

The Severan Salutatio: Re-evaluating the Severan Age

Quoted passages

- 1) Catiline “ordered Marcius and Cethegus to take their swords and go early in the morning to the house of Cicero on the pretence greeting him (ἐλθεῖν ἐπὶ τὰς θύρας ἕωθεν ὡς ἀσπασομένους τὸν Κικέρωνα)”. (Plut. *Cic.* 16.1).
- 2) The assassins “promised to rush into Cicero's house at daybreak and murder him there.” (Cass. Dio 37.32.4).
- 3) Cicero “went about in the garb of the knights, paying court (ἐθεράπευε) meanwhile, as he went the rounds, day and night alike, to all who had any influence” (Cass. Dio 38.14.7).
- 4) Cicero’s speech against Antony: “Did we order you to salute (ἀσπάσασθαί) any one as king?” (Cass Dio 45.32.2).
- 5) The *salutatio* under Maximinus Thrax: “Some people had not yet come out, and others had already gone home after making their morning calls at dawn (προσαγορεύσαντες πρὸ ἡμέρας).” (Her. 7.6.8).
- 6) “Standing outside the palace, he [Apollonius] saw some people receiving flattery and others paying it (θεραπευομένους ὀρῶν, τοὺς δὲ θεραπεύοντας), and the hubbub of people going in and out, at which he said: This place, Damis, seems to me like a bathhouse. I see those outside hurrying to get in and those inside hurrying to get out, and some look washed and others unwashed.” (Phil. *Apol.* 7.31.2).
- 7) Tiberius’ funeral speech of Augustus: “How could one forget to mention a man [...] who on holidays admitted (προσδεξαμένου) even the populace to his house?” (Cass. Dio 56.41.5).
- 8) The *salutatio* of Sejanus: “The leading citizens [...] regularly went to and from his house at dawn (ἔξ τε τὴν οἰκίαν [...] ἐφοίτων)” (Cass. Dio 57.21.4) and there was “rivalry and jostling about the great man’s doors (περὶ τὰς θύρας αὐτοῦ)” (Cass. Dio 58.5.2).
- 9) “On a New Year’s day, when all were assembling at Sejanus’ house (συνιόντων ἐς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ Σεϊανοῦ), the couch that stood in the room which is used for greetings (ἐν τῷ δωματίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ἠσπάζετο) utterly collapsed under the weight of the throng (ὄχλου) seated upon it” (Cass. Dio 58.5.5).
- 10) Dio writes of “those who came to greet Plautianus (ἀσπαζομένων)...” (Cass. Dio (Xiph.) 77.5.3).

11) Vespasian “admitted his friends, and while he was receiving their greetings (*salutabatur*) [...] he dressed himself.” (Suet. *Vesp.* 21).

12) Vespasian “would hold converse even before dawn while lying in bed with his intimate friends.” (Cass. Dio (Xiph). 65.10.5).

13) Marcus Aurelius “used always to greet the most worthy men (ἡσπάζετό τε τοὺς ἀξιοτάτους) in the House of Tiberius, [...] receiving them in the very apartment where he slept.” (Cass. Dio (Xiph.) 72.35.4).

Key evidence for the Severan *Salutatio*

The *salutatio* of Septimius Severus in Dio: The signs which had led him to hope for the imperial power were as follows. [...] When he was governor at Lugdunum, the whole Roman dominion approached and greeted him — in a dream, I mean (καὶ ἐν Λουγδούνῳ ἄρχοντι πᾶσα αὐτῷ ἢ τῶν Ῥωμαίων δύναμις προσῆλθέ τε καὶ ἡσπάσατο, ὄναρ φημί). (75.3.1-2).

The *salutatio* of Caracalla in Dio: “As for Antoninus himself, he would announce that he was going to hold court or transact some other public business directly after dawn, but he would keep us waiting beyond noon and often until evening, and would not even admit us to the vestibule, so that we had to stand round outside somewhere; and usually at some late hour he decided that he would not even exchange greetings with us that day (ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἐπήγγελλε μὲν ὡς καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἕω αὐτίκα δικάσων ἢ καὶ ἄλλο τι δημόσιον πράξων, παρέτεινε δὲ ἡμᾶς καὶ ὑπὲρ τὴν μεσημβρίαν καὶ πολλάκις καὶ μέχρι τῆς ἐσπέρας, μηδὲ ἐς τὰ πρόθυρα ἐσδεχόμενος ἀλλ’ ἔξω πού ἐστῶτας· ὄψε γὰρ ποτε ἔδοξεν αὐτῷ μηκέτι μηδ’ ἀσπάζεσθαι ἡμᾶς ὡς πλήθει).” (78.17.3.)

The *salutatio* of Julia Domna and Caracalla in Dio: Need I add that she was greeted publicly by all the most prominent men, precisely as did the emperor (τί γὰρ δεῖ λέγειν ὅτι καὶ ἡσπάζετο δημοσία πάντας τοὺς πρώτους καθάπερ καὶ ἐκεῖνος)? (78.18.3).

The *salutatio* of Elagabal in Dio: “And he often reclined while receiving the greetings of the senators (καὶ πολλάκις καὶ κατακείμενος τοὺς βουλευτὰς ἡσπάζετο).” (80.14.4).

The *salutatio* of Caracalla in the Codex of Justinian: “After the emperor Antoninus Augustus, having been greeted by Oclatinus Adventus and Opellius Macrinus, praetorian prefects, clarissimis viris, and also by the amici and the chiefs of staff (principalibus officiorum), as well as men of both orders, had come out and Julianus Licinianus, who had been sentenced to capital exile on an island by Aelius Ulpianus, then governor, was presented to him, Antoninus Augustus said: “I restore you to your province with rights.” And he added: “Moreover, so that you know what “with rights” means: political office, membership in your ordo, and all the rest.”” (9.51.1).

(Imp. Antoninus A. cum salutatus ab Oclatinio Advento et Opellio Macrino praefectis praetorio clarissimis viris, item amicis et principalibus officiorum et utriusque ordinis viris et processisset, oblatus est ei Iulianus Licinianus ab Aelio Ulpiano tunc legato in insulam deportatus, Antoninus Augustus dixit: Restituo te in integrum provinciae tuae. Et adiecit: Ut autem scias, quid sit in integrum: honoribus et ordini tuo et omnibus ceteris.)

The *salutatio* of Caracalla in the Goharieni inscription: “In the consulship of Sabinus and Anulinus, on the [sixth] day before the Kalends of June at Antioch after emperor Caesar M. Aurelius Felix Augustus Parthicus Maximus Britannicus Maximus Ge[rmanicus] Maximus, having been greeted by the praetorian prefects, e(minentissimis) v(iris), and also by the amici and the princ(ipalibus) officior(um), had taken his seat (sed(isset)) in the auditorium, he ordered to be admitted Aurelius Carzeus son of Sergius the defensor of the Goharieni acting against Avidius Hadrianus the contractor, which cognitio the emperor deigned to undertake (suscipere dignitatus est), with the advocate Egnatius Iulianus, while Avidius Hadrianus the contractor was with the advocate Lollianus Aristaenetus.” (SEG XVII 759, lines 1-6).

(Sabino et Anulino cos. [VI]Kal. Iunias Antio[chia]e Imp. Caesar] M. Aurel(ius) Antoninus Pius Fel(ix) Aug(ustus) Par(thicus) max(imus) Brit(annicus) max(imus) Ge[rm(anicus)] max(imus), cum sal(utatus) a praef(ectis) praet(orio) e(minentissimis) v(iris), item amicis et princ(ipibus) officior(um) sed(isset) in aud(itorio), admitti iussit Aur(elium) Carzeum Sergi defen(sorem) Go[har(ienorum)] agentem adversus Avid(ium) Hadrianum manc(ipem), quam cognitionem dominus suscipere dignatus est, cum advocato Egnatius Iuliano, Avid(io) Hadriano manc(ipe) cum advocato Lolliano Aristaeneto...)

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