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Addressing Emergent Charisma in Roman Military Leaders: Triumphal Practices in the Republican Period

Abstract: Starting from the premise that charisma is to be understood as both a social and political process, it is argued that in Republican Rome it represented a moment of political and personal consecration for military leaders. Within this context some of the practices associated with the triumph had the function of dampening emergent charisma. They helped to maintain as foremost the institutions of the Republic in the face of extremely successful military leaders who had the potential to radically alter them. Their capacity was at its peak during the classical republican period but progressively diminished during the late stages of the Roman Republic.

1. Introduction

The effect that charismatic leaders have on organizations is an important topic of study (Beyer, 1999; Conger and Kanungo, 1998; Klein and House, 1998; Weiertier, 2001) and so is the study of charisma at the sociological level (Bradley 1987; Gebhardt, 1994). However, charisma has an important political facet (Baehr 1998; 2008). The relationship between the charismatic leader and the followers is not exhausted in legitimate authority or organizational models but carries important effects upon the nature of a polity and of its processes. Charisma is also importantly related to the issues of fear and uncertainty (Turner, 2003) and to the emergence of crises (Weber, 1978: 1127). Here I look at the triumph in Republican Rome, as a mechanism that among other things may have helped to dampen emergent charismatic power in military leaders. The triumph was the highest honor that could be granted to a Roman general and 'was the apex of the public career of any Roman politician (Bonfante Warren, 1970: 49), affording him his community's ultimate recognition of his achievements' (Flower, 2004: 327) almost always giving an enormous boost to a political career[1] because the Roman Republic structured public offices as a sequence of military and political postings. A historically fluid and changing ritual (Beard, 2007), the triumph had a complex nature with military, religious, apotropaeic and political meanings coming together to shape its characteristics and its goals. I shall especially focus on the political facet, which has been severely downplayed in the existing literature. In particular, I argue that a Weberian reading of the triumph can enhance our understanding of charismatic power, and of the means to dampen it.

The literature on charismatic military leaders in current sociological theory could benefit from this analysis. In the first instance there is no Weberian analysis of Roman triumphal practice and the charismatic analysis of military leaders in other periods tends to focus on the political establishment of national leaders whose regimes must be carefully separated in charismatic ones and cults of personality (Kallis, 2006). A large part of this production deals with the charismatic (or not so charismatic) leadership of fascist leaders like Hitler (Brockman, 2003; Dobry, 2006; Rainer Lepsius, 2006), Mussolini (Gentile, 1998), Franco (Payne, 2006) and so forth (Kallis, 2006; Goldstein, 2006).[2] In the case of critical military figures like Napoleon (Marcus, 1961) or Garibaldi (Gundle, 1998) for example, their charismatic power is often linked to transcendental, status quo-challenging nature of this quality. In the case of Alexander the Great the charismatic power appears to match the exceptional nature of the Weberian mould, steeped in special qualities but ultimately facing the issue of how to routinize his charisma (Thomassen, 2006). With Julius Caesar it is often the case that the literature on charisma will deal mostly with Caesarism rather than with the man himself (Baehr, 1998; 2008). A different stream in the literature is interested in the relationship between military leaders and their subordinates (Boas et al, 1998; Lenard, 1998). Other analyses of the military hero simply bypass Weber altogether (Wansink, Payne and van Ittersum, 2008; Wong, Bliese and McGurk, 2003). In very few of these works do we find an analysis that is similar to the one proposed here. In general, however, there is a lack of analysis of what kind of reaction an established legal-traditional system may create when faced with potential charisma.

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[1] Cicero dismisses Piso's claim that the latter never wanted a triumph as the sign of a 'angusti animi atque demissi' [a petty and abject spirit] (Cicero c. 58 BC: 24).
[2] Horvath (1998) argues that some of these figures like Mussolini and Mao Zedong were not actual charismatic leaders but what she defines as 'tricksters' who use the area of ambivalence that appears in some historical periods to establish themselves.

Turner (2004: 247) argues that 'Charisma, and especially warrior charisma, is important because it occupies a social and historical niche that appears to challenge the social practices that bring about civility and civilization. … In particular, the rationalization of warrior charisma means the end of intoxication of the berserk warrior and the growth of military discipline and training as techniques for producing a mass army.' This is an important element of modernization of the military structure. However, another important part of this relationship is the apparent friction between either traditional or legal-rational rule and the charisma of military leaders seen as lacking a set of rules proper (Turner, 2003). The goal of this article is to look at how the Roman Republic's triumphal process incorporated mechanisms that could dampen emergent charisma, especially in a system that offered many an occasion to achieve it and which tied military and political careers so closely as Republican Rome did. It is sometimes the case that successful military leaders will use their charisma to take over civil power if they are dissatisfied with the nature of the polity at large or their personal place within it. Rome's militarist expansionism and its system of political advancement offer an interesting case study for this tension.

Janice Beyer's (1999: 326) states that charisma is 'a social process and emergent social structure that encompasses more than the leadership process,' based on a complex set of social dynamics that involve both the leader and the followers (Beyer and Browning, 1999; Klein and House, 1998), and that, because of its nature, it implies potential dangers for the stability of the organization. Weber noted how 'charisma is the great revolutionary force' (Weber, 1978: 245). Now, it is not necessarily true that at a crisis juncture a charismatic leader will emerge, but if a potentially charismatic leader does emerge an organization may be interested in dampening this potential charisma before its transformative power comes into play. This would have been especially important in Republican Rome where military postings were requirements of the *Cursus Honorum.*[3] We argue that the practices surrounding the military triumph during the Republican period like the *ioci militares* (the license given to the soldiers parading with the general to make fun of him or to point out his shortcomings on the day of the triumph) had this effect. Furthermore, the presence of someone, perhaps a slave, who reminded the general of his mortality and human nature,[4] may represent among other things an institutional safeguard designed to bring back to earth extremely successful generals and to dampen emergent charisma.

This analysis would also be compatible with the notion that crises are an important premise to the emergence of charisma (Beyer, 1999: 313-314). The triumph was staged at a time when the crisis had been resolved from a military point of view and, therefore, it would have an important role in reminding to all that a state of normalcy was returning by presenting the material evidence of victory and by allowing for the (potential or effective) charismatic leader to be criticized. The mention of his perceived shortcomings (Caesar's alleged homosexuality for example) would affect the image that Romans had of the leader's transcendent power by underlining his previous mistakes and his 'vices.'

The *ioci militares* would therefore act at two levels: upon the relationship between the leader and the people, and upon the perception of his record. How would Rome benefit from dampening emergent charismatic power? At the socio-political level, Rome was much more reliant on legal structures than most other contemporary polities, which tended to be traditional

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[3] The *Cursus Honoroum* (the course of honours) represented a sequence of public offices (both military and political) that aspiring politicians had to hold in the Roman Republic and in the early imperial period.

[4] The proper formula and whether or not there actually was a slave at all times is very much open to question (Beard, 2007: 87).

societies. The Roman concepts of law (*lex*) and tradition (*mores*), which were at the bases of both private and public life, and the subordinate position of the individual towards the commonwealth (*res publica*) and its institutions obviously conflicted with the radical transformational potential of charisma.[5] Furthermore, as Baehr (2008: 90) notes Weber's approach can be seen as 'suggest[ing] a universal, tripartite division of charisma into religious, military and political dimension.' In the Roman triumph the military and political facets of the charismatic leader become very close at the moment of the general's entry into the city.

On the other hand, Rome's early survival (and its socio-economic balance later) depended on the continued success of its military. At a time when victorious generals often became a danger for kings and chieftains, Republican Rome required a large supply of military leaders and was extremely successful in generating an institutional and social framework within which they, for the most part, did not undermine the state.[6] For most of its history Roman generals tended to be faithful servants of the Republic. Millar (1984) notes that the popular control over the victorious generals was an important part of the Roman republican polity but there is no denying that at least for the half century that preceded Caesar's assassination military leaders became increasingly willing to place their own personal power ahead of the respect for republican laws and institutions. Besides Caesar's (100-44 BC) coup, Marius (157-86 BC), Sulla (138-78 BC), and Pompey (106-48 BC) also demonstrated a desire and a capacity to bend the rules of the political game by using their military success to justify deep assaults upon traditional political processes and structures and the triumph did not seem to limit their actions too much. This however happened within a specific process of heightened elite competition and neither Marius nor Pompey for example ever considered using their armies in all out anti-institutional approaches (Sherwin-White 1956). At this time triumphs become increasingly perceived (and designed) as a promotional vehicle for personal aggrandizement within the context of elite competition (Beard, 2007). However, the record of the triumphal practice in checking emergent charisma remains significant. What the aforementioned examples allow us to do is limit the effective reach of these rituals. Triumphal practice remains one of a variety of variables shaping a final outcome. Its failures in limiting Marius, Sulla or Caesar should not be underestimated but neither should they serve to define its overall capacity. Important social, political and economic forces were active during this period that would have shifted the results of triumphal practice. The triumph appears to have worked well enough (along with other institutional elements) under less dislocated circumstances and it served its charisma-dampening role best during classical republican times. This is an important limitation of which we should be aware, but I do not present triumphal practice as a mono-causal explanation of the behavior of Roman military leaders. Rather I stress its potential contribution in the dampening of emergent charisma along other forces. It is evident that the ritual of the triumphal procession mixed religious, military and political elements in a historically dynamic fashion. To remain within the political sphere the interplay among the main actors (the Senate and the general) was imbued with constitutional, traditional and personal motivations stressing the constitutional and traditional primacy of the Senate while showcasing the uncontestable success of a leader who straddled both the military and the political worlds.

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[5] Roman practice was unique, and perceived as such even in antiquity: 'In other states men are jealous of one another, but the Romans praise their fellow citizens. The result is that the Romans, by rivalling one another in promotion of the common weal, achieve the most glorious success' (Diodorus Siculus, 1700 [1999] XXXI: 6)
[6] Suetonius noted that '[t]here is a saying of Marcus Cato that Caesar was the only man who undertook to overthrow the state when sober' (Suetonius, 1983a: LIII).

Caesar's decision to cross the Rubicon River with an army, the equivalent of high treason, was born of a complex situation, which included his potential indictment by his enemies after his return to Rome. The Republican institutions, chiefly the Senate, had become unable to efficiently manage Rome's territorial expansion or the challenges that the latter created at home. The long-standing social balance within the Roman heartland was challenged by the size of the Republic (which increasingly drew from its Italian allies both economically and militarily without offering much in return) and by an increasingly skewed distribution of wealth within Roman society itself. The latter exerted an unsustainable pressure on the farmer-soldier that had been the basis of Rome's wealth and military power, disproportionately favoring the trading and land-holding classes and within them especially the established senatorial elites. Within this context, a series of 'strong men' emerged: of whom Marius, Sulla, and Caesar were the most successful.[7] It was only under the enormous pressure of these conditions, and even so only over a long period, that the Republic gave way to the Empire. Thus I argue that within a more politically oriented reading of republican triumphal practices we can see the latter as incorporating tools to regulate some of the socio-political effects of elite competition, and that this capacity progressively weakened as normal political competition transformed in attacks against the Republican institutions in the late republican period.

The next section recaps the Weberian analysis of charisma and Roman antiquity and presents some of the issues regarding charismatic leaders and their effects upon institutions. Section three presents an analysis of triumphal practice in Rome focusing on its political meaning. Finally, some conclusions are offered.

2. Weber, Charisma and the Roman World

The article deals with two subjects that Weber treated in his work but never connected: charismatic power and the Roman world. His work on charisma is concentrated in his sociological writings (Baehr, 1998) and particularly in *Economy and Society* (Weber, 1978), while his analysis of Rome appears in *The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations* (Weber, 1976). An important cognate notion to charisma, Caesarism, occupies a key position in Weber's political analysis of the German state. In the rest of this section we look at the Weberian treatment of these subjects, beginning with Rome and following with charismatic power and Caesarism.

The triumph was not something that interested Weber very much. While the *The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations* remains an important study of socio-economic relations neither charismatic power nor the triumph are treated in it in such a way as to be useful to us. Whatever attention Weber shows in this book towards military activity is linked to the effect that it had on the socio-economic fabric of Rome. The closest reference to the triumph in *The*

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[7] There is no doubt the that Marius' reforms of the army made the latter more sensitive to the careers of successful generals. The introduction of the *capite censi* (the landless 'head count') to military service offered this largely disenfranchised group an economic opportunity. This was especially true in the light of the further Marian reform that introduced the granting of conquered land to those veterans who had completed their tour of duty. In a very real sense therefore Roman soldiers increasingly became the clients of their generals. However, the army did not become immediately a tool for these generals to use against the Senate. It was only with the Social Wars in 88 BC that this happened (Sherwin-White, 1956: 5).

Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations is the mention of the *spolia opima*[8] (Weber, 1976: 280). Weber describes the Greco-Roman societies as being able to develop a commercial economy that was reliant on agrarian capitalism (for which a ready supply of land and slaves was ensured through war) and was dependent upon a class of farmers/warriors who would make up the backbone of the army. Accordingly, Weber noted how Roman capitalism was of a stunted rentier type, and the possibility of developing a capitalist economy was further limited by the predominance of slave over salaried labour (Weber, 1976: 365). Slowly, the balance of power shifted in Republican Rome, and the nobility was able to offload the costs of the Social War (91-88 BC) onto the equestrian middle class setting the stage for the latter's support of Caesarism (Weber, 1976: 335). If we can only obtain limited information for our topic from his analysis, we are not any luckier when looking for contextual information to see how important military leaders were in Rome. For example, there is no particular reference to charisma as a key factor in situations like Caesar's power.

From an economic point of view, the ancient economy of Greece and Rome relied on a slave mode of production. Undoubtedly the Greco-Roman world made slave production the dominant mode of production (Anderson 1974: 22). Weber pointed at the incapacity of slave owners to reproduce the slave population through breeding leading to the notion that Roman military operations were initiated to ensure a resupply of slaves (Weber, 1976: 395; Finley, 1980). Slavery demanded a constant supply of human beings who were often procured through war because the social devaluation of labour in these societies led to expansion being represented by "geographical conquest – not economic advance" (Anderson 1974: 28). While Finley (1980: 89-90) argued that the emergence of slavery enabled the political and economic emancipation of the lower classes, in the long run the slave economy became critical to the economic fortunes of the Roman elites. Enormous concentration occurred in agriculture, the *latifundia* replaced the holdings of the small farmer/soldier, and Roman armies were increasingly composed of men who could not afford their own equipment (which had to be supplied by the state). After the Marian reforms the soldiers increasingly depended on successful campaigns to obtain a holding for their retirement. However, successful campaigns implied successful generals and it is unsurprising that strong bonds would develop between the latter and their soldiers.[9] In general Roman military activity (and triumphal practices in particular) are not a major focus for the German sociologist.

The Weberian concept of charisma, which emerges from *Economy and Society* (Weber, 1978), received enormous attention in the literature (Becker, 1988; Strauss, 1953; Kroll, 2001; Riesebrodt 2001; Turner, 2003; Hatscher, 2000). Weber notes that

> *the term 'charisma' will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers and qualities.*

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[8] Literally translated as 'rich spoils' this refers to the trophy that Roman generals took from the defeated enemy commanders they killed in single combat. This trophy would include armour and weapons. Only three such occasions are recorded. The defeat by Romulus of the king of the Caninenses in 752 BC, the killing by Aulus Cornelius Cossus of the Etruscan king Lars Tolumnius in 428 BC and the slaying of Gaesate king Viridomarus by Marcus Claudius Marcellus in 222 BC. In 29 BC Marcus Licinius Crassus killed in single combat the king of the Bastarne, Deldo, but in the changed political environment he was only granted a triumph.

[9] It could be argued that socio-economic factors, like the importance of small-farmers and the size of the slave economy affected the relative potential for charismatic military leadership in Rome. The choice of Cincinnatus to return immediately to private life after saving Rome from the Aequi certainly stems from great moral fibre, but it may also reflect the lack of the socio-political conditions that would be required for the emergence of true charismatic community and for the installation of a charismatic leader.

These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a 'leader.' . . . What is alone important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subject to charismatic authority, by his 'followers' or 'disciples.' (Weber, 1978: 241-242)

Weber (1978) links the emergence of charismatic leaders to times 'of distress whether psychic, economic, ethical, religious or political' (Weber, 1978: 1121). If charismatic leaders emerge their 'charisma is a highly individual quality' (Weber, 1978: 1113) and their authority is gained and retained only by demonstrating publicly that they possess these exceptional powers (Weber, 1978: 1114). Charismatic power exists only when a specific relation emerges between leader and followers: the former proves to possess charismatic qualities and the latter recognize them. This recognition is not the grounding of the leader's power but a duty of the followers (Weber, 1978: 1113). The charismatic relation between the ruler and the ruled emerges in terms of affectual surrender (*Hingabe*) and is particularly evident for prophets and military heroes. 'The power of charisma rests upon … "heroism" of an aesthetic, military, judicial, magical or whichever kind' (Weber, 1978: 1116).

The followers are a *sine qua non* of effective charisma and would seem critical in the phase of emergent charisma. Either out of 'distress or enthusiasm' they recognize the otherworldly nature of the leader and in doing so establish his or her power (Weber, 1978: 1115). A common emotional bond between the masses and the elite is developed in the *charismatische Gemeinde*. The transformative potential of charisma is such that 'in a revolutionary and sovereign manner, charismatic domination transforms all values and breaks all traditional and rational norms' (Weber, 1978: 1115). The charismatic relation can be used to challenge existing structures and transform them: closest to our case the charismatic war hero's (*Kriegsheld*) following 'may be transformed into a state' (Weber, 1978: 1121). Because charisma is ephemeral and temporary but also very powerful, there is the real possibility that a charismatic military leader may use it as a stepping-stone to take power and transform the state to his advantage. This is not to say that other forces, like bureaucratic rationalization, may not lead to deep changes; they can. However, the latter reorganizes society 'from the outside', changing people through changes it operates in the social and material structures first. Charisma, on the other hand, changes individuals 'from within' (Weber, 1978: 1116). In this sense, Weber leaves us with the description of a highly transformative relational quality (charisma) requiring the establishment of a *charismatische Gemeinde* that recognizes its validity to move from the potential to the effective state. The nature of charisma is closely correlated to Weber's work on *Herrschaft* but there is a difference in the nature of the charismatic relation, as Adair-Toteff (2005: 192) notes 'Weber usually speaks of the charismatic *person*, and, second, he speaks not so much of the person claiming *authority* as of the person claiming *leadership*.' Weber often links charisma with a magical quality in the leaders.

We can than think of charisma as the magical event at the intersection of three elements: the individual characteristics of the leader (or of the person who aspires to leadership), the institutional and organizational structure of the society, and the socio-political conditions of the moment. All of these elements must come together in a precise manner for the charismatic leader to emerge. Its very minimal and possibly the best definition is that of 'authority without rules' as any extension leads it away from its individual form to the sacralised, institutional one and becomes less useful (Turner, 2003: 10).

Weber's analysis of charisma sparked some important secondary literature. Often his work has both a sociological and a political facet and this is certainly true of charisma (Turner, 2003; Turner and Factor, 1984; Baehr, 2008). Turner (2003: 8) notes that Weber had two dimensions for charisma: a trans-historical one that was not connected to any specific situation and a historical one that was instead linked to specific times and situations. The latter was especially tied to great success and to *Herrschaft*. In its pure form charisma is highly unstable and the only way in which it can be retained for a long period of time is through its combination with some other element like the Napoleon's rational approach to strategy (Turner, 2003: 9). In practice the charismatic leader modifies the understanding of the notion of risk that is inherent in crisis situations. The leader affects a cognitive change in the followers by proving that what was previously thought of as impossible or extremely risky is now possible. In the follower the recognition of the capacity of the leader often is mixed with the recognition of the leader's superiority. The latter is the necessary conduit through which these choices become possible and success is the manifestation of the charismatic 'quid' that triggers cognitive change (Turner, 2003).

This may explain why failure in tackling a charismatic test, especially at the beginning of a charismatic career can be a deal-breaker for the leader and why the emergence of charisma is often correlated to struggles in which the leader emerges successful from a situation of difficulty and drives a challenge against the structure (Turner, 2003: 16-17). When leaders can identify the danger and overcome seemingly unusual odds they can be defined as charismatic assuming an almost magical aura (Turner, 2003: 19). This is not innovation as such but a different approach that breaks with traditional action patterns dispensing from the rules that frame 'normal' activity. This is the difference between normal persons (or even innovators) and a charismatic leader. Furthermore, the activity of the charismatic leader provides some tangibly positive change for the followers.[10] In this sense, charismatic relations are likely to exist at both a sociological and a political level, generating both a type of *Herrschaft*, and the practical and material consequences of the material implementation of that relation. When the charismatic leader successfully tackles a problem that is beyond the reach of others this has real, direct implications for the life of the followers and on the management of the polity.

A necessary addition to the discourse over charisma is that, as Baehr (1998; 2008) noted, charisma represents a sanitized sociological take on Weber's earlier political writings on Caesarism. In fact, there is an almost complete absence in the political writings of the concept of charisma (Baehr, 2008: 62), while the idea of Caesarism referred Weber's contemporary readership to a well-understood political debate on the nature and prospects of the German polity. The change in the method of selection of parliamentary leaders (not on the basis if their accomplishments but on the strength of the support of the masses) represented the Caesarist shift in parliamentary democracy (Baehr, 2008: 66). In particular the plebiscitarian tool for both political and military leaders seemed to Weber to represent a profession of faith. Baehr (2008: 67) describes the nature of Caesarism as follows:

a. 'Mode of selection (i.e., leadership route): military *or* civil ("bourgeois")
b. Mode of acclamation: plebiscitary
c. Relation to parliament: antagonistic

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[10] In this sense we could say that the institutionalization of charisma is possible to the extent to which the knowledge about patterns of risk can be properly codified. Charisma would be more than just a knowledge gap in risk assessment that the charismatic leader can exploit, charisma requires success and also a certain kind of social change and benefits for the followers to be sustainable.

       d.   Relation to hereditary legitimism: antagonistic

       e.   Conditions of existence: political democratization'

The core meaning of the two notions shifts noticeably over time. In Weber's political writings Caesarism is seen as constitutionally illegitimate because 'it is a rule devoid of hereditary foundation' (Baehr, 2008: 67) whereas when Weber transforms it into a subtype of charismatic rule in *Economy and Society*, the concept of legitimacy rests on the voluntary compliance that the leader elicits from the masses (Baehr, 2008: 68). In a democracy Caesarism becomes for Weber the "natural complement" of the system. It can make an important contribution to democratic politics if it is checked by a strong parliament (Baehr, 2008: 86). Ultimately Caesarist leaders enjoy a sociological legitimacy (the followers accept his power and are willing to obey him) that, much like charisma, depends on the continued capacity of leaders to first spark the followers' devotion to their person and then to their political project (Baehr, 2008: 87).

Within the sociological writings Caesarism is replaced often by various paraphrases of the concept of plebiscitary/leadership democracy (Baehr, 2008: 89) and *plebiscitare Herrschaft* becomes a hyper-rationalized form of charismatic relation where the legitimacy of the leader is now derived from his embodying the will of the followers (Baehr, 1998: 234).[11] Charisma replaces Caesarism in the sociological writings because it was not encumbered within the strong undertones of the latter term (Baehr, 2008: 103).

Two important issues emerge because of the nature of charismatic power. First, it is a type of authority that can be difficult to transmit to successors. Second, it carries potentially revolutionary transformative power. While an attempt can be made to routinize the charismatic authority of the leader into the organization by using administrative structures and organizational culture (Trice and Beyer, 1986), this is not a critical point here. More interesting in the context of Roman history is the second point: the effect that charismatic leaders may have on institutions. If they bring new visions for the future, are not strictly bound by the rules that are in place at the time of their emergence, and are able to draw to themselves large numbers of people who adopt or abide by that same vision, then they may also be dangerous to the continued existence of the institutions within which they operate, at least in the form in which they found them.

A broad section of charismatic literature in the 1900s focused on both its operation in dictatorship and in the "personalization of command fields." As a consequence 'from being a tool to analyze historical and political forms [charisma] came to throw "meaning" on the interaction between events and needs within political communities' (Pombeni, 2008: 37). The literature has been divided over whether or not charisma is attributed to the leader by the followers (Conger and Kanungo, 1998) or whether it is a characteristic of the leader (Boal and Bryson, 1988). However that may be, if Conger and Kanungo (1998: 211-239) are correct about the dark side of charisma, and if Boal and Bryson (1988: 16) are right in noting that charisma during a crisis is linked to the ability of the leader to offer a solution to it, emergent charismatic leaders may be especially dangerous to the status quo. In the case under examination, the problem is compounded because the charisma is possessed by a successful military leader and by the fact that celebrating a triumph was a clear boost to a political career. Within the context of Roman institutions, there probably was a relatively high concern regarding what Greenwood and

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[11] Baehr (2008: 97) notes that 'Weber's sociological re-modeling of Caesarism as "plebiscitary domination" and other cognate expressions depicts it as a social relationship involving a modern variant of charisma – occidental, political, demagogic – founded on the democratization of the suffrage and its corollary, the mass party system, in which the masses vote for the person that they find most exemplary.'

Hinings (1996: 1026) called radical change: 'when an organization moves form one template-in-use to another.'

Charismatic leaders are not predictable nor can they be counted upon to always be moral or honest (Yukl, 2002: 253; Conger and Kanungo, 1998). They can move the organization in a very different direction from the one that is currently in existence (Greenwood and Hinings, 1996; Burns, 1978) and may replace existing leaders. In a political system that hinged on strong legal and traditional bases like the Roman Republic, these must have been very problematic issues. We argue that the polity found in some parts of the ritual of triumph a way to dampen the emergent charismatic influence of the military leaders it relied upon and to preserve the institutional structure it had created.

3. The Triumph in Rome

This section deals with the practice of the Roman triumph. Roman society appears more than many others as one 'geared for war' and in the literature its military activity was linked to a complex set of motivations (Rich, 2001; 1995) and not simply either 'defensive imperialism' (Linderski, 1984) or the desire for glory and wealth that war brought (Harris, 1979). Be that as it may, Roman society had no shortage of celebrations for successful military leaders. However the limitations of early records and the fact that, after the triumph of Cornelius Balbus in 19 B.C., Augustus reserved the practice for the members of the imperial family (Payne, 1962: 149; Lendon, 1997: 112) bring us to focus on the late Republican triumphs. This is not a grave limitation for our argument because we are interested in the charismatic facet of the triumph and its effects especially on established rational-legal institutions of which the period in question provides a variety of interesting examples. Later triumphs would not seem to serve our analysis as well. Their nature changes with the transition from Republic to Empire, becoming no more than another way of exalting the members of the imperial family. The triumph's function as a way to dampen emergent charismatic power and to protect Republican institutional balance withers as those institutions rapidly become shadows of their former selves; mere facades for autocracy and its rituals and honours became a tool for imperial rule (Lendon 1997). As Payne eloquently puts it:

> *Augustus had killed the triumph: it had become in his reign no more than one of the many imperial processions, a gesture in honour of his own divinity* (Payne, 1962: 155)

Therefore, it makes sense to follow Auliard (2001) and limit the count of triumphal activity to the period between 509 B.C. and 40 B.C. The following table summarizes the number of triumphs, ovations and triumphs on Mount Alban that were celebrated in that period.

Table 1. Triumphal Celebrations – 509 B.C. to 20 B.C.

Date	Single Triumph	Double Triumph	Naval Triumph	Ovation	Triumph on Mount Alban	Triumph and Ovation	Total
509-396	18	3 (= 6)	–	4	–	2	30
395-300	35	2 (= 4)	–	–	–	2	41
299-200	40	10 (=20)	8	2	2	–	72

199-100	53	5 (= 10)	2 + 1 dbl	6	2	–	75
99-40	27	2 (=4)	–	4	1	–	36
Number of Triumphators	173	22 x 2 = 44	11	10	5	4	254

Source: Auliard (2001: 40)

It is possible however to suggest the following periodization of Roman history that we can superimpose on triumphal practices. The Monarchic period (753-509 BC) an Early Republican period (509-287 BC), a Mid-Republican period (287-133), a Late Republican period (133-27 BC) that however included Caesar's dictatorial powers and the transition period (49-27 BC), and an Imperial period from 27 BC onward. The periods highlighted here reflect some important changes in the political and social life of the Republic. In 287 BC the *Lex Hortensia* was promulgated marking an important shift in the balance of power between the aristocracy and the plebeian orders and ultimately favoring the senatorial elite. The date of 133 BC reflects the ultimately doomed attempt of the Gracchi to implement agrarian reforms.

While relatively little is extant in triumphal terms for the monarchic period, we can highlight some interesting trends for the successive periodizations. First of all, the political relevance of the ritual that is always present during the Republican period is very much heightened in the Late Republican phase. Second, the political significance of the triumph also changes. In particular, while during the Republican period we witness a progressively intensifying political competition within the elite at least partially based on military success, the logic of the Imperial period is very different. The triumph sheds its competitive nature to become a tool used to confirm and support an already allocated political power (McCormick 1986).

The nature of the triumph evolved throughout the history of Rome. Besides the aforementioned imperial reforms, Roman military expansion in *Iberia*, modern Spain, opened the doors to a series of *triumphators* who did not hold consular *imperium*.[12] In fact, Stewart (1998: 89-90) argues that as late as 207 BC Roman practice had no precedent for shared triumphs as they would have presumed shared command. The Roman Senate, as Richardson (1975) shows, was quickly able to substantially curb this trend by reframing the *ius triumphandi* – the law that regulated the assignment of the triumph – in a more restrictive fashion.[13] The Senate itself played a crucial role in Republican Rome's triumphal tradition if nothing else because it heard the request of the victorious general and granted the right to a triumph (even if they could not refuse one if the *ius triumphandi* prescribed that it should be granted), effectively becoming 'a crucial

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[12] It should however be remembered that only the positions of dictators, consuls and praetors (and the *imperium* that went with these) qualified a general for the triumph. This is reflected in the refusal of a triumph to the Proconsul Lucius Cornelius Lentulus. The Senators judged that his actions would deserve per se a triumph but found that "they had no precedent left them by their ancestors of any person enjoying a triumph, who had not performed the service either of dictator, consul or praetor" (Livy XXXI:20). Lentulus had to be happy with an *ovatio*. He was not alone. As Valerius Maximus (2004: 71) reminds us that the law 'was upheld so rigidly that a triumph was not decreed for Scipio Africanus when he won back the two provinces of Spain, or for Marcus Marcellus when he captured Syracuse, since they did not hold any *imperium* when they were sent to fight those campaigns.'

[13] In its late republican format, the *ius triumphandi* established that the granting of a triumph required that the requester held the *imperium*, and that he had waged a *iustum bellum*, a just war. Furthermore, the war had to be against a worthwhile enemy (this excluded slaves and pirates), 5,000 enemies had to be killed in battle, and the army should have been withdrawn from the province in which it had served as evidence that the military campaign had been successful (Richardson, 1975: 61-62). Triumphs over other Roman armies, in civil war, were also excluded. Hence Lucan (1982: I:12) bitter verse: 'Bella geri placuit, nullos habitura triumphos' (It was seen fit to wage wars that could win no triumphs).

means of collective control in an age of great individual victories' (Millar, 1984: 5). Frequently, the Senate debated the issue in detail (Millar, 1984: 11) and triumph hunting as Rich (1995) describes it may have been politically very risky because of the checks and balances that other members of the Roman military-political elite would have provided against unscrupulous military action. During the republican period the Senate remained a powerful interlocutor and gatekeeper for triumphal practice (Stewart, 1998: 86).

Not all military successes warranted a full triumph and two other practices were established: the *ovatio* and the triumph on Mount Alban. The *ovatio* was granted for defeating a lesser enemy, like pirates, and for conflicts that produced little bloodshed. The general granted the *ovatio* walked the streets of Rome in a lesser toga (rather than riding through the city in the *vestis triumphalis*) and was granted a myrtle wreath instead of a laurel one. Neither the Senate nor the army participated in the procession (Versnel, 1970). If the Senate refused a triumph, sometimes a disgruntled general who had nonetheless gained an important victory would go through the paces of the triumph but instead of parading through Rome he would do so on Mount Alban.

The institution of the triumph has a very long history even if its origins are still at the center of debate (Versnel, 2006; Rüpke, 2006). Plutarch in his *Romulus* attributes its origin to the actions of the mythical founder of the city, who had made a vow to Jupiter before going into battle against king Acron of the Caninenses. After achieving a resounding victory Romulus, followed by his army, paraded through the city wearing a laurel garland and carrying the suit of armor of the defeated king as a trophy (Plutarch, 1998a: XVI). Over time, and given the opportunity, this relatively simple procession evolved into a quite elaborate affair and sometimes a gaudy display of power and conquered wealth (Beard, 2007). Appian, who described Publius Cornelius Scipio's triumph over the Carthaginians, is worth quoting in detail.

The form of the triumph (which the Romans continue to employ) was as follows: All who were in the procession wore crowns. Trumpeters led the advance and wagons laden with spoils. Towers were borne along representing the captured cities, and pictures showing the exploits of the war; then gold and silver coin and bullion, and whatever else they had captured of that kind; then came the crowns that had been given to the general as a reward for his bravery by cities, by allies, or by the army itself. White oxen came next, and after them elephants and the captive Carthaginian and Numidian chiefs. Lictors clad in purple tunics preceded the general; also a chorus of musicians and pipers, in imitation of an Etruscan procession, wearing belts and golden crowns, and they march evenly with song and dance. ...
Next came a lot of incense bearers, and after them the general himself on a chariot embellished with various designs, wearing a crown of gold and precious stones, and dressed, according to the fashion of the country, in a purple toga embroidered with golden stars. He bore a scepter of ivory, and a laurel branch, which is always the Roman symbol of victory. Riding in the same chariot with him were boys and girls, and on horses on either side of him young men, his own relatives. Then followed those who had served him in the war as secretaries, aids, and armor-bearers. After these came the army arranged in companies and cohorts, all of them crowned and carrying laurel branches, the bravest of them bearing their military prizes. They praised some of their

captains, derided others, and reproached others; for in a triumph everybody is free, and is allowed to say what he pleases. (Appian of Alexandria, 1962: LXVI - LXX)

The details of individual triumphs vary according to the enemy, the dimension of the victory and of the spoils and, perhaps, the mood in the city. We are, in other words, in the presence of a rather complex, historically evolving practice (Beard, 2007; Bonfante Warren, 1970), centering on the public celebration of crucial military victories, incorporating important religious elements, but also involving the contemporary exaltation and 'dressing down' of the victorious general. Bonfante Warren (1970: 49) tries to linearize the historical progression of the triumph:

> *We can follow the gradual transformation of the triumph from a purification ritual, which cleansed the city and the soldiers of Rome from the blood-guilt of the ' murder ' of war, into a purely honorific ceremony, whose chief importance lay in the auctoritas and consequent political power it bestowed upon the victorious general, and the honour it brought his family and his troops.*

While this reading may be too linear (Beard, 2007), there is no doubt that the triumph had a close correlation with political power (Millar, 1984; Brennan, 2004) and the focus on the political element progressively increased. However, much of the literature focusing on Roman triumphal practices focuses on the religious, immanent facet of the *imperium* and classifies it, rather unidimensionally, as an apotropaeic practice intended to shield the general from bad luck and the envy of the gods (Ehlers, 1939; Künzl, 1988; Payne, 1962; Versnel, 1970; Wagenvoort, 1947). Versnel's (1970) discussion of the *imperium* relies on the analysis that Wagenvoort (1947) presented in *Roman Dynamism*, where he equated the *imperium* to the 'chief's mana' a 'personal quality, a magic, immanent power, which "works", manifesting itself in miraculous deeds, and as such is acknowledged by people who come into contact with it' (Versnel, 1970: 356). This immanent, superhuman power closely resembles the Weberian notion of charisma rather than simple political or military power.[14] However, this avenue is not explored and very little is done to link the triumph to Weberian scholarship. Versnel finds us only in partial agreement when he argues that

> *A successful man is from all sides threatened by 'feindliche Mächte', whether demonic or divine. I share Ehlers' view that the words spoken by the slave* respice post te, hominem te esse memento, *the iron ring worn by the triumphator, the phallus, the flail and the bells fastened to the chariot and the* ioci militares *are all of them apotropaeic means of warding off* invidia (Versnel, 1970: 380)

There is no doubt that warrior charisma had a religious or sacred nature in pre-modern societies (Turner, 2004) and the Roman triumph has a strong element of sacralization of the individual who is supposed to represent in his accoutrement the image of god. This

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[14] Versnel (1970) links the *imperium* to the concept of *felicitas* interpreting the *triumphator* as the bearer of good fortune, who would bring his good luck to Rome itself. According to Versnel the triumph was both a duty and a reward for the victor.

magical/sacral transference is very interesting in contrast with the *ioci militares* and the symbols of mortality and failure that accompany the general in the procession.[15] However, Rome seems, at least at the time of our analysis, to have evolved past the pre-modern stage and it appears that the religious side should be complemented by a more pragmatic, political one. Furthermore, the triumph certainly had apotropaeic and religious goals (Versnel, 1970; Köves-Zulauf, 1972; Rüpke, 1990),[16] but its structure seems to involve more than just this aim.[17] Zonaras (Epitome VII, 21) notes that

> *... the triumphator ascended his chariot. Now the chariot did not resemble one used in games or in war, but had been made in the shape of a round tower. ... A public servant ... rode also upon the chariot itself holding over him the crown made of precious stones set in gold and kept saying to him 'Look behind!', the 'behind' meaning naturally 'Look ahead at the ensuing years of life, and do not be elated or puffed up by your present fortune.' Both a bell and a whip were fastened to the chariot, signifying that it was possible for him to meet misfortune as well, to the extent of being disgraced or condemned to death. It was customary for those who had been condemned to die for any offence to wear a bell, to the end that no one should approach them as they walked along and so be affected with pollution.*

The symbolism attached to the procession makes it possible to argue that an alternative explanation based on the dampening of emergent charisma can be read in the Roman triumphal ritual. Because Versnel does not account for the charismatic side of the *imperium*, as he largely jettisons the political/power side to focus on the religious/dynamistic one, he ends up at best conflating the two elements. At a minimum the importance of the *ioci militares* is underestimated. Here I wish to correct this imbalance by putting forward the notion that some practices existed within the triumphal praxis that limited the possibility of a charismatic general rising to power and damaging Republican institutions. The flail and bell (symbols of capital punishment), the person holding a gold crown over the head of the *triumphator* while reminding him of his human nature, and the *ioci militares* can be interpreted as tools intended to reduce the charismatic aura of the *triumphator* and to deal with the dual nature of the *imperium*.

The *imperium* was both the supreme command in the field and the dynamist character of the leader.[18] It is best interpreted as charismatic power with both a 'magical' and a 'political'

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[15] Of course there is a part of the literature on charisma, like Shils (1975) who tried to reduce the notion of charisma by connecting them to sacralised central institutions or to the notion of sacrality. This however reduces the concept of charisma to a cultural category (Turner, 2003).

[16] There were warding elements here, and the purification ones are clearly noted by Plutarch: 'the soldiers crowned with laurel followed the triumphal chariot, so that almost cleansed from the human slaughter they enter the city' (Paulus Diaconus: 104 L). However, the political side has seldom been explored.

[17] For example Itgenshorst (2005: 210) argues, somewhat reductively (Versnel, 2006), that the original goal of the triumph may have been to offer a way for the victorious army to bring back the war booty to Rome.

[18] For an interesting analysis of the nature of *imperium* see Culpepper Stroup (2007). She argues that the triumph is the moment of 'religious transformation of violence from 'fact' to 'memory'' (Culpepper Stroup, 2007: 31), and proceeds to define the *imperium* as '*the potential of irresistible violence*' (Culpepper Stroup, 2007: 32). In this reading, the *triumphator* becomes something beyond a normal human being when he returns to Rome. 'By assuming the dress and aspect of an ultimately superior "Other," the *triumphator* functions as a kind of divinely mandated human receptacle for the divinely mandated martial force of Rome: he becomes *imperium* incarnate' (Culpepper

side to its operation. Within the context of Republican Rome a tension existed: on the one hand, the *Res Publica* and its institutions demanded dedication and respect from all of the servants of the state. On the other hand, the consistent military expansionism upon which the Republic was based required an equally consistent influx of capable field commanders. A successful military record was a very important part of Roman political careers, just as war booty partially funded the political ambitions of victorious generals. This placed the latter in the unique position of having to be hailed as possessing the immanent power of the *imperium* (in its charismatic notion) and to present a potential threat to the integrity and continued viability of republican institutions if that potential charisma was recognized by the people and a *charismatische Gemeinde* developed. This required that the institutions be somehow protected.

As we saw Roman law regulated in detail the granting of the triumph but traditional elements and considerations of appropriate behavior also played a role. Beside the *ius triumphandi*, there were concerns regarding the general who would become too prideful (or perhaps too charismatic) because of his victories. Camillus is one such example (Plutarch, 1998b). His pride in riding through the city on a chariot drawn by four white stallions (an image meant to evoke Jupiter) stood up poorly to the expectations for 'a civil magistrate subject to the law' (Plutarch, 1998b: VII). Even Marius, when he attempted to enter the Senate still wearing his triumphal costume, met with reproach (Plutarch, 1998b: XII).

An important element in the context of the triumph was the freedom of the soldiers to heckle the general, a custom that appears to have been long standing. Varro, in his *De Lingua Latina* (Varro, 1951: 237), roots the *ioci militares* in Greek Bacchic practice: 'the soldiers shout "Oho, triumph!" as they come back with the general through the city and he is going up to the Capitol.' Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his *Roman Antiquities* (1950, VII: 72) also gives the practice ancient roots.

> *The triumphal entrances also show that raillery and fun-making in the manner of satyrs were an ancient practice native to the Romans; for the soldiers who take part in the triumphs are allowed to satirize and ridicule the most distinguished men, including even the generals, in the same manner as those who ride in procession in carts at Athens; the soldiers once jested in prose as they clowned, but now they sing improvised verses*

The practice changed over time from a simple statement reflecting the active participation of the soldiers in the victory and the sharing of merit, to bawdier couplets (Ehlers, 1939). Various generals were subjected to this treatment over time (Gerick, 1993: 34). Certainly one of the most famous instances of *ioci militares* is recounted in Suetonius description of Caesar's triumph.[19]

> *There was no stain on [Caesar's] reputation for chastity except his intimacy with King Nicomedes, but that was a deep and lasting reproach, which laid him open*

Stroup, 2007: 37). This is an interesting reading that highlights the complex nature of the triumph and the close relation it had with the *imperium* and the political facet the latter always expressed.

[19] Of course the critique of Caesar was well represented in the political writings of his times. Cicero in his *De Officis* wrote 'Here you have a man who longed to be king of the Roman people and master of every nation; and he achieved it! If anyone says that such a greed is honourable he is out of his mind: for he is approving the death of laws and liberty, and counting their oppression – a foul and hateful thing – as something glorious' (Cicero, 1991 III:83).

to insults from every quarter. ...., in his Gallic triumph his soldiers, among the bantering songs which are usually sung by those who followed the chariot, shouted these lines, which became a by-word:

'All the Gauls did Caesar vanquish, Nicomedes vanquished him; Lo! Now Caesar rides in triumph, victor over all the Gauls, Nicomedes does not triumph, who subdued the conqueror' (Suetonius, 1983a: XLIX)

All the same, his exploits with women and the rumors about some shady financial dealings also became the topic of comment during the triumph.

That he did not refrain from intrigues in the provinces is shown in particular by this couplet, which was also shouted by the soldiers in his Gallic triumph:

'Men of Rome, keep close to your consorts, here's a bald adulterer. Gold in Gaul you spent in dalliance, which you borrowed here in Rome' (Suetonius, 1983a: LI).

The source of the *ioci miltares* (the army) is also relevant as these men are those whose contact with the potentially charismatic leader is closest and they may be expected to form the core of an emerging *charismatische Gemeinde*. Accusations against triumphing generals as Millar (1985: 5-6) noted certainly could have had a dampening effect on the personal and political stature of these men. Another case of *ioci militares* directly speaking to the moral fiber of the *triumphator* is the verse sung by the legionnaires at the triumph of the Consuls Lepidus and Plancus, both of whom had had their brothers added to the proscription lists (Velleius Paterculus, 1924: II 67).

De Germanis non Gallis duo triumphant consules[20]

The *ioci militares* had the potential to undermine authority along with shielding its object from ill fortune, and such a potential was not welcome in imperial times. Consider the fate that befell a group of bystanders who heckled the new emperor Gallienus. They asked what had happened to his father, Valerian, who had been captured while campaigning in Persia and was left to his destiny.[21] Gallienus had the incautious spectators executed (Payne, 1962: 188-189). The army itself under the Empire seems to have played a greatly diminished role. Josephus (1982 VII: 123-131) tells us that when Vespasian and Titus celebrated their Judean triumph they briefly spoke to the army, which had been arrayed in parade at porticus of Octavia and then dismissed the soldiers to an imperial-provided feast. With the rise of the Empire the power of the Senate

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[20] The pun here is on the word *Germanus* that means both brother and German: 'Over the Brothers/*Germans*, not the *Gauls* the two consuls triumph.' Originally Lepidus and Plancus were supposed to defend a Gallic tribe, but the situation evolved and they destroyed a Germanic threat. The triumph was achieved over a Germanic tribe but in Gallia, hence the pun's biting irony. Bliss (1960:30) notes that the overall validity of Paterculus's entry may be disputed on the basis of the analysis of the *Fasti Triumphales* (CIL 1.179) where the two consuls appear to have triumphed on separate if close dates. In fact Paterculus has the two parading together on the same triumphal chariot. As it may be; the effectiveness of the statement in dampening possible political and charismatic power remains.

[21] According to Lactantius *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, Valerian was made to act as a horse-mounting stool for the Persian Emperor Shapur. After his death, his skin was stuffed and preserved as a symbol of Persian victory over Rome. How much of this is true remains unclear. Still, Gallienus did not try particularly hard to ransom his father.

had also waned: while in Republican Rome the Senate paraded in front of the *triumphator* (Dio, 1961: 21) establishing a clear hierarchical relation with the general, during the imperial period the Senators walked behind the Emperor. It was Augustus, at his triumph for the victory gained at Actium who 'permitted his fellow-consul and the other magistrates, contrary to precedent, to follow him' (Dio, 1961: 21). This was not a harmless change but a strong signal as to who held power in Rome. The culmination of this practice rests with the imperial appropriation of the triumph and its loss of relevance as with emperor Nero's mockery of the practice when he paraded to commemorate his achievements in music and poetry (Suetonius, 1983b). Hatscher (2000: 75) goes as far as ending the line of charismatic leaders in Rome at Julius Caesar. Rüpke (2006: 268) also believes that the *ioci militares* held more than just a apotropaeic meaning; he notes that 'the mockery of the soldiers was not 'apotropaic' but rather formed a rite of reversal (and substantial public critique) in the presence of a superior who had enjoyed the right over the life and death of his inferiors and was now confined to immobility by the rite.'[22] While this specific interpretation is very unlikely (Versnel, 2006: 310-312), Rüpke (2006) is correct regarding the public critique of the general.

Furthermore, the *ioci militares* are not linked solely to the triumph: they appear also in the *ovatio* and in a context seemingly linked to power rather than *invidia*.

> *The senate decreed [Consul C. Valerius Potitus] an `ovation,' and whilst he made his formal entry into the City, rude verses were bandied by the soldiers with their accustomed licence in which the consul was abused and Menenius extolled in alternate couplets, whilst at every mention of the tribune the voices of the soldiers were drowned in the cheers and applause of the bystanders. This latter circumstance occasioned more anxiety to the Senate than the licence of the soldiers, which was almost a regular practice, and as there was no doubt that if Menenius became a candidate he would be elected as a consular tribune, he was shut out by the election of consuls.* (Livy, IV: 53)

At least in the case of Claudius Nero they were directed not to their general but to the man who was riding on horseback beside him and had agreed to renounce the triumph even if his contribution in defeating the Carthaginian army at Metaurus had been crucial. Livy (XXVIII: 9) reminds us that 'in their jests and songs the soldiers on that day celebrated the name of C. Claudius Nero more frequently than that of their own consul.' In a very real sense, the political importance of military victories takes central place in many events during the republican period. Millar (1984: 5) noted that the accusations of financial corruption often leveled against the returning *imperators* outside of triumphal practice 'certainly served the function of preventing a brief eminence in the field from being translated into a continued dominance at home.' As a critical space and occasion for political consecration the triumph also became a key site of elite conflict in Republican Rome with the representatives of different factions disputing it. As the mode of political competition changes in the imperial period the trumph loses its importance in consecrating political advances and becomes a ritual devoted at best to the reiteration and display of already consecrated power.

In Republican Rome triumphal practice was closely interwoven with power struggles and the Roman generals often used the triumph as a political tool to further their political career

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[22] Rüpke (2006) is arguing about a connection between the *triumphator* and Roman statuary; hence the reference to the immobility.

(Miller, 2001: 21-22; Beard, 2007: 33). The members of the elite had important stakes in victorious military operations and triumphs offered a way to stress the success of the military service that the *cursus honorum* required for all political appointments in the republic (Rich, 1995; 2001). This was a process that the state recognized for example through the granting of commemorative statuary (Hölscher, 1978; Sehlmeyer, 1999; Walter, 2004),[23] the building of monuments (Rich, 2001: 66), often games were organized after the triumph to capitalize on the popularity of the general (Millar, 1984:11-12). This may have served the purpose of 'stressing the hierarchy within the nobility' (Walter, 2004: 284).[24] An indication of this competition could be gleaned from the fact that it was the higher ranked Consuls, rather than the lower level Praetors, who claimed triumphs most often (Rich, 1995: 52). The fact that wooing the people was so important underscores the relevance of potential charisma in the Republican political process. The *ioci miltares* and the more legal attacks on the triumphing general may therefore be seen from a Weberian point of view as a tool in dampening emergent charisma.

Towards the end of the Republic, and intensifying with the Social Wars (91-88 BC) and ending with Caesar's assassination, the political, social and military situation in Rome underwent many important changes that favored the emergence of powerful challenges to Republican institutions and law especially from figures like Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar himself. During this period some very important differences began to emerge in the process. There is clear evidence of increased intra-elite competition with a particular focus on specific leaders especially after 133 BC. The four men mentioned above represent this shift very clearly at the top of the political-military hierarchy. Keaveney (2005: 157-158) notes how Sulla's Mithridatic triumph was used as a tool to legitimize his political position. This competition brought with it a concerning amount of power concentration in the form of multiple consulships and dictatorships.[25] Very common appears to have become the use of money to build political support in Rome. Suetonius mentions that Caesar resorted to plunder and pillage to fund his political activity and that he 'made alliances and thrones a matter of barter' (1983a: LIV). As the political situation changed we see more pressure being put on Roman law and tradition practices and also on its perceptions of propriety. Appian (1962 XI: 100) reminds us of how Sulla during his dictatorship kept only the facade of republican freedoms. The triumphal practices seemed have little effect on the reality of total power:

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[23] This process was not necessarily a very common one, these statuary in honour of the *triumphator* being rare (Flower, 1996; Itgenshorst, 2004), and some privately build statue was also erected. The latter was perhaps something that could be explained by residual, private political competition within the elite, but in 158 BC a censorial edict ordered the removal of all of these private statues from the area of the forum.

[24] This is my translation, Walter (2004: 284) says 'Demnach betonten die Ehrenstatuen die Hierarchie innerhalb der Nobilität.'

[25] Multiple consulships are found throughout the Roman Republic to be sure: Quintus Fabius and Marcus Claudius both held the office five time during the Punic Wars. During the Roman fight to establish hegemony over central and southern Italy Quintus Fabius Maximus was consul five times and Publius Decius four and yet the pattern in the late Republic rings different.

	Consulship	Dictatorship
Gaius Marius	107; 104-100; 86 (VII)	-
Lucius Cornelius Sulla	88; 80 (II)	82-81
Lucius Cornelius Cinna	88-84 (IV)	-
Gneus Pompeus Magnus	70; 55; 52 (III)	-
Gaius Julius Caesar	59; 48; 46-44 (V)	49-44

He had a triumph on account of the Mithridatic war, during which some of the scoffers called his government "the official denial of royalty" because he kept back only the name of king. Others took the contrary view, judging from his acts, and called it "the official avowal of tyranny"
(Appian, 1962 XI: 101)

Two of these elements of friction are worth noting here. The first is the excessive lavishness of triumphs the second was the use of triumphal symbols outside of the triumphal parade. The former appears to have been targeted to impress on the Roman people the power of the general and of its political faction (Beard, 2007) but was increasingly seen as "un-Roman" by many commentators. Velleius Paterculus (1924) notes how in 63 BC Pompey was granted the right to wear the triumphal toga and the gold crown at the games that followed his second and third triumphs. This was very negatively received: 'he forebore to use this honour more than once and indeed that was itself too often' (Velleius Paterculus, 1924 II: 40). Pliny (1942 XXXVII: 14-16) chastises Pompey for the lavishness of the triumph of 61 BC and in particular for parading a large portrait of himself out of pearls 'never, I think, would his surname "The Great" have survived among that age had he celebrated his first in this manner' and adds the quip that 'here it was austerity that was defeated and extravagance that more truly celebrated its triumph.' Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1950 II/3: 4) noted how the triumph had become in his times 'a very costly and ostentatious pageant, being attended with a theatrical pomp that is designed rather as a display of wealth than as approbation of valour, and it has departed in every respect from its ancient simplicity.'

Last but not least we witness closer ties developing between the armies, which were becoming increasingly professionalized, and the generals. Sulla in 88 BC refused to give up command of his army, which the Senate had explicitly ordered him to do. Plutarch (1998c: 29) reminds us that Caesar asked for an extension of his Gallic command by sending one of his captains to plead the case in front of the Senate. When the officer saw the Senators were dragging their feet he is said to have clasped a hand to the hilt of his *gladius* and to have said 'if you will not grant it him, this shall give it to him.'

Even under these conditions though triumphal law was applied in some cases (as with Marius' refusal to grant Sulla a triumph for Jughurta's capture). It is true however that the end of the Republic also saw an increase in debatable triumphs exactly because of the increased political significance attached to the ritual during the period (McCormick, 1986: 12). The *ioci militares* remained in place and proper respect for the Senate had to be shown. Marius was sent away from the Senate chambers when he arrived there in full triumphal regalia (Plutarch, 1998b: 12).

However, it is evident that the role of triumphs in fostering political careers by showcasing military capacity and the largesse of the festival and games thrown by the *triumphator* take center stage. The apotropaeic and dampening facets of triumphal practice appear increasingly under pressure. This is the result of the scale of these triumphs and of the intense personal rivalries that emerge within the Roman elite. Roman sources ascribe to these men levels of ambition that are judged 'un-Roman' and depict them, for example with Pompey's Greek Triumphs, as unduly influenced by 'oriental' (i.e., kingship-like) ideas and practices. Pompey himself had robbed Metellus Creticus of twp key prisoners that the latter wished to display in his triumph using them instead for his own (Beard, 2007: 33-34).

At the same time economic, social and political conditions had deeply changed in Rome leading to a less egalitarian society where armies' composition differed greatly from that of the early republic. This was the effect of the momentum of the conjoined economic marginalization of the small landholder, itself dependent on the growth of the *latifundia* and the explosion in slave labour, and of the staggering mortality rates that continued warfare exerted on the class of the farmer/soldier (Leddon 1997). With the use of the *capite censi* the army secured more recruits but nothing changed financially for these men who would be paid nothing at the end of their enlistment, while the wars in which they fought and died enriched an increasingly wealthy elite that was unwilling to redistribute any of these gains.

As this oligarchy proved incapable to successfully manage the tensions that the increased size of the Republic engendered, a series of ambitious individuals emerged to challenge it and with it the institutional and traditional frameworks on which it relied.

4. Conclusions

The triumph was a fluid, historically changing ritual (Beard, 2007). Even if it was just one facet of a complex political structure (Brennan, 2004), its practice was important in Rome (Flower, 2004: 50) and, as the Republic expanded, evidence of a power struggle emerges to define its bounds (Richardson, 1975) and to grant or refuse them (Livy, XXVI: 21; XXXIII: 22; XXXVIII: 50). Ultimately, as republican power gave way to imperial authority, the triumph itself and the visibility of the *triumphator* became a key site of political conflict. With Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar Roman politics begins a steady drift towards autocracy. The convulsions of the Social Wars first and outright civil war later are both the backdrop and the fuel for the shift towards a 'strong' figure that could solve the problems that the oligarchy and the Republican institutions could not. As domestic crisis deepened the spaces for charismatic leaders expanded. Figures like Cincinnatus who held his dictatorship for 15 days and returned to private life after crushing the Aequi and being granted a triumph (Livy, III: 29) are scarce indeed in late Republican Rome. Yet there are differences among these Late Republican leaders in the way in which they approached their challenge to the Republican institutions. So Lucan (1982) can still bemoan Pompey as the last example of Roman virtue and accuse Caesar to be the autocrat whose triumphs have the tragic taint of power lust and civil war.

What may have begun as a celebratory and apotropaeic rite seems to have also held an important political meaning. Triumphal ritual displayed power and recognized the charismatic value of victorious military leaders consecrating their political status. At the same time, it incorporated practices and symbols that reduced the possibility of that charismatic power to go unchallenged and to undermine the Republic's institutions. The position of the Senators in the procession, the role of the public slave on the chariot, the whip and bell, and the practice of the *ioci militares* are all symbolic reminders of the hierarchical place of the victorious general and of his 'human' nature. They are eminently suited to reaffirm the paramount position of republican institutions vis-à-vis the challenge that a truly charismatic general or simply the emergence of a 'strong man' may pose to them. There may be at work some of the civilizing effect that warrior charisma is exposed to according to Turner (2004: 248) and that effect could have been institutionalized through some elements of the triumph. At the same time, political and historical evolution appears to have reduced some of these safeguards' capacity. The Marian army reforms effectively opened the door for the legionnaires to become something akin to clients to their general, but the process was a long one. Consular re-elections became increasingly common, as

was the practice of leaders like Marius and Caesar to use part of their war booty to fund the political careers of their allies in Rome (Plutarch 1998b, 1998c). As elite competition increased starting in the last third of the Second Century BC the efficacy of the triumph in dampening emergent charisma or at least in shielding existing institutional and social arrangements from large scale change also decreased. The reasons for this are like to be multiple. Marius, Pompey, Sulla and Caesar truly achieved momentous feats of arms and showed themselves to be great if ruthless politicians. Social, political and economic conditions changed dramatically driving the need for institutional reform and the triumphal ritual changed with them.

It is always difficult to establish causation in such complex historical patterns, but it is interesting to note how, as long as the Republic endured, even the greatest and most successful generals like Marius and Caesar never enjoyed the level of transcendental status that even minor imperial figures had later on. Triumphal practice could not stop the ascendant autocracy within the context of very much changed socio-economic conditions in Rome. It was designed to act as a stabilizer within a specific institutional setting that preceded the period of crisis the republic was living. The crisis and the incapacity of 'normal' procedures and institutions to find a way out of it progressively opened the door to charismatic options and finally to the empire. During the imperial period the nature of imperial processions and rituals changes dramatically (McCormick, 1986; Versnel, 1970) especially in its political dimension and their power is now used to reinforce and stabilize dynastic claims rather than to establish political careers within a competitive environment. Hence the delay of four years between Septimius Severus' victory over the Parthians (198 AD) and the celebration of his triumph, which he combined with Caracalla's marriage and his own tenth anniversary as Emperor (McCormick, 1986: 18).

If the triumph is understood, besides as an apotropaeic and religious ritual, also as a site for elite competition and the assignment of coveted political capital it would then be more logical to see some of its elements as having a charisma dampening effect, which would protect extant institutional arrangements from potentially revolutionary changes.

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