come back to life in the form of his son. He refers to both himself and his father here, in one phrase, as “*imperatorem Scipionem*” when he attempts to alleviate their concerns regarding his ability.⁷⁵ The wording of the line implies that it would be the soldiers who are using the title “*imperatorem*” to describe them and so it is understood that they would call him by that. With that being considered, it is not strange that Scipio would do so again after Baecula, referring to himself as *imperator* and implying that the soldiers would or did call him that.

Various scholars have differing opinions on this topic. Kienast argues that Polybius was not trying to explain to his readers this ceremony, which they likely would not have understood or encountered, but is just retelling the events, and the term he uses is in many ways interchangeable with ἀποχράτωρ, and so, in line with Combès, it ought not to be taken as proof that the salutation did not occur. He believes that Livy is trying to demonstrate the effect and importance of Scipio’s refusal, and that is why he chose that specific wording, as it would be more impactful for his audience. He also argued that it was included to appease Augustus, as it linked the earlier usage of the title with its

⁷⁵ Livy, 26.41.25: *ita ingenii, fidei virtutisque effigiem vobis reddam, ut — revixisse aut renatum sibi quisque Scipionem imperatorem dicat.*

imperial meaning, and so was not a true salutation.⁷⁶ I do not think that either are trying to show their readers a particular ritual, although Livy might be trying to draw your attention to it with his word choice, but that the goal of both of their writings on this is to show Scipio's magnanimity in refusing. Aymard argues, also in agreement with Combès, that this is the first time that a source provides an example of a Roman being hailed as *imperator* by their troops for being a victorious general, and he does so based on Livy's word choice.⁷⁷ Neither of these scholars, however, address the fact that in an imperial salutation the general becomes an *imperator* when he is hailed, which does not seem to be the case here. Scullard takes a comparatively neutral stance on the topic, stating that it is possible that this was the first case of an imperial salutation, and if so then this is an important event, but he discusses its validity briefly and does not give a firm indication of his siding with either camp. He does make an important observation though, noting that even if this salutation is false, that it was "symbolically true, since he was the first general to enjoy so long and close a relationship with his army."⁷⁸ This is a connection that is pivotal to the Late Republican concept of being an *imperator*.

Develin believes that this appellation was not noteworthy. "It was nothing out of the ordinary for a general to be saluted as *imperator*."⁷⁹ Develin argues that this was how generals were saluted and met by their troops, and not originally intended to be used as

⁷⁶ Kienast (1957), 407-408.

⁷⁷ Aymard (1954), 124.

⁷⁸ Scullard (1969), 81.

⁷⁹ Develin (1977), 113.

they were in the Late Republic, therefore Scipio was not the first. He finds it particularly damning that there is no evidence in the sources of this being the first imperatorial salutation, as he argues that if it were, “we should have heard of it.”⁸⁰ Develin’s primary issue is that the arguments that are made in support of Scipio having been acclaimed are not sufficiently substantiated and that the “evidence is far from conclusive.”⁸¹ This is a valid concern, as the only evidence of a salutation is Livy’s choice of verb for this particular phrase, something which is not echoed in Polybius and is not apparent in the epigraphic source that has been cited as evidence, which will be discussed next. There is no explicit description of the actual acclamation or its process, which is perplexing by its absence. Combès admits that Livy provides little to no detail of the actual acclamation, and so understanding its scope is difficult.⁸² Develin also argues that the meaning and usage of the term ἀτοκράτωρ has been misrepresented by scholars. Citing evidence from Polybius, he explains that the title was also used to signify one who had the power of *imperium*, and not necessarily a general who received a salutation.⁸³ This specific argument is important to consider when dealing with counter-arguments that are so particular and obsessive about the exact terminology used; however, it does not strengthen the argument against Scipio’s salutation being legitimate specifically as it pertains to a term that is not present in Polybius’ account.

⁸⁰ Develin (1977), 113.

⁸¹ Develin (1977), 110.

⁸² Combès (1966), 60.

⁸³ Polybius 6.12.5: καὶ μὴν περὶ πολέμου κατασκευῆς καὶ καθόλου τῆς ἐν ὑπαίθροις οἰκονομίας σχεδὸν ἀτοκράτορα τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσι.; Develin (1977), 111.

There are other sources than literary that are used to justify the argument in favour of the salutation. Scipio being called *imperator* is confirmed by an inscription from Saguntum.⁸⁴ It is thought to have been re-inscribed at the end of the Augustan or during the Tiberian era, although it is believed to be originally from early Augustan or possibly Ciceronian time.⁸⁵ This inscription could be referring to Scipio Africanus, or his father, as it is ambiguous. It is known that before he was consul, when he was first sent out by Rome, Scipio Africanus was not given a formal position but instead *imperium pro consule*. Given the fact that the inscription specifically states *imperator* next to consul, this could be evidence that it was in fact Scipio Africanus and not his father, because it was meant to represent that unique power that was given to him, and which has no more appropriate designation than *imperator*. Although *imperium pro consule* would normally grant the title of proconsul, Scipio's command was exceptional as he had not held a consulship prior to being given proconsular *imperium*. Given the unique circumstances, the simple title of *imperator* would have conveyed his command unburdened by the confusion of its contradiction. This inscription is not compelling evidence that a salutation occurred, as it could be trying to take into account and memorialize those great deeds that he accomplished before he had become consul, rather than it being evidence of a salutation. According to Combès, it is rare to find the titles *imperator* and *consul* together on an inscription in this manner before the time of the second triumvirate, and so its inclusion here is odd and noteworthy; however, this can also be explained by it being

⁸⁴ C.I.L., II²/14, 327 = II, 3836: *P. Scipioni Cos. Imp. ob restitutam Saguntum ex S.C. bello Punico secundo*.

⁸⁵ Combès (1966), 57.

an attempt to commemorate his deeds before he was a magistrate and focus on the exceptional command.⁸⁶ Being given significant military authority prior to holding a magistracy was rare, if not unheard of at this point in Rome's history, and this could have been included to show that distinction.⁸⁷ The inscription also says nothing of Scipio being hailed as an *imperator*, it only calls him by that title, which, albeit uncommon, is not unheard of, a counter-argument which Combès conveniently provides with the inclusion of other inscriptions from around that time that include this title.⁸⁸ As such, although this does affirm that Scipio had been called *imperator*, that was never the issue of contention, and so this evidence is not convincing.

As was discussed at length in the previous chapter, Livy's reliability is a consistent issue. Therefore, it is necessary to first ascertain whether the Scipio section is itself factual, not solely with regard to the salutation itself. First, there is attestation by another source, the inscription, which has now been discussed. Second, Combès argues that the technical language used in 28.39.18, which refers to an embassy arriving from Saguntum to thank Rome for what their generals, in particular Scipio, had done, is evidence of its authenticity. He argues this based on the fact that it resembles language found in Cicero concerning the approval of deeds carried out by promagistrates, with both sources using some variation of "*voluntate senatus*."⁸⁹ This argument is more

⁸⁶ Combès (1966), 58-59.

⁸⁷ Develin (1977), 113; Scullard (1973), 54, 66.

⁸⁸ See footnotes 46-48 for inscriptions.

⁸⁹ Livy, 28.39.18: *suos imperatores recte et ordine et ex voluntate senatus fecisse, quod Saguntum restituerint*; Cic., *Phil.*, 5.15.41: *summa senatus populi Romani voluntate*.

tenuous than the other, and complicates the first evidence as well. The embassy thanks two P. Scipiones, Scipio Africanus' father and himself; however, the inscription does not make it clear which one of the two is being referred to, and it is possible that it was either. Particularly because this is a later inscription, it is likely that it referred to Scipio Africanus as he had far overshadowed his father in fame and so there would have been no question as to which of the two it referred. It should also be noted that the word “*imperatores*” is used here, but this is unquestionably referring to their being generals, not possible saluted victors.

It is important to consider why Scipio chose to focus on this title in his speeches, using it more than once to refer to himself. The title itself added nothing officially and only perhaps improved how Scipio was viewed by his own followers.⁹⁰ G. de Sanctis argued that it was normal for the troops to call their leader ‘*imperator*’ in the camp, regardless of whether it was their official title; thus, Scipio merely embraced the title because he was in a unique position from having skipped the *cursus honorum*, and so it was his only title granted by virtue of him having *imperium*.⁹¹ Develin also thinks this was the case, that it is just the way in which the soldiers address their general; however, there is no proof that this was a practice that was ever used or even common, aside from this example.⁹²

⁹⁰ Combès (1966), 60.

⁹¹ G. de Sanctis (1936), 58; Kienast agrees: Kienast (1954), 408.

⁹² Develin (1977), 113; Combès (1966), 60.

Combès argued that Scipio ‘certainly’ did not do this to gain something from the Senate, which normally provides any sort of reward or recompense to generals. In fact, despite ordering a day of thanks to honour Scipio’s conquering of New Carthage in 209, in 206, the Senate refused him a triumph on the grounds that he could not receive one without being a magistrate.⁹³ A similar situation can be seen with Pompey when he was hailed as *imperator* in 81 and called as such by Sulla in 83 and yet refused a triumph by the Senate in 80. He was not permitted to have a triumph until 79 when the political situation at Rome had changed, even though it celebrated those same past victories.⁹⁴ These events make clear that the title of *imperator*, during the Republican period at least, did not carry significant weight with the Senate. He also argued, based on points brought up by Aymard and Kienast, that Scipio’s choice to focus on this title could have been a reference to the Hellenistic kings, who acted the same as *imperatores* being hailed by their soldier; however, even he admits that there is no evidence to support this, only similar practices with no obvious link. He also makes a comparison between the imperatorial salutation and that received by a praetor when they are leaving to go to their province, positing that Scipio was attempting to take this and alter it for his purposes here.⁹⁵ This is believable, given the fact that Scipio held no magistracy and so would then

⁹³ The Senate ordering a day of thanks: Livy, 27.7.4: *senatus ob res feliciter a P. Scipione gestas supplicationem in unum diem decrevit*; the refusal: Livy, 28.38.4: *quia neminem ad eam diem triumphasse, qui sine magistratu res gessisset, constabat*.

⁹⁴ Sulla and Pompey in 83: Plutarch, *Crass.*, 6.5; *imperator* in 81: Plutarch, *Pomp.*, 12.2; the refusal: Plutarch, *Pomp.*, 14.3-4.

⁹⁵ Combès, (1966), 34-35, 64.

possibly reinvent another ritual that was related to a magistrate to improve his image, but this argument does still rely on there having been a salutation in the first place, for which the evidence is altogether lacking. Finally, Combès argues that Scipio chose to focus on this title because it was an epithet of Jupiter, which would have been known by his troops.⁹⁶ This is a compelling point for why Scipio would have attached as much importance to the title as he did and is further justification for his repeated usage of it and its appearance on the inscription. It also could explain in part the continued use of the term by other Roman generals that we see on the other inscriptions discussed.

I disagree with the contention that Scipio received a salutation after the battle at Baecula at its base level, but also with some of the arguments that are made regarding the salutation itself. One that I find particularly problematic is that Combès assumes that a salutation happened before Scipio's refusal of kingship, and that is what Scipio is referring to when he answers the Spaniards. The tone of Combès' discussion implies that he thought Scipio's salutation was a result of a plan or decision made by Scipio himself, and not something done by the soldiers, whether it was planned by them or carried out at the spur of the moment.⁹⁷ I find this difficult to believe because it would imply either him prepping his troops to do this beforehand or that it was reported differently than it happened. Both of these are possible, but neither of these are necessary explanations given the events in question. I see no reason to look for a hand behind the scenes when one is not required to explain what is happening. There does not need to be a prime

⁹⁶ Combès, (1966), 66-68.

⁹⁷ Combès (1966), 60-68

mover in the form of Scipio Africanus in order for a salutation to have taken place. It is confusing because he does this despite arguing later that a salutation did not come from the general, although he does state that it could be influenced and controlled by the general.⁹⁸ But, as I mentioned, this is not required in order for the salutation to have occurred, as it could have been spontaneous on the part of the soldiers as they reacted to the victory.

I argue that Scipio did not orchestrate the salutation; if there was a salutation, it was not a planned event on his part, at least. But Scipio did take advantage of the opportunity provided him and embraced the title that had been bestowed on him by virtue of his position. As Combès argued, Scipio certainly did not do this in order to gain favour, recognition, or power from the Senate, given that they did not accord the title any special privilege. He instead followed through with it in order to curry favour with the troops, and conceivably, in so doing, the general populace. Scipio, although not necessarily the source of the title, was intelligent and opportunistic enough to capitalize on the situation. After this, there are examples of others using the title in inscriptions that appear. I argue that this happened because of Scipio's decision to embrace this title, and so others imitated this focus on being an *imperator* as it reminded those encountering them of the positive Roman virtues that Scipio had demonstrated and so linked them to so great a man in both deed and title. One example of this is L. Aemilius Paullus whose uses of this title are found in inscriptions from 189 in Spain and 167 at Delphi, and, in Spain

⁹⁸ Combès (1966), 74-75.

after freeing slaves, he deliberately qualifies his decision with the statement that whatever decisions he makes are worthless unless they are backed by the Senate and the people.⁹⁹ Combès argues that this further illustrates the degree to which the Senate disregarded the words of an *imperator*, which may be true as L. Aemilius Paullus would only attain the consulship some years later; however, it could also have been him clearly subordinating himself to the Senate, and in so doing demonstrating his *Romanitas*, echoing the deeds of Scipio in Spain. It is also possible that he included this by necessity because at the time he did not hold a significant enough political position to merit his words and offer. His inscription at Delphi, which reads, “General Lucius Aemilius, son of Lucius, seized (this place) from the Persian king and the Macedonians,” is different though, because at that point Aemilius Paullus held the consulship.¹⁰⁰ The emphasis here could also have been a reference to Scipio. It is possible that this is evidence of a Roman general being hailed as *imperator* because this is on a monument commemorating a victory, at a time when he already held the consulship. There could also be a link to the Hellenistic practice of hailing a victorious βασιλεύς with their title, particularly because the inscription is found in Greece. Although these connections are intriguing, there is still no evidence of the ritual itself having taken place. There is also a third acclamation that is attributed to L.

⁹⁹ C.I.L., I², 2, 614: *L. Aemilius L. f. imperator decrevit ut ei qui Hastensium serui in turri Lascutana habitarent leiberei essent, agrum oppidumque, quod ea tempestate possedisent, item possidere habereque iousit dum populus senatusque Romanus vellet.*

¹⁰⁰ C.I.L., I², 2, 622: *L. Aemilius L. f. imperator de rege Perse Mecedonibusque cepet.*

Aemilius Paullus, which is found on a coin.¹⁰¹ These possible salutations will be further elaborated in the next chapter, as they relate to second century developments, because I believe they are indicative of Aemilius Paullus' importance in the development of the ritual.

There is also an inscription by L. Mummius that includes the phrase “*imperator dedicat*.”¹⁰² This may again be a general attempting to be related to Scipio Africanus, but, as Combès addresses, the “*imperator dedicat*” addition appears to have been added after, and so it is difficult to suggest that the two may have been related. Despite potentially imitating Scipio's focus on the title of *imperator*, there is little to suggest that L. Mummius was hailed by their troops. As such, although Scipio may very well have inspired imitators, if he was saluted, then his situation appears to not have started a trend of salutations.

Scipio Africanus' speech is likely not referring to the first imperatorial salutation, in fact, it is likely not even an imperatorial salutation at all, at least in how that would later be understood; however, this may represent another step on the ladder from earlier traditions and rituals to the Late Republican salutation that has become so recognizable, in the same way as Quinctius Poenus' salutation may have represented an early step in this development. In this way, it is both important for understanding the development of the ritual but also in understanding the development of Roman society, particularly with

¹⁰¹ Combès (1966), 68-69, 453; the third attested salutation of Aemilius Paullus will be discussed briefly in the following chapter.

¹⁰² C.I.L. I², 2, 630: [L. Mummius] L. f. Imp. [ded. Cor]intho capta [vico Ital]icensi.

reference to the place the soldiers had in it, and also how the soldiers' attitudes and practices were reflective of the general trends in Roman society at this time.

By looking at both the Scipio salutation and the Quinctius salutation in comparison, one must question Livy's reliability. Although I do not question his general facts, I will leave that to others, I do question the specifics that he chooses to include. These two examples demonstrate a distinct lack of care when dealing with his historical writing and a nonchalance with regard to accuracy. Bias is unquestionably present in most, if not all works by ancient authors, and that would have certainly skewed the work that they produced; however, it would seem to be necessary to examine the accounts in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* cautiously, remaining aware of the possible problems both in terms of bias and inaccuracy. This may have been spurred on by a desire to appease Augustus, as Kienast has argued, or may have been a result of the scope of his task.¹⁰³ Regardless of the cause, the result is one that includes specific wording that is included for impact but is deliberately misleading in the case of Scipio, or a bastardization of a source and a ritual that he did not understand in the case of Quinctius. There is no question that he knew that the wording he used was that of an imperial salutation, and so there can be no plea of ignorance.

Combès understood that if this salutation truly occurred, it was only a beginning and that it was not yet a trend, but he believed that because of this it did grow into one; I agree with part of this argument. It is possible that the focus on and acceptance of this

¹⁰³ Kienast (1954), 407-408; see footnote 29 and the related section.

title by so great a Roman figure led to its later widespread use, but the sources do not read as if Scipio had been saluted by his troops as *imperator*, but rather that Scipio was called that by his troops as a term of address, and so he chose to continue using that term.¹⁰⁴ Despite my disagreements with Combès, I acknowledge that he did address the important developments that transpired in this era of Roman history that are apparent when studying Scipio Africanus. This possible salutation came at a time of change in the military, as it was no longer just a magistrate ‘within the framework of institutions’ who was seen as being responsible for a victory; it then became about an individual whose troops had recognized his personal achievement.¹⁰⁵ Combès discusses the changes that were transpiring in Rome that were resulting in a wider spread of military and political power but more focus on individuals and less trust in auspices.¹⁰⁶ This trend became increasingly important point moving into the second century, as this shift is what resulted in the drastically increased popularity and frequency of imperatorial salutations, and then eventually into the Empire itself. This progression is a by-product of the same social and political changes that resulted in the Republic becoming an Empire, of it going from a collective government that focused on collegiality to a society and government that was increasingly concerned with the individual, particularly those of the elite, as they steadily grew in power and titles. Understanding this progression will be the focus of the next chapter, which will concern itself with the developments in the second century in Rome,

¹⁰⁴ Combès (1966), 71-72.

¹⁰⁵ Combès (1966), 71-72.

¹⁰⁶ Combès (1966), 71-72.

and how they can be seen reflected in the growth and popularity of the imperial salutation.

Chapter 3:

Understanding the Second Century Salutations: Trends and Causes

It is known that the Late Republican imperial salutation came together from its disparate parts either at the end of the third century, as addressed in the previous chapter, or early in the second century, as will be addressed here. The group of titles that are attested from the first and second century BCE often includes “*imperator*” to denote a victorious general who was spontaneously acclaimed on the battle field.¹⁰⁷ In order to understand the development of the salutation, its history and influences, I will begin this chapter with the list of known second century salutations, while examining the trends within that list, arguing for which are noteworthy and why, and providing an alternative to the theory that Scipio Africanus was the first to be hailed as *imperator*. A discussion will follow regarding the military, political, and socio-economic situation for the Roman Republic in the second century, with a focus on the power of the people, the importance of the individual, and the Marian reforms, with arguments as to how these changes relate to the development of the imperial salutation. As a whole, this chapter will be examining the development and growth of the imperial salutation ritual, and arguing for why and how its frequency and popularity was a reflection of the changing situation at Rome.

¹⁰⁷ Combès (1966), 73.

Section 1:

The Salutations

Throughout the second century, the number of salutations slowly increased. There were few in the first half of the century, three of which are possibly for one person, and two of those supposedly led to triumphs. This connection will be discussed, as this may be evidence of the beginning of the link between the imperial salutation and the triumph. The second half of the century saw an increase in the number, but also a change in the spread of the salutation as those that we know of are each attributed to a different individual.

Regardless of who began the trend of imperial salutations, whether it was Scipio or not, there was an increasing number of salutations starting in the second century BCE and moving into the first. Despite this, we have little information from our sources regarding the attribution and the use of this title. Cicero mentions three times that he received an imperial salutation at Cilicia; however, he does not provide any information concerning the circumstances or the details of the ceremony.¹⁰⁸ With that being considered, those salutations provided here are largely from epigraphical sources that do not provide information on the ritual itself, but rather provide evidence that a salutation occurred.

The first salutation attested in the second century, as was discussed in the previous chapter, was for L. Aemilius Paullus, which he received in Spain in 189 BCE.

¹⁰⁸ Combès (1966), 73; Cic., *ad Fam.*, 2.10.3: *ita victoria iusta imperator appellatus apud Isum*; 3.9.4: *ut appellatus imperator sim*; *ad Att.*, 5.20.3: *imperatores appellati sumus*.

The second and third were also for him; one that transpired in 181, which is attested on a surviving coin, and the other, which was also discussed in the previous chapter, that is believed to have occurred in 168.¹⁰⁹ Some or all of these resulted in triumphs; however, there is some uncertainty as to how many times he was awarded a triumph. There is an inscription, which is his *elogium*, that attributes three triumphs to him; however, Degrassi, with whom Combès agrees, argued that Aemilius Paullus did not receive more than two triumphs.¹¹⁰ It is important to take away from this that even at this early stage of the imperial salutation, there seems to have been a link between receiving a triumph and being acclaimed as *imperator* by one's troops. This connection would grow firmer as time went on, and saluted generals came to expect that one would follow the other, although, as Beard has demonstrated, there was no guarantee that a general would receive a triumph if they had been saluted by their troops.

I will take this opportunity to digress briefly, and explain the connection between the triumph and the imperial salutation and the significance of it. To summarize and simplify, a triumph was a parade-like procession, awarded by the Senate, that would occur at Rome in order to celebrate the achievements of a general. During the ceremony, the general would wear a particular set of clothing, and parade through the city with an abundance of wealth, accompanied by soldiers and officers, and with important prisoners

¹⁰⁹ Sydenham, 926: the coin reads *TER*. Because it has been established by scholars that Aemilius Paullus was only a *triumphator* twice, this is likely a reference to his being hailed as *imperator* three times. (see next footnote).

¹¹⁰ Combès (1966), 453; *Inscriptones Italiae*, 13, 3, n.71.

of war in chains.¹¹¹ Cicero was hailed as *imperator* by his troops in or around BCE 51, an occurrence that Beard describes as being often seen as a first step towards being awarded a triumph. Beard argues that it was important for the Roman aristocracy to receive triumphs, and so they would try to achieve it through whatever means necessary.¹¹² Albeit a contrary example, this desire for a triumph, and expectation to receive one after having been saluted as *imperator*, may be best demonstrated by Cicero's account of L. Calpurnius Piso. According to Cicero's prosecution, Piso was hailed as *imperator* by his troops, but he did not seek a triumph despite this. Following this, Cicero ridicules Piso for that refusal in a harsh manner.¹¹³ Cicero argued that the desire for a triumph is an important part of Roman life, that it was "the single most approved driving force in a man's career."¹¹⁴ He maintained that Piso was displaying this weakness and lack of ambition based on the fact that he had received an imperatorial salutation but not followed through as he should have.

The connection between the triumph and the hailing of a general as *imperator* put power in the hands of the soldiers, as it could be a powerful motivating step for an aristocrat who wished to receive a triumph, as was the case with Cicero and Cilicia. There was some direct benefit and incentive for the soldiers to want their general to

¹¹¹ While parodying Piso's refusal, which will be discussed shortly, Cicero provides some insight into the Republican triumphal procession: Cicero, *in Pisonem*, 60: *quid tandem habet iste currus, quid vinciti ante currum duces, quid simulacra oppidorum, quid aurum, quid argentum, quid legati in equis et tribuni, quid clamor militum, quid tota illa pompa?*

¹¹² Beard (2007), 187-188.

¹¹³ Beard (2007), 216-217.

¹¹⁴ Beard (2007), 217; Cicero, *In Pisonem*, 56, 60.

receive a triumph, aside from showing support for their general, that would then push them to salute their leader as *imperator*. Along with the general himself and his officers, the soldiers would have received a monetary bonus in the event of a triumph. They seemed to have been aware of this fact, and of the importance of the triumph to aristocrats, as, in Pompey's case, they are reputed to have threatened to mutiny or steal from the wealth on display if their requisite bonus were not increased.¹¹⁵ By that right, they would have been aware that their salutation could likely result in a triumph and so follow through with it with remuneration as part of their goal. This both explains a possible reason for some of the imperatorial salutations that occurred but also demonstrates the power and influence of the soldiery over the aristocrats, as exercised by their control over the doling out of salutations.

Although being hailed as *imperator* certainly helped in receiving a triumph, it was not a necessity. Regardless, it was certainly a strong motivating factor, and it is known that aristocrats considered it to be an important step towards the triumph to come. There is evidence of a Roman commander, Metellus Pius, who was a general in Spain during the 70s BCE, wearing his triumphal garb at dinners after having been hailed as *imperator* in anticipation of receiving a triumph.¹¹⁶ This lends credence to the argument that the imperatorial salutation was an influential ritual during the Republican era. I distinguish

¹¹⁵ Beard (2007), 243; Beard provides this example but does not provide the ancient source from which it came.

¹¹⁶ Beard (2007), 273; Valerius Maximus, 9.1.5: *cum palmata ueste conuiuia celebrabat demissasque lacunaribus aureas coronas uelut caelesti capite recipiebat?* ('*palmate veste*' is the triumphant garb).

which era I am referring to because this expectation of a triumph that came from an imperatorial salutation changed over time.

There remains one more salutation to discuss before I examine those of the second half of the second century BCE and provide a theory on the first imperatorial salutation. In 155, Publius Scipio Nasica refused both an imperatorial salutation from his troops and a triumph offered him by the Senate.¹¹⁷ Despite his refusal, this example demonstrates that there was a connection between the salutation and the triumph this early in its growth, and that said link was not exclusive to Aemilius Paullus. This is also the earliest attested salutation that is not attributed to either Aemilius Paullus or Scipio Africanus, both of whom may have been the first to receive that honour. There is little that can be learned from the act of his refusal other than a better understanding of his character, which is not the goal here, and to learn that both could be refused; if he were to have refused one of the honours but not the other, then we might have learned something of the attitude towards them, but this blanket refusal does not provide sufficient information to assess.

Although there are four attested salutations in the first half of the century and six in the second half, the difference between those numbers is deceiving at first because three of the four for the first half are salutations of the same person. The more ‘spread out’ nature of those in the second half is indicative of an increased use of this ritual, as there are no repeated *imperatores* attested during this period. In the second half of the century, the salutations begin to be more frequent, assuming the attestations that survive

¹¹⁷ Pseudo-Aurelius Victor, 44.4: *Imperatoris nomen a militibus et a senatu triumphum oblatum recusavit.*

are indicative of the total frequency of these acclamations. The first of these salutations was that of L. Mummius, which was discussed in the previous chapter, for which the evidence is not convincing; however, given how far into the century this is reported to have taken place, it is arguable that it could have been referring to a salutation, as they were less unique at this point.

The next acclamation that our sources mention is found in Varro's *de Re Rustica* and provides both an early example of a salutation and the first example of a salutation received on behalf of another. The exact date of this acclamation is uncertain, but it has been estimated to be in the range of 143-142.¹¹⁸ In the text, Varro describes his grandfather, L. Tremellius Scrofa, who was a quaestor under the command of Licinius Nerva, a praetor, being given command of the troops when in Macedonia while the praetor was away. Thinking this an opportunity for victory, the enemy attacked and were soundly defeated by Scrofa, resulting in an imperial salutation being carried out by the soldiers for the absent general.¹¹⁹ This acclamation, received by Scrofa acting as a proxy for Nerva, is the first example of a salutation received *in absentia*, but it is not the last. This practice becomes commonplace under Augustus, who received 21 imperial

¹¹⁸ Combès (1966), 83, 453; the dating of the acclamation: Broughton, T.R.S. 1951. *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*. 1, 473, n.2.

¹¹⁹ Varro, *de Re Rustica*, 2.4.1-2: *qui quaestor cum esset Licinio Nervae praetori in Macedonia provincia relictus, qui praeesset exercitui, dum praetor rediret ... Nam eo proelio hostes ita fudit ac fugavit, ut eo Nerva praetor imperator sit appellatus, avus cognomen invenerit ut diceretur Scrofa.*

salutations, many of which were earned by Roman generals acting on his behalf as vassals of his will.¹²⁰

The last three salutations of that century are as follows: Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus inscribed *imperator* on a mile marker in 118, and it is believed that this was to commemorate his victory against the Allobroges and the Averni in 122 when he held the consulship.¹²¹ On an inscription of his *elogium*, which was written during the imperial period, C. Caecilius Metellus is attributed an imperatorial salutation that is believed to have occurred in either 113 or 112.¹²² M. Minucius Rufus received an imperatorial salutation in 108 in a celebration at Delphi, which was discussed in chapter 2 for its Greek translation of the term *imperator*.¹²³ Several years later, roughly 100 BCE, M. Aquillius was acclaimed as *imperator* for his successes over the slave revolts while he was proconsul in Italy.¹²⁴

There is no debating that we do not have attestations for all Republican salutations. The evidence for the second century and before is sparse across all types of sources. On account of this, it is necessary to understand the salutations discussed here as a small part of a larger picture, in which the imperatorial salutation was increasing in popularity, frequency, and normalcy. The few attestations that survive, albeit providing a

¹²⁰ Augustus, *Res Gestae*, 4: ... *appellatus sum viciens et semel imperator... Ob res a me aut per legatos meos auspiciis meis terra marique prospere gestas quinquagens et quinquens decrevit senatus supplicandum esse dis immortalibus.*

¹²¹ Combès (1966), 106, 453

¹²² *Inscriptiones Italiae*, 13, 3, 73; Combès (1966), 98, n.67.

¹²³ For date: Broughton (1951), 549; for the inscription: See chapter 2, footnote 22.

¹²⁴ Broughton (1951), 577.

small sample size, still show a trend of increased and more widespread use, which is apparent in the number of those that are known and their attributions to unique individuals. When subdivided further, examining just those salutations in the last quarter of the century, there are four unique *imperatores* saluted that are attested. This is the same number as there are in the first 75 years combined; a difference that indicates a significantly growing trend in the second century.

With the salutations of the second century having been established, I will present my theory regarding the first Late Republican salutation. As shown in the second chapter, the only evidence that suggests that Scipio was saluted as *imperator* is a single phrase used in Livy that is suspect on its own, and the argument for its validity is weakened by the inclusion of the same event in Polybius, who is considered to be a more reliable source, without any mention of a salutation either explicitly and implicitly. This is in stark contrast to the evidence for Aemilius Paullus' acclamations, which are threefold, and so if one of them is false, or even two, there is still evidence enough to suggest that he had been saluted as *imperator*. The fact that he was possibly saluted three times as well could be taken to indicate that this was a ritual that was specifically related to him and his acts. It may have begun as a reference to the deeds of Scipio Africanus, but it was one that was repeated with him multiple times. If one looks at the salutations and their trends in the second century, it is apparent that these events only begin to happen frequently after his acclamations. In fact, others only begin to be saluted as *imperator* after he has already taken part in this ritual for the third, and possibly final time. Re-examining the evidence from the previous chapter, one of his salutations occurred in

Greece, which Combès argues is related to the Greek practice of saluting a victorious βασιλεύς after battle.¹²⁵ This is an argument that Combès provides in reference to Scipio's salutation as well, but which is more persuasive in regard to Aemilius Paullus given the geographical connection; Paullus' salutation occurred in Greece, whereas Scipio's was in Spain. It is true that Scipio was a known Hellenophile, but Combès' argument also relies on both his troops and the Spanish being aware of this practice, and so it rests on uncertain ground.¹²⁶

Section 2:

Military, Socio-economic, and Political Changes

Rome defeated Carthage in the Second Punic War and razed the city in the Third while she waged the Macedonian wars on her eastern front. By the end of this series of conflicts, Rome had established its dominance in the entire Mediterranean. These wars demonstrate that Roman control of the Mediterranean was growing. A natural consequence of this was considerably lengthened military campaigns. War was no longer a seasonal affair in which the soldiers would return to their homes and families each year. This is evident in a speech by a Republican soldier that Livy provides, which is reported to have taken place in 171 BCE.¹²⁷ In the speech, the soldier, Spurius Ligustinus, discusses multiple lengthy campaigns and his close dealings with his generals. This relationship that developed between general and soldier could have then led to an

¹²⁵ Combès (1966), 69

¹²⁶ Combès (1966), 61-63

¹²⁷ The soldier, Spurius Ligustinus, lists off a number of campaigns: Livy, 42.34.5-11.

increased number of salutations as the ritual became more widespread and well known. With the two developing side by side, it is probable that, although the longer campaigns were not the origin of the salutations, they were certainly a motivating factor for the proliferation of their use.

In the political sphere, Cato the Elder and Scipio Africanus dominated politics for the first half of the century, each representing opposing ideals. Ruebel writes that, “Cato embodied the "old" Roman farmer-soldier, politically conservative, provincial, and chauvinistic; Scipio captured all the best and worst of the new phil-Hellenism, a liberal, flamboyant, and cosmopolitan sophisticate.”¹²⁸ Their conflicts were between two giants in Roman society, and they represent the increased focus in the Roman world on the individual that was first discussed in the second chapter.¹²⁹

This clash demonstrates the intense degree of aristocratic competition that existed in the upper echelons of Roman society, and which further emphasized major figures such as Cato and the Scipios. This was an aspect of Roman society that figured in to the development of the imperial salutation. A Roman wished to be viewed as above others and would consistently strive to make apparent their skills and superiority to their peers. It is through this same lens that the Roman elite would have seen the salutations.

In the second half of the century, some Roman elite attempted to change the status quo in favour of the poor. This began with Gaius Laelius, but it reached its pinnacle with

¹²⁸ Ruebel (1977), 161.

¹²⁹ For a more in-depth discussion of the first half of the second century, see Scullard’s *Roman Politics: 220-150 B.C* (1973), and, for an examination of Scipio as a military leader and politician, Scullard’s *Scipio Africanus: Soldier and Politician* (1970).

the Gracchi brothers. Tiberius Gracchus was the first in what would be called the *popularis* movement; a sub-set of politicians that relied on support from the people in order to pass their laws, rather than support from the other senators. This was met with violent resistance because the elite not only feared the potential changes to the status quo, but they feared what this newfound powerbase would mean for Roman politics. These events demonstrated to both the people and the elite that the lower classes had significant influence and power, more so than had been believed beforehand. On account of this, the elite learned that the power of the people was something to be feared; the people learned that their voice had influence and could affect the careers of those in higher stations. There is a natural progression from this to the increase in the use of the imperatorial salutation. The lower classes had learned that their collective decisions could have impact, a realization that is apparent in the military sphere as well. The growth of the imperatorial salutation demonstrates that the soldiers knew they could affect the direction of their general's career and significantly increase his prestige

In the second century, economic disparity was a significant issue at Rome. The aforementioned elongated military campaigns resulted in the soldiers being away from their land for significant periods of time often missing the harvest season. This led to a drastic increase in poverty and a decrease in the number of available soldiers, which at that time consisted of only those who met certain property minimums and had to supply their own arms, according to the Servian Constitution.¹³⁰ In a discussion of the political

¹³⁰ Keppie, Lawrence (1984), 42; Livy 1.43.8: *hoc minor census reliquam multitudinem habuit; inde una centuria facta est immunis militia.*

difficulties of the second century, the policies of the Gracchi, and how they relate to the military, Keppie writes,

“All these measures reflect an increasing discontent at the rigours of service in the later second century, and the difficulties faced by magistrates in obtaining sufficient recruits to fill out the legions required for the defence of Rome’s growing possessions.”¹³¹

This led to a general, Gaius Marius, making sweeping changes to the Roman military as a result of its waning manpower. In 107, having been elected consul but finding himself lacking sufficient troops to wage war, Marius enlisted into the army volunteers from the *capite censi*, the landless poor that were normally excluded from military service. Marius made this decision on account of a need for more soldiers and consistency, which led to more reforms, a larger soldiery, and a full-time standing army. This translated to a more powerful and influential army that was more aware of its own power, a state which can be seen reflected in the increased number of imperatorial salutations.

The developments in the second century demonstrate a steady increase in salutations in response to the people’s growing power and knowledge of their influence. Its growth can be seen as a consequence of all of those factors that were discussed. The longer military campaigns resulted in closer ties between general and soldier. The growing economic problems forced drastic changes in both the military and political spheres in the favour of the people and the soldiers. The new political trend and focus on the power of the people demonstrated not only to the aristocracy that they did not hold all

¹³¹ Keppie (1984), 39.

the power but also to the people that they could have significant influence on the goings on in Rome. The Marian reforms then further cemented the power of the soldiers as an institution in Rome, while providing for closer and more long term dealings with generals. The knowledge of these changes and the confidence from them extended to the soldiery after a battle when they had the power to choose to acclaim their leader and so affect his career. Many of these developments had far-reaching effects, resulting in a violent and turbulent first century BCE and a salutation that continued to grow and change.

Chapter 4:

The First Century and Onward

Within the first 20 years of the first century BCE, there are more than a dozen recorded salutations, which is more than there were for the entirety of the second century. Although it took nearly a century for it to develop a firm hold, the imperatorial salutation had clearly secured its place in Roman society as of the outset of the first century. With the introduction of Marius' reforms, the class of soldiers was radically redefined, as it included those landless poor who previously could not enroll and could still not vote in the assembly. This change could have also contributed to the increase in the number of imperatorial salutations because the previously politically mute could now have an impact on present and future political figures, who led their armies at this point in their career.¹³²

As for the salutations of this period, there were two of lesser importance that preceded the first to be attributed to a major historical figure, L. Cornelius Sulla.¹³³ Sulla is considered to be one of the most influential figures in Republican Rome because he was the first to hold an extended dictatorship and is often attributed with causing 'the beginning of the end' of the Republic. At the end of the Social War in 88, Sulla marched on Rome and, after taking control of the city a second time in 82, he was awarded the title of dictator. While in power, Sulla enacted various changes to Roman politics that were

¹³² Flower (2009), 89.

¹³³ The first is attributed to C. Coelius Caldus in 98: Sydenham, 894-899; Combès (1966), 453. The second salutation was for T. Didius: Sydenham, 901; Combès (1966), 454. The third is attributed to Sulla: Mommsen (1870), *Hist. monnaie Romaine*, II, 444; Combès (1966), 454.

meant to aid its troubled situation, including drastically increasing the size of the Senate. Although he enacted many policies that were not inherently negative, his rule is largely characterized by gross violence bordering on barbarity, given that one of his primary methods of controlling the state was with the proscriptions. These were lists of Roman people who were labeled as enemies of the state, and who would often be killed as a result of this. Sulla was not the first to introduce violence into the Roman Republic, as will be discussed shortly, but none before him escalated the violence to the degree that he did. With Sulla's rise to power came changes to the Republic and also to the imperatorial salutation. To begin with, he was hailed multiple times and was possibly the first that this happened to, depending on whether more than one of the Aemilius Paullus salutations are to be believed. If not, then he was at least the first in nearly a century to be saluted multiple times and was certainly the first since salutations became more commonplace. This is not to say that there were no other salutations that took place during his supremacy though.

There were multiple other salutations that occurred while Sulla was establishing himself and in power. We have evidence of a C. Papius Mutilus being called *imperator* on a coin that is dated to the beginning of the Social War.¹³⁴ There were others that are attested to during this period as well, for example, Q. Caecilius Metellus Piso struck a coin as an *imperator*.¹³⁵ The same applies to the coins of Sulla himself that designate him as *imperator*. One of these was even struck by an *imperator*, although who it was is

¹³⁴ Crawford (1964), 146; the coin is from the Benevento and Hoffman 1870 hoards.

¹³⁵ Crawford (1964), 149; Combès (1966), 454; Sydenham, 750-751.

unknown. Sulla was saluted as *imperator* at least twice, and his coins demonstrate that, at least until those proclaiming him dictator began to be minted. The first occurred sometime in 92, it is believed, and the second was after the battle at the Colline Gate, which was when he successfully marched on Rome a second time.¹³⁶ It is undoubtable that he was saluted twice as is apparent on two coins: the first minted has the title “*imperator*,” the second reads “*imperator iterum*,” meaning “imperator for a second time,” and then the next chronologically reads, “*felix dictator*.”¹³⁷ It is important to note that these *imperator* references could be to one hailed as such, or just meant to be a general of some sort. With that being said, however, given the time period in question and the growing commonality of this usage, it is likely the former that is true.

There was drastically increased violence at the end of the second century BCE, following the brutal murder of Tiberius Gracchus and leading up to Sulla’s tenure as dictator in Rome. He was a by-product of the violence that was so prominent at that time, beginning in the 130s, the decade in which he was born. This aggressive practice continued with his proscriptions and coloured the political landscape for decades to come.¹³⁸ This was a perversion of the normal order of things in Rome at this time, and the prominence of the use of force was a clear demonstration of this. It demonstrated that the contemporary political system was unable to deal with the developments at Rome; it could neither settle the conflicts arising between opposing parties nor could it often

¹³⁶ Crawford (1964), 151; Combès (1966), 454.

¹³⁷ Crawford (1964), 149; Sydenham, 756-9, 760-761a, 762-762a.

¹³⁸ Flower (2009), 93-94.

function as a government performing its usual duties.¹³⁹ This proverbial turning of the Roman political system ‘on its head’ is an important part of why Sulla was able to succeed as he did at Rome, and later why both Caesar and Augustus were able to achieve their heights of power despite their perversion of the traditional Republican system. These changes relate indirectly to the imperial salutation as they demonstrate a decrease in the focus on conventional politicking at Rome, as it was progressively replaced by a violent and more military focused one. It was a Rome and a Republic in which one increasingly did not gain political support and position by manoeuvring in the then traditional sense, but instead a Roman could and, as is apparent, would secure a position of authority via force of arms.¹⁴⁰ With that shift in focus, there was a natural and gradual increase of reliance on the military in more than only foreign affairs. With the rise of the importance of the military came a growing reliance on military ritual as well. This is apparent when examining the increased number of imperial salutations during the beginning of the first century BCE.

The growing use of the military in internal affairs was prominent in the political scene beginning at the outset of the first century. This influence extended not only to battles, but also to blatant brutish acts in the city in the form of aggressive pressuring of citizens by whatever means necessary. This affected voting as well, which was plagued by soldiers intervening by pressuring citizens, often with violence. Despite Marius’ goals, within ten years of the implementation of his reforms, those that he had newly recruited

¹³⁹ Flower (2009), 82.

¹⁴⁰ Flower (2009), 81-89.

into the military from the landless poor could be found fighting in the city of Rome and threatening voters in the assemblies.¹⁴¹

The political situation in Rome in the 90s BCE is exemplified by the widespread violence at the time, which was made up of various groups taking up arms in the city, one against the other, and political assassinations.¹⁴² It is understandable that the level of displeasure with the political arena would have resulted in the general populace seeking other outlets through which their political voices could be heard. Along with an apparent multitude of other reasons, this was yet another driving force that would support an increase in the use of imperatorial salutations. The poor, displeased, and dispossessed were showing a proclivity for finding and capitalizing on new ways to ensure that they could affect the political order. These same groups then found themselves able to enlist in the military because of the Marian reforms, and it was in this position that they discovered another avenue that they could utilize to effect change.

The Roman soldiers had considerable control over events, and they were becoming increasingly aware that this was the case over time; a feat that certainly was aided by their use of and then familiarity with the imperatorial salutation. Not only could they support their generals as they saw fit, but they could deny them as well, sometimes to devastating effect. In the mid-80s, L. Cornelius Cinna and his group had control of Rome; they manipulated the elections, resulting in Cinna's election to the consulship for four consecutive years, from 87 to 84. Cinna's rule came to an abrupt end when in 84 he

¹⁴¹ Flower (2009), 89.

¹⁴² Flower (2009), 90.

was murdered by his own troops after their refusal to leave Italy to march against Sulla's army.¹⁴³ This demonstrates both the barbarity of the troops at this time, who were willing to kill their own commander, but also it stands as an example of the troops' apparent knowledge of their power. Sulla had been declared a foreign enemy by Cinna prior to this, and yet, likely on account of his successes during the Social War and his prominence at Rome, the soldiers rejected their general's command to march against him and his troops. This is evidence of a soldiery that was growing in power, not only in terms of numbers and manpower, but in that they were increasingly aware of their own influence in matters of import to Rome.

Cn. Pompeius Magnus was one of the most powerful figures in Rome in the first century BCE. During the tumultuous time of Sulla's reign, Pompey rose to prominence and, among other honours, was given an exceptional command; he was provided with the overarching command of the Mediterranean by the Senate and tasked with clearing it of the pirates that were terrorizing Roman ships. He succeeded at this and was received as a saviour of the Roman people. Before his death, he was the recipient of a then unmatched number of salutations. Based primarily on epigraphic evidence, it seems that he was saluted a total of four times, starting from his first in 81 until his last in 48 BCE.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Flower (2009), 92-93, 95; Livy, *Per.*, 83: *Cinna ab exercitu suo, quem invitum cogebat naves conscendere*

et adversus Syllam proficisci, interfectus est. consulatum Carbo solus gessit.

¹⁴⁴ Combès (1966), 81, 454-456; first salutation in 81: Broughton (1952), II.77. The second salutation was sometime between 75-73: *C.I.L.*, I².2.768. The third salutation in 67: Broughton (1952), II.146,160,176. The fourth salutation occurred in 48: Broughton (1952), II.278.

Although he had little effect on its development, Pompey is the center of a controversy related to the title. A law was passed called the *lex Gabinia* that may have granted Pompey a special imperium against the pirates along with the title of *imperator*. Combès argues that it is his *pro consule* that granted him this exceptional command, which is what is attested to in the official documents.¹⁴⁵

The next powerful figure in Rome was Caesar, who had sole control of the Republic for a time and was a politician with *popularis* inclinations. He embodied the idea of this new Rome that focused increasingly on the individual. He was also a successful general from multiple campaigns, whose successes can be attributed in no small part to his rapport with his soldiers.¹⁴⁶ Gaius Julius Caesar's prominence largely coincided with that of Pompey. The evidence suggests that Caesar was saluted three times before his assassination. His first was in 61 while he was in Spain as a result of his praetorship, although it is unclear after which battle it occurred.¹⁴⁷ Caesar's second salutation took place in 55 during his campaign in Gaul as a part of his extended consulship that he was granted in 59.¹⁴⁸ The third salutation occurred in February of 45 and was also in Spain, although this was after he held the consulship and the dictatorship. More information has survived regarding this salutation than those previous, as it is not

¹⁴⁵ Combès (1966), 18-19; discussing the *lex Gabinia*: Cicero, *de Imp. Cn. Pomp.*, 17.52: *de uno imperatore contra praedones constituendo legem*.

¹⁴⁶ Keppie (2005), 73.

¹⁴⁷ Plutarch, *Caesar*, 12.2: καὶ προσηγορευμένος αὐτοκράτωρ ὑπ' αὐτῶν.

¹⁴⁸ Cicero, *ad Fam.*, 7.5: Cicero begins by greeting Caesar as *imperator* (*Cicero Caesari Imp.*). According to Combès (1966), 456, this salutation must have preceded Caesar's demand for supplication at the end of his campaign in 55 that appears in *Caes., Bell. Gall.*, 4.38.5.

included in summary or as an address, which is the case for the other two. This salutation occurred on account of Caesar's capturing of a Spanish town from Pompey's troops, the surrender of Pompey's representative, L. Munatius, and Caesar's sparing of the lives of the townsfolk. The sparing of the townspeople is reminiscent of Scipio Africanus' treatment of the Spaniards during the Punic War both in its connection to the title of *imperator* and in the general's mercy to Spanish peoples, parallels that were likely intentional given the fame of Scipio Africanus.¹⁴⁹

As important as they are as historical figures, in many ways Pompey and Caesar function in a transitional role with regard to the imperatorial salutation, rather than at the cornerstone of change. Their importance is certainly reflected in their salutations, as they were both hailed multiple times. Pompey was viewed as a hero and revered, and the salutations reflect that, and Caesar was beloved by the people, although not the Senate. As such, both were saluted repeatedly and also held powerful positions in Rome in their time, but neither drastically changed the practice of the imperatorial salutation as those that came before and after them did.

All of these figures lived during tumultuous and violent times at Rome, and as a result of the Social and Civil Wars, there were many prominent Romans and their families that lost their lives, were exiled, or whose social status was changed drastically.¹⁵⁰ This was a time of great upheaval and change, and yet not only did the

¹⁴⁹ Broughton (1952), 2.305; *Bell. Hisp.*, 19: the salutation transpires in 19.6: *Ita ante diem XI. Kalendas Martias oppido potitus imperator est appellatus.*

¹⁵⁰ Flower (2009), 120; Flower's arguments are supported by Sulla's reforms in 87: Livy, *Per.*, 87; Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.59.

practice of the imperial salutation continue, its usage increased consistently. On one hand, this could have been the case as a result of the drastic changes that were taking place. The political scene was increasingly turbulent, and so this led to growing reliance on other means of establishing and securing political and military legitimacy as well as power via increased support from the soldiers, a group that was consistently involved in the goings-on of the city at the beginning of the first century.¹⁵¹ On the other hand, it is possible that the increase reflects a desire to establish ties to past Republican rituals, which could have been used to increase legitimacy by virtue of the ritual's history and ties to important Republican figures. In this latter case, it is not an embrace of change that resulted in the increased use of the imperial salutation, as it was with the former, but it can be interpreted as a deliberate counter to the changes occurring as it secured ties to a Republican past. Flower argues that it was the latter that was true, when discussing the transition period between Sulla and Augustus, she asserts, "The sense of disconnect with the past was tangible. Increasingly insistent rhetoric and iconography featuring traditional values and practices was a symptom of this sense of estrangement and loss, a malaise that only worsened as time went on."¹⁵² This need to relate to past events and to seem to fit into a Republican past that was quickly becoming different from the first century, a trend which was cemented with Augustus' supposed 're-establishing of the Republic,'

¹⁵¹ Keppie (2005), 48-49.

¹⁵² Flower (2009), 136; Flower's argument here is strengthened by her work from 1996 that centered on this issue exactly, which is a seminal piece in the study of ancestor images as they appeared in various media.

illustrates well the gap that the salutation filled, as it was considered to be an important aspect of Republican society.

Augustus' reign resulted in far-reaching changes in both the political and military spheres, both of which would have affected the imperial salutation. He had sole control of the state by 27 BCE, and he was also a man of the people. As Beard illustrates in her book, "Augustus was almost certainly the first Roman to use *imperator*, with all its triumphal associations, as a regular part of his title ("*Imperator Caesar Augustus*"), almost as if it were a first name..."¹⁵³ The salutation changes during his reign as it was increasingly necessary to have his approval in order to be saluted. There was a growing number of salutations received by others on behalf of the emperor, in this case they were considered extensions of himself and his will, so he was the one being saluted. Although the number of salutations that he accrued was remarkable, there was a precedent for this idea of a leader being saluted based on the deeds and received salutation of another. In the second century, as was discussed in chapter three, Licinius Nerva had an officer that commanded his troops in a battle and was saluted on his behalf. Augustus' virtual monopoly of this ritual marks the beginning of the end of the Republican imperial salutation, as it transitions into its Imperial version, at which point only members of the imperial family could be saluted. It is put forth by Syme as an axiom that by the time of Augustus' reign one had to have received an imperial salutation in order to be considered for and then awarded a triumph. Because of this restriction, Syme argues that there were alternative honours that were in place, as is evident with Drusus receiving an

¹⁵³ Beard, 296.

“ovation” (*ovandi ius*) rather than a triumph because he did not have proconsular *imperium*.¹⁵⁴ Under Augustus, triumphs were increasingly given in limited number to the elite; the last recorded triumph awarded to a proconsul was in 19 BCE.

“For not only was the ceremony of triumph monopolized by the imperial family, but its conventions and symbols were deployed as ways of marking, defining, and conceptualizing the emperor’s power. The imperial title *imperator* echoed the acclamation that had often in the late Republic preceded the grant of a triumph.”¹⁵⁵

Imperial salutations still continued after this time, but the authority of any who received one was still considered to be inferior to Augustus, and the frequency at which they were received reduced over time. There were no more proconsuls saluted with Augustus taking credit after 27/28. The last evidence of a *legatus Augusti* being saluted, and that being attributed to Augustus, is in 15. After that point, the acclamations that Augustus accrued seem to have been largely from members of his family, and possibly those with proconsular *imperium*.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Syme (1979), 310-311.

¹⁵⁵ Beard, 275.

¹⁵⁶ Syme (1979), 308-311.

Conclusion

There were a multitude of factors that led to the fall of the Republic and although not the sole issue at play in the first century, this was a time when personal ambition was allowed to run rampant. Ambition had always been an important part of Roman society and political structure, but it had always been kept in check by governing bodies like the Senate.¹⁵⁷ It had also often been directed so as to be used for Rome's benefit wherever possible, with various elites vying for the magistracies and attempting to gain fame and prestige through victories for Rome that would bring honour and renown to their families. This was not the case anymore, however, in the first century, when personal ambition no longer benefitted Rome. At this point, the direction that ambition focused on was a detriment to the state because it was more often turned inward than outward. Whether resulting in civil wars, wars with allies, or the purging of fellow upper class individuals in proscriptions, the ambitions of the Roman elite had reached a fever pitch. This can be seen reflected in the imperial salutation, as not only was there an increasing number of these rituals being carried out, but with each passing generation and conflict there appeared another great figure who accumulated multiple salutations to their name, first with Sulla, then Pompey, Caesar, and finally culminating in Augustus' domination of the rite, collecting at least 21 to himself.

The major figures have been addressed, but the general elite must be better understood as well. In Hopkins' book, *Death and Renewal*, he digresses for a section from his focus on the statistical reality of the elite in order to address some of the

¹⁵⁷ Flower (2009), 136-137, 139.

implications of his findings. In this section, he posits that, based on his findings, the Roman political structure was not as constant and rigid as it is often characterized by modern and even ancient historians. Adducing the numbers of sons of the upper class that held magistracies, which he maintains is lower than has been previously assumed, he demonstrates that the upper class was fluid and that there was not as clear a distinction between those of equestrian rank and those of senatorial rank as is usually supposed. This figures well into the arguments made here; the fluidity and lack of surety that a young magistrate would have had regarding his potential to obtain consular or even praetorian rank would have been a significant driving force in aristocratic competition in the Republic.¹⁵⁸ This impetus would have driven the elite Romans to capitalize on and gather to themselves any advantage that they could over their competition. As the imperatorial salutation grew in frequency and popularity, it certainly would have attracted those that were politically ambitious as it provided yet another means to advance one's political career. In so doing, as has been demonstrated throughout this work, the elite put more power in the hands of the soldiers and taught them how to exercise that power.

This dynamic that was so important and influential in the Republic changed drastically with the advent of the Empire and with the accession of Augustus. Certainly, political competition still existed, but it was far more muted than it had been previously, and its goal changed drastically. The existence of an emperor, a central figure in comparison to whom all other Romans were secondary, shifted the focus of the elite from gaining prestige in a collective, albeit selfish, especially in the last century, environment

¹⁵⁸ Hopkins (1983), 107-117.

to one in which the goal was to gain the favour of a single individual in order to advance.¹⁵⁹ Given that the accumulation of honours then became something one did not only to impress the emperor but usually was carried out on behalf of, and often as a vassal of the *princeps* drastically altered the use and meaning of the imperial salutation. This is still prior to the change of the ritual itself when it became a method of selecting emperors.

The history and development of the imperial salutation is a long and often difficult one to assemble, as very few sources discuss the salutation outright, instead mentioning it in passing when referring to other affairs. The earliest attested salutation was that of Quinctius Poenus, a Roman general who was forced into the position of commander of a group of disgruntled soldiers looking to protect themselves from their former leaders. This salutation can be found in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*; however, this event's veracity is questionable at best, and outright false at worst. The description and circumstances surrounding the acclamation do not match any of the information that we have concerning the imperial salutations. With that said, that section still has value, as it both provides evidence of an older ritual that only survives in a short section from Aulus Gellius, and I have argued that it also fits into the development of the salutation itself. The similarities between the two rituals are striking, most important of which is the fact that it is the soldiers that make the individual general upon his 'taking.' It is possible, if not likely that the rite in question was in fact a precursor to the late Republican salutation on account of the similarities discussed. The earlier ritual also demonstrates an

¹⁵⁹ Hopkins (1983), 149-150.

empowering of the soldiery that would later be embraced in the form of the imperial salutation. There are various other sections with similar phrasing in the early books of Livy, but none are as convincing or as potentially fruitful as that of Quinctius Poenus.

The next possible ‘first salutation’ is that attributed to Scipio Africanus, and which is generally accepted to be the first by modern scholars, particularly Combès, although not without debate. Although I agree that there was a first salutation that occurred, I do not agree with the argument that it was Scipio Africanus who received it. The evidence for this theory is tenuous and contradictory; Livy is the primary evidence to support it, and he does not include the act of the salutation itself, which, if it was the first, would seem likely. This weakness of argument is compounded by the fact that Livy has already been shown to be untrustworthy with regard to his phrasing, and so basing this theory on a single phrase that appears in his description of the aftermath of a battle against Hannibal’s brother seems outrageous. The other evidence that concerns this event can be found in Polybius, who is considered to be a far more reliable source than Livy by modern scholars, who includes no mention of a salutation having taken place, and his account, although including the word for general, does not even provide a passing reference to a salutation having occurred. This is further disproven by the presence of a separate instance in which Scipio refers to himself as *imperator* despite there being no connection to a salutation of any sort at that time. It seems likely then that Scipio’s focus on this title served to cement it in the minds of future generals, which, together with influence from Greek practices, resulted in the late Republican salutation, but he himself was not its originator.

Whether Scipio Africanus was the first *imperator* of this sort or not, there was certainly an upsurge in the use of the title and the appearance of the salutation in its more common form in the century that followed his defeat of Hannibal. The second century saw a gradual but consistent increase in the use of the imperatorial salutation, starting with Aemilius Paullus being hailed up to three times, and continuing and spreading to have many unique acclamations transpire by the end of the century. In fact, based on the significant evidence that Aemilius Paullus was a recipient of this ritual, whether all three of them are accurate or not, and the apparent focus of the ritual on him alone for what appears to be several decades if our records are to be trusted, it is more likely that he was the first to receive this honour, not Scipio Africanus as has been previously argued by Combès. The apparent acceptance and increased use of the imperatorial salutation is in line with the military, socio-economic, and political developments of the second century BCE. With longer wars and an increase in poverty of the lower classes, the military became all the more essential, and the lower classes were commonly the focus of political argument, legislation, and development. This intertwined with a Roman Republic that was growing more violent by the decade, with political violence and even death becoming more commonplace, and a political scene that became focused on the individual more than ever before. This culminated in a broadening and professionalization of the Roman military with the Marian reforms that strengthened it, grew it, and secured it as a powerful force in society. This reliance was apparent alongside the connection between the imperatorial salutation and the triumph, which remained the most sought after honour in Republican culture for the elite, and that now

did not solely rely on approval from the Senate but now a declaration of support from the soldiers could be influential in the doling out of these honours.

These same issues that began in the second century only worsened in the first as Roman politics became solely focused on individuals rather than the city, and when single leaders or small coalitions repeatedly seized control of the Republic and turned it to their own goals and gain. What began with Sulla continued and worsened until Augustus obtained full and unquestioned control in 27 BCE. Throughout this tumultuous period, the soldiers and armies increased in importance both within and without Rome and the number of salutations grew exponentially as individuals vied for control of the state. The support of the troops became paramount to a potential leader and so the imperatorial salutation was strengthened; however, this all changed when Augustus came into his ultimate power and, though the number of salutations did not diminish immediately, most were attributed to Augustus himself rather than the campaigning general, who was acting on the *princeps*' behalf. Although this did demonstrate the importance of the ritual, as it was important to the pre-eminent citizen in Rome that he be the sole recipient of it, it drastically altered its meaning and function, and it can hardly be considered to be the same process at that point. From there, the ritual continued to change as the emperors cemented their control and reduced the Republican aspects of their government and society gradually. The salutation continued, but it took on a new form, as it became an acclamation that would make a general emperor, rather than merely a stepping stone for further honours. This idea was cemented when in 69 CE Vespasian

passed the *lex de imperio vespasiani* that established the title *imperator* as the official title of the Roman emperor.

There is debate as to when the imperial salutation started, and it remains unclear when it began although the most compelling evidence supports it beginning in the second century with Aemilius Paullus. Regardless of the attribution of the first case of this ritual, the trends indicate that it developed from a growing soldiery that was becoming increasingly important. It served as a method to empower the lower classes, who, although they were part of the *comitia*, had little say over the elites of the society that made most of the decisions for the state. Even the earliest possible iterations of the ritual still functioned as a means to put an important decision in the hands of the soldiers, one that would normally have been made by one of the governmental bodies. These theories fit the developments of the second and first century as this acclamation continued its influence and grew to be both more popular and more important to the elite, thus empowering the soldiers with a method through which they could exercise control over their superiors.

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