

Raptim atque Turbate: ‘Antagonistic’ and ‘Consensualist’ Republicanism in Caesar’s Civil War

Ian Oliver—University of Colorado Boulder—April 2019

1. Morstein-Marx, Robert 2009. “Dignitas and Res Publica: Caesar and Republican Legitimacy.” In (ed.) Hölkeskamp, Karl-Joachim, *Eine politische Kultur (in) der Krise? Die ‚letzte Generation‘ der römischen Republic* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag): 115-40. (122-23)

There has been a frequent modern tendency to write as though in resting his case on the offense done to his *dignitas*, Caesar was lapsing into a kind of **solipsistic megalomania** ... (but) to make a stand on a claim of *dignitas*, as Caesar did, was to emphasize perhaps the most central principle of the *res publica*, a crucial cog in the mechanism of the meritocracy that induced men to show *virtus* in the service of the community, thereby earning the *praemium virtutis* of *honor*. ... for Caesar to make a plausible argument that this mechanism was being actively sabotaged by a faction for reasons of personal hostility was not to place personal claims over the public ones of the community but precisely to show that one's enemies were setting their personal vendetta over the interests, and the rights, of the Roman People, and therefore that *they* were undermining the Republic rather than he.

2. Kapust, Daniel J. 2011: *Republicanism, Rhetoric, and Roman Political Thought*. Cambridge.

Antagonism: Two politically ‘virtuous’ rhetors debating the appropriate course of action in a public venue, thereby allowing the stronger argument to prevail.

Consensualism: cooperative goodwill (*benevolentia*) and deference to dominant Republican *virtus* produces a general consensus in all parties. Relies on Aristotle’s foundations of “good sense, excellence, and goodwill” (φρόνησις καὶ ἀρετὴ καὶ εὐνοία, Arist. *Rhet.* 1378a8)

3. The Flatterer: Cicero, *On Friendship* 93

quid enim potest esse tam flexibile, tam devium, quam animus eius, qui ad alterius non modo sensum ac voluntatem, sed etiam voltum atque nutum convertitur?

For what can be as pliant and erratic as the soul of the man who changes not only to suit another's humour and desire, but even his expression and his nod? (tr. Falconer)

“Flatterers’ inner character, in effect, is observable through their external behavior” (Kapust 2011:107)

4. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.1.1

Litteris a Fabio C. Caesaris consulibus redditis aegre ab his impetratum est summatribunorum plebis contenti one ut in senatu recitarentur; ut vero ex litteris ad senatum referretur, impetrari non potuit.

When Caesar’s dispatch had been handed to the consuls, the tribunes, with difficulty and after much wrangling, gained their permission for it to be read in the senate, but they could not obtain consent for a motion to be brought before the senate on the subject of the dispatch.

5. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.5.1

His de causis aguntur omnia **raptim atque turbate**.

For these reasons everything is done in hurry and confusion.

6. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.2.5

Lentulus sententiam Calidii pronuntiaturum se omnino negavit; Marcellus perterritus conviciis a sua sententia discessit. Sic vocibus consulis, terrore praesentis exercitus, minis amicorum Pompei plerique compulsi inviti et coacti Scipionis sententiam sequuntur.

Lentulus absolutely refused to put the motion of Calidius, and Marcellus, alarmed by the invectives, abandoned his proposal. Thus most of the senators, compelled by the language of the consul, intimidated by the presence of the army and by the threats of the friends of Pompey, against their will and yielding to pressure, adopt the proposal of Scipio.

7. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.4.1-4

Omnibus his resistitur, omnibusque oratio consulis, Scipionis, Catonis opponitur. Catonem veteres inimicitiae Caesaris incitant et dolor repulsae. Lentulus aeris alieni magnitudine et spe exercitus ac provinciarum et regum appellandorum largitionibus movetur, **seque alterum fore Sullam inter suos gloriatur**, ad quem summa imperii redeat. Scipionem eadem spes provinciae atque exercituum impellit, quos se pro necessitudine partituros cum Pompeio arbitratur, simul iudiciorum metus, adulatio atque ostentatio sui et potentium, qui in re publica iudiciisque tum plurimum pollebant.

All these speakers encounter opposition and are confronted with speeches from the consul, from Scipio, and from Cato. Cato is goaded on by his old quarrels with Caesar and vexation at his defeat. Lentulus is moved by the greatness of his debts, by the prospect of a military command and a province, and by the lavish bribes of rulers claiming the title of king, and boasts among his friends that he will prove **a second Sulla** to whom shall fall the supreme command. Scipio is stimulated by the same hope of a province and of armies, which he thinks that kinship will entitle him to share with Pompey; also by the dread of the law courts, by the flattery of certain powerful men who had then great influence in public affairs and in the law courts, and by his own and their ostentatious character.

8. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.5.3

Decurritur ad illud extremum atque ultimum senatus consultum, quo nisi paene in ipso urbis incendio atque in desperatione omnium salutis sceleratorum audacia numquam ante descensum est.

Recourse is had to that extreme and ultimate decree of the senate which had never previously been resorted to except when the city was at the point of destruction and all despaired of safety through the audacity of malefactors.

9. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.6.6

...neque exspectant, quod superioribus annis acciderat, ut de eorum imperio ad populum feratur.

Nor do they wait, as had been the habit in previous years, for a motion to be brought before the people about their imperial command.

10. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.7.1

Quibus rebus cognitis Caesar apud milites **contionatur**.

When this was known Caesar addresses his troops.

11. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.22.5

cuius orationem Caesar interpellat: se non maleficiicausa ex provincia egressum, sed uti se a contumeliis inimicorum defenderet, ut tribunos plebis in ea re ex civitate expulsos in suam dignitatem restitueret, **et se et populum Romanum factione paucorum oppressum in libertatem vindicaret**.

Caesar interrupts his speech, observing that he had not quitted his province with any evil intent, but to defend himself from the insults of his foes, to restore to their position the tribunes of the people who at that conjuncture had been expelled from the state, **to assert the freedom of himself and the Roman people who had been oppressed by a small faction**.

12. “However, it is notable that in Caesar’s representation of the response of his men, they pledge to defend not only the tribunes but their commander, more specifically his *existimatio* and *dignitas*. (Morstein-Marx 2009: 126)

13. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.19.1-4

Litteris perlectis Domitius **dissimulans in consilio** pronuntiat Pompeium celeriter subsidio venturum hortaturque eos, ne animo deficiant quaeque usui ad defendendum oppidum sint parent. Ipse arcano cum paucis familiaribus suis colloquitur consiliumque fugae capere constituit. Cum vultus Domiti cum oratione non consentiret, atque omnia trepidantius timidiusque ageret, quam superioribus diebus consuisset, multumque cum suis consiliandi causa secreto praeter consuetudinem colloqueretur, concilia conventusque hominum fugeret, res diutius tegi dissimularique non potuit.

When the dispatch was read Domitius, concealing the facts, asserts in a public meeting that Pompey would quickly come to their aid, and exhorts them not to lose heart, but to prepare whatever was required for the defence of the town. Privately he confers with a few of his friends and determines to adopt the plan of flight. As his looks belied his words, and all his actions were marked by more haste and timidity than he had usually shown on the previous days, while, contrary to his custom, he conversed much in secret with his own friends by way of taking counsel, and shunned general deliberation and gatherings, concealment and dissimulation were no longer possible.

14. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.20.1

Divulgato Domiti consilio milites, qui erant Corfinii, primo vesperi secessionem faciunt atque ita inter se per tribunos militum centurionesque atque honestissimos sui generis **colloquuntur**:

When the intentions of Domitius had been divulged, the troops who were at Corfinium draw apart in the early evening and **hold a conference** among themselves by means of the military tribunes, centurions, and the most respectable men of their own class.

15. Caesar, *Civil Wars* 1.20.3-5

Ab his primo Marsi dissentire incipiunt eamque oppidi partem, quae munitissima videretur, occupant, tantaque inter eos dissensio existit, ut manum conserere atque armis dimicare conentur; post paulo tamen internuntiis ultro citroque missis quae ignorabant, de L. Domiti fuga, cognoscunt. Itaque omnes **uno consilio** Domitium productum in publicum circumsistunt et custodiunt legatosque ex suo numero ad Caesarem mittunt.

The Marsi at first disagree with them and occupy that part of the town which seemed most strongly fortified; and so great a dissension arises among them that they attempt to engage in hostilities and to fight out the issue, but soon after, messengers having been sent to and from, they learn the facts, of which they were unaware, about the proposed flight of L. Domitius. And so all **unanimously** surround Domitius, who had been brought out before them, and guard him, and send envoys out of their number to Caesar.