

Carsten Hjort Lange, *Triumphs in the Age of Civil War: The Late Republic and the Adaptability of Triumphal Tradition* London, UK.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. Pp. xiii + 333. 17 figs. Hardcover, \$128.00. ISBN 978-1-4742-6784-7.

This book is the latest work by Lange in a career marked by several books and articles on the many complex issues around the topics of triumph and civil war in the Late Republic and Age of Augustus. In this book Lange has composed a historical work addressing the Roman processes for dealing with the tension between the desire for triumphs and the tradition of not triumphing for victories in civil war. As the title states his subject is the Late Republic, but he goes on to set up and outline issues of triumph and civil war down to the time of Constantine. It is superbly written, clearly and persuasively argued, and well-supported by thoughtful consideration of ancient and modern sources; among the latter, I should note, he shows awareness of some of my work, but his disinclination to accept some of my conclusions does not change my positive judgment of the book.

Chapter One establishes his approach to the problems as well as modern approaches to the topic of civil war, including contemporary theories on civil wars and failed states, which have been applied to this period by other recent authors. Chapter Two outlines the forms of victory celebration in the Republic including Triumph, Ovation, Naval Triumph, and Alban Mount Triumph. Chapter Three examines the *Fasti Triumphales* as sources for civil and non-civil war triumphs. Chapters Four and Five make up the core of the book and its argument. Chapter Four surveys the changing nature of triumphs in the Late Republican period from Marius to Octavian with a detailed examination of innovations and variations from traditional practice. He carefully explains how the triumph, far from being a set ritual, was flexible and how Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar all exploited that flexibility in their own ways to celebrate victories in civil wars. For example, Caesar and Octavian eventually abandon the traditional pattern of meeting with the Senate in person outside the *pomerium* to request a triumph, although Lange traces the precedent to Marius. Chapter Five supports that chapter with detailed analysis of the construction of enemies in that same period. Chapter Six focuses on Augustus and the form of his victory monument at Actium as a case study in the commemoration of a civil war victory. Chapter Seven examines in detail Augustus' triumphal and triumph-like returns to the city of Rome including his final departure from the city in his triumphal funeral. This is followed by an Epilogue that analyzes the Casa di Pilatos reliefs as a visual record of civil war and triumph and an Appendix that surveys triumphal arches with particular emphasis on those erected following civil wars by Vespasian and Titus, Septimius Severus, and Constantine.

The topics Lange covers are significant for our understanding of the Late Republic and the Roman response to this chaotic period. He begins each topic by establishing the traditions in the Middle Republic. For triumphs that means reference to Aemilius Paullus and Scipio Africanus to establish a point of departure. For triumphal arches

he goes back to the earliest examples known also in the 2nd century BC. This is an almost unbelievably rich book addressing many key questions such as the definition of civil war, the nature of the Late Republic, whether Rome should be considered a 'failed state' in the 1st century BC, and many more. His major conclusion, however, is that "a commander could in practice expect to triumph after a civil war victory if it could also be represented as being over a foreign enemy ..." but "the civil aspect of the war did not have to be denied" (p. 2). A corollary to this is his conclusion, "There is every reason to suggest that civil war became an integral part of the Republican triumphal tradition due to the changing circumstances of the Late Republic" (p. 123).

He supports this through a very well-structured argument supported by close reading of the primary literary and documentary sources and with occasion support from visual sources as well. This major contribution is bolstered by many other thoughtful conclusions such as his statement that "the *Fasti Triumphales* should not be seen as an exclusively archival document, but a piece of historico-antiquarian reconstruction" (p. 8). and his argument that under Caesar "the triumph was becoming a medium for negotiating status and prestige in a monarchy" (p. 66). Lange also clarifies a long-standing issue about the tension of triumphing over other Romans; he argues that a *hostis* declaration means that the enemy in civil wars were no longer citizens. Triumphing over them is no different legally than triumphing over other foreign foes (p. 114). This may seem to be splitting hairs, but it provided the necessary legal cover allowing declarations of war and triumphal celebrations over former *cives*.

All of which is not to say that the book does not have some weaknesses. It exhibits some of the symptoms of its origin as separate studies in the lack of integration of some chapters. For example, the material in the appendix and epilogue seems extraneous while the theory discussed in the early chapters does not inform the core of the book in chapters 4–5. There are, in addition, some conclusions with which I disagree, generally where Lange's usually impressive application of nuance fails him.

On the issue of 'constructing' the enemy (pp. 120–121), Lange is correct in his conclusion that Romans used terms such as slave war or pirate war to distinguish non-citizen warfare, but goes too far in referring to this repeatedly as 'dehumanizing the enemy.' They are still human, only redefined as non-Romans. In fact the idea of dehumanizing the enemy as we understand it in modern warfare seems not to be a Roman convention, but is certainly not one of the Late Republic. Similarly, Lange is correct in his rejection of Flower's recasting of the Late Republican crisis as a series of five republics. In his analysis of the civil war between Marius and Sulla and their alternate seizing of Rome, however, he concludes "Rome was the symbol of the Empire and its capital; thus she was the main prize." The occupation of Rome was of more than symbolic importance. In fact, it was arguably of no symbolic importance. Marius and Sulla each took the city to ensure the then captive Senate would vote in his favor regarding the command of the war with Mithridates. Once each achieved that he largely abandoned the city. Finally, he writes that, "the question as to whether

a war was just (*iustum bellum*) had no objective judge, and was mainly and often even exclusively a political question” (p. 7). I have to disagree and think instead that the application of the fetial ritual is a clear indicator of what wars were just, as argued by P.A. Brunt in “Ideology and Government of Empire” in Craige B. Champion (ed.), *Roman Imperialism: Readings and Sources*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004, 162–185.

These are arguably minor points. On his major subjects Lange writes clearly and correctly making the case that triumph was a flexible series of political rituals that responded to the changing realities of warfare in the Late Republic.

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