

**COMMUNITY AND COLLECTIVE ACTION IN THE ROMAN REPUBLICAN
ARMY (218 – 44 BCE)**

By

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This dissertation by Dominic M. Machado is accepted in its present form
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CURRICULUM VITAE

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INTRODUCTION

The Roman Army at Rhegium

In the immediate aftermath of the Pyrrhic War, the Roman Forum was witness to a gruesome scene. At some point in the late 270s BCE, several hundred Roman soldiers were led into the Forum where they were summarily scourged and beheaded, a punishment which Polybius notes was “in accordance with Roman custom” (Plb. 1.7.12: κατὰ τὸ παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἔθος). The ignominy that these men faced did not end with death; the mourning and burial of the dead was allegedly forbidden by a decree of the Senate (Val. Max. 2.7.15; Frontin. *Str.* 4.1.38). The steep price paid by these soldiers was a consequence of their disobedience in the field. Several years earlier, they had participated in an unauthorized takeover of Rhegium, a southern Italian town sitting on the toe of Italy’s boot.

The gruesome and brutal punishments meted out to the Roman soldiers in this episode is certainly shocking to the modern observer. Indeed, it would have been an arresting image even for ancient readers. For instance, the second-century BCE Greek audience reading Polybius’ account of the incident would have found several aspects of the scene hair raising, in particular, the defilement of a ritual space like the *agora* and the

use of decapitation as a form of capital punishment.¹ Polybius takes full advantage of the shock value that the episode generates. Indeed, the scene is the first appearance of the Romans in his text and, as such, the Greek historian uses it to give his reader a broader sense of their character. An important part of Polybius' ploy is that his Greek readers would not have only viewed such behavior as shocking, but as typical of barbarians.² Polybius was emulating the well-pedigreed Greek tradition of depicting barbarians, above all the Persians, as engaging in various forms of brutal and inhumane slaughter.³

However, as Erskine argues, barbaric brutality does not quite do justice to Polybius' characterization of the Romans in this episode.⁴ While barbarians can engage in such behavior without any forethought, the Romans have an underlying aim in their harsh punishment of the soldiers. They want to maintain military discipline and to ensure that Roman soldiers would never again engage in such acts of insubordination. It should hardly be surprising that Polybius, who saw order and efficiency in the form of military discipline as a driving force in the Roman conquest of the Mediterranean, wants this

¹ Parker (1983), 19; Erskine (2013b), 121-2. While execution did occur in the ancient Greek world, it usually did not involve the spilling of blood (e.g. Plut. *Agis* 19-20 for strangulation as a less bloody form of execution).

² It is interesting to note that Polybius himself never uses the term βαρβαροι of the Romans. The three instances in which the Romans are referred to as such in his *Histories* occur in speeches (cf. Agelaus' speech at 5.104.1-11, Lyciscus' speech at 9.32.3-39.7 and Thrasycrates' speech at 11.4.1-6.8). Champion (2000), 425-444 discusses all three incidents and their implications for Polybius' view of the Romans more broadly.

³ Cf. Aesch. *Pers.* 371; Hdt. 9.78-9. For more on decapitation as a form of punishment among the Romans, see Voisin (1984), 241-293; Bauman (1996), 18-9. On capital punishment in antiquity more generally, see Cantarella (2011).

⁴ Erskine (2013b), 123-4.

aspect of the Roman character to become immediately apparent to his audience.⁵ As such, Polybius' Romans are introduced to his readers as doubly terrifying. Not only were they brutal like barbarians, but their brutality performed an important and effective function: it transformed their military forces into a well-disciplined and ordered unit that would eventually conquer the entire Mediterranean.

Ancient and modern authorities have generally followed Polybius' focus on military discipline in their analysis of this scene. The actions taken by the Roman state to reprimand the soldiers at Rhegium and the publicity surrounding the punishment have been viewed as evidence of the centrality of discipline and obedience in the construction of Roman military culture as early as the third century BCE.⁶ There is, however another side to this story that has received little attention. Given the centrality of discipline and obedience in the Roman army, why did the soldiers at Rhegium commit an act that amounted to treason and risk the possibility of such a brutal punishment?

While many of the details of the sacking of Rhegium are uncertain, the ancient sources allow us to construct a basic narrative of events.⁷ During the late 280s, a Roman army consisting of a few thousand Campanian soldiers was sent to garrison Rhegium, which had appealed to Rome for protection against either Pyrrhus or the powerful

⁵ As exemplified by Polybius' discussion of military order and efficiency in Book 6 (e.g. Plb. 6.19.5-20.7, 6.37.1-23). Erskine (2013a), 231-246 provides a discussion of how military order and efficiency function in Polybius' explanation of Roman success.

⁶ Valerius Maximus, Livy and Frontinus all focus on the exemplary nature of the punishment the soldiers to highlight the severity of Roman military discipline. Rampelberg (1988), 599-618 discusses the event as an instance of mass punishment and Stewart (2012), 88-92 argues that mass execution as a method of control and coercion employed against both slaves and soldiers during the third and second century BCE.

⁷ The list of sources that discuss the episode at Rhegium is long: Plb. 1.7.6-13 (whose account according to Gelzer (1933), 133-5 derives from Fabius Pictor); Liv. *Per.* 12, 15; Liv. 28.28.1-6, 31.31.6-7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 20.4-5; Diod. Sic. 22.1.2-3; Val. Max. 2.7.15; Frontin. *Str.* 4.1.38; App. *Sam.* 19-21; Cass. Dio fig. 40.7-12; Oros. 4.3.3-5.

southern Italian communities of Tarentum and Bruttium.⁸ After a few years in Rhegium without incident, the soldiers massacred and expelled its inhabitants and took over the town.⁹ The soldiers remained in control of the town for several years while the Romans were occupied with the war against Pyrrhus and the Greeks in southern Italy. Once these difficulties had died down, the Romans sent a second army to besiege Rhegium, which defeated the garrison after a protracted engagement. Most of the rebellious soldiers at Rhegium were killed in the siege, but the few who survived were sent to Rome and punished as described above.

Our sources are largely in agreement as to why the soldiers at Rhegium attempted such a bold endeavor. Beginning with Polybius, the tradition holds that the troops were captivated by Rhegium's significant wealth and grew envious of the affluence and prosperity of its inhabitants (Plb. 1.7.8; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 20.4.3; App. *Sam.* 19). The Roman soldiers – particularly, their commander, Decius Vibellius, a military tribune of Campanian origin – were unable to control their desires and devised a plan to take over the town and dispossess its inhabitants.

But the explanation that the sources provide does not hold up to historical scrutiny; the ancient accounts of the episode are replete with well-documented historiographical tropes. The impetuosity of the troops at Rhegium is consonant with elite perceptions of the army. Ancient historians, by and large, considered the soldiery as an armed and more dangerous extension of the *plebs/demos*: fickle, irrational and incapable

⁸ Walbank (1957), 1.52–3 lays out the difficulties in establishing 1) when the garrison was established; 2) the size of the garrison and 3) the Roman and/or southern Italian involvement in the incident.

⁹ There is some debate whether all the Rhegian citizens were killed or just the aristocracy as in the accounts of Livy and Cassius Dio.

of moderation.¹⁰ Further, the focus on the Campanian identity of the troops and their commander, Decius Vibellius, renders suspect claims about the envy inspired by the wealth of Rhegium and the devious manner in which the town was captured.¹¹ As a result of the defection of Rome's Campanian allies during the Second Punic War, Roman historians were notably hostile towards the region's inhabitants. They claimed that the fertility of Campanian land generated excessive wealth, creating a culture of indolence, greed and immorality for its citizens.¹² In this scene, the use of these well-worn tropes serves the purpose of placing blame on the shoulders of the Campanian soldiers at Rhegium and deemphasizes Rome's conspicuous lack of action during the episode.¹³ The standard narrative of the ancient sources offers hardly any insight into the circumstances that motivated the behavior of the Roman army at Rhegium.

An alternative and more interesting explanation for the behavior of the soldiers at Rhegium, however, is found in Livy's account of the event.¹⁴ Although Livy's narrative

¹⁰ Eckstein (1995), 165–172; Fulkerson (2013), 162–7. Milne (2009) discusses the construction of the Roman soldier in the Republican period more generally.

¹¹ Syme (1955), 129 discusses Decius' origin and family (cf. Cicero, *de Lege Agraria* 2.93).

¹² Oakley (1998), 289–90, 302–3, 366; Burton (2011), 252–4.

¹³ Dench (1995), 78–9; Champion (2004), 106–7, pace Mitsos (2013), 23–4 emphasize this aspect of the passage. The presentation has even caused modern scholars (cf. Bleckmann (1999), 144) to argue that the garrison at Rhegium was not a detachment from a Roman legion, but a band of Campanian warriors.

¹⁴ Dionysius of Halicarnassus also offers an alternative explanation for the actions of the soldiers. Dionysius claims that Decius was able to incite the soldiers to take over the town by informing them that the Rhegians were about to stage a revolt, slaughter the garrison and hand the town over to Pyrrhus (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 20.4.4). While Decius was making this pronouncement to his soldiers, a messenger arrived bearing a letter which claimed that Pyrrhus was sending 500 soldiers to take over the city. Dionysius provides two different explanations of the letter's origin. The first relates that the letter was written by Decius himself; while the second claims that the letter was sent by the consul, Fabricius (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 20.4.5–6). The former of these stories is unexceptional and fits with the general narrative found in the other ancient historians. The latter of these two stories, however, would imply Roman complicity in the slaughter of the Rhegians, but such a conspiracy seems unlikely, since in Dionysius' account, it is Fabricius himself who four years later attacks the garrison at Rhegium and restores the town to its former inhabitants. Dench (1995), 78–9 gives some credence to the conspiratorial narrative offered by Dionysius and Fronda

of the incident at Rhegium in Books 12 and 15 has been lost, the episode is discussed in some detail in a speech delivered by Scipio Africanus to his mutinous troops in Spain in 206.¹⁵ Scipio brings up the takeover of Rhegium in the context of asking his soldiers what exactly they hoped to achieve through their seditious behavior (Liv. 28.28.1: *quae mens, quod consilium uestrum fuerit scire uelim*). Despite Scipio's claim that no such behavior is ever justifiable (Liv. 28.28.1: *quamquam nullum scelus rationem habet*), he notes that the capture of Rhegium by Decius' army was motivated by rational thinking when compared with the actions of his own rebellious soldiers. He says that the soldiers at Rhegium acted within the framework of the Roman army, describing the group of soldiers as a *legio* who followed the orders of a Roman officer, the military tribune, Decius Vibellius (Liv. 28.28.4: *sed D. Uibellium tribunum militum secuti sunt*). On the other hand, his own soldiers chose to break away from their commander and follow an Umbrian *semilixa*.

Further, Scipio points out that the actions of the soldiers at Rhegium did not harm the Roman state, but rather strove for the betterment of their own situation. Unlike the soldiers in his own army who reached out to the leaders of the enemy forces, Indibilis and Mandonius, the soldiers garrisoned at Rhegium had no contact with any of the various Roman enemies who lurked in southern Italy like Pyrrhus or the Samnites and Lucanians (Liv. 28.28.4-5). The army at Rhegium saw the wealthy city as a permanent place to settle and their actions followed a contemporary precedent set by the seizure of Capua by

(2010), 174 offers a similar reading, suggesting that the Romans authorized the soldiers to kill the pro-Pyrrhic aristocracy of the town.

¹⁵ Livy has his own version of the incident at Rhegium; the author of the *Periochae* tells us that he chronicled the scene in Books 12 and 15.

the Etruscans and Messana by the Mamertines (Liv. 28.28.6). There was no such precedent for Scipio's army nor was the land suitable for his troops to settle as Spain was much too far from the families of these soldiers (Liv. 28.28.7-8).

Scipio's discussion of the actions of the troops at Rhegium does not rely on the usual commonplaces about soldierly irrationality and depravity, but rather attempts to consider the episode from the point of view of those involved.¹⁶ In Scipio's retelling of the incident at Rhegium, the transgressive aspects of the episode recede from the foreground and the collective actions and motivations of the soldiers take center stage. The soldiers are simply acting to improve their own condition and, in doing so, were simply following in the footsteps of other armies stationed in southern Italy in the third century BCE.

Despite the obviously rhetorical nature of Scipio's account of events, the picture that he paints of the army at Rhegium as a group acting to protect their own interests is actually quite plausible upon closer consideration. First and foremost, the situation of the army at Rhegium was conducive to the development of close bonds between soldiers that are essential for any type of coordinated action. The troops had lived in close quarters and participated in shared daily duties and rituals over a period of several years before the takeover of the city. Additionally, the nature of garrison service meant that troops had minimal contact with the outside world. The strongest social connections that a garrisoned soldier could develop were with the men inside the camp. Beyond the nature of the service of the Roman garrison force at Rhegium, cohesion among the troops would

¹⁶ It is, of course, ironic that while providing what seems to be a generous explanation of the incident at Rhegium, in this same scene, Livy casts aspersions at the indolence and greed of the soldiers who mutinied at Sucro.

have been helped along by the fact that the majority of the soldiers at Rhegium were of Campanian background. A shared ethnic identity would have added further depth to the bonds created by these and daily interactions.

The geopolitical situation also proved ideal for the soldiers to take action. The troops at Rhegium had little to fear in terms of the Roman state blocking its seizure of the town. Our sources record that the Romans had their hands full with Pyrrhus' invasion of Italy at the time of the town's takeover and could not commit forces elsewhere (Plb. 1.7.9, Diod. Sic. 22.1.2). Even if Rome did have the capability to interfere, the soldiers may have been able to gain support from several nearby towns harboring anti-Roman sentiment such as Tarentum and Bruttium.¹⁷ The soldiers at Rhegium also had a recent example to follow in the takeover of the Sicilian city of Messana by the Mamertines in 288 BCE. The two towns lay within a few miles of one another, separated only by the strait of Messina, and the Mamertines like the Roman garrison at Rhegium were also of Campanian origin. Several sources even suggest that a treaty was struck between the Roman soldiers at Rhegium and the Mamertines (Diod. Sic. 22.1.3; App. *Sam.* 19; Cass. Dio fg. 40.11). It is not implausible to think, as Polybius and Appian suggest, that the takeover of a nearby town a few years earlier by fellow Campanians helped to strengthen the resolve of the soldiers at Rhegium as they prepared to do the same.

Community, Collective Action and the Study of the Roman Army

Regardless of the veracity of Scipio's account of the incident at Rhegium, the above discussion of the episode evinces an important reality about the Roman army. The

¹⁷ Fronda (2010), 150–160 discusses the history of the negative interactions between Rome and the Bruttians and Tarentines.

scene serves as a reminder that Roman forces had concerns beyond their duties as a military unit and that they were capable of acting collectively to ensure that these concerns were addressed. Roman armies were not just fighting forces; they were dynamic social units capable of cooperation in a variety of matters. In short, Scipio's speech brings to the fore the human element of Roman military service.

The types of connections that developed among Roman soldiers on campaign and the broader impact that such connections had on Roman society have not gone unnoticed by scholars. Indeed, the study of the Roman army as a "community" has been an essential part of Roman military studies for the last thirty-five years.¹⁸ Over this time period, scholars have made use of the wide variety of papyrological, epigraphic and archaeological evidence to unearth distinctive interests, ideologies and rituals that developed in various military communities and to examine the extent to which these groups engaged with local populations.

The conception of Roman armies as communities originated in the early 1980s with articles written by Shaw and MacMullen.¹⁹ Though they employ different terminology, Shaw and MacMullen made essentially the same argument. Roman armies were, to use Shaw's term, "total institutions", communities with their own rituals, practices and interests that were totally separate from the rest of Roman society.²⁰ By the end of the last century, however, the idea that Roman military communities were isolated from the rest of Roman society had fallen out of favor. Works like Alston's *Soldier and*

¹⁸ The definition of community will be in Chapter 1, pp. 27-9.

¹⁹ Shaw (1983), 133-159; MacMullen (1984), 440-456.

²⁰ Shaw borrowed the term "total institution" from the 20th century sociologist, Erving Goffman, who used the term to refer to any occupation or residence that was effectively separated from the rest of society.

Society in Roman Egypt and Wesch-Klein's *Soziale Aspekte des römischen Heerwesens in der Kaiserzeit* have demonstrated that military communities developed close connections with local populations.²¹ Building off Alston and Wesch-Klein, more recent work has illustrated the impact that military communities had on the economies, religious practices and politics of both their environs and the empire as whole.²² The picture of the Roman army that emerges from these studies resonates well with Scipio's discussion of the actions and motivations of the soldiers at Rhegium.

There is, however, one aspect of Scipio's description of the incident at Rhegium that does not fit so well with recent scholarship on Roman military communities. Armies of the third century BCE do not figure at all in discussions of Roman military communities; rather, nearly all studies of military communities have focused primarily on the armies of the Principate.²³ Although there has been some recent work on the motivations and agency of military groups during the Late Republic and their broader social impact, there remains no work of scholarship that comprehensively treats the armies of the Republican period using the analytic of community.²⁴

The goal of this dissertation is to begin to fill this void in the scholarship of the Roman army. As such, it will have two overlapping areas of inquiry. First, the project will investigate the nature of the military communities that formed in the Republican period. In doing so, it will examine both the factors that fostered the development of

²¹ Alston (1995), 13-39; Wesch-Klein (1998), 99-146.

²² Pollard (2000), 84-170; Pegler (2000), 37-43; Greene (2013), 17-32.

²³ Armstrong (2016), 101-119 attempts to develop a conception of military cohesion for the archaic period using social psychology.

²⁴ de Blois (2007), 164-179; Keaveney (2007), 9-35, 71-92.

military communities during the Republic and the interactions that these communities had with local populations and other non-combatants. Second, the work will look at how military communities acted as a collective beyond their official duties. By studying the collective behaviors of Roman armies during this period, this project will provide insight about the power and agency that these groups possessed during the Republican period. As such, this dissertation, despite its obvious concerns with military matters, is a work of social history. It aims to understand more intimately the daily lives of Roman soldiers and to recognize the impact they had on both Roman and non-Roman society more broadly. Further, the project will give testament to the power that non-elite groups could achieve during the Republican period.

The chronological focus for this study will be the period from the beginning of the Second Punic War until the death of Julius Caesar (218 – 44 BCE). The reason for selecting these bounds for the study is that it coincides with a major shift in the nature of military service. The Second Punic War marked the point at which Romans began to abandon seasonal campaigns for multi-year military operations and established standing military outposts in the provinces in order to accommodate their increasingly imperialistic goals.²⁵ Consequently, soldiers in Roman armies started spending prolonged periods of service together and there were more opportunities for troops to develop the types of connections that were essential to the development of a sense of community. As such, the models of military service that developed during this time period established

²⁵ Harris (1985), 42-5; Potter (2004), 78-9.

many important precedents for the system that would be adopted in the aftermath of Augustus' army reforms.²⁶

Outline of the Present Study

This investigation will take the following form. Chapter 1 will contend that the nature of military service during the Republican period fostered community development among soldiers on campaign. The chapter pushes back against the perception that military service during the Republic consisted primarily of short-term military commitments and argues that beginning in the third century BCE the majority of Roman manpower was committed to longer term foreign campaigns. Such prolonged periods of service provided an ideal setting for the formation of what is often termed a “natural” community, a community whose members are unified by shared habitation or occupation. This natural sense of community was bolstered by structures within the army, both physical and ideological, that paralleled and co-opted the form and content of other types of communities with which soldiers were familiar. For example, the military camp was constructed in a similar fashion to a Roman city, and the hierarchy of the Roman army was figured in terms of the Roman family. The reproduction of these well-known forms of community created a sense of familiarity and attachment among Roman soldiers.

The second chapter will show that the communities that developed among soldiers in the Republic also interacted with large numbers of non-combatants. The chapter rejects the general perception that Republican military camps were soldier-only zones by claiming that these arguments have been based on evidence from narratives that seek to idealize the Roman army. Looking more broadly at textual and archaeological

²⁶ Raaflaub (1980), 1005-1025; Keppie (1984), 146-8; Gillver (2007), 184-8.

evidence reveals that large numbers of merchants, slaves and women were present in and around Roman camps. Further, this chapter asserts that such personnel were by no means ancillary figures in Roman military communities of the Republican period. Rather, they interacted frequently with these communities and often played crucial roles within them. Most importantly, however, they created connections between the army and inhabitants of the places in which the army was serving. These connections in many ways served as the foundations for Roman settlement and control of these regions. As such, these communities function in much the same way as the stationary camps of the early Empire. More broadly, these first two chapters, taken as a whole, demonstrate that the well-documented military communities that are found in the Principate had important predecessors in the Republican period.

Chapter 3 will examine collective behavior among military communities while on campaign. It shows that the Roman military communities, beginning in the third century BCE, engaged in various forms of collective action to protect their group interests. The chapter charts how the different forms and functions of collective action changed over time and how these changes were driven by broader historical events and social developments. The chapter yields two important conclusions. First, it demonstrates that troops in the Middle Republic often acted collectively – and often in defiance of their commander – in order to ensure their own safety, protect their social status and bolster their economic standing, an observation that challenges the idealization of soldiers of the period as men who fought solely for the protection of their country and family. Second, the chapter also reveals that broader societal factors such as the growth of popular power at Rome and the increasing resistance to Roman rule had a major impact on the

increasing frequency and violence of the collective actions taken by soldiers in the first century BCE. As a result, the behavior of the Roman army of the Late Republic need not be considered a result of the relaxation of military discipline, but rather as part of a larger cultural *ethos* of resistance against Roman power structures.

The fourth and final chapter of this dissertation will show that members of military communities continued to act cooperatively even after they returned home from service by examining their involvement in political affairs. They came together for political matters that were of particular concern to the group as a whole such as the careers of their commanders, the procedure for levying troops and the distribution of land for veterans. In such actions, the soldiers used their large numbers to their advantage whether through bloc voting or through their intimidating physical presence. This evidence casts doubt on the traditional account that sees the political power of the Roman army in domestic affairs as a direct result of the Marian reforms; Roman military communities were involved in such matters by the early second century BCE. Indeed, they represented one of the few well-organized Roman associations prior to the development of *collegia* in the first century BCE that had some semblance of political agency and power. Beyond establishing Roman military communities as powerful agents at home, the evidence presented in this chapter also gives testament to the strength of the bonds that formed between soldiers who served on campaign together.

The Composition of the Roman Army

While the discussion up to this point has loosely referred to the armies under consideration as Republican, it should be noted that the military forces that existed in my period of study can in no way be considered homogenous. Indeed, the composition of the

Roman army changed significantly from the third to the first century BCE. At the outset of the Second Punic War, the Roman army was largely made up of land-owning Roman citizens. As Polybius records, all Roman citizens who met the property requirements and were of age were called to the levy in Campus Martius prior to every campaign (Plb. 6.19-20). However, the nature of the Second Punic War – the constant fighting, the multiple arenas of war, the massive loss of life as well as the new ambitions that it inspired – also conditioned some significant new additions to the citizen militia. The war led to the formalization of the role of the Italian allies within the Roman army.²⁷

Previously, individual towns allied to Rome contributed bands of troops organized under local leaders of varying size on an *ad hoc* basis.²⁸ As the demands for manpower increased, the Romans relied more heavily on their allies and the number of soldiers each community was expected to contribute was concretely defined.²⁹ From this point forward, Roman armies consisted of, at least, the same number of allied troops as Roman citizens (Plb. 6.26.7, 6.30.2).³⁰ The Italians, however, served in a subordinate role to the citizen core as the *alae* or the “wings” of the Roman army.

²⁷ Frederiksen (1984), 224-230; Kent (2012), 99-106.

²⁸ Some example of these *ad hoc* Italian bands in the earlier part of the third century BCE: the Samnite Herius Potilius and 4,000 men (Zon. 8.11; Oros. *Hist.* 4.7.12); Oblacus Volsinius and his group of Frentanian soldiers at the battle of Heraclea (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 19.12; Plut. *Pyrr.* 16.8-10).

²⁹ The contribution requirements for allied towns is often referred in modern scholarship to as the *formula togatorum*, but the phrase only exists in one place, line 21 of the *lex Agraria* of 111: *socii nominisve Latini quibus ex formula togatorum milites in terra Italia inperare solent* (cf. CIL I² 585, Crawford (1996), 113-180 for the whole inscription). There are, however, a handful of references in Livy to *formulae* related to conscription (e.g. Liv. 22.57.10, 27.10.2). For more on such practices, see Mommsen (1887), 3.672-6; Brunt (1971), 545-8; Lo Cascio (1994a), 309-328.

³⁰ Rich (1983), 323-4; de Ligt (2007), 117.

Over the course of the next century, there were two major changes that fundamentally altered the composition of the Roman army. First, the continuous reduction in the property requirements for participation in the army and its complete eradication by the time of Marius and Sulla radically transformed the economic profile of the men serving in the Roman army.³¹ This change was driven by declining numbers of Roman citizens who met property qualifications for military service. Scholars have posited several explanations for this “manpower crisis” in the second century BCE. Brunt and Toynbee, relying on Appian, Plutarch and Livy, have argued that the crisis was triggered by an actual decrease in the number of Roman citizens.³² The increasing scale of war during this period took men away from their farms which not only reduced significantly the financial viability of their homesteads, but also led to increased mortality rates for men of fighting age. At same time, the wealthy benefited financially from war, largely through the influx of slaves, and subsumed much of rural countryside that had been owned previously by subsistence farmers. More recently, however, scholars like Lo Cascio, Rosenstein and de Ligt have shown that such argumentation is untenable.³³ Rather, it is more likely that the Roman population increased during this time period and the pressure of this growth on the economy was actually the cause of the drop in the number of men who were eligible for military service. Regardless of the reasons for the

³¹ Gabba (1976), 1-19.

³² Plut. *Tib. Gracch.* 8.1-3; App. *B Civ* 1.7-11; Sall. *Iug.* 41.7-8 as well as Livy’s census records in the *Periochae* provide the ancient evidence underlying the arguments of Toynbee (1965), 2.171-3 and Brunt (1971), 62-80 (cf. Brunt (1980), 81-100 for his own modifications to his thinking in *Italian Manpower*).

³³ Rosenstein (2004), 3-25; de Ligt (2012), 135-192 and Hin (2013), 101-171 provide substantial critiques of the traditional view of Brunt and Toynbee about the impact of warfare on the Roman economy and population. Lo Cascio (1994b), 23-40; Scheidel (1996), 167-8; Lo Cascio (2008), 239-256; de Ligt (2012), 1-39; Hin (2013), 261-297 discuss the problems inherent with relying on census figures to reflect changes in population.

decline in the number of soldiers meeting property requirements, the soldiers in the Roman army by the end of the second century BCE had different financial motivations than those a century earlier.

The second major change occurred in the aftermath of the Social War. The granting of citizenship to the Italian allies erased the distinction between Roman and Italian soldiers and, from that point forward, all troops recruited from the Italian peninsula served as legionaries. Since there was no longer a need to recruit soldiers from the city of Rome and its environs, the army became largely Italian in origin, a change which altered the societal and economic makeup of the Roman army. Further, the increasingly Italian character of the Roman army in combination with the relaxation of property requirements also altered the process of troop recruitment. Since there were now effectively no restrictions on who could be recruited into the army from the Italian peninsula, the ritual aspects of the levy, as described by Polybius, became less important. As a result, commanders of the first century BCE, at times, recruited their own troops, creating a different type of relationship between the general and the army.³⁴ Beyond these two larger changes, the second and first century BCE also saw increasing use of auxiliary forces, foreign soldiers recruited locally by Roman commanders on campaign, with the phenomenon becoming particularly pronounced after the Social War.³⁵

³⁴ The first privately recruited army to represent the Romans in war were the forces of Minatius Magius during the Social War (Vell. Pat. 2.16.1-3, cf. Keaveney (2008), 31). More famously, a young Pompey recruited his army during the first Civil War from his father's clients at Picenum (cf. App. *B Civ* 1.67).

³⁵ This is pronounced particularly during the civil war period (e.g. Caesar's recruitment of 30 cohorts in Further Spain (Caes. *B Civ* 2.18.1) in 48 and Cassius' conscription of Parthian archers (App. *B Civ* 4.59) in 43). Prag (2015), 281-296 discusses the use of auxiliaries during the third and second centuries. Saddington (1982) provides all the known evidence about auxiliaries during from 49 BCE onwards, while Meyer (2012), 42-59 discusses the use of auxiliaries from the Social War onwards.

Sources and Problems

One of the major reasons for the lack of study of military communities during the Republic is the paucity of evidence. The epigraphic and papyrological sources that provides essential information for the daily lives of individual soldiers in the Imperial period simply does not exist for the Republic. As such, it is not possible to study in detail the nature of specific military communities, or to reconstruct the interactions between individuals within these communities. However, while these realities about Republican military communities cannot be recovered, there is still ample evidence in the literary sources in the period about the ideological and structural factors that promoted the development of such communities in Roman armies and the impact that they had on Roman society. Warfare and conquest were among the primary concerns for historians who chronicled the Republic and, consequently, the Roman army, its organization, ideologies and actions feature prominently in the historical writings of the era.³⁶

Depictions of the Roman Army in Literary Sources

Relying on literary sources for evidence of the nature of Roman military communities requires caution. The majority of the sources that record the history of the period were not interested in issues that pertained to the lived realities of Roman soldiers. As seen above in the discussion of the incident at Rhegium, ancient authors were primarily concerned with documenting Rome's inexorable path to domination of the Mediterranean and providing moral instruction for its readers. Thus, the evidence for

³⁶ Tacitus, for instance, discusses the centrality of war to Republican historiography in his famed lament about the difficulties of writing Imperial history at *Ann.* 4.32 (*ingentia illi bella, expugnationes urbium, fusos captosque reges, aut si quando ad interna praeverterent, discordias consulum adversum tribunos, agrarias frumentariasque leges, plebis et optimatum certamina libero egressu memorabant*).

Roman military communities is generally anecdotal rather than systematic. Further, the historians of the Republican period were either part of the Roman political elite or, at least, relied heavily on sources written by members of this class.³⁷ Consequently, these works functioned, at least in part, to justify the position of the senatorial class as the dominant political force in the Roman state. Within this framework, it is not difficult to imagine that various forms of collective actions undertaken by Roman armies – events that demonstrate the power and agency of the soldiers as a group – would be passed over in order to project the idea of total elite control over military affairs. The writings of Caesar and his continuators provide an example. While other sources attest to mutinies against Caesar at Placentia in 49 and in Southern Italy in 47, neither Caesar nor his continuators make any mention of the events.³⁸ Rather, these authors actively suppress these incidents to maintain the perception of Caesar as a general in total control of his soldiers.

The perspective of our authors also means that even when information about Roman military communities is included in our texts, the reasons for its inclusion need to be considered. Frequently, the discussion of armies engaging in non-military activities or refusing to obey their commanders often coincides with attempts to explain military failure.³⁹ For example, our sources describe the failure of the Roman armies in Numantia

³⁷ Badian (1966), 1-38; Wiseman (1981), 375-393; Cornell (1986), 67-86 provide the quintessential discussions of the senatorial nature of early Roman historiography.

³⁸ Mutiny at Placentia: Suet. *Iul.* 69; Plut. *Caes.* 37; App. *BCiv* 2.47; Cass. Dio 41.26 (cf. Brice (2015), 108-110). Mutiny in Southern Italy: Suet. *Div. Iul.* 70; Plut. *Caes.* 51; App. *BCiv* 2.93; Cass. Dio 42.53 (cf. Chrissanthos (2001), 63-75 who problematizes the way that the mutiny has been presented by our sources).

³⁹ For example, the defeat of Rutilius (cos. 90 BCE) in the Social War is blamed on his poorly trained troops (Oros. 5.18.11) and Lucullus' inability to bring the third Mithridatic War to an end was blamed on the greediness of his soldiers (Cic. *Man.* 22-3). For the phenomenon more generally, see Rosenstein (1990a), 92-114.

prior to the arrival of Scipio Aemilianus as a result of the indolence of the soldiers deployed in the region, citing the interactions of soldiers with women, merchants and diviners from local communities as evidence of their moral failing (App. *Iber.* 85; Front. *Str.* 4.1; Val. Max. 2.7.1; Liv. *Per.* 57).⁴⁰ This strategy of blaming armies for military disaster was employed by the Roman elite even outside of literary confines. The treatment of the legions who fought at the Battle of Cannae is illustrative. While Varro, the consul who was responsible for the disaster, was famously praised by the Senate for not despairing of the state (Liv. 22.61.14: *quod de re publica non desperasset*), the troops that managed to escape from battle were banished from Italy and not allowed to return to the peninsula until the Hannibalic threat had been vanquished (Liv. 23.25.7).

Alternatively, information about the behavior of military communities could be included expressly for the purpose of enhancing the reputation of the commander in charge of the army. Take, for instance, the one mutiny that Caesar does mention in his work, the sedition at Vesontio in 58 (Caes. *BG* 1.39-41). As scholars have shown, the entire point of the episode is to showcase Caesar's control over the army by highlighting his ability to deal with a difficult situation and resolve it without any issues.⁴¹ Looking at how the army was manipulated as a literary character by elite authors in these incidents helps to make sense of the characterization of Roman soldiers as impetuous, avaricious and mercurial. Not only did this trope betray elite prejudices about the "masses", but it made it easier to explain away failure and exaggerate success. In the event of military disaster, blame could be transferred easily from the commander to his unruly soldiers

⁴⁰ See Chapter 2, pp. 77-9 for further discussion of this incident.

⁴¹ James (2001), 54-63 shows how the mutiny at Vesontio was a literary construction designed to serve as a bulwark for Caesar's authority.

and, in times of success, it was the general's ability to discipline and control his troops that was essential for the positive outcome.⁴²

This negative portrayal, however, is not the only characterization of the Roman army that exists in the literary sources. Ancient authors writing about the Roman army also made use of a completely different characterization of the Roman army, one that depicted Roman soldiers as the model of order, discipline and efficiency.⁴³ This characterization pertains, primarily but not exclusively, to the treatment of the armies of the third and second century and, just as in the case of the negative portrayal of Roman forces seen above, served to further the literary goals of its chroniclers. Polybius, whose work has served as the basis of the idealization of the Roman army to the present day, had the explicit goal of accounting for Rome's rapid and inexorable rise to Mediterranean dominance in a period of just 53 years (Plb. 1.1.5, 6.praef.1-8). The discipline, rigor and unity of the Roman forces are idealized precisely to stand in contrast to the discordant, boisterous and polymorphous nature of contemporary Greek armies and, thereby, explain Roman military success.

The Latin sources for the period, which mostly date to the Late Republican period and early Empire, had entirely different reasons for portraying the army of the third and second century in this idealized fashion. For example, they used the Roman armies of this period – the forces that transformed Rome from a city into an empire – to draw attention

⁴² Tac. *Ann.* 1.42 shows how Caesar and Octavian's successful handling of mutiny had turned into historiographical legend by the end of the first century CE.

⁴³ This has been a key aspect in the modern characterization of the Roman army as well cf. Nicolet (1980), 105–110; Keppie (1984), 38; Roth (1999), 140–1; Southern (2006), 171. James (2002), 1-58; Brice (2003), 3-16; Lendon (2005), 167–171 provide intellectual histories of the focus on Roman discipline as an explanatory factor for Roman success and problematize the notion.

to the moral failings of the current era. Sallust's discussion at the beginning of *Bellum Iugurthinum* is illustrative:

As soon as men could handle war, they were learning the way of war in the camps through hard work, they took more pleasure in beautiful arms and war horses than in prostitutes and parties. As a result, work was not unknown to such men, no place was too harsh or rough, no armed foe too formidable: valor dominated everything.

simul ac belli patiens erat, in castris per laborem usum militiae discebat, magisque in decoris armis et militaribus equis quam in scortis atque conviviis lubidinem habebant. igitur talibus viris non labor insolitus, non locus ullus asper aut arduos erat, non armatus hostis formidulosus: virtus omnia domuerat. (Sall. Cat. 7.4-5)

The hard work put in by the soldiers of earlier Roman history compares favorably with the interests of contemporary troops in prostitutes and parties (*scortis atque conviviis*). These authors also used this characterization of Roman soldiers of the past to construct moral model for the armies of their own era to emulate. Authors like Livy and Valerius Maximus recounted the bravery and devotion of soldiers from earlier periods of Republican history in order to educate their readers about the centrality of discipline and order in the Roman army's success, a trend which worked in lockstep with Augustus' renewed focus on *disciplina militaris*.⁴⁴

The use of these two distinctly different tropes by ancient authors provides some clarity about the necessary concerns when using literary sources for the study of Roman military communities. The frequent characterizations of Roman armies as greedy and impetuous prescribe caution when it comes to trying to make sense of the motivations

⁴⁴ E.g. Liv. 8.7 (the killing of Titus Manlius by his father, Manlius Torquatus), Liv. 9.17.10 (on the centrality of *disciplina militaris* to Roman success in the 4th century BCE). Val. Max. 2.7 is an entire section of Valerius' work dedicated to *exempla* of military discipline. Phang (2001), 345-350 and Phang (2008), 18-24 discuss the importance of military discipline to Augustus' reforms both military and cultural, while Brice (2011), 35-59 relates the essential role that discipline played in Octavian's military commands.

that our sources ascribe to soldiers in instances of disobedience or insubordination.⁴⁵ The goal of the authors in many of these scenes is to paint the Roman army in the worst possible light in order to better valorize the Roman senatorial elite. Alternatively, the idea of Roman soldiers as the epitome of discipline and order further reinforces the possibility of the potential suppression of the distinctive behaviors of Roman armies in our narratives. In order to idealize the Roman army, ancient sources would have been predisposed to exclude certain events and episodes that did not fit their agenda.

Sources

Beyond these generalizations, the biases of the ancient authors that will be consistently relied upon throughout this work and how these perceptions relate to the use of these sources for the study of the army need to be considered. The major literary sources for the study of the Republican army fall into two groups based on the time periods that they document: the sources that record events from beginning of the third century to the middle of the second century BCE and those that concern the period that follows till the death of Caesar.⁴⁶

Polybius and Livy are the two primary sources of information about the nature of the first of these two periods. Polybius, the earlier of these two authors, was a Greek historian writing in the middle of the second century BCE. Taken captive in the aftermath of the Third Macedonian War, he began writing his *Histories*, a detailed account of the so-called *oikumene* from 220 to 146 BCE, while at Rome. Polybius is a valuable source for the Roman army for two reasons. First, as a former cavalry commander who authored

⁴⁵ See n. 5 for bibliography on this issue.

⁴⁶ Throughout this dissertation, the first of these two periods will be referred to as the Middle Republic, while the latter will be called the Late Republic.

works about equestrian tactics, he was particularly interested in military matters. Second, during his time at Rome, he befriended Scipio and supposedly traveled with him as military advisor for his campaigns in Carthage in the 140s and in Spain the following decade.⁴⁷ His work, thus, represents the account of a knowledgeable eye-witness to the Roman army of the second century BCE.⁴⁸

As such, Book 6 of Polybius' *Histories*, which seeks to explain Rome's unbelievable success over the past half-century by looking at its political and military structures, represents arguably the single most important source on the nature of the Roman army of the Republican period. The book offers a long discussion of the nature of the Roman army, detailing among other things the process by which Roman soldiers were enrolled, the highly systematic layout of Roman military camps and the system of reward and punishment used to incentivize Roman soldiers. Scholars have often considered Polybius' description of the Roman army in Book 6 as a "straightforward factual account", but the discussion has literary aims and goals.⁴⁹ As mentioned above, Polybius idealized the Roman army of the third and second centuries as the epitome of systematic order and discipline and memorialized the virtuosity and patriotism of Roman soldiers of the era in order to explain to his Greek audience why they had been successful in the conquest of the Mediterranean. Beyond this, Polybius was also working within a Greek

⁴⁷ Walbank (1972), 1-31; Eckstein (1995), 1-16; McGing (2010), 129-146 discuss the evidence for Polybius' life and career.

⁴⁸ As Marincola (1997), 72-5 has shown, autopsy was essential to Polybius' historical methodology and practice.

⁴⁹ The quotation is from Erskine's (2009) review of Dobson (2008). Even some of the most sophisticated scholarly discussions on this part of Polybius' work (e.g. Rawson (1971), 14-25; Brunt (1971), 625ff.) do not make much of the literary purpose of the digression when discussing its value for information on the Middle Republican army.

intellectual tradition of military science that dated back to the fourth century with works like the *Hipparchicus* of Xenophon and the *Tactica* of Aeneas Tacticus.⁵⁰ Though Polybius' dependence on this tradition is difficult to assess due to a lack of evidence, it would not be surprising if his writings on the Roman army, particularly its form and content, were conditioned and shaped by the larger tradition of military science.⁵¹ However, although Book 6 may represent a distortion of historical reality in service of Polybius' literary goals, the descriptions of the rituals, structures, beliefs and practices provide essential evidence for the ways that Roman military communities were physically and ideologically constructed.

In spite of the idealized view of the Roman army that Polybius presents in Book 6, he does not exclude from the *Histories* instances in which Roman armies acted collectively in contravention of traditional ideals of military discipline. In the *Histories*, Roman armies mutiny (Plb. 11.25-30; Liv. [P] 32.2), flee from the battlefield (Liv. [P] 37.43.1-3), panic at the prospect of an upcoming engagement (Plb. 3.107.4-5; Liv. [P] 42.65.6) and indulge in the luxuries afforded by war (Plb. 9.10.1-13; 11.24.11, 39.2.1-3).⁵² Indeed, the growing immodesty, indiscipline and greed of Roman troops is a major theme of the later books of Polybius' work and it is against this background that the

⁵⁰ Burliga (2008), 92-101 discusses the development of the military handbook as a genre in the middle of the fourth century BCE.

⁵¹ For instance, Aeneas Tacticus' work on Greek military camps, mentioned at Aen. Tact. 21, may well have been a key influence on Polybius' work on Roman encampment, but due to the loss of this text, it is impossible to assess.

⁵² Eckstein (1995), 166-171 discusses the negative aspects of Polybius' depiction of the Roman army.

virtues of Aemilius Paulus and Scipio Aemilianus as soldiers and commanders are marked out for distinction.⁵³

Due to the fragmentary nature of Polybius' *Histories*, much of his narrative for the events of the late third and early second century BCE has been lost. As a result, the majority of our knowledge about the actual events of the period comes from Livy, a Roman historian writing in the Augustan era. His Third, Fourth and Fifth Decades, which cover the years between 218 and 167, offer comprehensive accounts of both Roman military campaigns and key political events of the time period. They provide vital and detailed information about the behavior of Roman military communities both at home and abroad for this period.

While on more historically stable ground than his work on early Roman history, Livy's account of the period is still problematic. His narrative, written nearly two centuries after the events described, is marred by factual errors; scholars have pointed to chronological miscalculations, doublets and mistranslations to question his historical reliability.⁵⁴ To complicate matters even further, recent scholarship has demonstrated that some of these errors were not errors at all, but rather purposeful repackaging of the facts of his narrative in order to suit his historiographical purposes.⁵⁵ There is reason to think that these issues would be exacerbated in Livy's accounts of military affairs. Livy, unlike

⁵³ Brink and Walbank (1954), 106–7; Walbank (2002), 200–207; Champion (2004), 144–167 discuss the centrality of Roman decline to Polybius' project.

⁵⁴ Walsh (1982), 1058–1074 provides a full and sobering analysis for the historical problems of the Third Decade (cf. Walsh (1961) for Livy's methods and aims in these books more generally). Miles (1997), 8–74 discusses the treatment of Livy as a historical source by modern scholars.

⁵⁵ Levene (2010), 53–63 argues that several of the chronological errors made by Livy can be interpreted within the literary framing and perspective of his narrative.

Polybius, was not experienced in military affairs and some of his worst factual errors come in his attempts to describe Roman military actions.⁵⁶

However, these issues need not strip Livy's account of its value for the current project. Indeed, many of the sources that Livy used in these books were contemporaneous or nearly-contemporaneous with the events that they were describing. Further, at least some of the authors that Livy depended upon for military matters of the period like Polybius, Fabius Pictor and Cincius Alimentus were not only experienced in such affairs, but were actually eye-witnesses to the events that they describe.⁵⁷ As such, there seems to be no *a priori* reason to doubt the historicity of events that he records in these books which pertain to the activities of military communities. What is more troublesome, however, is Livy's representation and framing of such episodes. As has been well-documented, Livy wrote his history within an exemplary framework with the purpose of providing moral instruction for his readers.⁵⁸ The events that Livy records are structured and written in order to advance the didactic and moralistic aims of his history. As a result, a scene like Livy's narrative of the mutiny at Sucro in 206 BCE is more concerned with teaching its readers about how a successful commander can strike the right balance between cruelty and leniency in dealing with his soldiers than accounting for the mindset and rationale of the mutinous Roman troops.⁵⁹ Thus, when analyzing Livy's accounts of

⁵⁶ Walsh (1958), 83-8 compiles Livy's worst errors, including the claim that Macedonian soldiers at the Battle of Cynoscephelae dropped their spears in the midst of battle (cf. Liv. 33.8.13; Plb. 28.24.9).

⁵⁷ Luce (1977), 177-181, Levene (2010), 128-163 (cf. Tränkle (1977), 193-241, particularly for Livy's use of Polybius).

⁵⁸ Chaplin (2000), 1-30; Lushkov (2015), 96-128.

⁵⁹ Liv. 28.24-32 (cf. Woodman (2006), 303-329; Aranita (2009), 1-19).

military activities, it is necessary to be conscious of how his didactic intentions influence the framing and discussion of incident at hand.

After the extant accounts of Polybius and Livy break off in the middle of the second century BCE, there are two key sources for the behavior of Roman military communities for the remainder of the period of study: Appian and Caesar. The *Roman History* of the former, a Greek historian of the second century CE, covered nearly nine hundred years, beginning with the regal period and ending with the campaigns of Trajan in Dacia and Arabia. Appian is important as a source for this project for two reasons. First, Appian provides a narrative for Roman activities in Spain after Livy's history cuts off in the middle of the second century BCE. Since Spain was one of the first regions where soldiers spent prolonged periods of time on campaign, Appian's account of the military campaigns in the region offers a close look at ways in which longer periods of service changed the makeup and behavior of Roman armies.

Second, Appian's belief, following from Thucydides, that *stasis* was a necessary precursor to political change meant that his account of the end of the Republic was dominated by evidence of unrest throughout the Roman world.⁶⁰ Consequently, Appian provides a particularly full record of the mutinies and other forms of disobedience and insubordination in the Roman army of this period.⁶¹ Since Appian will be used primarily to fill out the broader narrative of the behavior of the Roman army, the standard

⁶⁰ Bucher (2007), 454-460; Price (2015), 45-64.

⁶¹ Brice (2003), 45. It should be noted that Appian's views of the centrality of *stasis* to political change colors his interpretation of the various incidents of military indiscipline that he discusses. There is an inherent risk that Appian programmatically attributes larger significance to such events and, therefore, exaggerates his accounts of disobedience in order to make his larger historiographical point. Thus, caution is required when considering his interpretative analysis of these events.

criticisms leveled against the Greek historian are not particularly relevant to this study. For example, even if Appian is nothing more than a copier or compiler, it has been shown that he appears to have copied or compiled his narrative from sources that provide contemporaneous accounts of the events described.⁶² As such, the narrative that Appian presents provides useful historical material for the task at hand.

Completely different in scope, scale and purpose is the Caesarian corpus, the “historical” works of Caesar and continuators. These works narrate the various campaigns fought by Caesar and his soldiers between 58 and 45 BCE: the war in Gaul, the civil war with Pompey, Caesar’s wars in Alexandria and Asia and the civil war with Pompey’s children in Africa and Spain. Military affairs are, of course, the central concerns of these works. Indeed, they offer a close look into the daily operations, practices and rituals of a Roman army on campaign in the first century BCE. Additionally, the Caesarian corpus even provides different perspectives on the daily life of the Roman soldiers. The *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile* were written by Caesar and, thus, reflect a general’s view of life in the Roman camp. On the other hand, the *Bellum Africum* and the *Bellum Hispaniense* were authored by lower-level officers in Caesar’s army and, consequently, provide a soldier’s perspective on different aspects of military life.⁶³ Of course, Caesar and the other authors of the Caesarian corpus had their

⁶² Bucher (2000), 411-4 discusses the changing scholarly opinions about the value of Appian’s work. Barbu (1934) argues for Appian’s use of contemporary sources by showing that he used Sallust for the Catilinarian conspiracy and Nicolaus of Damascus for the assassination of Julius Caesar,

⁶³ Cluett (2009), 192-205 discusses what is known about the authors of the various pseudo-Caesarian works.

own literary goals in recounting these campaigns.⁶⁴ Foremost among their aims, especially given the political circumstances, was making Caesar appear as the perfect general, to depict him as always being in control of the situation at hand. Thus, all aspects of life on campaign from the organization of the camp to the relationships that developed among soldiers are likely to be idealized to reflect well on Caesar. As discussed earlier, this was further exacerbated when it came to instances of unrest and dissent in Caesar's army. Such events were either altogether excluded by our authors or used as a literary device to bolster Caesar's credentials.

There are a wide-range of sources beyond Polybius, Livy, Appian and Caesar that are used throughout this work. The fragmentary accounts of historians like Diodorus Siculus, Cassius Dio and Zonaras supplement our understanding of events in the third and second century BCE while Sallust, Plutarch, Cicero and the *Periochae* of Livy help to fill out the narrative during the Late Republic.⁶⁵ Additionally, the exemplary texts of Valerius Maximus and Frontinus provide anecdotes from the entire period under consideration that reveal important information about the nature of Roman military communities and the various forms of collective action that they engaged in. There are also pieces of archaeological and epigraphic evidence that shed light on the nature of military communities during the Republic. These sources all possess unique characteristics that affect their value as historical evidence. For the sake of brevity, these

⁶⁴ For the literary nature of these works, see Rambaud (1953) and Riggsby (2006) for the *Bellum Gallicum*; Batstone and Damon (2006) and Grillo (2012) for the *Bellum Civile*; Cluett (2003), 118-131, and Gaertner (2014) for the works of the continuators.

⁶⁵ The absence of Sallust in the list of primary sources for the Late Republican period may be surprising. This is due, perhaps, to the fact that Sallust's two major extant works are historical monographs rather than narrative histories. The *Bellum Catilinae* does not discuss military matters and the *Bellum Iugurthinum* covers only a short period of history. This, perhaps, would be different if the *Histories* were fully extant.

aspects will be discussed in more detail when relevant to the argument at hand.

CHAPTER 1: COMMUNITY AND THE REPUBLICAN ARMY

Introduction

In September 40 BCE, Octavian had encamped his army just outside the walls of Brundisium.⁶⁶ The future emperor had marched to the port city to besiege Antony's forces and consolidate his power throughout Italy. Just before the siege was set to begin, Antony's troops rushed out of the city and entered Octavian's camp unarmed (App. *BCiv* 5.59). Antony's soldiers reproached their counterparts for fighting against men they had served with previously. Octavian's troops responded that they had not forgotten their shared service; rather, they had a plan to bring the bloodshed to an end and to broker peace between Octavian and Antony. As a result, both armies agreed to disobey the orders of their commanders and sent deputies to Antony and Octavian to demand that they bring their conflict to an end (App. *BCiv* 5.64). While Antony and Octavian were not keen to do so, they ultimately reconciled and agreed to the so-called Pact at Brundisium. The incident not only demonstrates the power that soldiers had as a collective group, but the strength of the bonds that formed between soldiers who served together in the Roman army. Even years after they had gone their separate ways, the soldiers who took part in the campaign against Brutus and Cassius still felt a sense of loyalty to one another and

⁶⁶ For the Pact of Brundisium, Kromayer (1894), 556–585 and Gabba (1970), 98–110 provide a detailed chronology and prosopography. Lange (2009), 28–29 offers a discussion of the larger political importance of the treaty, arguing that it served as the basis for the power sharing dynamic in the years to come, while Chrissanthos (1999), 136–159 provides a close analysis of the agency of the soldiers in the incident.

were willing to take on the two strongest men in the Roman world in order to protect each another.

This chapter will examine the circumstances that produced such bonds among soldiers during the Republican period. It will show that the terms of military service as well as the structures and the ideologies of the Republican army produced strong feelings of community among soldiers on campaign from the third century BCE onwards. As such, the chapter will redress the lack of attention given to the military communities of the Republican period. Further, it will show that military service in the period created connections between soldiers in much the same way that it did in the Imperial period.

Defining Community in the Republican Army

The search for community in the army of the Republican period must begin with an attempt to define the term community. Unfortunately, there is no simple answer to this question; community is a complex and vague concept that has been the subject of much discussion among sociologists and anthropologists for much of the last two centuries.⁶⁷ There are, however, broadly speaking, two conceptions of community that dominate the sociological discourse. The first views community as something that occurs “naturally.”⁶⁸ That is, people who live or work together in close quarters share a unique set of experiences and develop a broader sense of collective consciousness as a result of those

⁶⁷ Though not a work of sociology in and of itself, Mac Sweeney (2011), 9-21 offers an excellent summary of the history of the study of community and discusses the applicability of these paradigms to the ancient world.

⁶⁸ The centrality of shared living spaces or occupations in this discourse of community is based in the sociological theory of the late 19th century. Tönnies' 1887 work, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* argued for a distinction between community and society. Community (*Gemeinschaft*), according to Tönnies, was the more primitive of the two social groups, based on mutual bonds of affection and exemplified by the relationship between family members or townsmen. Society (*Gesellschaft*), on the other hand, was a result of urbanization and the rise of capitalism in the modern era.

shared experiences. The second developed in the late twentieth century as a direct response to this idea. Using examples such as the modern nation-state, sociologists contended that communities were ultimately ideological rather than physical constructions.⁶⁹ These scholars held that a group's normative values – its practices, rituals and moral codes – were what created a sense of communal identity among its members. In the words of Cohen, communities can ultimately be defined as “a resource and repository of meaning and a referent of [its constituents'] identity.”⁷⁰

Over the last fifteen years, a growing number of sociologists have argued that these competing conceptions of community are not mutually exclusive.⁷¹ They contend that both physical and ideological factors play an essential role in the development of community. Indeed, for the purposes of this work, a definition of community that encompasses these two schools of thought proves most useful. In the existing scholarship on Roman military communities, the absence of a guiding definition of community has meant that both the natural and ideological conceptions of community have been applied to the armies of the Imperial period. In order to put this work in dialogue with these studies, the term community will be used to describe a group of people who shared a core system of values, practices and rituals and lived and worked in the same physical spaces.

⁶⁹ The foremost works in this movement away from the natural definition of community are Anderson (1983) and Cohen (1985). Anderson argues that newspapers and other media played a major role in the creation of the nation-state by providing an avenue for the development of a shared national ideology among people who did not know each other, who would never see each other and who had significant differences.

⁷⁰ Cohen (1985), 118.

⁷¹ Mac Sweeney (2011), 18-20.

Thus, this chapter will deal with how the armies of the Republican period fit within both the natural and ideological conceptions of community.

Military Service in the Roman Army (3rd – 1st c. BCE)

It is not difficult to understand why the Imperial army has been studied within the framework of community.⁷² After the Augustan reforms, troops were stationed in a particular province for the majority of their career. Since these soldiers fought and lived with the same people for a period of fifteen to twenty years, they formed close ties with one another and with local communities, connections which are well-attested in the papyrological, epigraphic and archaeological evidence from the period.⁷³ In short, the realities of military service after the Augustan reforms provided the ideal setting for the development of a “natural” community.

There has been little discussion about communities in the Roman army prior to the Augustan reforms except to acknowledge that the phenomenon had precursors in the armies of “strong men” of the late Republic. This lack of attention can be traced to the way that Roman armies of the Republican period traditionally have been viewed. Scholars have generally seen the Republican army not as a professional military force, but rather as a group of citizen-soldiers who were fighting to protect their families and

⁷² See, for example, the table of contents for Adams et al. (1999). The formative articles on the conception of the Roman army as a community, such as Shaw (1983), 133–159 and Pollard (1996), 211–227, deal only with evidence from the Imperial period. An exception to this general rule is MacMullen (1984), 440–56, who starts with Caesar’s armies in his discussion of the legion as a society.

⁷³ The chapters and articles mentioned in the above footnote provide a good sense of the range of connections that soldiers developed in the period and the types of evidence that can be brought to bear on these relations. For the Imperial period, the epigraphic archive at Vindolanda offers the best insight into the different relationships that developed between soldiers and reveals the variety of interactions that they had with their environs.

fatherland.⁷⁴ Recruitment occurred seasonally; armies were enrolled in the spring and dismissed in the winter on a yearly basis. There was not much time for men serving in Republican armies to develop close bonds with the other soldiers in their unit. In these circumstances, it was unrealistic to expect “natural” communities to develop within the Republican army.

However, these perceptions of Republican military service are not entirely accurate.⁷⁵ Beginning with the Second Punic War, soldiers in the Roman army regularly experienced periods of service that lasted much longer than a year. There were ample opportunities for soldiers to develop bonds with one another and to foster the kinds of connections that scholars of the Imperial period have discussed at length.

While many of the legions enlisted during the Second Punic War continued to serve under the normal rhythms of Roman warfare; several of them were exceptionally long tenured.⁷⁶ The *legiones Cannenses*, the two legions who survived the Battle of Cannae and were consequently exiled from Italy, served in Sicily from 214 - 204 BCE and in Africa with Scipio Africanus until the end of the war.⁷⁷ Roman forces in Spain during the conflict also experienced particularly long periods of service. Troops first came to Spain in 218/7 and our sources record only two reinforcements between then and the end of the conflict in Spain in 206/5 – in 211, after the disastrous defeats of Scipio’s

⁷⁴ Nicolet (1980), 89–105; Patterson (1993), 95–6; Hoyos (2007), 67; Alston (2008) 177–9 all discuss the essential importance of civic responsibility to the Roman army. Harris (1985), 54 and Raaflaub (1996), 297–8 among others believe that this ideology was propagated as a solution to a nexus of problems faced by Rome in the fourth century BCE.

⁷⁵ Maxfield (1981), 28; Keppie (1984), 38; Potter (2004), 78–9.

⁷⁶ Toynbee (1965), 2.74–6.

⁷⁷ On the deployment of the *legiones Cannenses* in Sicily after 210, see Liv. 27.8.11–13 (209); 27.22.8 (208); 27.36.12 (207); 28.10.13 (206) and 29.13.6 (204).

father and uncle (Liv. 26.17.1), and in 210, upon Scipio's election as commander (Liv. 26.19.10). In fact, there is reason to believe that many of the soldiers fighting at the end of the campaign had come to the region when the war first broke out in Spain: in Scipio's speech to his mutinous soldiers in 206 BCE, the general claims that the troops are upset about payments in arrears that predate his command in 210 (Plb. 11.28.3-5). Even beyond these soldiers in exceptional circumstances, a significant number of the legions enlisted during the Second Punic War spent several years fighting together. For example, when the Senate decided to disband seven legions in 210, the troops who had been serving in these units had been fighting together for between four and six years.⁷⁸

The exceptional circumstances of the Second Punic War naturally required exceptional measures. However, the Romans continued to employ soldiers for long periods of time throughout the rest of the Republican period. In the century that followed the Second Punic War, this phenomenon is well-documented in the Spanish provinces. Beginning in 197 BCE, both of the Spanish provinces had, at least, one standing legion. It was not feasible to replace the legions in Spain on an annual basis. In addition to the higher likelihood of success with veteran troops, large-scale mobilizations and all its attendant business – the levying of soldiers at Rome and among the allies, the equipping and provisioning of these new forces and the arranging for mass transportation to Spain – were difficult and time-consuming tasks.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Rosenstein (2004), 189. Contra Steinwender (1889), 285–305, the contention here is not that there was a six-year term limit for Roman soldiers, but simply to note that there were numerous instances where large numbers of troops spent prolonged periods of time in service away from home. Beyond these forces, it might also be mentioned that the two legions fighting in Sardinia during the war served for eleven and nine years, respectively.

⁷⁹ Toynbee (1965), 2.76-79; Brunt (1971), 399.

As a result of the logistical difficulties of raising, providing for and transporting a new army and the strategic problems of fighting with troops who had no experience in Spain, veteran soldiers were rarely discharged *en masse*. Rather, Roman policy favored yearly *supplementa*, which allowed for several hundred soldiers from each legion to be released from duty annually.⁸⁰ Further, due to the situation in the two Spains, the successful conclusion of a campaign did not mark the endpoint for a soldier's service. At least two legions of soldiers needed to be stationed in Spain throughout the entirety of the second century – even in times of relative peace.⁸¹ The model of the Spanish provinces was later replicated in the imperial provinces.

An incident involving the army of Quintus Fulvius Flaccus, the praetor in command of Hispania Citerior in 181/0 BCE, reveals the impact of this policy on the length of service of Roman soldiers fighting in Spain. Flaccus sent three representatives to the Senate to announce the success of his campaigns against the Celtiberians and to ask for the discharge of the two legions under his command so that they could return to Rome with their victorious general (Liv. 40.35.3-6). Flaccus' proposal was met with significant objections and the Senate only granted the praetor's request in part. They declared that a full legion with a small *supplementum* would be sent with Sempronius to allow for the discharge of all soldiers whose service in Spain had started before 186 BCE (40.36.1-4, 8-10).⁸² The Senate also added that if the new forces brought the total number of soldiers

⁸⁰ E.g. Liv. 36.2.9, 37.50.11, 39.20.4 (cf. Afzelius (1944), 40–61; Smith (1958), 6; Brunt (1971), 661–2; Potter (2004), 79.

⁸¹ Brunt (1971), 433; Rich (1993), 57.

⁸² Briscoe (2008), 500 argues that the new recruited troops sent to Spain were the legions who had been recently disbanded from the Ligurian campaigns.

in the field to more than two legions, Flaccus was authorized to bring the excess – rewarding, in particular, the soldiers that fought most bravely – with him to Italy (40.36.11).

So just how many soldiers in Flaccus' army would have been serving in Spain for six or more years? Some quick calculations can provide an estimate. Through close study of Livy's annalistic notices on troop deployment, Brunt has estimated that the annual replacement rate for troops in Spain from 187-167 was roughly 500 soldiers per legion per year.⁸³ The two legions which were fighting under Flaccus had been constituted in 187 and, thus, would have received a total of 6,000 new soldiers over the course of the six years between 187 and 181 (500 soldiers per legion per year). Subtracting this total from the number of soldiers in the two legions (10,400) allows us to estimate that approximately 4,400 of the soldiers serving in Flaccus' two legions had been fighting in the province since 187.⁸⁴ This estimate accords with the Senate's decision to enroll a new legion of 5,200 men to allow for the discharge of all soldiers who had served in Flaccus' army since 187. Almost half of Flaccus' two legions (10,400 soldiers) had been deployed in Spain for at least six years.⁸⁵

Again, one might object that military service in Spain was the exception to the rule, as it represents just one of many theaters in which Republican armies fought.

⁸³ Brunt (1971), 661-3.

⁸⁴ Following the argument of Afzelius and Brunt that there were two legions in Nearer Spain beginning in 187. For arguments against the point of view that there were two legions in Nearer Spain starting in 187 (though there is no dispute that there were two legions in 184), see Knapp (1979), 87-93.

⁸⁵ Contra Cadiou (2008), 148-9, who minimizes the number of soldiers who have been in Spain for more than six years and ignores the enrollment of the new legion as a reinforcement. There is some evidence to suggest that a decision made by the Senate regarding Flaccus' troops marked the beginning of a policy to limit service in Spain to a period of six years. Cf. App. *Iber.* 78 discusses the replacement of Pompeius' army in 140 BCE after serving in the region continuously for 6 years.

However, this picture comes under fire when the manpower dedicated by the Romans to Spain during the second century BCE is considered more closely. The metric of years of legionary service proves useful in assessing Rome's manpower commitment to a particular region. Over the sixty-five year period between the creation of the two Spains in 197 to the fall of Numantia in 133, the Romans used approximately 497 years of legionary service equating to just under eight legions in the field each year.⁸⁶ Of these 497 years, 175 years of legionary service were dedicated to the two Spanish provinces, meaning that on average about 2.7 legions were stationed in Spain each year. Thus, over 35% of the legionary service years were spent in Spain, indicating that a significant portion of Roman manpower was dedicated to serving in the region. While these numbers do not tell us about the experiences of individual Roman soldiers, they do indicate that circumstances of military service in Spain were not a just minor exception to the rule during the second century BCE.⁸⁷

Perhaps, it might be suggested that this time period misrepresents the importance of the Spanish campaigns to Roman military service as it coincides with the greatest extent of Roman involvement in Spain. Extending the study by another forty years to 91 BCE – a time period in which there were no substantial wars in Spain – actually reveals a slight increase in the percentage of legionary service years spent in Spain.⁸⁸ Of the 766 years of legionary service used by the Romans during the period of 197-91 BCE (7.16

⁸⁶ Brunt (1971), 424, 432-3. While, as discussed in the introduction much of Brunt's ideas about demography are out of date, the work that is relied upon here is based largely on a compilation of ancient evidence about army deployment and less about assumptions of population growth and decline.

⁸⁷ Potter (2004), 78-9.

⁸⁸ Brunt (1971), 432-3.

legions in the field per year), 274 (36% or 2.56 legions per year) were dedicated to Spain. The conditions of warfare in Spain should, then, not be treated as an exception to a general rule, but rather should be regarded as an important part of the story of Roman military service during the Middle and Late Republic.

Additionally, Spain may not have been the only province that maintained a standing Roman army during the Republic. There is some evidence to suggest that one praetorian legion was permanently stationed in Macedon beginning in 145 BCE.⁸⁹ However, almost nothing is known about the nature of the army that served in Macedon. Unlike the case of the soldiers deployed to Spain, there are no annual accounts of the deployment of Roman soldiers to the region. While it is possible that the legion was replaced each year, it seems more reasonable to conjecture that new legions would not have been levied on a yearly basis. Not only were there logistical difficulties of transporting an army to Macedonia and acclimating the forces to their duties, but also, in the past, when the Romans had fought in Macedon, they did not replace the legions that had been serving in the region unless absolutely necessary. The armies that were commissioned at the beginning of the Second and Third Macedonian Wars did not return home until the war had been brought to a close.

Even beyond the standing armies employed in this period and the exceptional circumstances of the Second Punic War, there were other conflicts in which Roman armies spent prolonged periods of time on campaign. As mentioned above, the troops

⁸⁹ The primary evidence is not particularly extensive (cf. Liv. *Per.* 53, 56, Eutrop. 4.15, SIG³ 700, App. *Mith.* 35 Julius Obsequens 43, 48). Brunt (1971), 428-9; Brennan (2000), 222-5; Eckstein (2013), 94-95 all argue for Roman military presence in Macedon from 145 forward, despite the protestation of Gruen (1984), 433-6 about a lack of evidence.

fighting in Second and Third Macedonian War saw extended periods of service. In the case of the Roman legionary, Spurius Ligustinus, Livy says that he was commissioned to serve in Macedon at the outbreak of the Second Macedonian War in 200 BCE, but did not return to Rome until five years later in 196/5 (Liv. 42.34.5). Similarly, Livy reports that the soldiers who had volunteered for the Third Macedonian War at its outset in 171 were still serving in 168 and didn't return home until the year after (Liv. 43.14.7). There are similar examples in the later second century BCE as well. The troops who were sent against Aristonicus in 131 had effectively brought the revolt to an end by 129, but they did not return home until 126 after five years of service.⁹⁰ Despite the fact that much is made of Marius' recruitment of volunteers *capite censi* in 107, his enrolment of troops at Rome was meant to be a *supplementum* for forces who had been serving in Africa since 111 (Sall. *Iug.* 86.4).⁹¹ Those troops did not return home until 105, meaning that some of the soldiers in Marius' triumphant army had fought together for six years. What emerges is that in the case of foreign wars which presented logistical difficulties in levying and transporting an army on an annual basis, Roman soldiers were expected to serve until the war at hand was brought to completion.

In the first century BCE, the idea that Roman soldiers spent long periods of time on campaign is less controversial. Scholars have shown that Rome began to manage problems within its growing empire through "extraordinary commands", extended grants of *imperium* that gave a single commander significant latitude in putting the issues at

⁹⁰ The *Fasti Triumphales* records that the triumph of Aquilius occurred in November, 126 BCE (cf. Brunt (1971), 429).

⁹¹ Brunt (1971), 430; Gabba (1976), 15–19.

hand to rest.⁹² These grants, such as the ones that gave Pompey the war against Mithridates and Caesar the war in Gaul, meant that the soldiers fighting under such commanders spent prolonged periods of time in the field.⁹³ Some of these soldiers had their terms of service extended even further by the outbreak of civil war in this period. It is well-documented both by ancient and modern authorities that soldiers serving under Sulla, Caesar, Octavian and the other military dynasts of the period spent many years fighting together.⁹⁴

What emerges from this reevaluation of the nature of military service during the Republic is that Roman soldiers of the period were not just part-time militia, levied on a year-to-year basis. When called to arms, it was normal to spend extended periods of time in a particular region. Indeed, if Polybius is right in asserting that Roman soldiers were required to serve sixteen *stipendia* (Plb. 6.19.2), it is reasonable to assume that most of the men who served in the Roman army from the third century onward experienced at least one longer campaign, if not more.⁹⁵ These prolonged periods of service gave soldiers in Roman armies the opportunity to create close bonds between one another.

⁹² Boak (1918), 1-28 looks at extraordinary commands as a result of the growing power of individuals. Ridley (1981), 280-297, on the other hand, has argued that the term extraordinary command has been misapplied and that the practice of prorogation and the granting of commands to *privati* was not only much more commonplace than usually perceived but also a practice that had been in place since the beginning of the first century BCE. Gruen (1974), 534-543 makes a similar argument to Ridley and asserts that the powers accorded to Marius, Sulla, Pompey and Caesar were part of a larger Roman policy that was enacted to handle the new set of pressures brought about by Roman expansion.

⁹³ Smith (1958), 27-44.

⁹⁴ Harmand (1967), 442-455 discusses the nature of the relationship between these commanders and their armies and argues that only Caesar could be regarded as having a client army.

⁹⁵ Rosenstein (2004), 189 rejects the idea that Roman soldiers only served in the field for six years as other scholars have suggested. He asserts that it was more likely that troops spent closer to the sixteen years that Polybius attests to.

Years of living and fighting together created a sense of “natural” community among Roman soldiers of the Republican period just as it did under the Empire.

***Castra* as “Natural” Community**

It was not only the duration of military service that fostered a sense of community among soldiers in the Roman army. The spaces in which Roman soldiers lived and worked also played a major role in creating a sense of “natural” community within the Roman army. First and foremost among the spaces of the Roman army were military camps, the *castra*. The *castra*, which could either be temporary or permanent structures, served as the home base for soldiers while they were on campaign. The section that follows will examine how the physical structure of the *castra* shaped the military communities of the Republican period.⁹⁶

The best evidence for the *castra* in the Republican period comes from Polybius’ account in his *Histories*.⁹⁷ In the middle of his famous digression on the Roman constitution in Book 6, Polybius offers an extended discussion of the nature of the Roman camp (Plb. 6.27-42). While Polybius’ account is idealized – the long set-piece serves as an important part of the historian’s attempt to explain the unique institutions that enabled the Romans to conquer the Mediterranean in a span of fifty-three years – it, nonetheless,

⁹⁶ Cagniat (1992), 221. There were several tracts from the imperial period that dealt with the issue of Roman camp construction including the *de Metatione Castrorum* of Pseudo-Hyginus and *Epitoma Rei Militaris* of Vegetius. The *castra* even appears in the visual culture of the era; Trajan’s column devotes two scenes to the construction of the camp while on campaign.

⁹⁷ Much is still debated about Polybius’ description of Roman military camps. Basic questions persist about the nature of the passage including the type and date of the encampment described and the sources for Polybius’ account still persist. Walbank (1957), 1.698 and Toynbee (1965), 505 argue that the passage represents the army of the mid-second century BCE, while Rawson (1971), 13–18, followed by Salvatore (1996), 5–18 and Dobson (2008), 46–66, believes that it describes the army that was operating during the Second Punic War. Fraccaro (1934), 154–161, Walbank (1957), 1.711 and Dobson (2008), 68–70 assert that Polybius’ camp was intended to describe a *castra* meant to hold four legions, while Fabricius (1932), 78–87 holds that it is a two-legion camp.

provides significant details about the structure, practices and ideologies of the Roman military camp during the Republican period.⁹⁸ The sections that follow will rely heavily on Polybius' account of the camp in order to understand the central role played by the *castra* in the construction of Roman military communities.⁹⁹

Castra as Settlement

A key observation that Polybius makes at several points in his discussion of the Roman camp is that *castra* resemble a πόλις. After detailing the design and dimensions of the camp, Polybius explicitly calls the Roman encampment a square which took on the appearance of a πόλις (Plb. 6.31.10: πόλει παραπλησίαν). Later, in describing the orderly fashion in which the soldiers set up the camp, he adds that since the soldiers knew exactly where they would live, the setting up of the *castra* resembled “the return of an army to its native city” (Plb. 6.41.10: γίνεται τι παραπλήσιον, οἷον ὅταν εἰς πόλιν εἰσὶ στρατόπεδον ἐγχώριον). The Roman camp evoked, at least for Polybius, the image of a πόλις on the move.¹⁰⁰

Investigating some of the details of Polybius' narrative a little more closely reveals that the *castra* did not just resemble a πόλις, but the origin of its structure was, in

⁹⁸ Polybius' account has also been compared to the archaeological remains of Republican camp sites in Spain. Schulten's 1927 study of the camps at Numantia has argued for the general reliability of Polybius' account, while Dobson's 2008 *The Army of the Roman Republic*, which provides a major reassessment of Schulten's excavations of the camps at Numantia, is a bit more skeptical of Polybius.

⁹⁹ Surprisingly, the ways in which the layout and organization of the Roman military camps of the Middle Republican period fostered the development of communities within the army has not been much discussed. The major exception is the aforementioned work of Dobson. While Dobson offers many astute observations about the ways in which the military camps described by Polybius resemble civilian structures, he does not go into detail about how this may or may not have produced a sense of community within the Republican army.

¹⁰⁰ This idea of army as a polis can also be found in classical Greek historiography in Thucydides' description of the troops in the Sicilian expedition as well as Xenophon's *Anabasis* (cf. Hornblower (2011), 226–249). It should also be noted that later authors observing Roman camps noted this as well, cf. Joseph. *BJ* 3.83; Veg. *Mil.* 1.21.

fact, based on Roman techniques for settlement construction.¹⁰¹ The unit of measurement used by Polybius to describe the dimensions of the camp has been shown to be multiples of the Roman *actus*, 120 Roman feet. The *actus* was originally an agricultural term used to describe how far the oxen attached to a plough were driven before they were turned.¹⁰² From the fourth century BCE onwards, a square (the *actus quadratus*), whose sides measured the length of an *actus*, became the unit used for the rectangular grid system around which settlements were built.¹⁰³ As Dobson notes, the grid system used for Roman military fortifications had civil origins and had been “transferred from a civilian to a military context.”¹⁰⁴

More correspondences to Roman methods of settlement can be found in the layout of the roads in the *castra*, a reality explicitly acknowledged by Polybius (Plb. 6.29.2: τῷ γὰρ ὄντι ρύμαις παραπλήσιον ἀποτελεῖται τὸ τῶν διόδων σχῆμα πασῶν, ὡς ἂν ἐξ ἑκατέρου τοῦ μέρους αἷς μὲν ταγμάτων). The main road of the camp, the *via principalis*, ran perpendicular to two other large thoroughfares, the *via praetoria* and the *via decumana* and it was at the intersection of these three roads that the two most important structures in the camp, the *forum* and *praetorium*, were located (Fig. 1).¹⁰⁵ This system of perpendicular thoroughfares whose conjunction marked the center of the settlement

¹⁰¹ Rykwert (1988), 68–9.

¹⁰² Plin. *NH* 18.9: *actus, in quo boves agerentur cum aratro uno impetu iusto. hic erat CXX pedum duplicatusque in longitudinem iugerum faciebat* (cf. Dilke (1971), 82; Dobson (2008), 71).

¹⁰³ Varro *Ling.* 5.34; *Rust.* 1.10.2; Columella *Rust.* 5.1.5 (cf. Dobson (2008), 71). Dilke (1971), 88; Castagnoli (1971), 100; Ward-Perkins (1974), 28 reveal the centrality of grid planning for the development of Italian city-states.

¹⁰⁴ Salvatore (1996), 146; Dobson (2008), 72.

¹⁰⁵ As Dobson (2008), 83, citing Schulten (1927), 107, notes, the term *via decumana* is a modern construction.

evokes the famous *cardo-decumanus* model used in Roman settlements throughout the Mediterranean world.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, the living quarters for the soldiers, which were broken up into rows of ten units (one *actus quadratus* for each manipule/*turma* of a particular kind of troops), were divided between the fifth and the sixth unit by the *via quintana* (Plb. 6.30.5-6; Liv. 41.2.11). The placing of *via quintana* in such a position had roots in Roman settlement practices; Hyginus Gromaticus says that the boundary between every fifth land plot was a road known as the *limes actuarius* (Hyginus Gromaticus *De Limitibus Constituendis* 19.2).¹⁰⁷

The camp also contained several other features that were hallmarks of Roman and Italic cities. Polybius claims that the space where the commander took up residence, the *praetorium*, was the first place marked out in the camp (Plb. 6.27.1). The details Polybius provides about the careful marking out of the space for the *praetorium* indicate that it may have served as more than lodging for the general. The placing of a σημαία on the ground and the measuring out of a square from that point has reminded scholars of the process of inaugurating a space as a *templum* (Plb. 6.27.1-2).¹⁰⁸ This conjecture has been advanced by Dobson who has noted the necessary functioning of the *praetorium* as a place of augury.¹⁰⁹ Military commanders were required to take the auspices prior to battle

¹⁰⁶ Keppie (1984), 22.

¹⁰⁷ The *via quintana* was also part of the aforementioned rectangular network of roads in the camp as it ran parallel to the *via principalis*.

¹⁰⁸ Oxé (1939), 53; Dobson (2008), 74.

¹⁰⁹ Quint. *Inst.* 8.2.8; Tac. *Ann.* 2.13, 15.30 refer to the *praetorium* as a place of augury (cf. also Dobson (2008), 74).

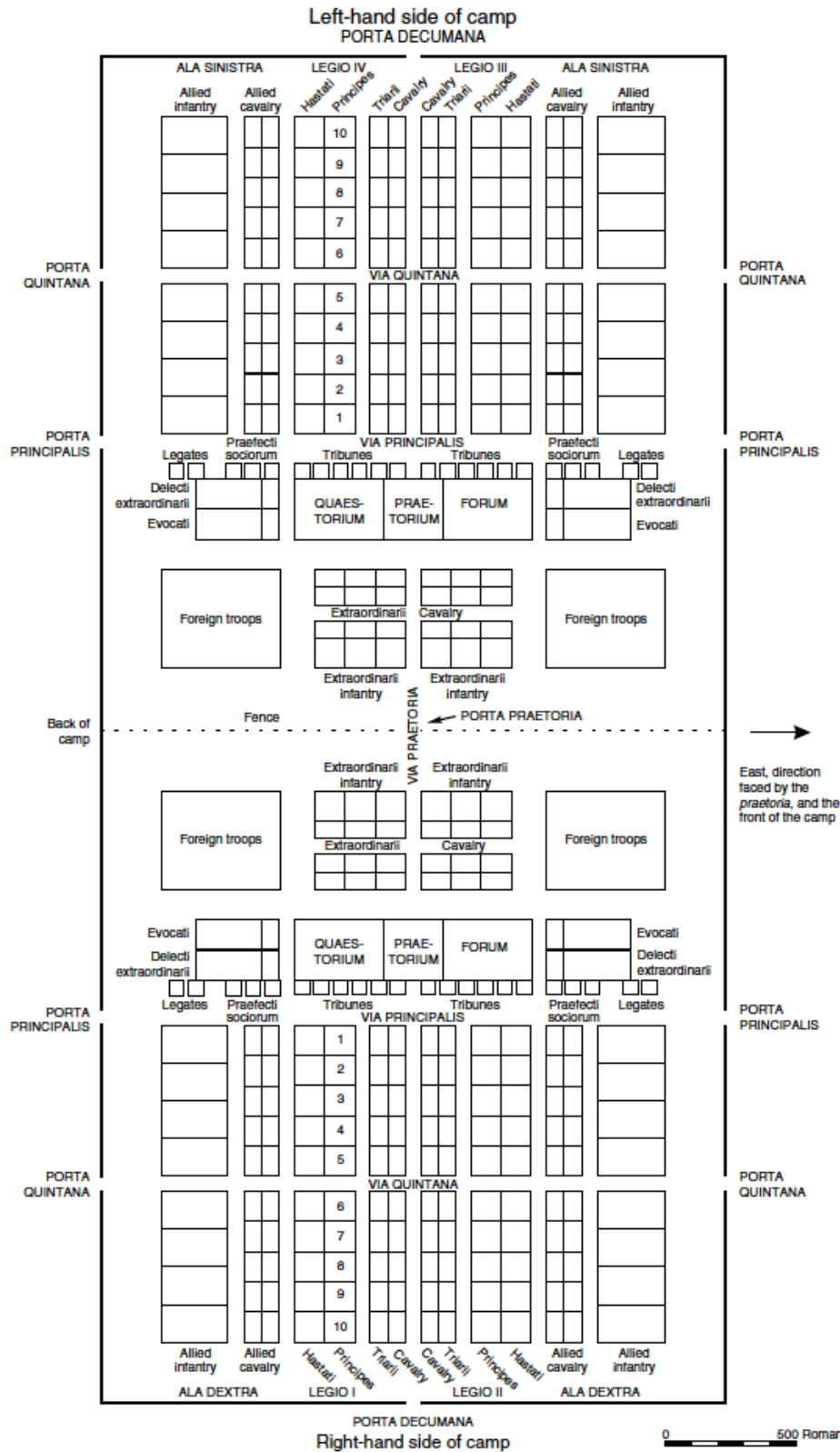


Fig. 1 – Reconstruction of Polybius’ manipular double-consular camp. Drawing from Dobson (2013).

needed an inaugurated space in which to do so.¹¹⁰ The importance of the augural aspects of the *praetorium*, Dobson argues, are also demonstrated by the fact that the commander's tent was at times referred to as the *augurale* (Quint. *Inst.* 8.2.8; Tac. *Ann.* 2.13, 15.30).¹¹¹ Even the usual word for the commander's tent, the *tabernaculum*, could also refer to the tent of an augur (Cic. *De Div.* 1.33, 2.76). Understanding the religious significance of *praetorium* and its similarities to a *templum* help to show how camp structure attempted to recreate a Roman settlement; the camp's religious center was its first foundation and was located at its center, occupying the position that many temples held in actual Roman towns. To the east of the *praetorium* is what Polybius describes as the ἀγορά (Plb. 6.31.1). Polybius' ἀγορά seems to have functioned like a forum: it was both a place for official business under the supervision of the commander as well as a market area where troops could buy any necessary provisions.¹¹² The location of a public forum-type construction to the east of an inaugurated religious space was a common arrangement for Roman settlements throughout the Mediterranean and demonstrates yet another way in which the structure of military camps borrowed from Roman settlements (Fig. 1).¹¹³

What these similarities between the *castra* and Roman foundations reveal is that military camps were envisioned as an analogue to traditional Mediterranean settlements.

¹¹⁰ Cic. *Div.* 1.35; Liv. 22.42.3, 23.36.9; Val. Max. 1.6.4 provides examples of commanders taking the auspices before battle (cf. Scheid and Lloyd (2003), 114).

¹¹¹ Dobson (2008), 74

¹¹² Festus. *Gloss. Lat.* 309L indicates that military *fora* were places where one could get provisions (cf. Petrikovits (1975), 140). Roth (1999), 100 argues that the forum was just a center for collection of provisions and is doubtful that it served as an actual market place for soldiers.

¹¹³ Dobson (2008), 76-7.

They were not an altogether new type of construction tied to a specific military purpose. The order and structure of the camp would have been familiar to the soldiers and, consequently, have evoked the memory of life in towns and cities they previously inhabited (cf. Plb. 6.31.10, 6.41.10).¹¹⁴ In the Mediterranean world of the third and second centuries BCE, the πόλις and its analogues were not just places in which people lived; they epitomized ancient conceptions of community.¹¹⁵ In its resemblance to a town, the camp replicated a form of community that its inhabitants knew well and that instinctively promoted feelings of familiarity and a shared sense of identity among the soldiers.

The Communal Spaces of the Castra

The Roman *castra*, however, did not just promote community by mimicking the structures of the cities and towns that soldiers once inhabited. *Castra* were filled with public spaces that actively encouraged and fostered the development of community. This is indicated most prominently by the existence of the forum in the Roman camp. As a public, open space, the forum was the *locus* of all business, both official and commercial. All of the camp's inhabitants would have come together in the forum to participate in public rituals, such as the taking of the auspices before battle, events which would have affirmed ideologically and visually that the inhabitants of the camp comprised a unified whole. Additionally, many soldiers would have frequented the forum to purchase food

¹¹⁴ Cagniat (1992), 232; Milne (2012), 27–29.

¹¹⁵ Scholars have long questioned the vitality of the πόλις in the Hellenistic period, but recent work such as Will (1975), 297–318; Billows (2007), 196–215 and Ma (2009), 337–376 has demonstrated that the πόλις still served as the most important marker of community in the period.

and various other provisions from merchants and traders in the camp.¹¹⁶ Both official and commercial activities would have brought their soldiers into contact with people who were not members of their *contubernium* or maniples. Some, but not all, of these chance interactions would have resulted in friendships or business relations that created ties between different parts of the community and, consequently, strengthened communal bonds of the *castra* as a whole.

Another such locale that actively fostered interaction among the soldiers was the *via principalis*. This road, the main thoroughfare of the camp, was constructed parallel to the praetorium and forum and measured over 120 feet in width (Fig. 1). Due to the constant foot traffic on the road and its proximity to the center of the camp, the *via principalis* became more than a thoroughfare. Indeed, Polybius records that it was the place where soldiers spent their leisure time throughout the day (Plb. 6.33.4: τὴν γὰρ διατριβὴν ἐν ταῖς καθημερείαις οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐν ταύτῃ ποιοῦνται τῇ πλατείᾳ). The Roman response to the transformation of an area intended for travel into space of communal interaction indicates that the Romans understood the importance of such interactions within the *castra*. Rather, than attempt to regulate the amount of social interaction between soldiers, it was a priority in the *castra* to take care that the place for these interactions was maintained properly.¹¹⁷ Two maniples were assigned to ensure the street's cleanliness and order (Plb. 6.33.4). Polybius' description of the praetorium-forum complex and the *via principalis* allows us not only to envisage a bustling central area of

¹¹⁶ For the evidence for merchants and traders in Roman camps, see Chapter 2, pp. 73-82.

¹¹⁷ Dobson (2008), 102-4.

camp that provided space for interactions between its inhabitants, but also to understand the primary importance that developing communal bonds held within the *castra*.

Sub-Communities within the Castra and the Problems of the Allies

In addition to fostering a larger sense of community within the camp, the physical layout of the *castra* also fostered the development of smaller sub-communities. This was accomplished mainly through the organizational layout of the camp. Each division – the allied infantry, the allied cavalry, the *hastati*, the *principes*, the *triarii* and the Roman cavalry (moving from east to west) – inhabited distinct north-south rows.¹¹⁸ Within these divisions, each *turma* and maniple had their own tenting areas (Plb. 6.28.3-4). Soldiers were settled according to both the division and units in which they served.¹¹⁹ The organization of *castra* reinforced the connection between soldiers who fought together. At the maniple/*turma* level, this connection was further strengthened by the paucity of space in the tenting areas. By all accounts, the tents in such areas would have been unable to fit all the soldiers in a maniple or *turma* at one time.¹²⁰ Soldiers likely had to sleep in shifts and, thus, all soldiers would have spent much time standing guard outside their tent. The space that soldiers standing guard would have occupied was the communal part of the tenting area known as the *conversantibus*.¹²¹ The *conversantibus* was not a particularly large space and it can be imagined that the large number of soldiers standing

¹¹⁸ The exception is the *extraordinarii*, allied soldiers specially chosen to fight under the commander. As their name indicates, they lived in a separate place from the rest of the army (cf. Plb. 6.26.8).

¹¹⁹ Cagniat (1992), 231.

¹²⁰ Hyginus Gromaticus *De Limitibus Constituendis* 1.3-4 notes that there were a total of eight soldiers living in each tent. While Hyginus dates from the Imperial period, it is believed that his manual was based on Republican precedents.

¹²¹ Hyginus Gromaticus *De Limitibus Constituendis* 1.11 provides the only definition of the term: *reliqui pedes XII qui conuersantibus spatium sufficient*.

guard would have interacted and engaged with one another, perhaps, taking part in games, banter and gambling to pass the time.¹²² That the *castra* were laid out to encourage close communal interactions between soldiers who fought together would not be surprising. The Romans would have wanted to do whatever possible to promote cohesion within their ranks.

Zooming out beyond the manipular level, the allied forces were separated from the Roman troops. The allied infantry and cavalry were settled in the westernmost north-south rows in the camp.¹²³ The lack of spatial integration of allied and Roman troops might lead one to surmise that the allied forces would have formed close bonds with each other and but not with the Roman soldiers. There are many other factors that would have limited the scope of relationships between the Roman and the allied soldiers. Animosity between various localities and Rome would have made interactions between Roman and allied troops potentially uneasy. Further, linguistic differences among Italic peoples, further reinforced by the fact that allied *turmae* and cohorts were formed from communities sharing linguistic similarities, would have made simple conversation much

¹²² Rosenstein (2012), 100-2.

¹²³ Kent (2012), 84–119 argues that, prior to the Second Punic War, allied communities were not officially part of the Roman army. Rather, allied troops were recruited and commanded by local potentates who had personal alliances with Rome. Their service and participation on campaign was organized on an *ad hoc* basis. It is clear that under these circumstances the allies would not have had a specified place within the Roman camp, as the size and nature of the forces contributed would not have been decided beforehand. Kent instead claims that the allies were first likely integrated into Roman camps after the battle of Cannae. He contends that this likely happened in conjunction with the standardization of the recruitment and incorporation of allied troops into the Roman army in order to meet the massive manpower needs demanded by the Second Punic War. After Cannae, the ways in which communities contributed troops to Roman military campaigns were regularized at this time by *formula togatorum* and allied soldiers were put under control of Roman officers, the *praefecti sociorum*. The allied *alae* soon became entrenched in a specific military role, the *cornua* which flanked the Roman forces in the battle line. This new role that the allies played in military affairs was reflected in the Polybian camp.

more difficult.¹²⁴ Indeed, this evidence seems to reinforce the viewpoint of Mouritsen, who sees the long-held idea of the Roman camp as a melting pot by which the Italian allies were assimilated to “Roman culture” as a gross oversimplification.¹²⁵ Given the level of dissatisfaction that arose by the time of the Social War, it may well be fair to ask if allied soldiers really did interact with Roman soldiers. More broadly, it might be worth considering if they considered themselves a part of the same community as the rest of the camp.

This is, without doubt, a complex issue, but it is important to note that differences between groups within a lived space does not preclude the creation of a larger sense of community. Further, individuals are capable of belonging to multiple overlapping and, at times, conflicting social identities.¹²⁶ There is no need to deny that a camp-wide community existed in order to believe that there were closer, more tightly-knit communities within it. Troops from an Italian town could feel a strong connection with their fellow citizens, while still participating in a larger camp-wide community discussed above. In fact, Rosenstein has argued that the success of allied units in battle and the extent to which the Romans depended on the allies indicates that the *socii* felt that their efforts were being appropriately “valued and rewarded.”¹²⁷ While the allies may not have

¹²⁴ Pfeilschifter (2007), 27–42. Pfeilschifter also argues that the separation between Roman and allied troops within the camp intended to emphasize the difference between the two constituencies.

¹²⁵ Mouritsen (1998), 67–8.

¹²⁶ In his work on Romanization and the provincial experience of empire, Mattingly (2011), 207–249 has shown persuasively that individuals can possess discrepant identities, that is, conflicting and non-harmonious aspects of their identity.

¹²⁷ Rosenstein (2012), 102. Indeed, this is also indicated by the pride of place that the *extraordinarii*, specially chosen allied soldiers who often served directly under the consul’s command, held in Roman camp. This is reflected in the structure of the camp as well; their lodging stood right next to the *praetorium*.

been seamlessly integrated into the Roman army and may have had their own sub-communities within the camp, the bravery and self-sacrifice that was shown on the battlefield appears to indicate that they were fully engaged in the Roman ideologies of valor and bravery promoted in the *castra*.¹²⁸

***Castra* as Ideologically Constructed Community**

The discussion of the *castra* up to this point has been focused primarily on understanding how the physical layout of the camp produced a sense of community among the Roman soldiers. In the sections that follow, the ways in which the ideology – the values, practices and rituals – of the camp defined what it meant to be a member of a Roman military community will be examined.¹²⁹

Polybius' description of the camp provides much evidence for the ideological construction of community within the *castra*. For instance, there is a clear emphasis on the importance of organizational hierarchy within the camp.¹³⁰ The camp had a commander who had unlimited authority over his troops and was responsible for meting out justice and engaging with envoys from foreign enemies, a quaestor who managed financial and logistical matters and a series of tribunes who were responsible for supervising three maniples and reported directly to the commander. Many of the

¹²⁸ For the bravery and self-sacrifice of Italian soldiers, see Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 19.12.1-5, Plut. *Pyrrh.* 16.8-10, Plut. *Aem.* 20.1-3 (cf. Rosenstein (2012), 102-3).

¹²⁹ Particularly popular are studies of the culture of discipline in the Roman army. Phang (2008), 1–37 has examined the ways in which the Roman culture of “military discipline”, *disciplina militaris*, helped to maintain social control over various military communities throughout the army (cf. Brice (2011), 35-59, which provides a more nuanced approach to discipline by discussing how it functioned in more dynamic ways than just creating restrictions for soldiers). Rüpke, (1990), 165–198 shows how religious practices within the camp were part of the broader ideology of Roman war-making.

¹³⁰ Erskine (2013a), 231-246 discusses the essential nature of efficiency and order in Polybius' narrative in Book 6.

activities such as the break-up of camp reflected and reinforced the importance of this hierarchical structure. The camp was disassembled in three phases designated by three different signals. In the first of these phases, the tents of the camp's inhabitants were taken down and all their belongings packed up (Plb. 6.40.1-3). This, however, was not allowed to occur until the tents of the commander and the tribunes had been taken down beforehand (Plb. 6.40.2). This process mirrored camp construction, which, as discussed above, laid out the space for the commander's tent before any other part of camp.

Another part of the ideology of the *castra* was its emphasis on bravery as a communal value, as illustrated by the system of rewarding soldiers who upheld such ideals.¹³¹ Honors handed out to soldiers for conspicuous bravery were presented to the recipient by the commander in front of a public assembly of all troops (Plb. 6.39.2). This public process encoded for the inhabitants of the *castra* the immense value placed on valor on the battlefield. As Polybius notes, the ritual seemed to spur soldiers to be as brave as possible (Plb. 6.39.1).

But, perhaps more interesting for our analysis than the emphasis of order and valor within the camp is the fact that the physical entity of the *castra* and its protection were viewed as an essential part of the construction of a sense of community for Roman soldiers. Take, for example, Polybius' description of the Roman night watch. Each maniple was required to furnish four sentinels for the night guard, one for each of the four night watches (Plb. 6.35.6). The man in charge of the first watch, accompanied by an *optio* from his maniple, received four small distinct tokens (*tesserae*) from the tribune,

¹³¹ Rosenstein (1990a), 97; McDonnell (2006), 68. A useful discussion of how rewards and punishment fit into the disciplinary schema is Brice (2011), 39-41.

one for each of the soldiers assigned to the different night watches (Plb. 6.35.6-7). To ensure that these soldiers were doing their job properly, four *equites*, one for each night watch, were assigned to check the status of these manipular sentinels (Plb. 6.35.8,11). If the *eques* found the night watchman to be awake, he received the *tessera* from the guard and, if not, he called on the men traveling with him to serve as witnesses before moving on to the next station without collecting the *tessera* (Plb. 6.36.2-3). If all *tesserae* were not returned, the tribune ascertained which manipule's *tessera* is missing and the centurion and the picket assigned to the night watch by that manipule as well as the *equites* on patrol were called in front of the tribune to determine who was at fault (Plb. 6.36.6-9). Whoever was adjudged to have erred is called before a court of all the tribunes and if he was found guilty, he was subjected to the *fustuarium*. The *fustuarium* was administered in a public forum, initiated by the tribune, who touched the culprit with a stick, before releasing him to the rest of the inhabitants of the *castra* who stoned and beat him usually to the point of death (Plb. 6.37.1-3).¹³² What emerges from the complex process described by Polybius is that securing the physical location of the camp was a shared task in which every part of the community played an important role. There were both people and procedures put in place not only to ensure the successful completion of the task, but to affirm the honesty and earnestness of those involved. The severity and publicity of the punishment illustrates that the security and safety of the entire *castra* was of paramount concern for

¹³² *Fustuarium* is rarely discussed in Latin sources. In the Late Republican period, only Cic. *Phil.* 3.14.6 and Liv. 5.6.14 mention the practice and there are no further mentions until Pomponius Pophyrio in the 2nd century CE and Servius in the 4th.

every member of the community and that failure in this regard meant exclusion from that community (cf. Plb. 6.37.4).¹³³

A similar ideology can be found in the oath administered upon the completion of camp construction by the tribunes to every person in the camp, both slave and free (Plb. 6.33.1).¹³⁴ Each person was to swear to steal nothing from the camp and to bring anything he finds to the tribunes (Plb. 6.33.2). The oath, which was in addition to the *sacramentum* that every soldier swore upon entering the army, created a bond of communal responsibility between all those who resided in the camp and enshrined the *castra* as a place that was meant to be inviolate for its inhabitants.¹³⁵ The punishment for the crime, according to Polybius, was also the *fustuarium*, indicating once again the communal and public enforcement of an ideology about the space that the soldiers inhabited. In both of these examples, the Romans constructed a sense of community in the camp by elevating the ideological importance of the physical space of the *castra*. The *castra* was not just a physical unit which looked much like a settlement, but it also provided part of the conceptual framework for the construction of a community within the military camp. While Roman military camps of the Republican period were often temporary, the ideological construction of the *castra* and the role of each soldier remained important from camp to camp for the troops on campaign.

¹³³ Cagniat (1992), 233.

¹³⁴ For a discussion of slaves in the Roman camp, see below in Chapter 2, pp. 80-9.

¹³⁵ For ancient evidence on the *sacramentum* and its nature, see Plb. 6.21.2, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 10.18, Liv. 22.38, Plut. *Sull.* 27.4, App. *BCiv.* 1.66. The centrality of the *sacramentum* to the structuring of Roman military service is emphasized by Watson (1969), 44–50; Campbell (1984), 19–30; Phang (2008), 117–120; Brice (2011), 37-9.

Contributing to the idea of permanence is the conception of the Roman military camp as a “home” for the soldiers that inhabited it.¹³⁶ The way in which the *castra* were constructed as a home is outlined in a speech allegedly delivered by Aemilius Paulus on the eve of the Battle of Pydna (Liv. 44.39.1-9).¹³⁷ Paulus, in an attempt to justify why he had not committed to battle on the previous day, embarks on an extended discussion about the importance of the *castra* for the Roman army. He refers to the *castra* as a second fatherland for soldiers (*patria altera militaris*) and as their home base (*sedes*) with ramparts for walls (*uallumque pro moenibus*). Paulus adds that the *castra* provided not just a tent for each soldier, but also a *domus* and *penates* (Liv. 44.39.5). For Paulus, the *castra* represented a homeland for the soldiers in which each had his own domicile and household gods, a place where soldiers formed real and deeply embedded attachments that paralleled those which they had at Rome.¹³⁸ Paulus makes it clear that the camp had long held this special significance for members of the Roman army; the *maiores* had viewed the camp as a safe-haven in times of both victory and defeat (Liv. 44.39.2: *maiores uestri castra munita portum ad omnis casus exercitus ducebant esse*) and there was a long history of the camp serving as inspiration for routed Roman soldiers to return to battle.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Mommsen (1881), 3.203 famously said of the Roman soldier of the Late Republican period that “[h]is only home was the camp, his only science war, his only hope the general – what this implied, is clear.”

¹³⁷ Briscoe (2012), 592–3 largely focuses on the textual issues with the speech and the intratextual references to the complaints of his soldiers.

¹³⁸ Milne (2012), 28.

¹³⁹ In Livy’s narrative of the battle of Caudine Forks, when the Romans are surrounded by the Samnites, their first instinct in this time of disaster is to build a camp (cf. Liv. 9.2.13-14).

Looking more closely at the two terms, *domus* and *penates*, that Paulus uses in this speech provides some important insights into the way that the *castra* was figured as a home for Roman soldiers. First, the use of these words imbued the Roman camp with a sense of physical permanence that stands in marked contrast to the fact that *castra* were often temporary construction set up only for a period of few days. The term *domus* often referred to a non-temporary physical domicile in which someone lived, a meaning most explicitly evidenced by Cicero's *de Domo sua*.¹⁴⁰ In the *Aeneid*, the *Penates* were emblematic of Aeneas' destiny as the founder of the Roman state and his ultimate settlement of the *Penates* at Lavinium, as Milne notes, symbolized a "move from a state of nomadism...into a state of permanency and stability."¹⁴¹ The physical permanence of the *penates* is emphasized further by the famous story of how they remained at Lavinium and refused to move along with Ascanius to Alba Longa after Aeneas' death (Val. Max. 1.8.7; Dion. Hal. 1.67).

The references to *domus* and *penates* in Paulus' speech, however, connote more than just permanent residence and a sense of stability. As Saller has shown, the term *domus* was not limited in meaning to the physical structure of a house.¹⁴² The *domus* could refer to the people, both free and non-free, who were part of the household.¹⁴³ At times, the term could have a more intimate sense, referring to the nuclear family or the broader kinship relations, both cognate and agnate. On rare occasions, it could even

¹⁴⁰ Saller (1984), 341–3.

¹⁴¹ Milne (2012), 29. Milne also makes an interesting observation about the connection of the Dioscuri to the *Penates* during the Republic, thereby, reinforcing their association with the Roman military power.

¹⁴² Saller (1984), 343–353; Saller (1994), 81–5.

¹⁴³ E.g. Cic. *Rosc. Amer.* 96; Ov. *Fast.* 4.543 (cf. Saller (1984), 344). Unlike the *familia*, which generally referred to enslaved members of the household to the exclusion of the free members.

signify all the male members of a Roman family, a valence that would be particularly fitting for the soldiers in the Roman army.¹⁴⁴

A similar observation can be made about the *penates* as well. As Bodel has argued, the *penates* represented an important expression of individual religion; the collections of deities and heroes that were part of the household *penates* were eclectic and personalized and often were passed down from generation to generation.¹⁴⁵ The composition of the *penates* was based in large part on personal preference or a particular affinity for what the gods represented.¹⁴⁶ To return to the issue of Aeneas and his *penates*, while they did represent the destiny of the Roman state, they also were Aeneas' most personal belongings. Depictions of the hero frequently show him carrying Anchises on his shoulder, holding the hand of Ascanius and carrying the *penates* (usually the Palladium) in the other hand (Fig. 2).¹⁴⁷ In these representations of Aeneas, the *penates*



**Fig. 2 – RRC 458/1, denarius
of Julius Caesar 47/6 BCE**

¹⁴⁴ Plin. *Ep.* 1.14.6, 2.9.3, 4.15.4 (cf. Saller (1984), 344-5; Saller (1994), 84).

¹⁴⁵ Bodel (2008), 260–2.

¹⁴⁶ Bodel (2008), 262.

¹⁴⁷ In addition to the coin of Julius Caesar, cf. Bodel (2008), 254.

appear as part and parcel of his family and they represent a tradition that would be passed between all three generations displayed. What emerges is that by using the terms, *domus* and *penates*, Paulus figures the Roman camp not just as a home, but one defined by familial connections.

Constructing the Army as Family

The metaphor of family in the Roman army, however, went beyond the analogy of the camp to a *domus*. The relationship between members of the camp paralleled the hierarchical structures of a family as well. As such, part of the ideological construction of the Republican army as community was the appropriation of the language of one of the most natural forms of community, the family.

General as Pater

The commander, a Roman magistrate with *imperium*, stood as the head of the Roman army's household. Most apparently, the rights and privileges of a commander and those of the head of the Roman family, the *pater familias*, were similar in many ways. Both held the power of life and death over members of their families, both were expected to protect their family members from harm and both had effective authority over their family members until they reached marriageable age.¹⁴⁸

But it was not just these shared rights and privileges that defined the general as the father of the household of the Roman army. Commander and father were cemented in Roman imagination as figures of unrivaled power and authority in Roman society who demanded the respect of their subordinates. Indeed, the sources show that the Romans

¹⁴⁸ Milne (2012), 31. The extent to which these broader cultural ideals about fatherhood were actually practiced by the Romans has been questioned in recent years by Saller (1994), 102-154 and Shaw (2001a), 31-77.

often analogized the control of a general over his army to that of *pater familias* over his family. The most famous example of the close association between generalship and fatherhood is the story of Titus Manlius Torquatus and his son during the Great Latin War (Liv. 8.7-8).¹⁴⁹ In the story, Torquatus' son defies his father's orders not to break ranks and engages in single combat with a Tusculan soldier by the name of Geminus Maecius (Liv. 8.7.1-2). Torquatus' son is successful in the engagement and returns to camp triumphantly bearing the spoils of his vanquished foes (Liv. 8.7.8-12). His father, however, had a different reaction to his son's triumph. Upon hearing of the deed, he immediately summoned the entire army to assembly and executed his son for his insubordination (Liv. 8.7.14).

In his speech justifying the decision to kill his son, Torquatus cites the parallel models of authority of a commander and father. He tells his son that his decision to execute him is driven by the fact that his son had no regard either for consular *imperium* or fatherly *maiestas* (Liv. 8.7.15: *neque imperium consulare neque maiestatem patriam ueritus*). Torquatus also claims that the decision to kill his son was necessary for him to ensure that he did not become neglectful as both a general and a father (Liv 8.7.16: *ut aut rei publicae mihi aut meorum obliuiscendum sit*).¹⁵⁰ In his discussion of the punishment, Torquatus actively blurs the line between his power as father and as general. And in the execution, he similarly invokes both his *imperium* as a commander and his right of life

¹⁴⁹ Oakley (1998), 436–444 discusses in detail the development of the story over time (cf. Nisbet (1959), 73). Lushkov (2015), 46–51 points out the importance of family dynamics in this scene to construct an exemplary and didactic model. Other ancient accounts of the incident: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 8.79.2; Dio fr. 35.2; Zon. 7.26.3-5.

¹⁵⁰ Lushkov (2015), 48 argues that one of Livy's key points in this scene is to show that the son was unable to distinguish between Titus Manlius' joint identity as father and general.

and death over his son. The story of Torquatus was not the only instance from early Roman history in which a general orders the execution of a soldier in his army who happens to be his son. According to Livy, Aulus Postumius beheaded his own son in 431 BCE while on campaign against the Aequi and the Volsci because he had abandoned his post (Liv. 4.29.6-7).¹⁵¹

The close associations between the powers of commander and *pater* far predate Livy's first century account of Manlius and his son.¹⁵² The idea that the realms of authority of a commander and father were similar appears to have been circulating by the early part of the second century BCE. This is best exemplified in the speech of Micio in the *Adelphoe* about the proper relationship between father and son:

*nimum ipse durust praeter aequomque et bonum,
et errat longe mea quidem sententia
qui **imperium** credat gravius esse aut stabilius
vi quod fit quam illud quod amicitia adiungitur.
mea sic est ratio et sic animum induco meum:
malo coactu' qui suum officium facit,
dum id rescitum iri credit, tantisper cavet;
si sperat fore clam, rursum ad ingenium redit...
hoc patriumst, potius' consuefacere filium
sua sponte recte facere quam alieno metu:
hoc **pater** ac dominus interest. hoc qui nequit
fateatur nescire **imperare** liberis.*

He himself is excessively harsh beyond what is fair and reasonable and he who believes that authority, which is established by force, is more firm and more stable than that which is engendered by friendship errs significantly in my opinion. This is my reasoning and this is how I think: he who is compelled by harsh treatment does his duty only so long as he believes it will be monitored and as a result he is guarded; but if he believes that it will be secret, again he returns to his natural impulses.... This is "fatherly", to

¹⁵¹ Milne (2012), 33. Ogilvie (1965), 580 does not discuss the relationship between these two incidents.

¹⁵² E.g. Plb. 6.54.5 notes that there were stories about Roman generals killing their sons were circulating already in the second century BCE.

accustom one's son to act rightly of his own accord rather than out of fear of another: this is the difference between a father and a master. Whoever denies this admits to know not how to govern his children.
(Ter. *Adelph.* 65-72, 76-7)

In the speech, Micio uses two forms of the word *imperium*, the term employed to describe a general's realm of power, to conceptualize a father's relationship with his son. The way in which Micio describes the different forms of parenting also fits neatly with broader paradigms of generalship. According to the speech, a father can either govern his son by force (*vi*) or by friendship (*amicitia*), a contrast that mirrors the two archetypes of the Roman general, the martinet who maintained discipline with manual labor and punishment and the friendly commander who acts like a soldier and give his troops license to do as they please.¹⁵³ This type of language permeates the whole play's discussion of how to be a good father and it has been argued by Leigh that the debate about the proper style of parenting serves as an allegory for the relationship between a general and his troops.¹⁵⁴ The analogization of fatherhood to generalship through the use of the term *imperium* in *Adelphoe* was replicated in other works of the period. *Imperium* was used to describe the relationship between father and son in the works of Cato and Plautus as well as in other plays written by Terence.¹⁵⁵ There was significant cross-

¹⁵³ The development of a friendly relationship between Roman soldiers and their commanders is exemplified by the use of the term, *commilitiones* (fellow-soldier) by commanders in the Republican period (cf. Campbell (1984), 31–50 for a history of the terminology). The term had become current by the time of Civil War between Caesar and Pompey, as both generals use the terminology while addressing their soldiers (e.g. App. BCiv. 2.72). The word had become so popular that Augustus disavowed the term and forbade family members from using it. While there is no explicit evidence for the use of the term *commilitiones* before Caesar, there is evidence that the idea behind it was circulating long before this (e.g. Marius' speech in Sall. BJ 85.31-3).

¹⁵⁴ Leigh (2004), 175-189.

¹⁵⁵ Plaut. *Amph.* 991-2; *Bacch.* 459; *Stich.* 141; Ter. *Phorm.* 232-3, cf. Leigh (2004), 178 n. 87 for more references in which *imperium* is used to reference paternal authority over a child.

pollination in Roman thought about the nature of masculine authority as embodied by the father and the general as early as the turn of the third century BCE.

It is possible, however, to move beyond analogy in considering the fashioning of a general as *pater*. A general could be directly referred to as *pater*. In 217 BCE, Fabius Maximus was awarded the title of *pater* after he rescued the forces of Marcus Minucius from an ambush orchestrated by Hannibal.¹⁵⁶ The honorific was bestowed on Fabius by Minucius directly for saving his life (Liv. 22.29.10-11).¹⁵⁷ As Milne has shown, the use of this title was directly related to the role of the domestic *pater* as a preserver and protector of his children.¹⁵⁸ Following this logic, successful commanders were given the title of *pater patriae*, both officially and unofficially, for preserving the state during a time of military crisis. For example, Caesar was awarded the title for vanquishing his foes at Munda in 45 BCE and Camillus and Marius are referred to in later texts as *pater* or *parens patriae* for their role in saving the state from Gallic incursions.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ For the context for this situation, see Liv. 22.24-29. Fabius Maximus had been serving as dictator in the aftermath of the Roman defeat at Lake Trasimene in 217 BCE and had adopted a conservative military strategy which entailed avoiding open battle with Hannibal. Minucius, his master of horse, however, took exception to these tactics and advocated publicly for a more aggressive approach. Minucius' strategy gained traction and he was chosen to serve as co-dictator with Fabius. As result of his elevation to the dictatorship, he received half of Fabius' troops and immediately went on the march against Hannibal.

¹⁵⁷ This can be compared to the traditions surrounding the *corona civica*, a special crown that could be given by any citizen or ally to the man who saved his life in battle (Plb. 6.39.7; cf. Maxfield (1981), 71–2). This decoration, however, came with a specific requirement of the soldier who was saved: he had to treat his preserver as his father for the rest of his life and “must treat him like a parent in every way” (Plb. 6.39.7: πάντα δεῖ τούτῳ ποιεῖν αὐτὸν ὡς τῷ γονεῖ). Polybius' discussion is confirmed by Cicero in the *Pro Plancio* of 54 BCE, where the orator notes the reluctance of soldiers to award the *civica corona* to those who saved them in war because they were terrified of the massive obligation of treating a stranger as if a parent (Cic. Planc. 72: *sed onus benefici reformidant, quod permagnum est alieno debere idem quod parenti*).

¹⁵⁸ Milne (2012), 33-4.

¹⁵⁹ There is some debate as to the historicity of the titles of Marius and Camillus. (cf. Miles (1997), 100). Alföldi (1953), 105, for example, asserts that Marius held the title in an official capacity, while Weinstock (1971), 202 is more skeptical about this claim and accepts Pliny's assertion that Cicero was the first person to be awarded the title.

Soldiers and Brotherhood

If the general was cast as the father for the troops, it would follow logically that the soldiers in the army would be figured as brothers. In the Imperial period, soldiers referred to one another as *fratres*.¹⁶⁰ In a similar vein, Virgil could describe soldiers fighting in battle as sharing one mindset (*unanimi*) just like brothers.¹⁶¹ While such direct evidence for soldiers being described as brothers is not available for the Republican period, there is much indirect evidence to suggest that the relationship between Roman soldiers at the time was constructed within the paradigm of brotherhood.

From the archaic period onwards, brotherhood was essential to the construction of Roman military ideology. Beginning in the fifth century BCE onwards, a pair of brothers, Castor and Pollux, served as symbols of Roman victory and military power.¹⁶² The temple to the Dioscuri was established in 484 BCE as thanks for their support during the Battle of Lake Regillus.¹⁶³ According to Livy and Dionysius, the Dioscuri had allegedly appeared at the battle as soldiers after the dictator, Aulus Postumius, made a vow to build a temple in their honor of the brothers if they came to his aid in battle (Liv. 2.20.12; 2.42.5). After the Romans had routed the Latins, the brothers also appeared in Rome, in the guise of two handsome young soldiers dressed in military garb and accompanied by

¹⁶⁰ MacMullen (1984), 443.

¹⁶¹ Verg. *A.* 12.264-282 (cf. Bannon (1997), 140-1, 148).

¹⁶² Champlin (2011), 74 and Armstrong (2013), 59-60 offer a brief history of Castor and Pollux in the archaic period. Castor and Pollux are prominent in the archaeological and epigraphic evidence from the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. The Dioscuri were the dedicatees of a bronze tablet found near a temple in Lanuvium that dates back to the sixth century BCE (ILLRP 1271a).

¹⁶³ Nielsen et al. (1992), 46-53 affirm the date of the fifth century BCE for the temple. There is some evidence that a similar story also existed in the Greek tradition after Aegospotammi in 405 BCE (Plut. *Lys.* 12.1).

horses, to announce to all passers-by the Roman victory (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.13.1).

Throughout the Republic, the Dioscuri continued to appear from time to time to predict great military triumphs; they allegedly announced Roman successes before the battles of Pydna in 168 (Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.2.6), Vercellae in 101 (Plin. *NH* 7.22; Flor. 2.38) and Pharsalus in 48 (*Pan. lat.* 2.39.4).

The brothers, as tall, handsome cavalrymen and in their devotion to Roman military success, represented the ideal Roman soldiers.¹⁶⁴ Ironically, however, Castor and Pollux fell short of Roman conceptions of brotherhood. Traditional Roman brotherhood was defined by equality and shared paternity.¹⁶⁵ The Dioscuri were not equal and nor did they share the same father; Pollux, the son of Zeus and Leda, was divine, while Castor, the son of Tyndareus and Leda, was mortal.¹⁶⁶ Rather, what signified their fraternal connection in Roman culture was their joint appearance in relation to Roman military victories.¹⁶⁷ They were brothers who, in the words of Armstrong, were linked by “the bond of fraternity defined by unity in battle.”¹⁶⁸ As such, they were in many ways a perfect fit for the broader construction of Roman soldiers as brothers. Roman troops, despite the fact that they came from various social classes and did not share a biological father, were connected through shared military service for their adoptive father, the general.

¹⁶⁴ Champlin (2011), 74.

¹⁶⁵ Bannon (1997), 30-5, 41-3. Armstrong (2013), 54-5

¹⁶⁶ Harris (1906), 58–62 discusses the latent inequality of the relationship between Castor and Pollux in the Greek tradition.

¹⁶⁷ Champlin (2011), 74-5; Armstrong (2013), 60.

¹⁶⁸ Armstrong (2013), 60.

Beyond the myths surrounding Castor and Pollux, there were other stories from the Republican period that cast brothers as ideal Roman soldiers. One such story was the battle between the Horatii and the Curatii during the reign of Tullus Hostilius (Liv. 1.23.5-1.25.14).¹⁶⁹ After what was a long and intense conflict between Rome and Alba Longa, the Alban king, Mettius Fufetius, beseeched his Roman counterpart to find another way of deciding the war (Liv. 1.23.7-9). They agreed that two sets of triplets, one Alban, the Curiatii, and the other Roman, the Horatii, would fight against one another to decide the outcome of the war (Liv. 1.24.1). Just like Castor and Pollux, Livy represents the triplets as ideal Roman soldiers. However, they are cast as ideal, not in their looks or social standing, as was the case with the Dioscuri, but rather in their devotion to the state and to one another. As the triplets charged into battle, Livy says that they had no concern for their own safety, but only thought of their great responsibility for the *patria* (Liv. 1.25.3: *nec his nec illis periculum suum, publicum imperium servitiumque obuersatur animo futuraque ea deinde patriae fortuna quam ipsi fecissent*).¹⁷⁰ Further, the victorious and only remaining member of the Horatii describes his accomplishment of defeating the Alban triplets as a tribute to his fallen brothers and to the Roman state (Liv. 1.25.12: *duos...fratrum manibus dedi; tertium causae belli huiusce, ut Romanus Albano imperet, dabo*). In this legendary narrative, the piety and cooperation of the brothers is linked expressly to devotion to the Roman army and, consequently, to the preservation of the

¹⁶⁹ Ogilvie (1965), 107-113. Ogilvie discusses how the idea of a battle of “champions” can be found in many other Indo-European cultural traditions. However, none of the examples that he cites here involve brothers.

¹⁷⁰ Wiseman (1995), 18–30, citing Puhvel’s work on brotherhood, argues that the story of the Horatii and Curiatii might be viewed within the context of expiatory sacrifice necessary for the success of the state on broader level.

Roman state. Roman soldiers were idealized as brothers fighting to protect their *patria* from foreign threats.

Military brothers were not just figured as ideal Roman soldiers. Legendary narratives show that fraternal cooperation and piety was infectious and could inspire the rest of the Roman soldiers to similar actions. For example, Livy tells the story of three consular brothers, Quintus, Marcus and Kaeso Fabius fighting side-by-side in an intense battle against Etruscan forces near Veii in 479 BCE.¹⁷¹ When Quintus lost his life charging against the enemy, Roman forces were demoralized and the battle began to turn in favor of the Veientes. At this point, Marcus and Kaeso took action. Marcus chastised his troops for forgetting their oath not to flee from battle (*hoc iurastis... milites, fugientes uos in castra redituros? adeo ignauissimos hostes magis timetis quam Iouem Martemque per quos iurastis?*) and swore that he would return to camp as victor or die right next to his brother (Liv. 2.46.5-6: *at ego iniuratus aut uictor reuertar aut prope te hic, Q. Fabi, dimicans cadam*). Marcus' words, as Bannon has shown, provide another example of fraternal devotion serving as emblematic of the way Roman soldiers were supposed to behave.¹⁷² After Marcus' speech, Kaeso takes it one step further, ordering his brother to move from talk to action and follow him back into battle (Liv. 2.45.7-8). When the soldiers saw Marcus and Kaeso charging into battle, they followed their example and turned the tide of the battle.¹⁷³ The scene reveals not only how brothers fighting side-by-

¹⁷¹ Ogilvie (1965), 346 discusses how this story fits within the broader context of Fabian history that dominates this part of Livy's narrative.

¹⁷² Bannon (1997), 139

¹⁷³ Similarly, the bravery of T. Caecilius Teucer and his brother on the battlefield allegedly inspired Ennius to write the sixteenth book of his *Annales* (Plin. *NH* 7.101).

side came to symbolize ideal soldierly behavior, but also how the image of fraternal devotion on the battlefield was meant to serve as inspiration for Roman soldiers, both past and present, to act in the same way.

The centrality of brotherhood to Roman understanding of military service is revealed by the continued use of the concept during the civil war period. The image of brothers fighting against one another was deployed to powerful effect in order to demonstrate the devastating realities of the internecine conflict.¹⁷⁴ Before the battle of Pharsalus, Appian describes the civil war between Pompey and Caesar as an event that disrupted Roman society, breaking apart the ties that had long held it together (App. *BCiv* 2.77). Appian mentions how the war tore apart towns, tribes and local alliances, but the ultimate horror for him was that it pitted brother against brother.¹⁷⁵ Similarly, Livy and Tacitus sum up the perverse and ultimately tragic nature of civil war by telling the story of how one of the soldiers fighting for Pompey's father unwittingly killed his brother in battle and, upon recognizing what he had done, committed suicide (Tac. *Hist.* 3.51; Liv. *Per.* 79).¹⁷⁶ Countless other discussions of brother fighting against brother in the literature of the period could be adduced, but the implication of such rhetoric is nonetheless clear.¹⁷⁷ Civil war was a complete distortion of the way Roman warfare was supposed to be. As a result, the paradigm of Roman soldiers as like-minded brothers

¹⁷⁴ Bannon (1997), 145-167; Fantham (2010), 215-16.

¹⁷⁵ Bannon (1997), 152-4 notes how Appian constructs his narrative to emphasize fraternal conflict as central to the horror of the scene.

¹⁷⁶ Hinard (1990), 558-567 discusses the historical reality of brothers being killed during the first civil war between Marius and Sulla.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Val. Max. 5.5.4; Lucr. 3.68-73; Catull. 64.394-9; Verg. *G.* 2.510, 3.518; Verg. *A.* 7.335-8. Fantham (2010), 207-221 shows how the trope of brothers in strife remains important in Lucan's discussion of civil war.

fighting side-by-side against a foreign foe to protect their *patria* needed to be turned on its head to make sense of the conflict.

So what type of community did these feelings of brotherhood promote among the soldiers? Bannon, in her study of Roman brotherhood in literary and legal sources, has argued persuasively that the concept was characterized by equality and affection.¹⁷⁸ The first century BCE intellectual, Nigidius Figulus, perhaps summed up this conception of Roman brotherhood best in attempting to provide an etymology for the term *frater*: “a brother...is called *frater* because he is, *fere alter*, nearly an alter-ego” (Nigidius Figulus *Gramm.* 28; Gell. *NA* 13.10.4: *frater...est dictus quasi fere alter*).¹⁷⁹ Thus, the army emerges as a community in which its members viewed one another as equal and felt strong ties to one another, an image which resonates with the legendary narratives examined above about brother-soldiers.

Bonds of affection and equality, however, do not tell the whole story about brotherhood. Rather, brothers were naturally competitive, always attempting to one-up each other.¹⁸⁰ As Neel has shown, the early accounts of Rome’s first brothers, Romulus and Remus, indicate the importance of competition. Indeed, it appears as if Ennius and Cassius Hemina portray their fraternal rivalry as having positive results and pushing each brother to a high level of achievement.¹⁸¹ The story of Romulus and Remus’ fraternal

¹⁷⁸ Bannon (1997), 25-35 uses the Roman legal tradition to foreground the idea of fraternal equality. Bannon (1997), 4-9, 67-72 discusses how fraternal *pietas* is based on ideas of affection.

¹⁷⁹ Armstrong (2013), 54-5.

¹⁸⁰ Armstrong (2013), 55-6; Neel (2015), 96-7.

¹⁸¹ Enn. *Ann.* 72-91 (cf. Cic. *Div.* 1.107); Cassius Hemina *FRH* 6 F14. In discussing the development of the Romulus and Remus story, Neel (2015), 25–53 shows the importance of the ethic of competition between the two brothers. Neel is interested in the political resonances and questions of collegiality for aristocrats, but there is no reason that the stories could not have had broader appeal.

competition coincides well with the conception of soldiers as positive rivals. The literature of the late Republic frequently alludes to the centrality of competition between soldiers leading to Rome's military success. At the beginning of *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust claims that in the heyday of the Republic an outstanding tradition of military discipline trained Roman soldiers to be prepared for any situation in warfare and that, as a result, there was no reason to fear the enemy (Sall. *Cat.* 7.4-5) Their most difficult competition (*gloriae maximum certamen*), Sallust tells us, was with their fellow troops. They strove with one another to be the first to strike an enemy, to scale a wall and to be conspicuous in their glory (Sall. *Cat.* 7.6).¹⁸² Sallust's discussion of the importance of soldierly rivalry is remarkably similar to that of Polybius writing nearly a century earlier, who remarked that the Roman systems of rewards and punishments helped to set up an idea of competition between soldiers.

Caesar's famous description of Pullo and Vorenus in Book 5 of the *Bellum Gallicum* similarly demonstrates how rivalry compelled soldiers toward bravery. Caesar begins his story by telling his readers that Pullo and Vorenus were centurions of the bravest character and were approaching the first rank (Caes. *BG* 5.44.1). Pullo and Vorenus were continually trying to gain the favor of their superiors and they fought for their promotion each year with the utmost enmity (*summīs similitatibus*). While serving under Caesar in Gaul, the rivalry between these two men inspired them to achieve the highest levels of distinction for their actions in a battle against the Nervii. But the distinction that soldiers earned was not only for fighting bravely in the battle, but from

¹⁸² The idea put forth by Sallust subtly echoes the Romulus and Remus story in which the Remus attempts to scale his brother's wall and getting killed for doing so.

protecting one another from harm (Caes. *BG* 5.44.7-12). When Pullo was surrounded by the enemy after being struck with a javelin, Vorenus quickly rushed to his aid and fought off his attackers (Caes. *BG* 5.44.7-9). In turn, when Vorenus was encircled later in the battle, Pullo returned the favor (Caes. *BG* 5.44.10-12). In the scene, Pullo and Vorenus' excellence is not only a result of the rivalry between the two soldiers. Their success is defined by their complete devotion and support for their fellow soldier no matter the circumstance, an ethic that parallels the aforementioned stories of the brothers Fabii and Horatii.¹⁸³

Further, in this narrative about Pullo and Vorenus, Caesar is at pains to emphasize their equality. When he introduces the episode, he makes no effort to differentiate between the two men. Rather, he simply describes them as a pair, noting that both Pullo and Vorenus were exceptionally brave and were striving for the same post within the army. Indeed, Caesar ends the passage by making an explicit comment about their equality, stating that *fortuna* had decided in this competition that it could not be determined who was more worthy than the other (Caes. *BG* 5.44.14: *neque diiudicari posset, uter utri virtute antefendus videretur*). In his portrayal of Pullo and Vorenus as ideal soldiers, he emphasizes their equality, their rivalry and, most importantly, their support for one another on the battlefield. Caesar's construction of the ideal soldier in this scene mirrors Roman conceptions of brotherhood and shows just how closely aligned the ideas of soldiering and brotherhood were in the Republic.

¹⁸³ Nolan (2016), 49–50 discusses how the narrative that Caesar creates deemphasizes the individuality of the centurions by showing that their highest achievement comes from collaborative efforts.

The idea of soldiers as brothers rounds out the picture of the Roman army as a family. It is not difficult to see why the construction of the Roman army as a family would have produced a broader sense of community among soldiers. As Milne has rightly observed, the portrayal of military service in terms of well-known institutions such as the family would have instilled in Roman soldiers a sense of familiarity and an emotional attachment to military service. Similar observations can be made about the ideological fashioning of the Roman military camp as a *polis*. In short, service in the Roman army of the Republican period was structured in a way that recreated communities to which soldiers were accustomed. In spite of the temporary nature of their physical encampment, the ideological construction of Roman military service made the soldiers feel as if they were at home.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the nature, structures and ideologies of Roman military service produced a sense of community among soldiers on campaign during the Republican period. Not only did soldiers spend a significant amount of time fighting far away from home and living in quarters that necessitated close interactions with their fellow troops, but military service was ideologically constructed to produce feelings of familiarity that bonded Roman soldiers together. It should, of course, not be surprising that the Romans actively encouraged the development of close bonds between the soldiers serving in the army. Fighting forces which share a strong sense of affinity with one another, it stands to reason, are more likely to be successful in military operations. However, as the rest of the dissertation will demonstrate, these structures of community did not just function to strengthen Rome's military capabilities. They served as a

foundation for Roman soldiers to shape the communities that they lived in and gave them the ability to act collectively in order to protect their own interests.

CHAPTER 2: REPUBLICAN ARMIES, NON-COMBATANTS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES: INTERACTION AND INTEGRATION

Introduction

In 134 BCE, when Scipio Aemilianus arrived in Numantia, he found an army that was lazy, idle and greedy and had failed on several different occasions to take the Spanish stronghold (App. *Iber.* 85; Front. *Str.* 4.1; Val. Max. 2.7.1; Liv. *Per.* 57).¹⁸⁴ In an attempt to rectify this situation, Scipio rid the camp of all distractions. Traders, prostitutes, soothsayers and diviners were driven out; wagons were emptied of their contents and pack animals except those that were absolutely necessary for transportation were sold. All luxury goods were forbidden and soldiers were allowed to eat only boiled or roasted meats. Men who had acquired slaves to bathe and massage them were ridiculed by Scipio as were those who used pack animals for travel. After the enactment of these measures and a sustained period of training, Scipio's army finally was able to conquer Numantia after nearly a decade of failure.

This story was particularly popular in antiquity. Roman historians, military manuals and moralizing epitomators cited the incident as a powerful illustration of how the implementation of discipline and order could transform an unruly fighting force into an effective one. These sources cast Scipio Aemilianus as an exemplary general whose

¹⁸⁴ For more on the previous failures of Roman commanders in Numantia, see App. *Iber.* 76-83, particularly the discussion of the treaties signed between the Romans and the Numantines. There may also be reference to these treaties in Lucil. 11.430.

devotion to traditional Roman values was worthy of emulation.¹⁸⁵ Even Hadrian, three centuries later, used the episode as one of his models in his efforts to restore discipline to the Roman army.¹⁸⁶ Modern scholars have followed the lead of their ancient predecessors and analyzed the incident in hopes of understanding Roman ideologies of discipline and expectations for generalship in the late Republic and early Empire.¹⁸⁷

But there is another aspect to this story that often goes unmentioned. The scene is also evidence of the fact that, over the decade that they had spent fighting in Spain, the Roman soldiers had developed connections with a wide variety of non-combatants. They had engaged with local women with the hope of sexual companionship, traded with merchants to acquire various “luxuries” such as bedding and high-quality food and consulted with local, non-Roman religious figures to gain a better understanding of what the future might hold for them. The soldiers also had acquired personal servants and pack animals to help them with mundane tasks such as bathing, cooking and baggage handling. When considered from the point of view of the soldiers, the relationships that were established between the troops and the non-military personnel had no bearing with their commitment to the Roman war effort. Rather, the interactions between Roman soldiers and non-combatants were a matter of making the harsh realities of military service more bearable for themselves.

¹⁸⁵ Alongside Scipio as a master of discipline was Metellus, a consul who commanded the Roman army during the Jugurthine War. For the story of his implementation of discipline, see Sall. *BJ* 44-5 and Val. Max. 2.7.2. For the exceedingly positive treatment of the Cornelii Scipiones in the literary tradition, see Torregaray Pagola (1998).

¹⁸⁶ SHA *Hadr.* 10.1; Birley (1997), 117.

¹⁸⁷ Moore (2002) and Phang (2008), 236–7, 281–3.

It is these types of relationships – the connections that developed between Roman military communities and its members and non-combatants during the Republican period – that serve as the focal point of this chapter. The chapter examines the evidence for the presence of the three groups that Scipio expelled from his camp in Republican armies: slaves and merchants, women and non-Roman religious figures. It demonstrates that the presence of such personnel at Numantia was far from exceptional in the Republican period; rather, all three groups were consistently present in and around Roman camps and played essential roles in the lives of Roman soldiers.¹⁸⁸

Further, the chapter also examines the impact that the presence of non-combatants had on Roman military communities and its members. What emerges is that the military communities described in Chapter 1 were not static and insular entities, but dynamic and fluid ones. Military communities came to include non-combatants; while members of the military communities became part of local communities as well. The interaction between members of military communities and non-combatants, at times, even led to the creation of new hybrid communities. Further, the chapter argues that the evidence that exists merely scratches the surface of the nature of the relationship between military communities and non-combatant personnel. The engagement of Roman soldiers with

¹⁸⁸ Indeed, the sources on the incident at Numantia, however, indicate that what the authors deem as exceptional in this scene is not the behavior of the army, but that of Scipio. The great general's behavior compares favorably to the previous two commanders at Numantia who had been content to allow the army to behave as it had without penalty or punishment. The depiction of Scipio as exceptional fits neatly within a long tradition, beginning with Polybius in the second century BCE, that cast him as the ideal Roman statesmen and general (cf. Torregaray Pagola (1998) for the exceedingly positive treatment of the Corneli Scipiones in the literary tradition). On the other hand, the army and its interactions with non-combatants are treated in a traditional manner; our sources merely repeat well-documented tropes about the desire of Roman soldiers for *luxuria* and *otium*.

these various groups would have introduced them to wider social networks in the places where they were stationed that are irrecoverable from the historical record.

As such, the chapter mounts a challenge to the traditional view of the Republican army as a “quasi-monastic institution” that excluded non-free, non-Italic and non-male populations from the camp in order to achieve military success.¹⁸⁹ This analysis complements similar work over the last twenty years on the Imperial army that has demonstrated the widespread interaction and incorporation of civilians within Roman military communities on campaign.¹⁹⁰ Once again, the similarities between the armies of the two periods show that military communities that developed in the wake of Augustus’ army reforms ought to be considered in light of their Republican predecessors.

Lixae, Calones, Mercatores and Negotiatores

According to our sources, the Roman army was followed by a train of people who provided goods and services to soldiers. The nature of the people who made up these trains, however, cannot be easily defined. They performed a range functions; acting as servants, animal attendants, porters, bakers, cooks, merchants and traders. They were both slaves (public and private) and free people; Romans and non-Romans. Even our Latin sources seem to have been confused about their identity, as they employ the Latinate terminology used to refer to the most common types of camp followers (*calones, lixae, mercatores* and *negotiatores*) with an alarming level of inconsistency.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ James (2001), 80.

¹⁹⁰ While this vision of Roman military communities has come under fire from historians of the Imperial period over the last twenty years (e.g. James (2002), 1–58 and Allison (2013), 14, 20), its place of primacy for the Republican period has largely remained unchallenged.

¹⁹¹ Paul (1984), 137; Roth (1999), 92–102; Vishnia (2002), 265–272; Thorburn (2003), 47–61. The use of the term *lixa*, usually rendered as “sutler” in our English sources, is indicative of this confusion. In these sources, *lixae* are often not engaged in sutler-type actions. For example, *lixae* also took part in various sorts

Regardless of the exact nature of individuals involved in these groups, the sources, both ancient and modern, agree that they were numerous. The epitomator of Livy says that at the Battle of Arausio over 40,000 *lixae* and *calones* were killed in addition to the 80,000 soldiers (Liv. *Per.* 67).¹⁹² The author of the *Bellum Africum* attests that Caesar publicly punished his military tribune, Avienus, for filling an entire transport ship with slaves (*BAfr* 54). Indeed, merchants, traders and slaves were so numerous that ancient authors take special care to mention their absence from Roman camps. Livy, for example, notes that there were no *lixae* present during a campaign against the Ligurians due to the extreme poverty of the land (Liv. 39.1.7). Quintus Caecilius Metellus, the consul of 109 BCE, earned renown equal to Scipio for his strict adherence to military discipline for expelling *lixae* from his camp during the Jugurthine War (Sall. *BJ* 44-5; Val. Max. 2.7.2; Front. *Str.* 4.1.2) and Plutarch draws attention to the abstemious and well-disciplined nature of Cato the Elder by noting that he was attended by only one slave during his first military campaign (Plut. *Cat. Min.* 1.7, 10.5).¹⁹³ While these

of manual labor in camps, carrying stakes for the construction of the *vallum* (Liv. 23.16.8) and managing the *vehicula* and baggage train that followed the army (Tac. *Hist.* 2.41). Sallust's narrative describing the behavior of *lixae* during the Jugurthine War notes that *lixae* went out into the field with soldiers, raiding local towns with hopes of selling booty to *mercatores*. Further, while most of our sources, both ancient and modern, seem to believe that *lixae* were free persons, there are several occasions where *lixae* are explicitly referred to as military slaves (cf. Liv. 30.4.1; Sen. *Phoen.* 597-8; Tac. *Hist.* 2.87; Porph. *ad Hor. Sat.* 1.22.44, see also Welwei (1988), 81-122).

¹⁹² This was also true during the Principate. Tacitus observes on two different occasions that Vitellius' army in 69 CE had more *lixae* and *calones* than active soldiers (cf. Tac. *Hist.* 2.86-7; 3.33). Along the same lines, Quintillian made the quip that an army with as many *lixae* as soldiers had doubled its size but not its strength (Quint. *Inst.* 8.6.42).

¹⁹³ Albinus, Metellus' predecessor, according to our sources, had managed the army without discipline or restraint (Sall. *BJ* 44.1). As a result of his laxness, the soldiers deserted their posts and joined camp followers in looting the slaves and cattle of their allies to sell to foreign traders for wine and other luxuries (Sall. *BJ* 44.4). Metellus remedied the situation by passing a series of strict edicts limiting the sale of bread and cooked food in the camp, banning *lixae*, slaves and pack animals from camp and forcing soldiers to carry their own provisions (Sall. *BJ* 45.1-2). These measures in combination with a strict training regimen led to a significant improvement in the soldier's morale and led to a successful campaign against Jugurtha. In his discussion of the incident, Koestermann (1971), 182-8 discusses how Sallust's treatment of the scene

numbers and stories naturally exaggerate the state of affairs, it has been conjectured, based on comparison to other pre-modern armies and evidence from Dura Europus, that roughly 20% of the people associated with the Republican army were “supernumeraries.”¹⁹⁴ If these estimates are accurate, a force of 20,000 soldiers would have been accompanied by roughly 5,000 camp attendants.

Some of these camp followers functioned in an official capacity.¹⁹⁵ Roman armies appear to have owned slaves and used them for a variety of different tasks.¹⁹⁶ Ancient authors depict *calones* taking care of the army’s transport animals (e.g. *muliones*) and foraging for food and wood to supplement the usual supply lines that serviced military units.¹⁹⁷ Roman forces also officially employed some free people that followed the army. During the Imperial period, there are funerary inscriptions of *lixae* claiming to be members of military units, implying that they worked in some official capacity for the Roman army.¹⁹⁸ Further, when traditional supply chains were out of commission,

fits within the literary portrait of the ideal commander and larger attempts to codify the meaning of *disciplina militaris* in the Late Republican period.

¹⁹⁴ Erdkamp (1998), 72; Roth (1999), 113–4. The estimate made by Roth is based on modern comparisons and epigraphic evidence from Dura-Europos under the Empire.

¹⁹⁵ Erdkamp (1998), 125; Roth (1999), 100, 105.

¹⁹⁶ For example, Appian, in recounting the total destruction of Curio’s troops in Africa in 48 BCE, refers to the servants who belonged to the army (ὀπηρέται τοῦ στρατοῦ) among those who were killed (App. *BCiv.* 2.46).

¹⁹⁷ Taking care of animals: Frontin. *Str.* 3.2.9, Caes. *BCiv.* 1.51.6, Liv. 7.37, 10.41.6. Foraging for food: Caes. *BG* 6.36.1-2, Amm. Marc. 22.2.8. Cf. Erdkamp (1998), 124-7; Roth (1999), 87-8, 94; Vishnia (2002), 267; Thorburn (2003), 48-9, 51.

¹⁹⁸ Ivanov (1990), 131-6 discusses two recently discovered epitaphs from the Imperial period, which attest to *lixae* as being attached to a specific military unit. Le Bohec (1994), 226 argues that these *lixae* might be viewed as “licensed purveyors” for Roman soldiers.

mercatores and *negotiatores* were called upon by commanders to provide for the basic needs of their troops.

However, the vast majority of the people following the Roman army functioned in a private capacity. While there were some public slaves attached to the army, most slaves within Roman military communities were the property of individual soldiers. *Calones* had as their primary duty the care of the pack animals owned by their masters (Caes. *BG* 6.36.3; Sall. *BJ* 44.5; Liv. 10.41.6; Frontin. *Str.* 3.2.9). Slaves also performed more personal tasks such as giving baths and massages to their masters, as is attested in the incident at Numantia (App. *Iber.* 85). The various personnel that bought and sold goods in Roman camps (*lixae*, *mercatores* and *negotiatores*), in the words of Festus, followed the army *quaestus gratia* (Festus, *Gloss. Lat.* s.v. *lixa*) and functioned separately from official distribution channels.¹⁹⁹ These merchants served as a supplement to the regular supply system, offering goods and services that were not provided by the army. Our sources depict, for example, *lixae* preparing food and working as cooks and bakers for Roman soldiers and *mercatores* peddling higher-end goods such as wine and comfortable bedding (Sall. *BJ* 44.5).²⁰⁰

In this private capacity, slaves and merchants played a vital role within Roman military communities. The life of the soldier was, by definition, one of hardship and restriction. The state supplied soldiers with dry rations that they were responsible for

¹⁹⁹ In some instances, these three groups participated in activities together (e.g. looting the country in search of goods for sale: Liv. 28.22.5; Tac. *Hist.* 4.15.6), but, at other times, there appears to be clear difference in the status of these groups (e.g. *lixae* selling goods to *mercatores*: Sall. *BJ* 44.5). Verboven (2007), 295–314 discusses these figures in terms of promoting the emergence of a “business class” in and around the Roman army.

²⁰⁰ Val. Max. 2.7.2; Amm. Marc. 28.4.4; Just. *Epit.* 38.10.2 (cf. Thornburn (2003), 50).

cooking with the limited implements they carried.²⁰¹ They also received basic clothing which often doubled as sleeping gear. Eating boiled meat and porridge and sleeping on straw mats on a daily basis was part and parcel of military discipline, the process by which citizen was transformed to soldier.²⁰² But this did not mean that Roman soldiers had rid themselves of all worldly desires. It would be reasonable to expect that troops would have looked for ways to improve their quality of life in the camp and to ease the hardship of military service, particularly, as warfare became more protracted. By providing goods, such as food other than boiled meat and porridge, proper bedding or nicer clothing, and services, such as bathing, massages or simply carrying a soldier's pack, non-military personnel like *lixae*, *calones*, and *mercatores* met these needs and gave troops a brief escape from the harsh realities of life in a military camp.²⁰³ This not only served to bolster the morale of the soldiers, but it can also be connected with the ideological underpinnings of Roman military communities discussed in Chapter 1. The equivalence of *castra* and *domus* may well have subconsciously driven soldiers to try to domesticate their living spaces by acquiring various goods and services from slaves and merchants that reminded them of home.

At times, however, these individuals served more than just providers of goods and services. These various slaves, merchants and traders came to be seen as part of Roman military communities. Their incorporation within the framework of Roman military

²⁰¹ Watson (1969), 63–66; Roth (1999), 14–22, 68–70.

²⁰² Food restriction was a part of military discipline and that commanders participated in out of solidarity. For example, Scipio Aemilianus (Plb. 31.25.1–8), Caesar (Plut. *Caes.* 17.3), Pompey (Plut. *Pomp.* 2) all restricted their food intake either in preparing to be or actually serving as a commander (cf. Moore (2002), 41–44, 98–117).

²⁰³ Spiedel (1989), 242.

communities is indicated most clearly by their use for a variety of military purposes.²⁰⁴ They were, for example, used to give the appearance of a larger army. In 216 BCE, Marcellus used the *calones*, *lixae* and *omnis generis sequellae* in his camp to augment the battle-cry of his army and, thereby, hide the small size of his forces (Front. *Str.* 2.4.8). At the Battle of Aquae Sextiae, Marius used *lixae* and *agasones* (the slaves in charge of horses) together with the camp's various animals as part of an attack on the Teutones so as to create an illusion of a much larger attacking force (Front. *Str.* 2.4.6). The Teutones were allegedly so discouraged by the size of the force that they fled from the battlefield. On other occasions, they actively took part in battle.²⁰⁵ At the Battle of Baecula in 208 BCE, Livy notes a *turba calonum* throwing rocks at the Carthaginians (Liv. 27.18.12) and during the Battle of Sambre in 57 BCE, the *calones* fought bravely, despite being unarmed, against the Belgae (Caes. *BG* 2.27).²⁰⁶ They could even stand in for cavalry; Caesar outfitted the *muliones* with horses and helmets to ride around the hills near Gergovia (Caes. *BG.* 7.45.2).²⁰⁷ When it came to military matters, Roman commanders considered the slaves and merchants in and around military camps as an effective extension of the army and believed that their primary loyalty lay with the Romans. Given the general belief in the ancient Mediterranean that slaves and merchants were an

²⁰⁴ Speidel (1989), 243–5; Roth (1999), 106–110.

²⁰⁵ Roth (1999), 109 discusses the development of these troops into a “para-military” force in the Imperial period.

²⁰⁶ There is evidence that this type of non-military personnel could be confused for soldiers. *BAlex* 74 says that Pharnaces thought that the large number of slaves who had been sent out to transport material for a rampart were soldiers.

²⁰⁷ Roth (1999), 109–110.

untrustworthy lot, the willingness to use them in battle serves as a testament to their incorporation within Roman military communities.²⁰⁸

Beyond use in actual engagements, these groups were relied upon for military intelligence. *Mercatores*, in particular, were called upon by commanding officers to supply important information about foes that Roman forces were to meet on the battlefield.²⁰⁹ For example, when Caesar contemplated his invasion of Britain, he summoned merchants from everywhere in order to learn more about the size of the island, the nature of the tribes that inhabited it, their customary style of warfare and the suitability of their ports for travel (Caes. *BG* 4.20.4: *neque quanta esset insulae magnitudine neque quae aut quantae nationes incolerent neque quem usum belli haberent aut quibus institutis uterentur neque qui essent ad maiorum navium multitudinem idonei portus*). Though the merchants proved unable to give a satisfactory answer, the incident shows that Caesar trusted that they would not betray his plans to the opposing side.²¹⁰

Merchants provided intelligence to common soldiers as well. In Book 1 of the *Bellum Gallicum*, the *mercatores* informed the troops in Caesar's army that the German forces they would be facing in battle were huge and so abounding in courage that the Gauls were not even able to bear their countenances (Caes. *BG* 1.39-41). While the accuracy of the reports of these merchants was questionable at best, the soldiers within the Roman camp took them seriously. The rumors spread by the merchants caused such a

²⁰⁸ On the untrustworthiness of slaves, cf. Joshel (2013), 155–6. On the same phenomenon for traders, cf. Gruen (2011), 116–121.

²⁰⁹ The manner in which Roman armies gathered intelligence, particularly during the Republican period, has not been studied in much detail. Austin and Rankov (1995), 87–106 offer a discussion of all the difference sources of information that a Roman general might use while on campaign.

²¹⁰ It is worth noting that some of them did, in fact, inform the Britons of Caesar's plans.

fear among the soldiers that the army nearly refused to take the field against Ariovistus' forces. The degree to which the military functions of various camp followers mirrored and supplemented the actions of the Roman army points towards their integration within Roman military communities.

It should be noted that exchange of intelligence between providers of goods and services and the Roman army was not one-sided; Roman soldiers looked out for their interests as well. For example, Sallust records that Marius used to talk often with traders (*negotiatores*) based at Utica during the Jugurthine War and inform them of the status of the conflict (Sall. *BJ* 64.5).²¹¹ The traders were anxious that the war was dragging on and hurting their financial investments more than they had anticipated (Sall. *BJ* 64.6).²¹² In his discussions with these traders, Marius provided an outlook (albeit biased) that helped the traders to understand how to protect their investments. He told them that as long as Metellus was in charge, he would unnecessarily prolong the war. Conversely, if he were elected consul in the upcoming election, he predicted that the war would end quickly. The information that Marius provided to these traders was so highly valued that they wrote to their friends at home and encouraged them to support Marius in his run for consulship (Sall. *BJ* 65.4-5).²¹³ It can be surmised that it was not just Roman generals who provided

²¹¹ Sallust paints this as part of Marius' indiscipline when it came to military matters after he declared that he would stand for the consulship in 107. It stands in contrast to the narrative of Metellus who drove traders and merchants out of his camp (cf. Koestermann (1971), 244-5). Paul (1984), 174-7 suggests that Marius' affinity for these men may be attributable to their shared social status (cf. Val. Max. 8.15.7, Vell. Pat. 2.11.1).

²¹² Paul (1984), 175 insinuates that this may have been a common occurrence because *equites* in the first century BCE tended to be averse to war due to negative effects that physical damage could have on their profits (cf. Sherwin-White (1955), 169).

²¹³ Yakobson (1999), 13-19 argues that Marius' political relationships with traders was part of a broader appeal to a non-elite electorate.

such information; regular soldiers who interacted with traders on a much more frequent basis would likely have served as important repositories of knowledge for them. The possibility of acquiring this type of information reveals why traders were willing to put themselves in harm's way in order to follow the Roman army and demonstrates the close ties that they often fostered with the soldiery more broadly.²¹⁴

A final indication that these individuals were, at times, part of Roman military communities is the way they were treated in emergency situations. Though merchants and slaves likely would not have lived within the walls of Roman military camps, an anecdote from Book 6 of the *Bellum Gallicum* indicates that exceptions were made in extreme circumstances.²¹⁵ While besieged by the Eburones, Quintus Cicero explicitly banned anyone from leaving camp even the *calones* (Caes. BG 6.36.1: *summa diligentia milites in castris continuisset ac ne calonem quidem quemquam extra munitiones egredi passus esset*). When the Germans were approaching the camp, the *mercatores*, who had set up shop beneath the rampart, did not have time to retreat within the walls before the attack began (Caes. BG 6.37.2: *qui sub vallo tenderent mercatores, recipiendi sui facultatem non haberent*). The scene reveals that both *calones* and *mercatores* were welcome within the Roman camp in the most hostile of situations. Further, it demonstrates that when the safety of the Roman army was most at risk, *calones* and

²¹⁴ On the potential dangers to traders cf. BAfr. 75: *quod ubi Labienus animadvertit, cum equitatu levique armatura agmen eius extremum carpere coepit atque ita lixarum mercatorumque qui plostris merces portabant, sarcinis interceptis addito animo propius audaciusque accedit ad legiones*.

²¹⁵ Officially sanctioned slaves who served under camp officers would have lived inside the walls of the camp near the tents of their masters. It would have been difficult to house the rest of the merchants and slaves within the *castra*. As seen in Chapter 1, soldiers' tents were crowded and were not even able to fit the full complement of men assigned to it. It might be conjectured that merchants and slaves stayed in temporary lodging right outside of camp and that there were, perhaps, more permanent housing structures when soldiers entered winter quarters or engaged in siege warfare, akin to the *canabae* during the Imperial period (cf. Hanel (2007), 410–3).

mercatores were viewed as being on the Roman side, as part of the larger military community that needed to be protected from the enemy.²¹⁶

In reviewing the evidence for merchants and slaves accompanying the Roman army, they appear to be ubiquitous on Republican military campaigns. At times, they were almost as numerous as soldiers and their presence was so commonplace that commanders even began to think of ways to use them in a military capacity. In addition to serving in official capacities, *lixae*, *calones*, *mercatores* and *negotiatores* played the important role of providing goods and services for soldiers. Easy access to such things allowed soldiers to enjoy a temporary escape from the regimented and monotonous nature of military service and, thereby, helped to transform the camp into a more livable place for them. Scipio's vision of a Roman military camp without *lixae* and *calones* would have been a significant deviation from the norm.

Captives, Prostitutes and Wives

The evidence for the presence of women in Republican military camps is not particularly strong. Our sources rarely mention women in and around military camps and when they are discussed, as in the incident involving Scipio at Numantia, it is to demonstrate the exceptional moral degradation of the army in question or to emphasize the virtue of an outstanding Roman. Further, there are explicit statements from Servius and Isidore who both record the pithy maxim that camps were referred to as *casta* because women were not permitted within the premises (Serv. *ad Aen.* 3.519; Isidore *Etym.* 9). As a result, scholars have posited that there was a Republican ban on the

²¹⁶ See Chapter 1, pp. 56-60 for the idea that physical integrity and protection of the *castra* was essential to the construction of the military community.

presence of women in military camps and this prohibition is often seen as the precursor to the marriage ban placed on soldiers during the Imperial period.²¹⁷

There is, however, good reason to question this narrative.²¹⁸ First, the most explicit evidence for some sort of ban on women from camps comes from two authors, Servius and Isidore, who were far removed from the Republican era and belonged to a period of history that idealized the Republican army.²¹⁹ Second, the conspicuous absence of women from accounts detailing military campaigns is due to an issue of genre. History writing and military manuals were predisposed to exclude women from their narratives; rather, they sought to glorify Rome's military ideologies and provide good *exempla* for generations of readers to follow.²²⁰ To mention women in camp, whose presence was viewed as a distraction for soldiers, did not suit the moral purposes of these genres. The dearth of women in our accounts of military campaigns, therefore, does not necessarily correlate with an actual lack of women interacting with the Roman army.

Additionally, there is a growing body of scholarship on the Imperial army which recognizes that women were much more common in military camps than previously believed. Archaeological evidence, particularly from Britain, suggests that women were present in significant numbers in Imperial camps. Lindsay Allason-Jones has used the epigraphic evidence from northern Britain to demonstrate the presence of women and

²¹⁷ Jung (1982), 334; Rüpke, (1990), 66.

²¹⁸ Phang (2001), 124–5.

²¹⁹ Phang (2001), 229–30.

²²⁰ On the centrality of exemplarity in Roman literature and culture, see Chaplin (2000), 5–11; Morgan (2007), 1–22.

families of soldiers within these military communities.²²¹ Analysis of footwear found at Vindolanda by van Driel-Murray has shown that women and children were part of the Roman military installation in the region.²²² In a similar vein, Phang has demonstrated that Roman soldiers entered into various forms of sexual relationships with both men and women while on campaign in spite of the supposed marriage ban, indicating a much more vibrant community than previously thought. Most recently, Allison has shown through a close examination of the artifacts found at six early Imperial forts in Germany that women did not just live near Roman military camps, but inhabited the *castra* in significant numbers.²²³ She argues, based on an analysis of these artifacts, that women and children made up somewhere between 5 and 24% of the population of Roman military camps.²²⁴ This data suggests that the question of the presence of women in camps and the interaction of Roman soldiers with them during the Republican period deserves reconsideration.

Captured Women: Captives and Hostages

Despite the relative silence of our sources on the issue, the evidence that does exist reveals the variety of ways in which women interacted with Roman military communities. For instance, the Romans captured (and enslaved) large numbers of military prisoners during the Republican period.²²⁵ While it is difficult to ascertain

²²¹ Allason-Jones (1999), 41-51.

²²² Driel-Murray (1995), 3-21.

²²³ Allison (2013), 22-9.

²²⁴ Ibid., 336-7.

²²⁵ On the enslavement of female captives in the Republican period: Bradley (1987), 50-1. On the massive extent of enslavement of captives in war, see Bradley (1994), 33, 40-1; Bradley (2011), 246.

accurately how many captives may have been present in a Roman military camp on average, the numbers recorded by these sources suggest that they were substantial. For example, the Romans supposedly enslaved 25,000 captives at Agrigentum (Diod. Sic. 23.9.1) and 27,000 in Northern Africa (Orosius 4.8.9) during the First Punic War. Most famously, Livy records that 150,000 Epirotes were enslaved after the conclusion of the Third Macedonian War in 167 BCE (Liv. 45.34). If these figures have any bearing in reality, it stands to reason that there would have been large numbers of captured women in Roman camps, even accounting for the fact that women were less likely to be seized in war than men. Livy's narrative of the siege of New Carthage in 209 BCE provides a sense of scale for the number of female captives in Roman camps. In describing Scipio's address to a group of Spanish women who had been taken hostage by the Carthaginians, Livy says that one source (Polybius) recorded that the meeting consisted of 300 women and another 3,724 (Liv. 26.49.1).²²⁶ The Spanish hostages, however, represented only part of the women captured at New Carthage; the total number of female captives was much greater, given the tens of thousands of people supposedly seized during the siege (Liv. 26.49.2).²²⁷ Of course, most victories, sieges and military operations were not on the scale of the siege of New Carthage and would have resulted in much more modest numbers of female captives. Nonetheless, even numbers in the hundreds would represent a significant portion of the population for a single legion.

²²⁶ In this passage, Livy, in fact, addresses the difficulties of getting numbers right when the sources are so variant on the matter.

²²⁷ Livy gives several different estimates for the number of total prisoners of war, noting that one source suggests 10,000, while another 25,000.

More insight about the relationship between Roman soldiers and female prisoners can be gained by looking closely at what our sources say about the interactions of Scipio Africanus with the women captured at New Carthage (Plb. 10.18-19; Liv. 26.49-50; Frontin. *Str.* 2.11.5).²²⁸ Our sources begin their narrative with the story mentioned in the paragraph above: Scipio addressing the former Carthaginian hostages and assuring them of fair treatment. In the aftermath of Scipio's speech, a high-ranking Spanish woman, the wife of Mandonius and the sister-in-law of Indibilis, the chieftain of the Ilergetes, throws herself at the general's feet beseeching him to ask the guards to treat the female hostages with care and consideration (Plb. 10.18.7, 12-14; Liv. 26.49.11). The woman claims that this is not so much out of concern for her own safety but rather for that of the young girls who had been taken captive with her (Plb. 10.18.13; Liv. 26.49.12). Scipio obliges with the request of the Spanish woman and appoints a number of trustworthy men (πιστοὺς ἄνδρας; *spectatae...integritatis viro*) to protect these women from any potential abuse (Plb. 10.18.15; Liv. 26.49.16).²²⁹

Both Livy and Polybius immediately follow this with another similar story about the general's handling of a female captive who was renowned for her exceptional beauty (Plb. 10.19.3; Liv. 26.50.1). In the Greek historian's narrative, the girl is meant to be a gift from the soldiers to their commander. Scipio refuses to accept her as a gift as it would be deleterious for a man who was consumed with military matters to indulge in such pleasure (Plb.10.19.4-7) Livy's version, however, pays less attention to the girl as a

²²⁸ Leitaο (2014), 240–1.

²²⁹ Livy names only one guardian, C. Flaminius, who later became consul in 187 (cf. Walbank (1967) 2.219). It seems more likely that there was more than one guardian given the number of women in the group. The latent political motive in both these scenes, an aspect of the story will be discussed below, pp. 113–4.

potential object of Scipio's affection and, instead, focuses on his fair treatment of conquered people and the value of this practice in securing alliances.²³⁰ Upon learning that the girl was betrothed to a Celtiberian noble named Aluccius, who was deeply in love with her, Scipio summoned her fiancé to camp and returned the beautiful maiden to him on the condition that he be a friend of Rome (Liv. 26.50.3-8). Again, in his speech to Aluccius, Scipio makes sure to emphasize that she was treated with respect (*verecundia*) during her stay in the Roman camp and that he was returning her to him "involute" (Liv. 26.50.6-7).

These stories of Scipio's kind treatment of Spanish female captives underscore several important points about women in Roman military communities. First, female captives were placed in the care of common Roman soldiers. While it is unclear whether this meant that women stayed within the camp walls or not, it implies that they were not separated from soldiers and would have interacted and engaged with various members of the camp community on a daily basis. Unfortunately, this often had brutal consequences for female (and male) captives. Captives were slaves and, consequently, were subject to the sexual desires of their masters.²³¹ The tears of the noble Spanish woman as well as the great care which Scipio took in selecting a trustworthy guard attest to the fact that sexual exploitation was not just a possibility, but often a reality of being a captive.

Another incident bears these realities out more fully. In Livy's account of the Roman Wars in Asia Minor during the 180s BCE, the historian records a story about the beautiful wife of a local chieftain named Origiagon, who along with several other

²³⁰ Walbank (1967), 2.219.

²³¹ Phang (2001), 231-2.

captives was in the custody of a centurion (Liv. 38.24.2).²³² The centurion, who allegedly was defined by lust and greed (*libidinis et avaritiae militaris*), made advances towards the woman and, when rebuffed, raped her (Liv. 38.24.3-4).²³³ When the soldier attempted to make up for his actions by offering to return her home in exchange for ransom, the woman tricked the centurion into leaving camp and killed him (Liv. 38.24.4-9). What is emphasized in the episode is not the rapacity of the centurion, but rather the startling bravery of Origiagon's wife in such circumstances. Livy, as his description of the centurion implies (*libidinis et avaritiae militaris*), does not seem to be surprised that a soldier left in charge would take advantage of his position of power.²³⁴

Looking back at the incident at New Carthage with Scipio in light of the story of Origiagon's wife, Scipio's restraint in these episodes emerges not as indicative of superior Roman moral character, but rather as part of Polybius and Livy's narrative of praise for his exceptional behavior and its deviation from the norms of military life. Polybius' story of Scipio's rejection of the beautiful girl reveals that it was common for

²³² The story originated in Polybius (cf. Plut. *Mor.* 258d-f), but his account has been lost (cf. Walbank (1979) 3.151-2). Polybius' account supposedly provides a name for the woman, Chiomara, but Livy omits it, which is standard for his treatment of foreign people (cf. Briscoe (2008), 94).

²³³ Livy's verbiage (*militaris*) here is slightly ambiguous as to whether the lust was a particularly characteristic to this centurion or soldiers more generally. Briscoe (2008), 95 argues that this refers to the behavior of Roman soldiers more generally, referencing the aforementioned story of Scipio and the captives and the rape of Lucretia. Ratti (1996), 95-131, however, contends that Livy uses the incident to get at the moral corruption of Manlius' army. There is no reason to choose between the two; as discussed in the Introduction, Roman soldiers were stereotyped as being both virtuous and insatiable in their lust – the scene shows a typical way in which a Roman soldier was expected to act when the reigns of military discipline were loosened.

²³⁴ This type of activity was not limited to one bad apple; such brutalities could be enacted by armies *en masse*. After taking the town of Locri in Southern Italy in 204 BCE, Scipio left his subordinate, Pleminius, in command. The town had been abused by the Carthaginians to such an extent that Livy notes that they would have easily withstood "run-of-the-mill abuse" (*modicas iniurias*), but Pleminius and the troops had other ideas. They were so blinded by greed and wickedness that committed "unspeakable crimes" (*infandae contumeliae*), particularly, against the women and children in the town (Liv. 29.7.8-9), which later resulted in the criminal prosecution of Pleminius.

captured women to become *praeda* for members of the Roman army. The great care taken by Scipio in selecting a trustworthy guardian for the Spanish hostages demonstrates that the general knew it took an exceptional soldier to refrain from engaging in sexual activity with hostages under their care. Captured women were placed in largely asymmetric power relations with their captors which often resulted in effective sexual slavery. However, despite the horrific treatment that these women endured, our sources depict them acting as agents – the wives of Mandonius and Origiagon were both able to negotiate with the captors and ensure that their interests were taken into account.

Prostitutes

Prostitutes also seem to have interacted significantly with members of Roman military communities during the Republican period. Gellius records a speech of Gaius Gracchus in which the famous tribune emphasizes his morally upright behavior while serving as quaestor in Sardinia by stating that he did not interact with prostitutes. Gracchus asserts that there was no *popina* – a locale that was notorious for prostitution in the Roman world – near his tent and that no prostitute (*meretrix*) had ever entered his dwelling while he was serving the state (Gell. *NA* 15.12).²³⁵ Gracchus argues that his chastity with respect to prostitutes (as well as slave boys) indicates that his audience can trust full well that he committed no disgrace against young citizen-soldiers. The power of Gracchus' argument rests on the assumption that consorting with prostitutes while on military service was normative and that Gracchus' restraint was extraordinary.²³⁶

²³⁵ McGinn (1998), 329–330 and Rauh, Dillon, and McClain (2008), 216–220 describe close connections between *popinae* and prostitutes.

²³⁶ Williams (1999), 22–3.

Further, it is elucidating to read Gracchus' discussion of *popinae* in light of an important piece of archaeological evidence from the Imperial period. House C in block G5 at Dura Europos features graffiti which attests to the presence of women within a troupe of 63 entertainers.²³⁷ Due to the fact that female entertainers often doubled as prostitutes, scholars, such as Davies and Pollard, have asserted that the structure functioned as a brothel owned by the army.²³⁸ While it may be a bit of a stretch to claim that Gracchus' speech insinuates that the army of the Republican period usually constructed its own *popinae*/brothels while on campaign, it is indicative of the fact that Roman soldiers frequented such establishments and would have interacted with a variety of local inhabitants there.

This evidence would seem to put the presence of the two thousand prostitutes (*ἑταίραι/scortae*) at Scipio's camp at Numantia into proper perspective and, therefore, confirm the earlier observation that what was exceptional about the episode is not the presence of prostitutes but Scipio's initiative in kicking them out. However, there is some reason to doubt that there was an extensive prostitute presence in Roman military communities. Phang, in particular, has called attention to the general lack of literary and archaeological evidence for the interactions that Roman soldiers had with prostitutes in both the Republican and Imperial periods and has deemphasized the role of prostitutes within Roman camps.²³⁹ Though Phang is correct in her assertions about the body of evidence, the lack of archaeological and literary support does not necessarily mean that

²³⁷ Herter (1960), 99; Pollard (1992), 67–8.

²³⁸ Pollard (1996), 225–6. It is necessary, however, to exercise caution in assuming that a building that features evidence of professional women indicates the presence of women.

²³⁹ There does not appear to be much literary evidence in the Imperial period either.

prostitutes did not frequently interact with Roman soldiers. In fact, there is reason to expect direct evidence for prostitution in these circumstances to be limited. As mentioned above, the generic conventions of historiography and exemplary literature prevented authors from going into detail about the more lascivious and less dignified details of Roman military life.

Further, it would seem reasonable to think that part of the difficulty in locating prostitutes in our literary evidence may be due to the fact that they were included but not distinguished from camp followers more generally.²⁴⁰ As discussed above, Roman authors had difficulty differentiating between the various types of the camp followers. The commentary of Servius on Vergil's disdainful description of Antony's marriage to Cleopatra in Book 8 indicates that the imprecise catch-all terms used for camp followers may well have included women as well. The fourth century CE author notes that the arrangement between Anthony and Cleopatra was shameful not just because a Roman magistrate had taken an Egyptian wife but also because female camp-followers (*mulier castra sequebatur*) were viewed with disdain by the *maiores* (Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.688). Servius not only uses this episode to point to standard Roman military conventions and beliefs, but also to take a subtle jab at Cleopatra by equating her to a female camp follower. There is a similar problem with the archaeological source material. While there is good evidence for the presence of women within military camps during the Imperial period, it is difficult to discern the status of these women or the type of relationships they had with Roman soldiers.

²⁴⁰ Phang (2001), 247 acknowledges this difficulty, but offers no way of dealing with it.

More compelling when attempting to ascertain the presence of prostitutes within Roman military communities is the general prominence of the institution throughout the ancient Mediterranean. When it came to sexual gratification, prostitution provided a cheaper alternative to marriage or owning a female slave and its practice was extremely popular among lower-class males.²⁴¹ As a result, prostitutes were numerous in large cities and port towns throughout the Mediterranean.²⁴² Rome and Pompeii had dozens of brothels. Corinth allegedly had a temple of Aphrodite with over 1,000 prostitutes connected to it (Strab. 8.6.20), as well as what Plutarch refers to as a “great army of prostitutes” within the city. One of the biggest indications of the ubiquity of the institution in the Mediterranean is the fact that it was taxed under the Roman Empire. In addition to the obvious moral implications of the measure, McGinn has shown that the decision to tax prostitutes was motivated by the large revenues that a tariff on such a popular and wide-spread institution might yield.²⁴³

The use of the prostitutes within Mediterranean armies is also well-attested. It is well-known that ἑταῖραι travelled in large numbers with Greek armies. For example, Athenian ἑταῖραι accompanied Pericles’ army during his campaign against the Samians in 439 BCE and that the fourth-century BCE Athenian general, Chares, always used to supplement his army with ἑταῖραι as well as flute-girls and harp players (Ath. 13.31, 12.43). The *Anabasis* provides the most detailed account of this phenomenon; Xenophon

²⁴¹ Glazebrook and Henry (2011), 14–33; McGinn (2014), 83–101.

²⁴² Rauh, Dillon, and McClain (2008), 197–242.

²⁴³ McGinn (1989), 79–110; McGinn (1998), 248–287.

constantly refers to the presence of ἑταῖραι within the army.²⁴⁴ This reality of ancient Mediterranean warfare is acknowledged even by Roman authors. When Livy describes the moral degradation of the Carthaginian troops wintering in Campania during the Second Punic War, he mentions that the Punic camp was overrun with *scortae* (Liv. 23.18.12-15, 23.45.2, 26.12.16). This general picture is also echoed in the fictional world of Plautus and Terence, which depicts soldiers as the group most frequently associated with prostitutes.²⁴⁵ It would be surprising and exceptional if the Roman soldiers, who would have been well-aware of the availability of prostitutes throughout the Mediterranean, refrained from interacting them.

Long-term Partners

From the evidence discussed thus far, it might be tacitly assumed that the nature of the relationships between women and members of Roman military communities were primarily short-term. While this was surely the case in many situations, there is reason to believe that soldiers in the Republican era developed long-term relationships with local women as well. A peculiar incident from 171 BCE helps to illustrate this reality. In that year, an embassy from Spain was admitted to an audience with the Roman Senate. The ambassadors claimed that they were born from the union of Roman soldiers and Spanish women, who had not legally been married (*quibus conubium non esset*) (Liv. 43.3.1).²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ Lee (2004), 145–165.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Plaut. *Poen.* 829; Rauh, Dillon, and McClain (2008), 222.

²⁴⁶ Briscoe (2012), 395–6. There is much debate about the nature of the colony that was set up at Carteia because it is referred to by Livy as a *colonia libertinorum*. Due to manuscript deficiencies, it is unclear whether this status is due to the fact that the offspring of Roman soldiers and Spanish women were slaves or that there were many freedmen of the Hispano-Roman colonists who settled in the town. For more on this issue, see del Castillo (1991), 602–7 and López Barja de Quiroga (1997), 83–93.

They asserted that there were four thousand others just like them in Spain and begged that the Senate give them a town in which they could take up residence (Liv. 43.3.2). The Roman Senate assented to their request and authorized the foundation of a Latin colony at Carteia, a town about six miles northwest of Gibraltar, which was referred to as *colonia Libertinorum* (Liv. 43.3.3-4).

The most remarkable aspect of this episode is that these children of Roman soldiers and Spanish women were able to come together on a large scale. The ability of this group to take collective action suggests that the offspring of Roman soldiers and Spanish women shared a sense of community. Further, their decision to bring the matter to the Senate indicates that this sense of community was built, at least in part, on the fact that their fathers were Roman.²⁴⁷ Despite the fact that these children were not born from *conubium* and were, therefore, “illegitimate”, it would appear that these *hybridae* and, presumably, their mothers had some sustained form of relationship with the Roman soldiers stationed in the Spain. Additionally, it should be pointed out that the Senate honored the request of these men, revealing that a Roman political institution acknowledged and recognized these relationships as a legitimate reality of military service in Spain in the second century BCE.²⁴⁸

More evidence for long-term relationships of Roman soldiers with foreign women comes from the late Republican period.²⁴⁹ Testimony is generally provided by

²⁴⁷ Wilson (1966), 24.

²⁴⁸ Phang (2001), 296–324 records similar phenomena in the empire.

²⁴⁹ It should be noted that it has also been suggested that the *scortae* in the Roman camp at Numantia were not prostitutes, but rather women from local communities who were engaged in long-term relationships with Roman soldiers (cf. Phang (2001), 247). They assert that our sources, in order to emphasize the enormity of Scipio’s task, referred to them as prostitutes. While it is impossible to tell if the *scortae* at

contemporary authors lamenting the moral decline that they saw as damaging the army and the state more generally.²⁵⁰ At the end of the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar notes that the soldiers in Gabinus' army had grown accustomed to an Alexandrian lifestyle and no longer upheld traditional military discipline (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.110). One result of this was that the soldiers had taken up wives (*uxores*) and had sired children.²⁵¹ Similarly, Horace excoriates Crassus' soldiers on the Parthian campaign for their marriages to local women (*coniuge barbara turpis maritus*) and for staying with them after the disastrous defeat at Carrhae rather than returning to Rome (Hor. *Carm.* 3.5.5-12).²⁵² The families of Roman soldiers, at times, traveled with the army; Cassius Dio notes that part of the reason for the lack of cohesiveness of the Roman army at the Battle of Teutoburg Forest in 9 CE was due to the fact that they marched in scattered groups to protect the large number of women and children traveling with them (Cass. Dio 56.20.2). Despite the moralizing tone of our sources, "marriages" between Roman troops and local women occurred in circumstances when soldiers spent prolonged periods of time away from home on campaign. Perhaps, then, the Imperial laws that forbade the marriage of soldiers should be considered as a response to the realities that emerged from the prolonged military

Numantia were girlfriends or wives of Roman soldiers, it would fit in well with the evidence for long-term relationships between foreign women and Roman troops that existed during the Republican period.

²⁵⁰ Sallust, though he doesn't mention marriage explicitly, describes how Sulla during his campaign against Mithridates gained the favor of his soldiers by allowing them to indulge in license and luxury, a tactic which accustomed the soldiers to engage in their sexual desires while on campaign (Sall. *BC* 11.5-7: *quod L. Sulla exercitum, quem in Asia ductaverat, quo sibi fidum faceret, contra morem maiorum luxuriose nimisque liberaliter habuerat....ibi primum insuevit exercitus populi Romani amare*).

²⁵¹ Caesar's disdain for these soldiers is made clear by lumping them in with *praedones*, *latrones*, *damnati* and *exules* as well as fugitive slaves.

²⁵² Such critiques of Roman soldiers engaging in relationships with foreign women must have naturally been magnified in the wake of Mark Antony's relationship with Cleopatra.

service of the last centuries of the Republican period rather than as a reaction to new developments of the Empire.

Since it appears that there was a distinct possibility of Roman soldiers developing long-term relationships with women while on campaign, it is worth thinking about who these women were. Let us return to the situation of the *hybridae* in 171 BCE. What can be made of Livy's claim that these were children were not born from *coniubium*? It may simply be that *coniubium* here is being used in the strictly legalistic manner, referencing the fact that marriages between Roman citizens and foreign women could not have been recognized as such if the foreign community did not have the right of *coniubium*.²⁵³ The Senate's recognition of *hybridae* as Latin citizens in this situation could be compared to special grants of *coniubium* given to auxiliary troops marrying foreigners in the Imperial period.²⁵⁴ However, it may also be argued that the term is being used euphemistically by Livy to indicate that these *hybridae* were born out of wedlock in a more general sense; they may have been born from relationships between Spanish prostitutes or captives and Roman soldiers. This argument is supported potentially by the fact that Carteia is referred to as a *colonia libertinorum*, which some scholars have argued indicates that the *hybridae* in the episode were the offspring of enslaved Spanish captives and Roman soldiers.²⁵⁵ Epigraphic and papyrological sources from the Empire also hint at the possibility that mothers of the *hybridae* may have been camp followers. These sources mention *focariae*, a term which originally referred to female camp attendants who served as cooks, but later

²⁵³ Briscoe (2012), 396.

²⁵⁴ Roxan et al. (1985); Phang (2001), 332; Moore (2002), 114.

²⁵⁵ del Castillo (1991), 602–7; López Barja de Quiroga (1997), 83–93.

came to refer to a soldier's long-term sexual partner.²⁵⁶ It is difficult to decide which possibility is most likely in the absence of more specific evidence. Nonetheless, thinking carefully about the incident involving the Spanish *hybridae* reveals that Roman soldiers could have entered into longer-term relationships with different types of women while on campaign.

This examination has demonstrated that Republican military communities, despite their reputations, had frequent opportunity to interact with women. Soldiers both took advantage of and actively sought out women in order to fulfill their sexual desires. Others, who were looking for non-male companionship or were fearful that they might never return home and, therefore, not have a chance to marry, established long-term relationships with women in and around Roman camps. Despite the fact that Romans believed that the *castra* was *casta*, it is difficult to imagine that this perception bore any resemblance to reality.

Non-Roman Religious Personnel

The interactions of seers and diviners (μάντεις καὶ θύτας), the third group mentioned by our sources on the incident at Numantia, with Roman military communities should be not be surprising. θύται and μάντεις were part of a wider network of religious “experts” in the Mediterranean world who inhabited the interstices between civic and private religion.²⁵⁷ While most aspects of private religion (e.g. prayer, sacrifice and basic

²⁵⁶ There is some debate about the exact status on *focariae* and they seem, in the words of Phang, to “occup[y] an ambiguous position between ‘wife’ and concubine or still more casual partner” (cf. Phang (2001), 204–7; Scheidel (2007), 425).

²⁵⁷ For recent work on the phenomenon in the ancient Mediterranean, Georgoudi, Koch Piettre, and Schmidt (2012) is a collected volume that traces through a series of case studies the prevalence and variety of these practices in both civic and private life throughout the Mediterranean, while Struck (2016) offers a compelling interpretation of the different reactions of Greek thinkers to various religious symbols. For the dichotomy between civic and private religion, see Wendt (2013), 50–59. Civic religion was concerned

divination) could be performed and understood by the average person without any type of specialized knowledge, certain matters that made an impact on the individual – obscure omens, illnesses, continuous bad luck – proved impossible to interpret and necessitated the help of someone with specialized religious knowledge. Because the civic officials who had such capabilities could not be used for these matters, this void was filled by those known as “freelance experts” who claimed to be able to replicate this special knowledge.²⁵⁸

These religious specialists were particularly prevalent at Rome. Cicero’s *de Divinatione* provides a vivid account of all the different kinds of religious experts and the nature of their knowledge including (but not limited to) *sacrificuli*, *vates*, *harioli*, *mathematici*, *magi*, *sortilegi*, *astrologi* and *Chaldaei*.²⁵⁹ This range of freelance experts was a result of the growing expanse of Rome’s hegemony over the course of the last two centuries of the Republic. As the city grew more cosmopolitan and became home to an increasing amount of foreigners, the number of experts and areas of religious specialization grew as well. Further, it appears that the consultation of such experts was not specific to any particular part of Roman society; rather, it was utilized by the all parts of the populace.²⁶⁰ For example, Cato the Elder, reminded theoretical *vilici* of the dangers

primarily with ensuring the well-being of the community and was the preserve of the elite and its practice relied heavily upon privileged systems of knowledge tied to specialized religious literature. Private religion dealt with day-to-day matters of individuals and its practice was dictated by a principle of constant social exchange between the individual and the gods.

²⁵⁸ Wendt (2013), 6-10 introduces and explains the terminology of freelance experts.

²⁵⁹ Horster (2008), 336–343; Wendt (2013), 101.

²⁶⁰ Scheid (2003), 124–5. Unsurprisingly, the Roman elite developed prejudicial views towards these practices in order reaffirm their own religious identity. In 163 BCE, Sempronius Gracchus, an augur and the sitting consul, lambasted the *haruspices* for challenging his decision to continue with the consular election after an election official had dropped dead, referring to the Etruscan diviners as “*Tusci ac barbari*”

of interacting with itinerant *haruspices*, *augures*, *harioli* or *Chaldei* in the *de Agricultura* (Cato Agr. 5.4.4).²⁶¹ By the end of the Republic, books professing to be prophetic texts were apparently so widespread that when Augustus took over as *pontifex maximus* in 12 BCE, he collected and burned over 2,000 different writings, sparing only certain parts of the Sibylline books (Suet. Aug. 31.1.4).²⁶² These experts were incredibly popular and competed with one another to gain recognition for their skills.

As highlighted throughout this chapter, there was a desire among soldiers to replicate the comforts of home while on campaign and it can be conjectured that this would have been the case with religious specialists as well. In fact, it might be surmised that war would have heightened the need for religious specialists around the army. Experts with specialized religious knowledge played an important role in helping people to rationalize and comprehend the uncertainties of life. These concerns would have been magnified for soldiers. Not only were soldiers operating in unfamiliar lands far away from home, but they were putting their lives on the line on a daily basis. While civic rituals would have mitigated this to some degree and offered a glimpse at the future of the army as a whole through official acts of divination and augury, soldiers would have wanted to know their personal fate. When they would return home? Would they die in an impending battle? What had happened to the family that they left at home?

and questioning the right they had to interfere with constitutional matters (Cic. Nat. D. 2.11; Cic. Div. 1.33).

²⁶¹ For wariness about itinerant *haruspices* and *augures*, see Columella, *Rust.* 1.8.6.1, 11.1.22.6. North (2000), 92-107 provides vital background information on the historical *realia* that underlies Cato's concerns about such figures.

²⁶² Wardle (2014), 248-9 discusses the cultural context of the event, arguing that it was a political maneuver attempting to curb the use of prophecy for political (cf. Santangelo (2013), 149-173).

Indeed, our sources demonstrate how important prophecy and divination were in affirming and ensuring the morale of the army. Plutarch relates an anecdote about the influence that two vultures had on troops in Marius' army (Plut. *Mar.* 17.3). The two vultures always appeared to fly over the armies before they were victorious in battle and often traveled with them during their campaigns. As a result, whenever the birds appeared, the soldiers came to believe that success was ahead of them. Similarly, negative signs could be demoralizing for the army; Polyaeus recounts two incidents in which the army was so adversely affected by bad portents that Caesar had to resort to humor to help the troops to feel better (Polyaeus, *Strat.* 8.23.32-3). So influential were signs and portents among the soldiers that generals often made a claim to some sort of special religious knowledge in order to ensure their obedience. Scipio Africanus made his close contact with the divine part of his public persona. Livy reports that by acting as if he was influenced by dreams or divine portents, the great general was able to execute his plans without delay (Livy. 26.19.4: *ut imperia consiliaque... sine cunctatione exsequerentur*). Polybius records a specific example of this tendency during the siege of New Carthage in 209, when Scipio, in order to convince his soldiers of the feasibility of his plan, told the troops that Neptune had unveiled the plan of attack to him in a dream (Plb. 10.11.7-9).²⁶³ Similarly, Sertorius, while campaigning in Spain, trained a white fawn to accompany him on walks and enjoy the "crowdedness and uproar of the camp" (ὄχλου τε καὶ θορύβου παντὸς ἀνέχεσθαι στρατιωτικοῦ) in order to convince his soldiers

²⁶³ Walbank (1967), 2.213 argues that these stories are part of the early development of a "Scipionic legend" that predates Polybius (cf. Walbank (1967), 2.198-9 for a full argument in favor of the existence of the "Scipionic legend" prior to Polybius).

that the deer had been given to him by Diana and provided him with a direct line of communication with the goddess.

The direct evidence about the presence of freelance religious experts in the Roman army during the Republican period relates primarily to those who interacted with Roman generals.²⁶⁴ Marius was accompanied on campaign by a Syrian priestess named Martha who was renowned for ability to predict gladiatorial combat (Plut. *Mar.* 17.1-3). She was carried in a litter and attended sacrifices dressed in fine regalia. On one occasion, Marius made recourse to her expertise to explain to his troops why they had not engaged in battle on the previous day, leading Plutarch to speculate as to Marius' belief in her oracular abilities (Plut. *Mar.* 17.3). Apparently, a *haruspex* by the name of Gaius Postumius, successfully persuaded Sulla to carry the operation against the town of Nola after he saw a snake crawl out from under the altar on which he was sacrificing (Cic. *Div.* 1.72). Sulla also sought out Greek ἐρμηνεῖς, prior to embarking on his second campaign, in Italy in order to interpret the discovery of a satyr by his soldiers in a nearby grove (Plut. *Sull.* 27.1-2).

Our sources depict Caesar consulting with a number of religious experts while on campaign. Caesar appears to have traveled with a personal *haruspex* by the name of Spurinna.²⁶⁵ Prophets (μάντις) played a major role in convincing Caesar to cross over to Greece to challenge Pompey in the wake of his victory over Pompeian forces in Spain (Cass. Dio 41.39.2-4). Further, Plutarch relates an incident in which Caesar consulted a μάντις over the plans and prospects just prior to the Battle of Pharsalus (Plut. *Caes.* 43.2).

²⁶⁴ Potter (2011b), 62–4.

²⁶⁵ Santangelo (2013), 107. For Caesar and Spurinna, see Cic. *Div.* 1.119; Suet. *Iul.* 81.2; Plut. *Caes.* 63.3; Val. Max. 8.11.2.

Although Caesar ignored the warning, Cicero records that a *summus haruspex* (probably Spurinna) told him not to cross into Africa in the winter of 47 BCE (Cic. *Div.* 2.52). Even Pompey, who seems to have been markedly less interested in religious matters than Sulla or Caesar, is said to have relied heavily on divination based on entrails and portents during the Civil War in order to get a sense of the fate that awaited his troops (Cic. *Div.* 2.53). Given the consultation of prophetic figures by the troops at Numanita and the centrality of such practices in the daily life of the average Roman, it is not a stretch to argue that soldiers would have sought such personnel on their own.

Being on campaign in a distant land also brought members of the Roman army into contact with a wide range of religious specialists who had knowledge and abilities that were foreign to those practiced at Rome. This seems to have happened to Sulla during his time spent in Asia Minor and Greece in the 90s and 80s BCE. Plutarch's *Life of Sulla* makes it clear that Sulla consulted with Chaldeans and openly advertised his association with them after his campaigns in the East. While serving as a proconsul in Cilicia in 95 BCE, Plutarch says that Sulla met with a Chaldean seer in Cappadocia whose particular set of skills led him to declare that the Roman general would become the greatest man in the world (Plut. *Sull.* 5.4-6). Chaldeans appear again later in Plutarch's work and, this time, it was their sage prophecy foretelling the time of Sulla's death that caused the general to put a stop to his autobiography just two days before he passed away (Plut. *Sull.* 37.1). Nor was Sulla the first Roman commander to consult foreign religious specialists. Lutatius Cerco, the consul of 241 BCE, intended to consult the oracle of *Fortuna Primigenia* at Praeneste, but was prevented from doing so by Senate. If high-level officials such as Sulla and Cerco were openly interacting with

foreign forms of religion while on campaign, it seems reasonable to think that soldiers were doing the same. In times of such uncertainty, it is unsurprising that prophetic figures would have been appealing to soldiers and that they would have actively sought them out.²⁶⁶

Moving beyond seers and diviners and casting the net slightly wider reveals that Roman soldiers would likely have interacted with other types of religious personnel as well. In another anecdote about Sulla, a goddess “who the Romans learned to worship from the Cappadocians” allegedly visited him in a dream to encourage him to march on Rome in 88 BCE (Plut. *Sull.* 9.4). It has been postulated that not only did Sulla bring the goddess to Rome, but that he also constructed several temples to her.²⁶⁷ Whoever this goddess was and whatever role that Sulla played in bringing her to Rome, it seems reasonable to assume that he had learned of the goddess during his campaigns in Asia Minor by interacting with local religious authorities who attested to her power. A similar impulse can be seen in Sulla’s alleged initiations into the Eleusinian mysteries during his time in Athens; such a process would have required the general to come into contact with various figures involved in the institution (Plut. *Sull.* 26.1).²⁶⁸ Though it might be suggested that such practices reflect the creation of connections between Roman and local elites, evidence from the Imperial period suggests that engagement with local religions was widespread throughout the soldiery. The religious character of imperial legions was determined in large part by the practices of local inhabitants; nearly every

²⁶⁶ Stoll (2007), 464; Orlin (2010), 198–200.

²⁶⁷ Orlin (2010), 199.

²⁶⁸ Clinton (1989), 1504 has some doubt as to whether Plutarch’s account of the matter is accurate and actually refers the Eleusinian Mysteries.

legionary base contains some form of evidence for the worship of local deities. Similar evidence for the phenomenon can be found in the fact that the diffusion of local cults beyond their traditional haunts can often be traced to the movement of particular legions throughout the Mediterranean.²⁶⁹ While Imperial legions generally had more time to engage with local religious practices, there is evidence that troops even in temporary garrisons set up dedications to local deities in order to seek their protection.²⁷⁰ Roman soldiers were willing to seek out whatever god might potentially offer them assurances about their safety.

Social Nodes and Roman Military Communities

In surveying the evidence for the interactions of Roman soldiers with non-military personnel, it emerges that members of Roman military communities during the Republic interacted and developed relationship with a wide range of non-combatants. Slaves, merchants, women and non-Roman religious figures all played vital roles in the lives of members of military communities. This, however, by no means, defines the full extent of the interactions that Roman soldiers could have while on campaign. The non-combatants that were in and around the Roman camp possessed a variety of social ties that connected Roman military communities to an even wider range of local inhabitants. To borrow a term from social network theory, non-combatants were “nodes” that linked Roman military communities to various individuals, families and local populations.²⁷¹

²⁶⁹ Stoll (2007), 464-470.

²⁷⁰ Stoll (2007), 466. Cf. also *AE* (1958), 259.

²⁷¹ The idea of social network theory finds its origin in Granovetter (1973), 1360–1380.

By looking at the social ties fostered by women who interacted with Roman soldiers as a case study for this phenomenon, the wide range of connections that military communities possessed becomes clear. Let us return to Scipio Africanus' dealings with the women being held in the Roman camps mentioned above. In the first of the two incidents discussed by our sources, the central character, who is unnamed, is defined explicitly by her relationships with powerful men in the Spanish community. She is the wife of Mandonius and the sister-in-law of the Illergetan chieftain, Indibilis. Her fellow female hostages are similarly categorized; Livy mentions that the daughters of Indibilis and "others of similar nobility" (*aliaeque nobilitate pari*) stood beside her (Liv. 26.49.12). While our sources depict Scipio's efforts to protect them as evidence of his moral fiber, the purpose was also pragmatic (Plb. 10.18.7, 12-14; Liv. 26.49.11-13).²⁷² By taking these women hostage, Scipio necessitated an interaction with the Spanish elite and by keeping them safe, he ensured that this interaction would be on good terms.

This subtext is made explicit in the story which follows immediately after in Livy's narrative. The central female figure is not a hostage, but a captive. She is of particular interest for Scipio due to her social ties, as she was the fiancé of a young Celtiberian noble, Aluccius. Scipio uses her capture as an opportunity to strike up a relationship with Aluccius, returning his future wife to him on the condition that he be a friend of Rome (Liv. 26.50.3-8). Scipio's treatment of the girl brings about further interaction with the Spanish nobility; the maiden's parents and relatives (*cognati*) are

²⁷² Badian (1958), 117-8 argues that relationships such as these were an essential way in which Rome imposed its dominance over the Mediterranean in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE. Riaza (2015), 132-4 reads the episode as a historiographic construction of Scipionic morality (cf. Torregaray Pagola (1998) on this phenomenon more broadly) and does not believe that these relationships were important in forming hegemony over Spain.

summoned to the camp and offer a large ransom of gold in return for their daughter's freedom (Liv. 26.50.9-10; Val. Max. 4.3.1; Frontin. 2.11.5; Gell. 7.8; Polyæn. 8.16.6; Cass. Dio. Fr. 57.42). The captive maiden, just as our hostages in the story before, helps to connect the great Roman general to powerful local aristocrats.

The connections that Scipio made with the family members of his female prisoners should not be viewed as unique. These episodes should be thought of as higher stakes versions of interactions that happened all the time. Families of lower-status women probably also attempted to ransom their daughters, sisters and wives. While they might not have been able to offer significant political or monetary recompense; it is reasonable to think that they too would have tried to negotiate with Roman soldiers in order to ensure that their loved ones were well-looked after. Such interactions would have created new connections between the Roman soldiery and the local community more broadly.

Similar relationships would have been fostered by the women who married Roman soldiers. By marrying local women, Roman soldiers became sons- and brothers-in-law of local inhabitants, thereby, enjoining themselves to a new family. It is not difficult to imagine that even more relationships between Roman soldiers and local communities would have sprung up from these associations: "married" soldiers may well have introduced their *commilites* to their new family members of marriageable age. In the ancient Mediterranean, women were, first and foremost, defined primarily through their familial relations; they were mothers, sisters and wives. Interacting with women naturally brought Roman military communities into contact with their families.

The social networks to which women connected Roman soldiers, however, went far beyond their immediate families. Prostitutes, as has been shown by Rauh, Dillon and

McClain, were a lynchpin of the “leisure culture” of the ancient Mediterranean world. Though our sources often paint brothels and taverns that housed prostitutes as the haunts of the dregs of society, people from all social strata associated themselves with such establishments.²⁷³ Local aristocrats not only frequented brothels and taverns, but they often owned these properties.²⁷⁴ Further, if the city of Rome during the late Republican period provides any indication of a general Mediterranean phenomenon, aristocrats also saw these locales as an opportunity for creating connections with a different kind of support base.²⁷⁵ Wealthy foreign merchants are also described as having such a penchant for frequenting *tabernae* and *popinae* that prostitutes commissioned slaves to the docks for the purpose of recruiting all interested parties.²⁷⁶ Taverns and brothels were social melting pots where rich and poor alike congregated for sexual pleasure. By merely seeking to fulfill their sexual desires, Roman soldiers would have come into contact with a diverse array of local inhabitants and created new social connections.²⁷⁷

But beyond being an attraction that brought a wide range of people together in a single place, prostitutes also played a more active role in forming connections in the ancient Mediterranean. This was driven by the diverse clientele kept by prostitutes, which enabled them to enforce what Rauh, Dillon and McClain term a “semblance of equality

²⁷³ On the varied clientele of brothels, see Plaut. *Poen.* 829-832, *Pseudol.* 170-227; Juv. 8.171-8 (cf. Rauh, Dillon, and McClain (2008), 221-231).

²⁷⁴ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.24.4; Varro *Rust.* 1.23.23; Ulp. *Dig.* 5.3.27.1 (cf. Rawson (1976), 97-107; D’Arms (1981), 66; Rauh, Dillon, and McClain (2008), 231). These establishments were so lucrative that, under the Empire, the Roman state taxed them heavily (cf. McGinn (1989), 79-110).

²⁷⁵ For instance, Sall. *Hist.* 3.63, *Cat.* 13, 24; Cic. *Mil.* 55 (cf. Rauh, Dillon, and McClain (2008), 231-2; Rauh (2011), 198-201).

²⁷⁶ Plautus, *Poen.* 649-683; Ath. 13.580-584; Str. 8.6.20, 12.3.36.

²⁷⁷ In the chapter that follows, the ways in which these connections may have been useful in the collective action undertaken by Roman soldiers against their own commanders will be examined.

on their followings.”²⁷⁸ The rules of the famed 4th-century Athenian prostitute, Gnathaena, embody this phenomenon. According to Athenaeus, her brothel was open to all who could afford payment and followed the *nomos sussitikos*, a law that allegedly was “equal and same for all.”²⁷⁹ Such a policy created competition between suitors, regardless of social status, for the time and affection of the same woman. Because they were in such high demand, prostitutes gained power. One of the ways that this power manifested itself was the ability of prostitutes to use their client list to make connections and deals. In Rome, a *meretrix* by the name of Praecia used her encounters with clients to make political deals for her friends (Plut. *Luc.* 6.2-4). Apparently, her influence was so great that Lucullus allegedly obtained his command against Mithridates by bribing her (Plut. *Luc.* 6.2). While women as powerful as Praecia and Gnathaena were the exception rather than the rule, the stories told about their ability to influence clients demonstrate how prostitutes could use their clientele to create connections between the various individuals who sought their services.

The interactions with local merchants and religious personnel would have created a similarly broad set of connections. Merchants, due to the nature of their work, would have been connected to a wide range of people both locally and internationally. The wide-ranging connections of merchants are illustrated clearly by an episode from Sallust’s *Bellum Iugurthinum* which mentions how the traders serving in Africa during

²⁷⁸ Rauh, Dillon, and McClain (2008), 236–7. For example, the client list of the fourth-century BCE Athenian prostitute, Gnathaena, not only included the playwright, Diphilus, the comic actor, Andronicus and several wealthy merchants but also a wide-range of low-status individuals including a butcher’s apprentice, criminals and runaway slaves (e.g. Ath. 13.579-585a).

²⁷⁹ It appears that her contemporaries, Lais, Pythionike and Leme enforced this same set of rules (cf. Ath. 13.588-9, 595-6). There is also evidence that Roman prostitutes used similar guidelines (cf. Plut. *Ant.* 9; Philostr. *Epist.* 38).

the Jugurthine War were able to reach out to their friends at Rome in order to ensure that their economic interests were protected in the upcoming consular election (Sall. *BJ* 65.4-5). Similarly, scholars have shown that important religious figures and the places in which they operated (e.g. temples, religious sanctuaries, etc.) encouraged community gatherings and fostered the formation of a group identity among worshippers.²⁸⁰

Interactions with these figures would have no doubt brought Roman soldiers into contact with local populations. In short, what emerges is that Roman military communities were likely involved in an even wider range of interactions with local inhabitants than the evidence suggests.

Conclusion

In 206 BCE, Scipio Africanus returned to Rome to celebrate a glorious triumph for his victories over the Carthaginians in Spain. However, before leaving the Iberian Peninsula, he settled a number of his injured and wounded soldiers in a town which he named Italica (App. *Iber.* 38). Scipio's decision to create a settlement for his veterans set a precedent for generals who campaigned in Spain over the next century. The town of Cordoba was settled with Roman soldiers and Spanish auxiliary forces by Marcus Claudius Marcellus at some point during the middle of the second century BCE (Strab. 3.2.1); Valentia was founded as a military settlement by Decimus Iunius Brutus in 138 for soldiers who fought in the war against Viriathus (Liv. *Per.* 55) and, in 122, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Baliarcus relocated 3,000 "Romans in Spain" to take residence in the newly established towns of Palma and Pollentia in Majorca (Strab. 3.5.1).²⁸¹ Our sources

²⁸⁰ de Polignac (2009), 429–442.

²⁸¹ Knapp (1983), 9-10 argues for a foundation date of 169/8 BCE.

also record the foundations of several other cities in Spain by Roman commanders during the second century BCE: Sempronius Gracchus set up Gracchuris on the upper Ebro and, possibly, Illurgiti near the upper Guadalquivir in the early 170s. While the identity of the people who was settled in these new cities is not explicitly stated, it seems likely that Roman soldiers were among them.²⁸²

It is interesting to note that archaeological evidence from these settlements suggest that these were not new foundations but were rather expansions of preexisting cities and towns.²⁸³ Roman soldiers were expected to fit in and interact with local inhabitants. These realities are best understood within the context of the interactions between Roman armies and various non-military personnel throughout the chapter. That many soldiers were willing to remain in Spain and become part of preexisting Spanish community rather than returning home reveals a substantial level of attachment to the region.²⁸⁴ Indeed, the close ties that soldiers had developed with local inhabitants – in particular those of “marriage” and kinship – played a major role in making Roman troops amenable to this reality.

The situation in Spain in the second century BCE is not so different from the provinces of the Imperial period.²⁸⁵ Tacitus, in Book 2 of the *Histories*, writes that both

²⁸² Harris (1989), 128.

²⁸³ Knapp 1983, (1–8); Keay (2003), 157–162.

²⁸⁴ Richardson (1986), 151; Tweedie (2011), 470.

²⁸⁵ It should be noted that this practice did not only happen in Spain. In 121, after the wars with the various Gallic tribes were brought to a conclusion, Sextus Calvinus founded the town of Aquae Sextiae and, three years later, a foundation of a colony for veterans at Narbo Martius (cf. Wilson (1966), 65; Mullen (2013), 41–3). This also happened in the East. Cicero says that when he arrived in Cilicia, he was greeted by Roman soldiers. These are likely the veterans of Pompey’s campaign against Mithridates who had settled in the region (cf. Cic. *ad Att.* 5.18; Wilson (1966), 137).

the provincials and the soldiers based in Syria were sad about Vitellius' decision to move the army to Germany because they had gotten used to living with one another (Tac. *Hist.* 2.80: *quippe et provinciales sueto militum contubernio gaudebant*). The close contact had resulted in ties of friendship and marriage between the local inhabitants and soldiers (*plerique necessitudinibus et propinquitatibus mixti*). Due to the length of their stay in the region, the soldiers had supposedly grown to love the military camps as if it was their own home (*militibus vetustate stipendiorum nota et familiaria castra in modum penatium diligebantur*).²⁸⁶ Tacitus' claim about the ties of soldiers to local inhabitants and their affection for their assigned province is reinforced by the fact that many veterans of the Imperial army were settled in the places in which they served. Given the continuity that existed in the army's relationship to its environs in both the Republican and Imperial periods, it is perhaps no surprise that the story of Scipio Aemilianus at Numantia was popular for such a long time. Scipio was such an enduring *exemplum* for generals precisely because he provided a blueprint for dealing with this more human side of the Roman army, a human side that wanted to build a home away from home, a human side that sought out social interaction to satisfy both their emotional, spiritual and physical needs.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Note again the construction of the *castra* as home for Roman soldiers in this passage and mention of the *penates* as central to that construction of home. Indeed, the parallel is also made at Tac. *Hist.* 3.84.2: *proprium esse militis decus in castris: illam patriam, illos penates* (cf. Ash (2007), 314).

²⁸⁷ Allison (2013), 13-4.

CHAPTER 3: MILITARY COMMUNITIES AND COLLECTIVE ACTION ON CAMPAIGN

Introduction

The last two chapters have discussed the ways in which the institutions and realities of military service created a variety of communities among the soldiers serving in the Roman army. The next two chapters will demonstrate that these communities functioned as active agents, focusing on how soldiers acted collectively beyond the battlefield in order to protect their own interests.

The current chapter examines collective behavior among military communities while on campaign. It shows that the Roman military communities, beginning in the third century BCE, frequently engaged in collective action to protect group interests. Further, the chapter charts how the various forms and functions of collective action changed over time and how these changes were driven by broader historical events and social developments. It highlights, in particular, how the growth of popular power and the increasing resistance to Roman rule influenced similar behavior within the Roman army.

From Community to Collective Action

There were several factors that empowered Roman military communities to act collectively. First, the fact that Roman soldiers in the Republican period possessed a sense of communal identity made them more likely to engage in collective action. Social psychologists have shown that when individuals identify as part of a group, they “generally strive for and benefit from positive social identities associated with their

membership groups.”²⁸⁸ In the case where it is not easy for an individual to dissociate from a group in a time of hardship for the entity, collective action becomes one of the most important means by which its members can regain positive social distinction.²⁸⁹

Having a shared identity, however, does not necessarily mean that a group *will* engage in collective action. The claim of social psychologists is that a sense of shared identity makes it *more likely* for individuals to engage in collective action. Culturally ingrained attitudes about collective action and its ability to create meaningful results can serve as limitations or incitements to collective action for communities with a shared sense of identity. In the case of the Roman army, soldiers were encouraged to act collectively and empowered to make their own decisions on the battlefield. For Polybius, the strength of the manipular system used by Roman armies in the third and second BCE was its ability to fight multiple smaller battles at the same time (Plb. 18.28-32). This required individual units and their leaders to make real-time decisions without the sanction of a commander.²⁹⁰ For example, during a battle in Campanian, a Paelignian cohort shouted down the consul’s call to retreat from battle and, instead, surged forward

²⁸⁸ van Zomeren (2008), 507. For much of the twentieth century, it was believed that shared feelings of injustice and a belief in the potential efficacy of group resistance drove collective action. However, psychologists have noted that many groups who believed that they were wronged and had the capability of successfully organizing themselves for collective action did not do so, new theories were needed to explain the basis of collective action. The most influential of these theories was Social Identity Theory (SIT), developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), 33-47, which argues that people act collectively to improve the social standing of the identity groups to which they belong.

²⁸⁹ It is worth noting that Tajfel and Turner saw conflict as a means for strengthening this sense of collective identity. In fact, Tajfel notes that soldiers are perhaps the example *par excellence* of a group that creates a social identity with war serving as a form of collective action in which two identity groups attempt to attain positive social conflict with one another.

²⁹⁰ Isaac (1995), 23–31; Sabin (2000), 15–6 argue for the importance of non-elite initiative and organization within Roman battles.

and captured the Carthaginian camp (Liv. 25.14.3-10). Insubordination notwithstanding, the troops were richly rewarded for taking the enemy camp (Liv. 25.14.13).

The agency given to bands of Roman soldiers on the battlefield would have positioned them to act similarly in a non-military context. Further, the positive encouragement and reinforcement associated with collective initiative may well have conditioned soldiers to consider taking collective action for their own interests as socially acceptable.

Collective Action in the Middle Republic

Our sources demonstrate that military communities frequently engaged in collective action during the Middle Republican period. There is a long record of Roman armies taking part in acts of insubordination and delinquency in order to protect their own interests.²⁹¹ Despite the prevalence of such actions in the record, the topic has attracted little attention from scholars. This is due in large part to the way that the sources present these incidents; they are usually mentioned in passing in the narratives of major historians or are offered anecdotally in works of epitomators such as Valerius Maximus and Frontinus. Rarely is there sustained discussion of the behavior of a particular military community. In the uncommon event where such an incident is narrated in detail, the point of the discussion is usually to praise a Roman commander for his successful handling of

²⁹¹ Mutiny: Scipio at Sucro (Plb. 11.25-30; Liv. 28.24-9); Tappulus' troops in Macedonia in 199 (Liv. 32.3.3-7); 600 equites fighting under Caepio in Spain in 139 (Dio, fr. 78); threat of mutiny: Flaccus' troops in Spain in 181/0 (Liv. 40.35.4-36.11); desertion: 900 deserters fighting for the Carthaginians during the Third Punic War (App. *Pun.* 130-1), deserters recovered by Quintus Pompeius at Numantia (App. *Iber.* 79) and Decimus Iunius Brutus at Talabriga (App. *Iber.* 73); looting of cities: the sack of Phocaea in 190 (Liv. 37.32.10-3), ravaging of Histria by troops under the ex-consuls, Marcus Iunius and Aulus Manlius, instead of commencing campaigns under the proconsul, Gaius Claudius (Liv. 41.10-1).

the matter.²⁹² This is not surprising – all of the sources that detail Middle Republican history seek to glorify the armies and commander of the period as *exempla* of Roman devotion to order and military discipline in order to explain the success of the Roman army during this period. Beyond the issue of the interests and aims of the authors who chronicle the period, there is also the problem that our sources are lacunose. Aside from Livy's detailed account of the period from the beginning of Second Punic War to the end of the Third Macedonian, there is no running narrative for any other part of the Middle Republic. Fragments of Polybius, the *Periochae* and the motley assortment of references in Cicero and other authors hardly provide a full picture of the era.

The sections that follow attempt to bring the collective behavior of the Roman military communities of the Middle Republic into greater focus. The different factors that incited military communities to collective action during this period are examined, as are the variety of ways in which military communities could come together to protect their own interests.

Crisis Reorganization

The potential of Roman military communities for collective action during the Middle Republican period is best demonstrated by the ability of armies to reorganize in the absence of some form of authority in crisis situations. In their flight after the Battle of Cannae, the survivors, the so-called *legiones Cannenses*, were left without a commander (*multitudine semiermis sine ducibus*) and had been separated into two groups (Liv.

²⁹² For example, Scipio Africanus' quelling of the mutiny at Sucro in 206 in Polybius and Livy (see below for citations) and the various discussions of Scipio Aemilianus' handling of unruly troops in Numantia in 134 (see Chapter 2, pp. 77-9 for full discussion). In the Imperial period, Tacitus makes use of this feature of mutiny narratives to compare Drusus and Germanicus in Book 1 of the *Annales*.

22.50.1-4). Amidst the chaos, the impulse of the soldiers was to organize and work as a unit to ensure their collective safety. According to Livy, the night after the defeat, the larger contingent of the two groups commissioned messengers to travel to the other camp and proposed that they join forces (Liv. 22.50.4). The proposal resulted in significant debate among the soldiers at the smaller camp, but they ultimately agreed to join with the larger force (Liv. 22.50.5-6). Once the troops had come together, the group as a whole worked to determine the path forward. In the absence of any senior institutional leadership, the soldiers organized an election and voted to determine which of the four surviving military tribunes would be their leader. Livy reports that it was unanimously decided (*omnium consensu*) that the young Scipio Africanus and Appius Claudius were chosen to be the leaders of the army (Liv. 22.53.1-3).²⁹³ If this aspect of this story is to be believed, the overwhelming consensus of the soldiers in choosing their leaders is indicative of the extent to which the community functioned as a unit.

Two other incidents from the Second Punic War show military communities without a commander taking similar collective initiative. In 211, after the death of both Roman generals in Spain, the legions fighting in the region were left in a difficult situation. As at Cannae, the forces again came together in one camp and held an election to replace their fallen leaders (Liv. 25.37.3-4). According to Livy, the election was in no way a sham process, but one in which every soldier participated. The troops rotated sentinel and guard duty throughout the day to ensure that every soldier had the

²⁹³ Ridley (1975), 161–5 finds Scipio’s relationship with the battle of Cannae to be highly suspicious, pointing to his thwarting of the plot of L. Caecilius Metellus to abandon Rome after Cannae (cf. Liv. 22.50-53; Val. Max. 5.6.7, Sil. *Pun.* 10.481ff.) as an attempt to gloss over his involvement with the disaster. Regardless of whether Scipio was present, the ability of *legiones Cannenses* to rally together and to organize still holds.

opportunity to vote (Livy 25.37.5-6: *ut castris citra Hiberum communitis cum ducem exercitus comitiis militaribus creari placuisset, subeuntes alii aliis in custodiam ualli stationesque, donec per omnes suffragium*). The results of the election are striking; the soldiers were again unanimous (*cuncti*) in their decision to elect C. Marcius, an equestrian who had rallied fugitive soldiers after Gn. Cornelius Scipio's death in battle, over the various tribunes and legates serving the army.²⁹⁴ Marcius continued to lead the army until Scipio Africanus was commissioned to take over the command in Spain.

In 206, a different set of circumstances left another set of soldiers in Spain without a commander. This time, the troops who were garrisoned at Sucro had mutinied against Scipio (see below). After they had expelled the seven military tribunes who had been in charge of the garrison, the soldiers set about to organize. Again, the mode of self-organization was an election. They chose two common soldiers (*gregarios milites*), Gaius Albius, a man from Cales, and Gaius Atrius, an Umbrian, to serve as their commanders (Liv. 28.24.13).²⁹⁵ Again, they were elected with unanimous approval and Livy uses the same phrase to describe the consensus of the soldiers (*omnium consensu*) as he does in his description of Scipio's election by the *legiones Cannenses*. Appian claims that the organizational efforts of the soldiers did not stop with electing their commanders. They

²⁹⁴ Lushkov 2015, 123–4 shows that the focus of Livy's account on the singularity of Marcius and his representation as an *unus vir* (in the mode of Camillus) destined to save the state draws attention to the collective action undertaken by the troops. Jaeger (1997), 107-131 and Cornell (2013), 3.211-2 stress how Livy emphasizes the truthfulness of his account by citing several second century authorities on the matter including Piso and Acilius.

²⁹⁵ Scullard (1930), 148 n.1 and Salmon (1986), 81–2 note the questionable historicity of the names of Albius (Mr. White) and Atrius (Mr. Black), in spite of the fact that both names are attested in the Republic, though Walbank (1967), 2.308-9 maintains its plausibility. According to Livy and Polybius, there were thirty-five ring-leaders who were executed by Scipio, but nothing is known about their roles in the affair. It is worth noting that thirty-five would indicate five representatives for each military tribune that had been at Sucro.

also elected centurions, set all their affairs in order and promised to abide by the traditional rules of military discipline (App. *Iber.* 34: δ' ἀπὸ σφῶν ἐλόμενοι καὶ ταξιάρχους, καὶ τᾷλλα διακοσμηθέντες, ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν ἐτάσσοντο). They affirmed all these measures by a collective gesture. Instead of swearing an oath to a commander imbued with *imperium*, the soldiers swore an oath with one another (App. *Iber.* 34: συνώμνυον ἀλλήλοις).²⁹⁶

The ability of Roman military communities to regroup in the absence of a commander demonstrates the capacity of these units for collective action. In these crisis situations, military communities stuck together and organized themselves to maintain some semblance of normalcy. In the process of reorganization, these communities were able to build consensus without difficulty. The formation of consensus was not due to previous instantiated power structures; rather, the people who were granted power in these instances of collective organization were by no means typical leaders of Roman troops. In the cases of the troops in Spain and the mutineers at Sucro, an *eques* and two Italians were chosen to serve as commanders. These three episodes provide a picture of a Roman soldiery that was more than capable of acting collectively for its own interests.

Release from Service

As discussed in Chapter 1, the nature of military service changed drastically over the course of the third century BCE; soldiers began to spend longer periods of time further away from home on military campaigns. The extension of campaigns, both

²⁹⁶ It is interesting to note that the mutineers resorted to typical Roman structures, hierarchies and traditions in their efforts to organize. Livy says that not only were Albius and Atrius granted the traditional powers of a Roman general, *imperium* and *auspicium*, but also its trappings (Liv. 28.27.4-5). They lived in the *praetorium*, sat on the general's tribunal and were attended by lictors armed with the *fascēs* and axes (Plb. 11.29.6; Liv. 28.27.15-6).

geographically and chronologically, created additional burdens for Roman soldiers, which appears to have generated pushback from troops who found the conditions of their service too oppressive. For example, in 199 BCE, a mutiny (*atrox seditio*) broke out in the camp of the consul, P. Vilius Tappulus. According to Livy, the instigators of the sedition were 2,000 "volunteers" from Sicily who had previously taken part in Scipio's African campaign (Liv. 32.2.3). The reason for the dissatisfaction of these soldiers was the amount of time that they had spent on campaign. Livy says that "they had not seen Italy for many years and had grown old while fighting in Sicily, Africa and Macedonia" (Liv. 32.3.5: *multis annis sese Italiam non uidisse; consenuisse sub armis in Sicilia, Africa, Macedonia*). Though Livy does not provide much information about the mutiny, he does mention that Tappulus found the complaints of the troops to be reasonable but not their behavior in making their demands manifest (Liv. 32.3.6). Tappulus promised to refer the matter to the Senate if the mutinous soldiers peaceably returned to their regular duties (Liv. 32.3.7). We, however never hear if the soldiers ultimately received the discharge they desired from the Senate.

While Livy never explicitly identifies the mutinous soldiers beyond their shared service, the description of their terms of service has led many scholars to conjecture that the mutinous soldiers had previously served in the *legiones Cannenses*.²⁹⁷ Whether these soldiers had previously served in *legiones Cannenses* or not, the significance is the same. The incident reveals the sense of identity that had developed among the troops who

²⁹⁷ Briscoe (1973), 172–3; Chrissanthos (1999), 25–6. This conjecture seems reasonable, but it is troubling, given the emphasis that Livy places on the *legiones Cannenses*, that he does not explicitly make note of their presence. Livy's oversight on this point might be explained by conjecturing that he may have been consulting a source for the Second Macedonian that did not mention the identity of these legions. Briscoe has argued that Polybius is most probably the source for this scene and given his lack of interest in the *legiones Cannenses*, it would make sense that he does not make mention of them.

served together remained strong even after the forces were disbanded. The soldiers who had fought as a unit in Sicily and Africa and were now part of Tappulus' army were able to organize and work towards a common goal. Further, the episode demonstrates that it was not just entire legions or whole armies that had the ability to act collectively; smaller communities within Roman armies could work together to protect their interests.

The action taken by the troops in Tappulus' army who wanted release from military service was not unique. In the winter of 181/0 BCE, two legions in Spain pushed back against the terms of the service imposed upon them by the Senate. The soldiers no longer wanted to serve in the region and wished to return to Italy. The troops made public their frustrations about the conditions of their service:

“If it must be conjectured what they thought from what they discussed with each other and what they made clear by shouts at praetorian *contiones*, [he said that] they had said openly that either they would keep the general in the province or they would go into Italy with him.”

Si ex eo quod aut inter se loquantur aut succlaminationibus apud contionantem imperatorem significant, quid sentiant, coniectandum sit, palam vociferatos esse aut imperatorem in provincia retenturos aut cum eo in Italiam venturos esse. (Liv. 40.36.5)

The troops in Spain voiced their concerns to their commander, Quintus Fulvius Flaccus, in a collective manner (*succlaminationibus*) in a public setting (*apud contionantem imperatorem*).²⁹⁸ The nature of the action – thousands of troops, potentially armed, assembled in one place loudly threatening the commander– was meant to intimidate and

²⁹⁸ A similar example of this sort of intimidatory behavior can be found among soldiers during the mutiny at Sucro. Livy says that as Scipio approached the tribunal to address his mutinous soldiers, the troops gathered together with the hopes of striking fear into the heart of the general by their shouting (Liv. 28.26.12: *ferociter in forum ad tribunal imperatoris ut ultro territuri succlaminationibus concurrunt*). Their ploy, however, failed when Scipio revealed that he was not facing the mutinous soldiers alone, but rather had the support of his loyal army (Liv. 28.26.13-15). As Briscoe (2012), 499 points out the word is used primarily in the context of military engagements.

strike fear into the heart of commander and served as a reminder of the power of the soldiery as a collective.²⁹⁹

The tactic used by the soldiers in Spain was a form of collective vocalization, often referred to by scholars under the misleading moniker of acclamation.³⁰⁰ Collective vocalization, i.e. shouting or chanting with the purpose of making a request or expressing consent or disapproval, was an important mechanism of popular power in the Roman world. Unpopular politicians were jeered at various public spectacles; members of popular assemblies shouted in unison to indicate their assent on legislative matters and emperors were granted honors by the chants of their subjects.³⁰¹ Soldiers of the Middle Republic would have been aware of the power implicit in collective vocalization. During this period, troops began to use collective vocalization to confer the honorific title of *imperator* on victorious commanders such as Scipio Africanus, Aemilius Paullus (three times) and Lucius Mummius.³⁰²

As a result of the soldiers' behavior, Flaccus sent three representatives to the Senate to request that the army be discharged and allowed to return to Rome with their victorious general (Liv. 40.35.3-6).³⁰³ Flaccus' legates noted that the release of the army

²⁹⁹ Briscoe (2012), 498-500 offers no comment on the collective action taken by the soldiers and primarily views the scene as a negotiation between representatives.

³⁰⁰ Roueché (1984), 181.

³⁰¹ It should be noted that not all collective vocalizations should be viewed as having similar levels of effectiveness. The politically-charged chants of a crowd at gladiatorial combats or chariot races may have been menacing, but there was no clear target as in certain other situations.

³⁰² Combès (1966), 51–75 discusses the circumstances and nature of the conference of the honorific title of *imperator* on these occasions, locating the initiative in these instances squarely on the soldiers. It is tempting to suggest that the practice developed or, at least, was related to the acclamatory nature of the triumphal rituals in which chants of *Io, Triumphe* heralded the approach of the victorious general (cf. Beard (2009), 243–4).

³⁰³ Develin (1985), 434–5 and Hickson-Hahn (2004), 44-6 have suggested that the threat of mutiny was merely posturing by Flaccus' representatives to secure him a triumph. It is important to recall, however,

from service was an inevitability (Liv. 40.35.6: *quod fieri, praeterquam quod ita deberet, etiam prope necessarium esse*). The soldiers were resolute in their belief (*obstinosos esse milites*) that they were not going to serve in the province any longer.³⁰⁴ In the case that the soldiers were not discharged formally, they would leave without senatorial sanction (*iniussuque abitura inde essent*) and, if they were coerced to stay, they would break out into mutiny (Liv. 40.35.7). There was nothing that Flaccus or the Senate could do to change the minds of the soldiers; they could only officially sanction what the troops had already decided to do.

Flaccus' army proved somewhat successful in their attempt to achieve release from the terms of military service. The Senate decided that a full legion with a small *supplementum* would be sent with Sempronius to allow for the discharge of all soldiers whose service in Spain had started before 186 BCE (40.36.1-4, 8-10). The Senate also added that if the new forces brought the total number of soldiers in the field to more than two legions, Flaccus was authorized to bring extra soldiers – rewarding in particular the soldiers that fought most bravely – with him to Italy (40.36.11).³⁰⁵

that there is no explicit mention of a triumph in the passage and that the debate in the Senate is focused almost solely on the soldiers in the army – the opposition, as discussed above, comes from Flaccus' successor, who would have hoped to make use of these veterans during his campaign (cf. Liv. 38.50.3, 41.28.9, 45.38.14). While it must be admitted that returning home with one's army was a mark of honor and demonstrated senatorial approval of commander's *acta*, Pittenger (2008), 93-98 has shown conclusively that *deportatio* was not a prerequisite for a triumph.

³⁰⁴ Brunt (1971), 400; Rosenstein (2004), 189. Discharging an army for success in the field, regardless of any putative length of service, was not uncommon in the Republic. Not only did it occur often when a general received a triumph, but it even happened in the most trying of times: the Senate disbanded seven victorious legions in 210 after their successes in Capua, Syracuse and Greece and both consular legions after the major victory at Metaurus in 207.

³⁰⁵ The incident may shed light on an episode from four years earlier. In 185/4, when the two praetors, C. Calpurnius Piso and L. Quinctius Crispinus, stationed in Spain sent their representatives to the Senate to request that their armies be discharged and return to Italy with them, their entreaty was protested vociferously by the praetors who were going to succeed them in their respective provinces (Liv. 39.38.4-8). After the two sides threatened the use of tribunician vetoes and the suspension of state business, the Senate intervened and decided in favor of the new praetors, allowing only troops in excess of four legions to be

When looking at these incidents, not only were the soldiers able to organize with the hope of gaining release from service, but also both commanders, Tappulus and Flaccus, were receptive to the complaints of the soldiers. They seem to have had no qualms in bringing the concerns of the troops before the Senate and advocating for a change in the terms of service for their men. The willingness of Roman commanders to publicly support the demands of their soldiers in the Senate serves as a strong testament to the real power that military communities possessed when acting collectively.

Economic Motivations

Soldiers also acted collectively to protect their economic interests. This was a response to the changing nature of warfare during the third and second centuries BCE and the newfound pressures that such activity placed on state coffers. In particular, the Senate had difficulty adequately compensating soldiers operating outside of the Italian peninsula. The letter of the brothers Scipiones to the Senate is indicative of the problems faced by Roman operatives throughout the Mediterranean during this period. In their address, the brothers informed the Senate that the legions in Spain were in desperate need of pay, food and clothing (Liv. 23.48.4).³⁰⁶ The commanders, understanding the dire straits of the state's financial situation, noted that they would find a way to obtain payment for the troops, so long as food and clothes were provided for (Liv. 23.48.5-6).³⁰⁷

dismissed from duty (39.38.9-12). Given the provision regarding the replacement of troops, one wonders what role the soldiers played in the request.

³⁰⁶ del Hoyo (2011), 387–9. Liv. 23.21.2-4 records the complaints of the *propraetors* of Sicily and Sardinia, Titus Otacilius and Aulus Cornelius Mammula, who both noted that the soldiers and the sailors serving in their forces had neither pay nor food. The Senate responded that there was nothing it could do at the moment to alleviate these problems and, instead, advised them that they should do their best to find their own provisions. Liv. 23.48.6-10 provides a detailed account of all the different factors that were draining and stressing the treasury in that same period.

³⁰⁷ The episode is interesting as the solution that the Senate arrives at for providing the necessary supplies to Roman troops is to let out private contracts to some of the wealthier members of the state (Liv. 23.48.10-

If the commander was responsible for gathering pay from various sources for his troops, payment of soldiers would often be irregular and delinquent. This reality would have been even further complicated by the fact that commanders were replaced on an annual basis during the period.

These irregularities of payment created a problem for the soldiers for whom military service represented a means towards economic improvement.³⁰⁸ Further, the uncertainties for the troops went beyond the issue of regular pay. In addition to the money that every enlisted soldier received for his service, they would have expected to be awarded a share of the army's booty and a donative from their commander at the end of the campaign.³⁰⁹ Thus, the frugality or incompetence of the commander meant that Roman soldiers were often faced with a prospect of returning home without significant financial gain. Roman soldiers combatted this uncertainty by acting collectively, often in defiance of their commander's orders, to ensure their financial well-being.

The most-well known example of Roman soldiers taking their financial interest into their hands is the mutiny at Sucro.³¹⁰ The soldiers who were garrisoned at Sucro, a

49.4). The instance is cited by some as the first appearance of *publicani* (though Livy avoids the term) in Roman history.

³⁰⁸ As exemplified by Liv. 29.27.1-4, Plaut. *Epid.* 158-60, *Bacch.* 1068-71. *SEG* 13.382 (the Roman treaty with the Aetolians from 212/1) states that in all wars in which the Romans and Aetolians fought on the same side, the Romans would carry the booty. See Harris (1979), 47-52; Gruen (2004), 30-2 for a fuller discussion of the evidence for the ways in which financial motivations drove Republican soldiers to fight in these wars.

³⁰⁹ Vogel (1948), 394-422 argues that Roman soldiers had the right not just to shared booty but plunder that they collected of their own accord (for an opposing view, see Bona (1958), 237-268). Brunt (1971), 394 and Gruen (1974), 369-70 have shown that donatives were not rare, but rather regularly given to soldiers throughout the third and second centuries BCE.

³¹⁰ The episode is recounted by Polybius 11.25-30, Livy 28.24-29, Appian and Cassius Dio in significant detail and all four authors considered the mutiny an important event in Scipio's early career. On Polybius' treatment of the scene, see Walbank (1967), 2.306-9; Williams (2001), 143-153. On the Livian treatment, see Aranita (2009), 1-19 and Levene (2010), 349-354. For its consideration more broadly in the literary

town roughly 100 miles northeast of New Carthage, had served in Spain for a long period of time and were owed arrears for their years of service (Plb. 11.28.3-6; Liv. 28.25.7-12).³¹¹ Shortly after the successful conquest of Spain in 206 BCE and amidst rumors that Scipio had fallen seriously ill, the troops decided to act. They demanded payment of arrears from the military tribunes in camp and, when no promise of payment was made, they drove the officers out of camp and they began to redress their lack of payment by plundering nearby towns (Liv. 28.24.7-8: *et noctu quidam praedatum in agrum circa pacatum ierant; postremo interdium ac propalam sine commeatu ab signis abibant*).³¹² As discussed above, they organized their own governance and prepared to provide for themselves without any relationship with Roman power structures.

The actions of the soldiers got the attention of Scipio.³¹³ Upon hearing of the mutiny, Scipio immediately worked to address the financial issues that beset the soldiers. He sent representatives who sought contribution from local communities to pay back the troops for past service (Plb. 11.25.9; Liv. 28.25.9-10, 28.34.11).³¹⁴ While Scipio did take strong punitive action against the ringleaders of the mutiny, he did not punish the soldiers as a group and paid them their arrears in full (Plb. 11.30.1-5; Liv. 28.29.12).

contexts of mutiny, see Woodman (2006), 303-329 and Fulkerson (2013), 169-175. Historical treatments of the mutiny: Salmon (1986), 77-84, Chrissanthos (1997), 177-184 and Chrissanthos (1999), 85-101.

³¹¹ Walbank (1967), 2.306-7 touches on the difficulties in ascertaining the exact location of Sucro.

³¹² Cf. Plb. 6.37, Chrissanthos (1997), 179. The punishment for leaving camp without permission was extremely harsh.

³¹³ Salmon (1986), 80; Chrissanthos (1997), 174-5.

³¹⁴ Richardson (2011), 475. In Livy's narrative, the promise of settling accounts is the ploy used by Scipio to attract the soldiers to New Carthage (Liv. 28.25.9-10).

The mutiny at Sucro was not the only time in Scipio's career where his troops defied his orders for their financial benefit.³¹⁵ In 204 BCE, during his campaign in Africa, Scipio's army besieged the town of Locha (Liv. 29.34; App. *Pun.* 15).³¹⁶ While the soldiers were in the process of scaling the walls, the Lochaianes came forward and surrendered the city. Scipio accepted their plea and ordered the soldiers to retreat. However, the troops did not obey his orders to stop the siege and continued scaling the walls. They entered the city and killed, ravaged and plundered indiscriminately, without sparing even women and children. After the looting of Locha, Scipio attempted to restore some semblance of order by executing three soldiers and confiscating the booty that the soldiers had taken.

Looting and pillaging against the will of the commander was the most common way in which soldiers acted collectively for their economic interest. In 190, during the siege of the town of Phocaea in Northern Ionia, the praetor, L. Aemilius Regillus, ordered the soldiers to spare those who had surrendered themselves (Liv. 37.32.9-10). The soldiers protested vociferously that the Phocaeans had gotten off with impunity (Liv. 37.32.11: *clamor undique est sublatus*) and proceeded to ravage the town. Aemilius was left powerless and could do nothing to stop his troops from looting and killing the city's inhabitants indiscriminately (Liv. 37.32.12-3).³¹⁷ Similar incidents of insubordination occurred in 189 during the capture of a town belonging to the Tolostobogii (Liv. 38.23.2-

³¹⁵ Ziolkowski (1993), 83-7 argues that Roman soldiers were allowed to plunder with impunity and asserts that the Roman treatment of captured cities was fully dependent on the mood of the soldiers.

³¹⁶ Chrissanthos (1999), 24-5.

³¹⁷ Briscoe (1981), 336 finds it worth noting that Livy does little to suppress the brutality of the Roman soldiers during this episode.

4) and in 146 during the sack of Carthage (App. *Pun.* 127).³¹⁸ The capture of Rhegium in 280 by the Roman soldiers garrisoned within the town provides another example of such behavior (see Introduction). As a garrison force, the troops at Rhegium had little opportunity for looting and pillaging and decided in contravention of the duty assigned to them by the Senate to enrich themselves by taking over the town.

Roman soldiers during the third and second century BCE often found themselves in a tenuous economic situation due to the nature of warfare during this period. Their pay, both formal and informal, was highly variable and dependent on the discretion of their commanders. As a result, soldiers reacted to this uncertainty by taking matters into their own hands. They had few qualms about collectively defying their officers in order to achieve their economic goals.

Social Status

In 216 BCE, the Senate decreed that the *legiones Cannenses*, the aforementioned survivors of the Battle of Cannae, were to be sent to Sicily for the remainder of the war. They were not to be discharged nor to set foot in Italy until the Carthaginian threat had been neutralized (Liv. 23.25.7). Their service in Sicily was unpaid (Liv. 23.31.1) and they were allegedly prevented from taking part in any military operation on the island (Liv. 25.5.10-7.4). To the ranks of the survivors were added the weaklings from the army of Marcus Junius Pera (Liv. 23.25.8: *militem minimi quemque roboris*). Through these measures, the Senate made it clear that they did not want the soldiers to have anything to do with the war against the Carthaginians. The survivors from Cannae, in the Senate's eyes, had deserted their fellow soldiers in their time of greatest need and, thus, had

³¹⁸ Ziolkowski (1993), 79–81.

endangered the safety of the entire Republic (Liv. 25.7.3).³¹⁹ The Senate preferred to entrust the safety of the state to slaves rather than to the soldiers of the *legiones Cannenses*.³²⁰ In a culture that valued bravery in the face of battle, the measures taken by the Senate made clear that the soldiers were second-class citizens, unworthy of serving the Republic.

Scholars have generally viewed the punishment of the *legiones Cannenses* in terms of how the Roman elite responded to crisis. The sanctions have been seen as a means by which the Senate reasserted traditional Roman values while detaching itself from the stigma of military disaster.³²¹ What is rarely discussed, however, is how the *legiones Cannenses* responded to the punishment. Two years after the Senate had imposed these sanctions on the *legiones Cannenses*, a select group of soldiers approached Lentulus, the Roman commander in Sicily at the time, for permission to speak with the consul, Marcus Claudius Marcellus, about possibly being allowed to fight in Sicily (Liv. 25.6.1). This group consisted of representatives of various communities within the *legiones Cannenses* including the foremost members of cavalry and centurions (*primores equitum centurionumque*) and the strongest of the foot-soldiers (*robora ex legionibus peditum*). The soldiers had organized themselves with the hopes of bringing an

³¹⁹ For the idea of the location of the “exile” of the *legiones Cannenses* as punishment, see Péré-Noguès (1997), 125–6.

³²⁰ On the enrollment of slaves, the so-called *volones*, cf. Liv. 22.11.7; 22.57.11; 23.14.2. Brunt (1971), 416–22 and Stewart (2012), 125–9 discuss the political and social issues related to the *volones*. On the enrollment of men who had not yet reached military age, see Liv. 25.5.5.

³²¹ The Senate praised Gaius Terentius Varro, the defeated consul, because “he had not despaired of the state” (Liv. 22.61.14: *quod de re publica non desperasset*) and, according to a story found in Valerius Maximus, may have even offered him the dictatorship (Val. Max. 3.4.4, 4.5.2; cf. Rosenstein (1990a), 103; Golden (2013), 39). Rosenstein (1990a), 92–114 has shown that this policy was commonplace in the Middle Republic: defeated commanders saw no difference in their post-defeat careers when compared with generals who had suffered no defeats in the field.

end to their social stigmatization. Lentulus granted their request and special legates were sent to Marcellus to plead their case before the consul.³²² Marcellus agreed to pass on a letter relaying their requests (*postulatis militum*) to the Senate (Liv. 25.5.10-11).

The response of the Senate was contemptuous - it remarked that there was no reason to entrust the Republic to the men who had deserted their fellow soldiers at Cannae - but ultimately gave Marcellus license to do as he saw fit with the troops (Liv. 25.7.3-4). The Senate appended three conditions to this grant of authority: 1) the soldiers were not to receive rewards for their bravery, 2) they were not to be discharged and 3) they were not allowed to set foot in Italy while the enemy remained there (Liv. 25.7.5).³²³ The *legiones Cannenses* had by acting as a collective won for themselves the right to take part in military operations. The right to serve under Marcellus was about more than just participation in the Roman war effort. It afforded the soldiers the chance to display courage and fortitude in battle, to demonstrate that they did not deserve the pariah status that had been conferred on them after the Battle of Cannae.

When Marcellus was commissioned to Sicily shortly thereafter, he employed the *legiones Cannenses* throughout his campaign to great effect. As a result of their bravery

³²² These representatives pleaded with him for the opportunity to make up for their disgrace at Cannae by fighting in the Sicilian campaign, citing the redemption achieved by the Roman forces defeated at the Allia, Caudine Forks and Heraclea as precedents (Liv. 25.6.10-20). Chaplin (2000), 90 analyzes this scene from a literary perspective and discusses the use of these three disasters as *exempla*.

³²³ Brunt (1971), 652-6 has called into question the veracity of this episode, especially the fact that the *legiones Cannenses* had been banned from taking part in military activities. He argues that the narratives of operations in Sicily found in Polybius and Livy are "unintelligible" if the *legiones Cannenses* were not allowed to take part in these campaigns. Brunt's arguments are sound but fail to consider the structuring of Livy's narrative in his Third Decade. In fact, Levene (2010), 338-9 has argued that the placement of the request of the *legiones Cannenses* to the Senate in the narrative of 212 BCE provides a perfect example of Livy's willingness to sacrifice chronological accuracy for literary purpose. Livy's point in this scene is not so much to establish a clear chronology of when the incident happened, but rather to show the repeated and continued obstinacy of the Senate towards the *legiones Cannenses* in the face of Roman difficulties with manpower.

in the war in Sicily, the *legiones Cannenses* were no longer treated as second-class soldiers. When Scipio was allotted Sicily as his consular province in 205, he was thrilled that the *legiones Cannenses* were under his command.³²⁴ The legions were not an object of contempt; rather, Scipio regarded them to be the soldiers most fit for upcoming campaign due to the variety of experiences that they had gained while fighting with Marcellus (Liv. 29.1.12-14; 29.24.10-14).³²⁵ The soldiers were no longer a danger to the Republic but a bulwark of the decisive campaign against Carthage.³²⁶ After the war, the social rehabilitation of the soldiers continued; the *legiones Cannenses* were rewarded for their exceptional service in 200/199 with grants of land in Samnium and Apulia (Liv. 31.4.2; 31.49.5-6; 32.1.6).³²⁷ The existence of a historical tradition that paired them with two of the most prolific generals of the Second Punic War (Marcellus and Scipio) gives testament to the lasting change in social perception that the efforts of the *legiones Cannenses* were able to achieve by challenging the Senate.³²⁸

³²⁴ The whole debate between Scipio and Fabius is stylized and Rodgers (1986), 335–352 and Levene (2010), 112–8 have argued that the debate between the two men is modelled on the debate over the Sicilian expedition in Book 6 of Thucydides between Nicias and Alcibiades.

³²⁵ Brunt (1971), 654–5 notes that Livy's account of Scipio's African invasion is confused both as to the number and nature of his troops and appears to conflate two different annalistic accounts on the matter, but nonetheless believes that the *legiones Cannenses* took part in the campaign.

³²⁶ The change in perception happened in spite of continued resistance from the Senate. Even though the legions were allowed to take part in Marcellus' campaign, there were restrictions on their service; they could not to receive prizes for their bravery (Liv. 25.7.4) and were forbidden from wintering in cities or building winter quarters within ten miles of a city (Liv. 26.1.10). Additionally, equestrians who served in the unit were stripped of their horses and forced to serve at least another ten years in the field (Liv. 27.11.14). The legions also continued to be repository for all the soldiers who had disgraced themselves in the eyes of the Senate (Liv. 26.1.9-10; Liv. 27.8.13).

³²⁷ Toynbee (1965), 195; Brunt (1971), 393, 400; Briscoe (1973), 62, 161, 167.

³²⁸ Péré-Noguès (1998), 231–2 follows Ridley's logic (see above) to suggest that the rehabilitation of the *legiones Cannenses* during the invasion of Africa is part of a pro-Scipionic tradition. However, the character of the *Cannenses* was on the mend before 204. The legions had already staked a claim about their role in the disaster at Cannae while Marcellus was a proconsul in Sicily (Liv. 25.5.10-7.4). Given the preeminence that Scipio would achieve during his career, there is no explanation for his presence as a military tribune at Cannae. The senators who took part in the battle suffered minimal political

While the dramatic story about the social rehabilitation of the *legiones Cannenses* is certainly exceptional, other groups within the Roman armies worked collectively to protect their social standing. This is illustrated aptly by two incidents from the period involving Roman *equites*. In 252, when Aurelius Cotta ordered the *equites* to assist in completing camp fortifications, four hundred of the cavalrymen refused to do so and officially renounced his authority (Frontin. *Str.* 4.1.22: *pars detractasset imperium*; Val. Max. 2.9.7).³²⁹ A similar event occurred in the war against the Lusitanian forces in 139 (Dio. Fr. 78; Liv. *Per. Oxy.* 54). The general, Caepio, demanded that the *equites* cross a nearby river and collect wood in the vicinity of Viriathus' army as punishment for their constant mockery and jeering of the consul (Dio. Fr. 78.1). The circumstances made the order effectively a suicide mission (Dio. Fr. 78.2). The cavalry, despite the obvious danger of the task, fulfilled their mission (with the help of the allied cavalry and some other volunteers) and used the wood that they had gathered to set fire to Caepio's tent (Dio Fr. 78.3).

In both these cases, the collective defiance of the *equites* was a response to being asked to participate in some form of manual labor. It seems likely that the reaction of the cavalrymen was driven by a shared feeling that such tasks were beneath their social standing. *Equites* enjoyed special privileges for their military service: they received three

consequences for their actions and Scipio, whose career advanced faster than other Roman senators before him, was no exception. It makes more sense to see the depiction of the *legiones Cannenses* as an attempt to rehabilitate the troops who fought in the battle – they, unlike Scipio, had suffered serious political and societal consequences for their actions during the battle.

³²⁹ Chrissanthos (1999), 23, 40. Cotta was a notorious disciplinarian (cf. Frontin. *Str.* 4.1.30, 31). The *equites* were punished for their behavior; Cotta complained about the behavior of his cavalry to the censors and had the status of the *equites* reduced (Frontin. *Str.* 4.22; Val. Max. 2.9.7). Additionally, a bill was passed by the tribunes to enforce higher standards of discipline on all soldiers (Val. Max. 2.9.7).

times the amount of food as a regular infantryman; they were allowed to bring slaves on campaign and they were generally rewarded with larger prizes for their service on the battlefield.³³⁰ Gathering of wood and similar tasks were jobs for the infantrymen and the coterie of slaves that attended the army. In fact, hard labor and demotion to the status of infantryman represented a form of punishment for the *equites* during the Republican period.³³¹ It seems that *equites*, in both of these cases, acted to protest their treatment as not befitting their social status. While such collective action should not be taken as an indication that the cavalry represented a coherent social group, it does demonstrate that years of fighting and living in close quarters fostered strong bonds among the *equites* who served together and that they had a shared understanding of the social status of *equites* within the army.³³²

The Participation of Non-Military Personnel in Collective Action

So far, this discussion of collective actions in military communities has been focused on the actions taken by soldiers within the Roman army. However, as argued in the previous chapter, the Roman military communities were not just limited in scope to soldiers – they also included a vast array of non-military personnel. While our sources are not particularly forthcoming about the role played by these non-military personnel in these incidents, there is reason to think that they played an important part in the various forms of collective action undertaken by Roman communities. Non-military personnel,

³³⁰ McCall (2002), 6–8.

³³¹ Cf. Liv. 24.18.9; Val. Max. 2.7.15b; Front. *Str.* 4.1.18, 31

³³² There is significant discussion among scholars as to the criteria for admission to the equestrian class in the Republican period and the extent to which this helped to create a coherent social class. On these debates, see Veyne (1960), 100–112; Nicolet (1966); Wiseman (1970), 67–83, Brunt (1988), 144–193.

particularly those who were local inhabitants of the regions in which the Roman army was campaigning, played an essential role in creating connections between Roman soldiers and local communities. By interacting with merchants, hostages, prophets and prostitutes and frequenting establishments like temples and brothels, people and places which might be classified as nodes of social interaction, soldiers gained access to wide social networks which were stratified both horizontally and vertically.

On several occasions, Roman soldiers engaging in collective action are alleged to have sought the help of local potentates. In our accounts about the mutiny at Sucro, soldiers interacted with non-Roman leaders to garner support for their endeavors. According to Livy and Polybius, they tried to make an alliance with the two Spanish leaders, Indibilis and Mandonius, who were attempting to break free from Roman control in the wake of Scipio's sudden illness (Plb. 11.29.3-5; Liv. 28.27.13).³³³ The accounts of Appian and Dio/Zonaras note that they were able to obtain support from the Carthaginian, Mago (App. *Iber.* 34; Zon. 9.10). A similar observation can be made about the troops who mutinied at Rhegium in 280 BCE. Several of our sources suggest a treaty was struck between the Roman soldiers at Rhegium and the Mamertines (Diod. Sic. 22.1.3; App. *Sam.* 19; Cass. Dio fr. 40.11). It is certainly not impossible that these interactions were facilitated in large part through the connections that soldiers made with non-military personnel that were in and around the camp. Indeed, several women related to Mandonius and Indibilis spent time as hostages in Roman camps after the siege of New Carthage (Plb. 10.18-19; Liv. 26.49-50; Frontin. *Str.* 2.11.5). The interactions and

³³³ Walbank (1967), 2.308 implies that the story is not too far-fetched by noting that it was natural for Indibilis and Mandonius to revolt upon hearing that Scipio had fallen ill.

connections that soldiers made with these women may have proved instrumental in gaining the support of the local Spanish leaders in their mutiny against Scipio. However, the nature of our sources do not allow for more than suggestion and speculation on the role of non-military personnel in the various forms of collective action undertaken by Roman soldiers.

Hispania Locus Seditiois Est?

In examining these incidents of collective action, it appears that a disproportionate amount of the activity occurred in Spain. In addition to the events discussed, our sources are filled with anecdotes about the “indiscipline” of Roman troops in the region. A year before the thinly-veiled threats of mutiny made by Flaccus’ soldiers in 181/0, Livy reports that military discipline had fallen by the wayside amongst soldiers in Further Spain because of *luxuria* and *otium* (Liv. 40.1.4: *luxuria et otio solutam disciplinam militarem esse*). The wars against Viriathus and the Numantines in the mid-second century BCE provide several examples of Roman soldiers collectively failing to maintain appropriate standards of discipline. In 138, the year after this episode, the troops of the consul, Decimus Junius Brutus, who otherwise was successful in the field against Viriathus, refused to obey his order to cross the River Oblivion (Liv. *Per.* 55). In that same year, Gaius Matienus was accused of deserting the Spanish army in front of the tribunes and, when found guilty, was beaten, sent under the yoke and sold into slavery for one sestercius (Liv. *Per.* 55). The publicity and brutality of this punishment indicates that the problem of desertion was likely not limited to Matienus, but rather represented a

common phenomenon among soldiers serving in Spain.³³⁴ The continuous failures in the Numantine War were blamed on the indiscipline, an argument typified by Mancinus' complaints about the worthlessness and laziness of the troops handed over to him by Pompeius (App. *Iber.* 83).

The frequency of collective action in Spain was due, at least in part, to the terms of military service in the region. As a result of the logistical difficulties of raising, providing for and transporting a new army and the strategic problems of fighting with troops who had no experience in Spain, veteran soldiers fighting in the region were rarely discharged wholesale. Rather, Roman policy favored yearly *supplementa*, which allowed for several hundred soldiers from each legion to be released from duty annually.³³⁵ Further, due to the provincial status of the two Spains, the successful conclusion of a campaign did not mark the endpoint for a soldier's service as it did in the other parts of the Mediterranean; at least two legions worth of soldiers needed to be stationed in Spain throughout the entirety of the second century – even in times of relative peace.³³⁶ Indeed, among various stories of collective action that happened in places other than Spain, it is soldiers who spent prolonged periods of time together on campaign who seem to work together to protect their own interests. For example, soldiers who took over Rhegium had served together as a garrison for the period of several years before they took action, and the members of the *legiones Cannensis* had been together for almost three years when

³³⁴ Goldberg (2016), 150–2 argues that the punishment of Matienus led to the passage of the third and final of the *leges Porciae* in 138 BCE that sought to give soldiers protection from random punishment in the field.

³³⁵ Afzelius (1944), 40–61; Smith (1958), 6; Brunt (1971), 661–2; Potter (2004), 79.

³³⁶ Brunt (1971), 433; Rich (1993), 57.

they petitioned Marcellus to be reinstated into the army. Later when the *legiones Cannensis* mutinied against Tappulus, they had spent nearly twenty years in service together. Soldiers who spent longer periods of time in service together had stronger bonds of community and were more likely to take part in various forms of collective action.

Beyond the length of service in Spain, the difficult conditions in the region may also have played a major role in inducing military communities to take part in collective action. Campaigning in Spain was viewed as being substantially worse than in other regions. Not only were soldiers fighting in both Spanish provinces enlisted for longer periods of time than those in other theaters, but they also did not have the option of taking winter furlough to break up their service as troops in regions closer to Rome such as Northern Italy did.³³⁷ Further, the type of warfare in Spain was also different than what the Romans were accustomed. Resistance to Roman rule was never organized on a trans-Iberian level, but rather persisted on a local, tribal basis in different parts of the peninsula. Because these Iberian tribes were largely pastoral and mobile, Roman forces could not adopt the traditional strategy of destroying the enemy's major centers and struggled to eradicate the resistance.³³⁸ If the casualty figures given by Livy for the battles fought in Spain in the early second century are to be believed, they indicate that these wars were fiercely contested and characterized by high mortality rates for the Roman soldiers

³³⁷ There were some troops in other theaters that served longer periods of time. For example, there were those who were enlisted at the outset of the Second Macedonian War served in Greece for six years consecutively and those enrolled at the beginning of war with Antiochus spent four years fighting throughout Greece and Asia Minor (cf. Liv. 42.34.5, for the alleged length of Spurius Ligustinus' service in Macedonia). Rosenstein (2004), 103–4 reveals that furlough is more common than previously thought. Rosenstein does note, however, that in 170/169 troops in Macedonia were given furlough (Liv. 43.11.10) as were the troops of Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus in 141 (Val. 9.3.7).

³³⁸ Harris (1989), 126.

involved.³³⁹ Additionally, while Spain was generally profitable in the first half of the second century, the wars were still less lucrative than contemporaneous campaigns in the Greek East.³⁴⁰ Not only did the soldiers potentially have a better sense of cohesion, but they had additional reason to be frustrated with their superiors and, therefore, stronger incentive to do something about it.

Collective Action in the Late Republic

The armies of the Middle Republic emerge from this analysis, not as automata programmed for the destruction of Rome's foreign enemies, but rather as powerful communities capable of challenging Roman power structures in order to protect their own interests. The same can be said of Roman military communities in the Late Republic. As scholars have shown over the last fifteen years, the armies of the Late Republican period were not pawns of powerful warlords of the era like Sulla, Marius and Caesar; they were dynamic forces that had the ability to act collectively and were willing to take on even Rome's most successful commanders.³⁴¹

In fact, there are many similarities in both the factors that drove military communities to act collectively and the strategies employed by such groups in the Middle and Late Republic. The armies of the Late Republic took their economic interests into

³³⁹ Rosenstein (2004), 112–9 offers a full discussion of the mortality rate in Roman wars during the second century BCE, arguing that the validity of annalistic evidence on the topic is questionable at best.

³⁴⁰ In 171 BCE, the Third Macedonian War apparently drew a significant amount of volunteers due to the fact they had heard stories of the great wealth acquired by soldiers who had fought in the Second Macedonian War and the war with Antiochus (Liv. 42.32.6).

³⁴¹ de Blois (2000), 11–30 and (2007), 164–179 pushes back against the idea that commanders were all-powerful and emphasizes the agency of Roman soldiers in order to show the importance of "middle-cadre" officers in the Roman army. Chrissanthos (2004), 341–369 demonstrates that Roman soldiers in the Republican army had the ability to speak freely and challenge the authority of their commanders. Keaveney (2007), 9–35, 71–92 rejects the idea of client armies (cf. Gruen (1974), 368–372) and offers a prolonged discussion of the various forms of disobedience that armies during the Late Republic engaged in.

their own hands in much the same way as their predecessors in the Middle Republic had done. They mutinied to recover back pay that was owed to them and they frequently plundered and looted against the will of their commander.³⁴² Roman military communities of the Late Republic also continued to vent their frustration with the conditions of their service. If soldiers felt as if they had served for too long a period of time, they resorted to threats of mutiny and demanded concessions from their commanders.³⁴³ Roman armies also countered commanders who tried to enforce particularly strict standards of discipline with various forms of insubordination.³⁴⁴ Finally, though the makeup of the Roman army was distinctly different in the Late Republican period, warfare was still viewed as a means towards social prestige, and Roman military communities worked to ensure that the proper social benefits were bestowed upon them.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Mutiny to acquire back pay: The legions fighting under Piso in 55 BCE had not been paid for several years and forced Piso to swear an oath promising to pay them what they were owed (Cic. *Piso* 92). When he failed to do so, the soldiers rioted at Dyrrachium. Similarly, Appius Claudius Pulcher faced a mutiny in Cilicia because he had failed to pay his troops on time (Cic. *Att.* 5.14-17, 21). Illegal raiding and plundering: The forces sent out by Lucullus in pursuit of Pontic fugitives missed a golden opportunity to capture Mithradates because they were too easily consumed by a mule's pack saddle that was filled with gold (Appian, *Mith.* 82). Similarly, in spite of Lucullus' orders to spare the city of Amisus, his army destroyed it entirely in their search for booty (Plutarch, *Luc.* 19). Plutarch also records a story about the young Pompey who was forced to forestall his operations in Africa because his troops came to believe that they had found the spot where the Carthaginians had hidden a huge treasure (Plutarch, *Pomp.* 11.3-4).

³⁴³ On two separate occasions, Caesar's troops mutinied due to the length of time that they had spent in service. In 49, Caesar's ninth legion, seeing no end in sight to the military service, mutinied at Placentia and demanded that they receive all their back pay (Suet. *Caes.* 69; App. *BCiv.* 2.191, cf. Brice (2015), 108-110 for a close analysis of the incident). In 47 BCE, five legions who were tired of serving in Caesar's army were disbanded before the African campaign and given land and back pay that they were owed after they mutinied in Campania (Suet. *Caes.* 70; Plut. *Caes.* 51; Liv. *Per.* 113; Dio 42.52-3; App. *BCiv.* 2.92-3).

³⁴⁴ The harsh disciplinary program of Postumius Albinus led to a mutiny in 89 (Oros. 5.18), as it did in the case of Valerius Flaccus in 86 (App. *Mith.* 51; Dio fr. 104) and Lucullus in 68 (App. *Mith.* 76, 78, 84; Plut. *Luc.* 7-8, 14-15, 18-19, 33-38).

³⁴⁵ While soldiers in the Middle Republic consisted of a mix of citizens who lived near Rome and Italian allies, the armies of the Late Republic consisted largely of poor Italian farmers who had recently received citizenship. For these men, promises of land and the possibility of being among the foremost citizens in a newly formed colony provided rich opportunity for social advancement. The land grants became an

While there was much continuity in the behavior of Roman military communities between Middle and Late Republic, there were, however, some significant changes. First, collective actions undertaken by Roman armies grew both increasingly frequent and increasingly violent over the course of the last century of the Republican period. Second, the period saw the rise of desertion as a powerful form of collective action. The sections that follow will examine the factors that led to these developments, discussing, in particular, the ways in which collective action in the period was conditioned by its broader historical context.

Collective Action and Resistance to Roman Rule in the First Century BCE

The most substantial difference between the two periods is the frequency with which military communities engaged in collective action. Our sources seem to indicate a significant increase in collective action during the Late Republic. While the incompleteness of our records for the Middle Republic and the problem of defining what events constitute collective action make quantifying the increase difficult, the catalogue of mutinies in the Republican period compiled by Chrissanthos offers a sense of the magnitude of the increase.³⁴⁶ From 89 to 51 BCE, Chrissanthos records twenty instances of mutiny, while for the two centuries prior, he notes only six.³⁴⁷ In other words, from 89

important motivation for the soldiers (e.g. the troops who mutinied against Caesar in 47 (see above) and the troops fighting for Lucullus (Plut. *Luc.* 34.4) during the Third Mithradatic War). While there is some difference in scholarly opinion about exactly how important land and land grants were for Roman soldiers of the period (cf. Brunt (1988), 240–80 for the view that land grants were the most important factor for soldiers of the period; while Gruen (1974), 387–404; Gabba (1976), 17–27; Keaveney (2007), 57–69 argue that it was not as important as Brunt suggests); all scholars agree that they were a key motivating factor for long-tenured Roman armies.

³⁴⁶ Chrissanthos (1999), 22–6, 48–9.

³⁴⁷ Chrissanthos (1999), 48. Chrissanthos (1999), 12 defines mutiny as any act that qualifies as the breaking of the *sacramentum* and tries to catalogue events that constitute the violation of the known parameters of the oath. While it is possible to quibble with the definition and what events qualify as such, Chrissanthos

to 51 BCE, mutinies occurred on average once every year and a half; for the previous two centuries, they happened once every thirty-three years. Taking Chrissanthos' catalogue of mutinies as a broad proxy for collective action reveals a large increase in the incidence of the phenomenon in the Late Republic. The difference in the nature of the sources for the two periods and the fact that incidence of mutiny is not necessarily an indicator of the frequency of collective action seems unlikely to explain *in toto* the massive increase.

Scholars have generally dismissed the increasing frequency of collective action as a localized phenomenon that erupted during the anarchic period of civil war in the 80s.³⁴⁸ For these scholars, the civil war between Sulla and his enemies was a conflict driven by the question of the legitimacy of Republican government, most proximally, the legitimacy of the decision to give Marius the military command. Within this context of contested legitimacy, soldiers had a ready-made excuse for not obeying the orders of their commanders. Soldiers understood that the questions of governmental legitimacy would be decided ultimately by the winners and, as a result, they were ready and willing to abandon their current situation in order to ensure that they ended up on the winning side.³⁴⁹ Further, because the commanders so desperately needed soldiers for the successful prosecution of the war, generals were more lax about punishing insubordinate troops and were much more willing to make concessions to keep them happy.³⁵⁰

appears to apply it consistently across both periods and does not appear to leave out any major events in his catalogue.

³⁴⁸ Gruen (1974), 373–4; Brunt (1988), 241–2.

³⁴⁹ Gruen (1974), 373; Keaveney (2007), 77–82; Wolff (2009), 263–314.

³⁵⁰ Take, for example, the Fimbriani (see below), who, despite their numerous misbehaviors, were never punished by any of the commander. For a fuller discussion, see Chrissanthos (1999), 206–7; Keaveney (2007), 81–2; Wolff (2009), 341–347.

While this may be a fair characterization of armies during the civil war period, collective action continued with great frequency even after the end of the civil war between Sulla and his enemies. There were ten mutinies in the thirty-year period between the end of the first civil war and the outbreak of the second between Pompey and Caesar.³⁵¹ While the rate of mutiny in the period is lower than in the tumultuous decade of the 80s, mutiny still occurred at much higher rate than it had in the centuries prior. Civil war only in part explains the increase in the incidence of mutiny during the Late Republic; it does not account for the phenomenon completely.

The history of the Fimbriani, the infamous group of soldiers who were commissioned by Cinna to fight against Mithridates in 86 under Valerius Flaccus and continued to serve in Asia for more than twenty years until the end of the Third Mithridatic War, sheds light on the insufficiency of previous scholarly opinions on the rise of collective action during the late Republic.³⁵² The Fimbriani mutinied against Flaccus only a few months into their campaign against Mithridates. One could argue the insubordination of the soldiers was due in part to the fact that Flaccus was a commander of questionable legitimacy; Sulla had already been commissioned to fight against Mithridates and had already conducted a successful campaign against him in Greece. This is further evinced by the eventual defection of the Fimbriani to Sulla's army a year later (see below). However, the same explanation cannot be provided for the behavior of

³⁵¹ For example, Keaveney in his chapter on disobedience in the Roman army structures discusses various forms of insubordination during periods of the civil war, but does not explicitly talk about what happens in the intervening period between the first two civil wars.

³⁵² Gruen (1974), 372; Lovano (2002), 98–100; de Blois (2007), 172–73; Wolff (2013), 338–49 discuss the history of the Fimbriani.

the group in the early 60s under Lucullus.³⁵³ Under much more sedate political circumstances, the Fimbriani gave much trouble to Lucullus and eventually mutinied against him in 68 (Plut. *Luc.* 33-38). There was no question about the political legitimacy of Lucullus' command or his capability as a general. Larger forces than issues of the legitimacy were at play in this era of increasing collective action among military communities.

Looking closely at two mutinies that mark the beginning of the era of the increased insubordination of Roman military communities reveals some of the social and political undercurrents that influenced the behavior of Roman soldiers during this period. The first thing that stands out about both of these incidents is the context in which they occurred. The two mutinies, the first against Postumius Albinus and the second against Porcius Cato broke out during the Social War in 89 BCE, a year before the civil war between Marius and Sulla. While modern scholarly opinion remains divided about the goals of the Italians in the Social War, it is clear that the conflict was an out-and-out rejection of the current terms and conditions of Roman rule and that the Italian tribes believed that collective and violent resistance provided the best means for reaching some sort of resolution to the matter.³⁵⁴ Further, there is strong reason to think that the frustration of the Italian troops was partially inspired by the unfair treatment of allied

³⁵³ Contra Gruen (1974), 373.

³⁵⁴ The traditional explanation for the Social War is that the Italians went to war in order to fight for Roman citizenship and other rights (cf. Salmon (1962), 107-119; Brunt (1965), 90-109; Gabba (1976), 70-130). This view was forcefully rejected by Mouritsen (1998), 5-22, 124-25 and Pobjoy (2000), 187-211, both of whom asserted that the primary goal of the Social War was Italian independence. Others such as Sherwin-White (1973), 119-48 and Keaveney (2005), 189 take a middle ground, arguing that Italian aims changed from a desire for citizenship to emancipation. For a full discussion of the historiography of the question, Dart (2015), 9-22 provides a succinct summary of the various points about the motivations for the Italian insurgents during the Social War.

troops: Italian soldiers had long been held to the same standards as Roman soldiers, but did not yet share the benefits of Roman citizenship.³⁵⁵ The era of increasing incidence of collective action among Roman military communities was born in the context of collective popular resistance against Roman rule, driven, perhaps, by the pretext of frustrations about the terms of military service.

This observation can be stated more broadly. The Social War was hardly the only example of large-scale popular resistance to Roman rule in the period of the Late Republic. The Social War was preceded by two massive slave revolts in Sicily and followed by a third on the Italian mainland.³⁵⁶ In addition to the large-scale provincial revolts of Aristonicus and Jugurtha towards the end of the second-century BCE, Mithridates united Greek communities in Asia Minor against Rome in the early 80s and maintained the resistance for almost three decades. The threats were not just from outsiders: Catiline and his motley crew of followers, if Cicero and Sallust are to be believed, were ready to burn Rome to the ground.

Further, the various instances of collective resistance against Rome were more interconnected than scholars have been willing to admit. There were strong connections between Catiline's forces and the Italic slave population. Part of Catiline's strategy to cause confusion at Rome had been to incite a slave revolt in Apulia (Sall. *Cat.* 46.3) and, after the failure of the conspiracy, the remaining followers of Catiline joined up with remnants of Spartacus' army around Thurii (Suet. *Aug.* 3.1). Similarly, there were close

³⁵⁵ Pfeilschifter (2007), 27–42; Rosenstein (2012), 100–104.

³⁵⁶ In each of the slave wars, slave armies were able to defeat Roman military forces on multiple occasions. Their victories speak to the fact that these revolts were a force to be reckoned with – they demonstrate both the large numbers of people that desired to fight against Roman rule and the ability of these people to organize effectively.

connections between Spartacus' revolt and Italic resistance towards Rome.³⁵⁷ When Mithridates tried to convince the Gauls to attack Rome, he could speak of the Third Servile War as a continuation of the frustrations manifested in the Social War because of the large-scale support that Spartacus was able to draw from Italic populations (App. *Mith.* 109).

What emerges is that the increased frequency of collective action among Roman soldiers mirrored the development of an *ethos* of collective resistance against Roman rule in the Mediterranean world.³⁵⁸ Is this merely coincidence or did this *ethos* of collective resistance against Roman authority in the Late Republic influence the actions of Roman soldiers? While it is nearly impossible to answer this question definitively, what can be said is that Roman soldiers would have been aware of the various resistance movements that occurred throughout the Mediterranean during the Late Republic. In the case of the Social War, Roman and Italian soldiers who had remained loyal had served with and knew some of the troops who were now part of the Italic forces. Some Roman soldiers even ended up fighting on the Italian side. In 90, when Papius Mutilus captured the town of Nola, he offered to spare 2,000 soldiers serving within the garrison if they agreed to join his army (App. *BCiv* 1.42.1).³⁵⁹ While one might assume that soldiers eagerly accepted Papius' deal because it was a matter of life and death, the incident is less complicated than it first seems. The officers who were in charge of the garrison of Nola,

³⁵⁷ Rubensohn (1971), 290–99; Piccinin (2001), 272–296; Piccinin (2004), 173–199; Dart (2015), 209–210.

³⁵⁸ The idea of a larger *ethos* of collective resistance during the Late Republican period has rarely been discussed by scholars. The sole exception is Gallini (1970), 64–135.

³⁵⁹ Cf. *Sis. fr.* 62; *Liv. Per.* 73. Keaveney (2007), 79–80; Wolff (2009), 219. Gabba (1967), 135–6 discusses the history of Nola throughout the civil war period.

unlike their soldiers, did not go over to Papius' side and, as a result, were killed. In the midst of a particularly violent and intense war, deeply rooted in issues of identity, there was a gulf between Roman officers and soldiers at Nola – the former could in no way see themselves fighting on the side of the Italians and would rather die than do so, while the latter were not so entrenched in their worldview.³⁶⁰

It might even be argued that some Roman soldiers were sympathetic to these resistance movements. For instance, there were large numbers of fugitive soldiers that tried to join Spartacus' rebellion in 72 (App. *BCiv* 1.117).³⁶¹ It is remarkable that free Roman soldiers were willing to join a revolt which consisted largely of slaves. What is even more remarkable, however, is Spartacus' rejection of the defectors. Spartacus' refusal to accept the troops who wanted to defect reveals that the soldiers had come over without enticement from the opposition, a reality which speaks to the appeal of Spartacus' message of social, economic and political upheaval to Roman soldiers.³⁶² One might venture that, given the strong ties between Italian towns and Spartacus' revolt, the deserters were perhaps of soldiers of Italian origin conscripted in the Roman army, but sympathetic to Spartacus' attempts to undermine Roman rule. There is also some evidence that Roman soldiers deserted in large numbers to Mithridates (App. *Mith.* 55; Vell. Pat. 2.23.6). It is difficult, however, to determine from these brief notices the extent

³⁶⁰ Dart (2015), 129-130.

³⁶¹ Gabba (1967), 323 suggests that this incident may be related to the indiscipline of Gellius' army in 72 as recorded in Plut. *Cat. Min.* 8.3.

³⁶² Piccinin (2001), 272–296; Piccinin (2004), 173–199; Strauss (2009), 43-5; Schiavone (2013), 108-116 discuss how Spartacus' rhetoric was aimed at taking advantage of a disgruntled Southern Italian populace. Bradley (1989), 95-110 sees the slave revolts as lacking broader goals beyond the freedom of its participants.

to which Roman soldiers were motivated by factors other than issues of safety and monetary considerations.

Further, news of these large-scale resistance movements against Roman rule seems to have traveled quickly and to have spread broadly. For example, the sources for all three slave wars record that these rebellions led to “copy-cat” revolts throughout the Roman world. Diodorus and Orosius record that the First Servile War inspired similar acts of slave resistance throughout Italy and as well as in Athens and Delos (Diod. Sic. 34.2.19; Oros. 5.9.4-8). Athenaeus claims that, at the same time as the outbreak of the Second Servile War, the slaves in the Athenian mines captured the acropolis of Sounion and plundered all of Attica.³⁶³ Further, he adds that there were many other slave revolts throughout the Mediterranean that occurred as a result of the Second Servile War, making the exaggerated claim that over a million slaves were killed during this period of upheaval (Ath. 6.272d-f).³⁶⁴ In the Third Servile War, there is some evidence that Spartacus’ actions inspired slaves to rebellion in Sicily; Verres could, at least, make the claim to have put an end to a servile uprising during his time as praetor (Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.5-6, 9-20). The incidence of these copy-cat revolts indicates that information about large-scale resistance like the slave wars traveled widely and quickly and was disseminated to a broad audience.

In short, it is reasonable to assume that most Roman soldiers did not live in a vacuum; they were aware of various forms of collective resistance towards Roman rule and, at times, were active participants in these events. Just as the rise of collective action

³⁶³ Lauffer (1956), 236–40 discusses the slave revolt at Laureion; while Tracy 1979, 232–5 gives the context for the rebellion at Athens.

³⁶⁴ Shaw (2001b), 120–1.

among Roman military communities in the Late Republic is viewed as a natural result of the anarchy brought by civil war, so too should it be considered as a product of an interconnected Mediterranean world in which collective resistance towards Rome was increasingly common.

The second aspect of the two incidents of 89 BCE that deserves further consideration is the space in which the mutinies occurred. In the case of the mutiny against Albinus, the commander held a *contio* with the hopes of quashing the mutinous feeling of his soldiers. The assembly had the opposite of the intended effect – the troops were further incensed, broke out into mutiny and stoned Albinus to death (Liv. *Per.* 75; Val. Max. 9.8.3; Oros. 5.18.22). The troops fighting under Porcius Cato, the consul of 89, also broke out into mutiny in the context of the *contio* (Cass. Dio Fr. 100; Sis. Fr. 36).³⁶⁵ Cato had called a *contio* to criticize his soldiers for refusing to obey orders, but, as in the case of Albinus, it only fostered further dissent. The soldiers pelted Cato with clods of dirt, forcing him to flee camp. It was only the fact that no stones were available that saved the consul from certain death.

That the *contio* was the space in which these mutinies erupted should not be surprising.³⁶⁶ Due to the exceptional circumstances of the Social War, both rebellious armies of 89 had been recruited directly from Rome. For inhabitants of the city, the *contio* was a locus of popular power and an essential part of the state's political

³⁶⁵ See Cornell (2013), 3.382–3 for the association of this fragment of Sisenna with the incident concerning Cato.

³⁶⁶ Chrissanthos (2004), 359–363.

culture.³⁶⁷ Even more importantly, no place was more closely connected with various forms of violence and rioting than the *contio*.³⁶⁸ In the *Pro Sestio*, Cicero explicitly claims that there was no violence in the city without the calling of a *contio* (Cic. *Sest.* 77, 110).³⁶⁹ Indeed, the thirty years prior to the mutinies of 89 had seen several instances of violent outburst and riots at *contiones* in the city.³⁷⁰ Most famously, a *contio* held by Minucius Rufus in 121 turned violent when the supporters of Gaius Gracchus protesting the event killed Quintus Antyllus and precipitated the use of force by the consul, Opimius, against Gracchus and his supporters (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 13.3). In 91, the consul, Philippus, interrupted a *contio* at which Livius Drusus was speaking and was brutally attacked by the tribune's supporters (Val. Max. 9.5.2; Flor. *Epit.* 3.17). The *contio* was, for the inhabitants at Rome, a place where agents of power could be actively challenged through resistance and violence. For men from Rome, the *contio* would have naturally been the locale in which various forms of violent dissent and resistance broke out.

However, mutinies *in contione* were not only limited to the rare occasions when the soldiers were recruited from the city of Rome. Nine of the twenty-seven mutinies recorded between 89 and 43 BCE broke out in the context of the *contio*, a number that might be even higher if our sources for some of these events were more complete.³⁷¹

³⁶⁷ E.g. Millar (1998), 30–47; Morstein-Marx (2004), 34–66, 119–159; Tan (2013), 117–33; van der Blom (2016), 1–66. The centrality of *contio* to Roman political life has been an object of significant discussion and debate in the last twenty years.

³⁶⁸ Tan (2013), 127–132.

³⁶⁹ Metaxaki-Mitrou (1985), 182. It is interesting to note that Cicero attributes the growing violence in the *contio* to Greek influences entering the city (Cic. *Sest.* 106).

³⁷⁰ Pina Polo (1996), 186 provides a list of recorded *contiones* in the Republic.

³⁷¹ Chrissanthos (1999), 179–184.

These military *contiones* displayed several characteristics that evoked their civilian counterparts. They often had their own rabble-rousing organizers who were skilled at whipping soldiers into a frenzy.³⁷² In the mutiny against Cato, the sedition at the *contio* was organized by C. Titius, a Roman knight who had made his living in the Forum and whom Cicero claimed “had achieved as high a level of perfection as a Latin orator was able without knowledge of Greek literature and without much practice” (Cic. *Brut.* 167: *C. Titius, qui meo iudicio eo pervenisse videtur quo potuit fere Latinus orator sine Graecis litteris et sine multo usu pervenire*). A few years later, when the legate of Valerius Flaccus, Flavius Fimbria, a Marian supporter active in politics and renowned for violent tendencies (Cic. *Rosc. Amer.* 33; Val. Max. 9.11.2), was kicked out of camp for insubordination, the soldiers assassinated Flaccus when he tried to address the situation in *contione* and appointed Fimbria as their commander (App. *Mith.* 51-2; Dio 31.104; Liv. *Per.* 82).³⁷³ One final example. In 68, the disaffection of the Roman soldiers towards Lucullus was sparked by the future tribune, Publius Clodius Pulcher, who was serving as a legate in the army at the time (Plut. *Luc.* 33-4; Dio 36.14). Clodius had perfected and honed the techniques that he would later use in civilian *contio* in a military setting.

Further, even the forms of violence used by the troops in these mutinies mimicked what would be found in *contiones* at Rome. In several of the mutinies that broke out in *contione*, the soldiers stoned their commanders.³⁷⁴ Despite the fact that soldiers had their

³⁷² Cic. *Sest.* 77 discusses the central role played by an insolent tribune in inciting a riot in a *contio* (cf. Metaxaki-Mitrou (1985), 184; Chrissanthos (2004), 349-350).

³⁷³ Lintott (1971), 696–701 offers a close look at the career of Fimbria and argues that he would have had the rare title of *pro quaestore pro praetore* while he was in charge of the troops in Asia Minor.

³⁷⁴ In some of the instances of mutiny in *contione*, there was no violence but rather an open expression of disapproval (e.g. the mutiny against Crassus at Carrhae in 53).

own weapons nearby, they took recourse to a method of intimidation that was commonly used within the context of the civil *contio*.³⁷⁵

Over the course of the first century BCE, it appears that the military *contio* became a space for the expression of popular collective power and agency among Roman soldiers. The similarities between the place of the *contio* in both civilian and military contexts begs the question of the impact of the former on the latter. Did the developing culture of political dissent and resistance in Rome carry over into the Roman camp? The answer to the question, as in the case of collective resistance to Roman rule in the Mediterranean, hinges on the extent to which soldiers were aware of the developments and changes in the political culture in the city of Rome during the late Republic.

While there is no direct testimony from soldiers about their knowledge of Roman political culture, recent scholarship has contended that Roman officers and commanders expected their troops to be familiar with matters of political importance. Keaveney and Morstein-Marx argue that Roman historians have created a false dichotomy between the army and the citizen body at Rome and that it is necessary to attribute a “higher level of civic consciousness among the late-Republican soldiery than is normally conjectured.”³⁷⁶ Both scholars use speeches given to soldiers in camp to demonstrate that commanders saw issues of political import as a particularly powerful way to appeal to the troops. Thus, Sulla and Cinna could speak of their removal from their magistracies as a step on the way to loss of popular sovereignty, a matter of highest concern for an army that

³⁷⁵ Pease (1907), 1–19; Metaxaki-Mitrou (1985), 184–5; Morstein-Marx (2004), 165–6 (cf. also Cic. *Sest.* 34; Asc. 58C) attest to the frequency of *lapidationes* in *contiones*. It should be acknowledged that this may have just had to do with either the fact that soldiers were not allowed to bring weapons to *contiones* or simply that in the heat of the moment troops needed nothing other than a stone to get the job done.

³⁷⁶ Morstein-Marx (2011), 276 (cf. also Keaveney (2007), 37–55).

consisted of Roman citizens.³⁷⁷ Similarly, Caesar could expect his soldiers to be moved by the Senate's dismissive treatment of the tribunate (Caes. *B Civ.* 1.7).³⁷⁸ Morstein-Marx has even drawn attention to the fact that the rhetoric of these speeches mirrors that of the *contiones* at Rome.³⁷⁹ Ultimately, Morstein-Marx takes the implications of the political awareness of the Roman army further than Keaveney; in his interpretation, the marches on Rome by Sulla in 88 BCE and Caesar in 49 BCE are not demonstrations of loyalty towards the general in place of the "state" but rather as claims by a part of the electorate about the legitimacy of the authority of their commander.³⁸⁰

There is, however, a problem with assuming that these speeches are indicative of the political awareness of the Roman army. In their discussions of Sulla and Cinna's marches on Rome in 88, Morstein-Marx and Keaveney rely upon the account of Appian, invoking the rhetoric of the speeches delivered by these two men in front of their soldiers at Nola as evidence for the political nature of the Roman army in the late Republic. To divine the motivations of Sulla and Cinna's soldiers from speeches of a second-century CE Greek historian with his own historiographical aims and goals is problematic.³⁸¹ One could read the speeches delivered by Sulla and Cinna just as easily as illustrations of the fracturing of political legitimacy that plagued the late Republic, set-pieces that prove the

³⁷⁷ Keaveney (2007), 37-9; Morstein-Marx (2011), 263-274.

³⁷⁸ Morstein-Marx (2007), 159-178; Morstein-Marx (2009), 115-140.

³⁷⁹ Morstein-Marx (2011), 270.

³⁸⁰ Morstein-Marx (2011), 277-8.

³⁸¹ Morstein-Marx, at least, acknowledges this and tries to justify his reading of Appian, but his argument for trusting the rhetoric is not totally convincing.

validity of Appian's pro-monarchical stance throughout the work.³⁸² Even with Caesar, where the account of his speech to the troops comes from Caesar himself, the *Bellum Civile* was written with the purpose of persuading the Roman elite of the justness of the future dictator's actions.³⁸³

A different and potentially more fruitful way of seeing the phenomenon identified by Morstein-Marx and Keaveney, perhaps, is to think of commanders like Sulla and Cinna and legates like Titius, Fimbria and Clodius as purveyors of a political idiom.³⁸⁴ That is, these leaders played a major role in bringing the political culture of the Republic to a military setting. Unlike earlier periods of Roman history, Roman commanders in the Late Republic had generally spent the majority of their careers in Rome dealing with political matters. Given this political experience, it would have been natural for Roman commanders and officers in the first century BCE to use the kind of rhetorical and political practices that they were well-acquainted with when interacting with the Roman army. Further, since the civilian *contio* was one of the primary ways in which the Roman political class interacted with large crowds in the city, it can be conjectured that the culture of the institution was highly influential in structuring similar interactions between Roman magistrates and soldiers. It can even be postulated that when lower-level officers were at odds with commanders or were seeking to build a political career, they may have

³⁸² Bucher (2000), 411–458 offers a close analysis of Appian's "program" and its influence on his interpretation of the Civil Wars. He argues that Appian pro-monarchical tendencies caused him to play up the discord of the late Republic.

³⁸³ Batstone and Damon (2006), 43–63 provide an excellent analysis of the literary character of this scene. Rambaud (1953); Grillo (2012); Riggsby (2006) more generally attest to the literary nature of the *Bellum Civile* as well as the *Bellum Gallicum*.

³⁸⁴ Chrissanthos (2004), 351.

enacted tactics of political opposition that were common in the civilian *contio* and that played a prominent role in the military *contio* as well.³⁸⁵

This is not to say that emergence of a popular ideology of resistance and violence among the soldiers was the product of a top-down process. There is evidence that people from Italy were already frequent participants in *contiones* by the early first century BCE. There are records of large numbers of people from the Italian countryside coming into the city to support Tiberius Gracchus' legislative agenda in 133 (Diod. Sic. 34.6.1; App. *BCiv.* 1.33.3, 1.56) and, similarly, Sallust reports that a large number of rural voters travelled to the city to support Marius' bid for the consulship of 107 (Sall. *Iug.* 73.6).³⁸⁶ In the aftermath of Marius' victories, former soldiers also came to the city from the Italian countryside to participate in political matters that benefitted them (see below for further discussion). These soldiers not only attended *contiones*, but were also part of the violent protestations that broke out in the Forum (Liv. *Per.* 69; App. *BCiv.* 1.30).

It appears reasonable to assume that Roman soldiers of the period, even those who came from Italy, were well-aware of the political culture of resistance encoded in the *contio* and that, over the course of the first century BCE, these soldiers began to use this knowledge for their own benefit. More broadly, the ethos of group resistance throughout the Mediterranean and a burgeoning political culture of popular power at Rome in the late second and early first centuries BCE were important undercurrents that motivated the increasing incidence of collective action in the Roman army of the same era.

³⁸⁵ Chrissanthos (2004), 363-4.

³⁸⁶ Yakobsen (1999), 1-17; Flower (2013), 90-93. Mouritsen (2001), 36-37, 81 is a bit more skeptical about the frequency of Italians coming into the city.

Desertion

The Late Republican period also saw the rise of a new form of collective action. Desertion became a frequent tactic used by Roman military communities during periods of civil war.³⁸⁷ Scholars have primarily viewed these tactics as a means of self-preservation: Roman armies deserted to avoid certain destruction in impending battle or to ensure that they aligned themselves with the likely victor in the civil war. However, looking more closely at the phenomenon of defection and the groups involved in the process reveals that there were a variety of motivations other than self-preservation that conditioned such behavior. Soldiers used desertion to improve their financial situation, to better their social standing and to avoid the internecine bloodshed of civil war.

The first instance of defection among Roman soldiers in the context of the civil war occurred in 85 BCE.³⁸⁸ The defectors were the Fimbriani, the force that the Cinnan government had sent to Asia for the purpose of fighting against Mithridates under Valerius Flaccus in 86 BCE. As mentioned above, these soldiers had mutinied against Flaccus in the year prior and aligned themselves with Fimbria. Over the next year, the Fimbriani were successful; they fought Mithridates to a standstill and benefitted richly from the plundering of Asia (App. *Mith.* 52-3; Plut. *Sull.* 23.6).³⁸⁹ The situation, however, began to change when Sulla, the commander of the other Roman army in Asia Minor, came to terms with Mithridates (App. *Mith.* 54-6). Sulla decided that he wanted to face

³⁸⁷ Keaveney (2007), 77-92; Wolff (2009), 181-355.

³⁸⁸ Some might assert that the first example of the phenomenon dates to 90 BCE, when Papius Mutilus captured the town of Nola, he offered to spare 2,000 soldiers serving within the garrison if they agreed to join his army (App. *B Civ* 1.42.1).

³⁸⁹ The Fimbriani famously sacked Ilium, an event that was immortalized even in ancient times by the like of Lucan and the *Tabulae Iliacae*. Erskine (2001), 237–245 provides a modern account of the matter.

off against the other set of Roman troops that were in the East. When Sulla finally cornered Fimbria, the Fimbriani defected (App. *Mith.* 59-60; Plut. *Sull.* 25.1).³⁹⁰ As they had in the case of their mutiny against Flaccus in 86, the Fimbriani acted collectively in order to serve the best interests of the group. This time, however, the stakes were much higher; they were acting as a group to save their own lives.

It appears that Sulla took notice of the way the Fimbriani acted. In 83, the future dictator had returned to Italy and found himself encamped opposite the forces of L. Cornelius Scipio in Southern Italy (App. *BCiv* 1.85; Plut. *Sull.* 28.1-3; Liv. *Per.* 85).³⁹¹ According to Appian, although the soldiers in Scipio's army were recruits from the city of Rome who had enrolled themselves to oppose Sulla, when faced with the prospect of fighting a well-trained and experienced army that had thoroughly routed the forces of Scipio's consular colleague, Norbanus, they lost all desire to fight (App. *BCiv* 1.82). Sulla recognized that Scipio's army had no will to do battle and attempted to foment further dissension by having his soldiers fraternize with their opponents (Liv. *Per.* 85; Plut. *Sull.* 28.2). Sulla's plan worked and the soldiers, unbeknownst to their commanding officers, decided that they would desert *en masse*.

This strategy of seduction and desertion became a hallmark of Sulla and his subordinate commanders.³⁹² Sulla, it appears, understood that soldiers were capable of making collective decisions to protect their own interests, regardless of what their

³⁹⁰ In Plutarch's account of the incident, the Fimbriani announce their defection by joining up with Sulla's soldiers – they entered the camp unarmed, warmly greeted their new companions and helped them to dig the entrenchment around their camp.

³⁹¹ Gabba (1967), 223-5 provides a detailed account of the events leading up to the defection of Scipio's troops.

³⁹² Keaveney (2007), 79-82.

commanding officers thought. Further, Sulla's use of his own troops as emissaries reveals that he saw the bonds that potentially existed between the two bodies of soldiers – whether familial or related to previous military service – as a key driver of group behavior.

Defection continued in the civil war between Caesar and Pompey. In 49 BCE, Caesar had successfully hemmed in the Pompeian forces under the command of Afranius and Petreius in Spain and cut them off from their food supply (Caes. *BCiv* 1.72.1). Caesar decided that, instead of going to battle with the Pompeian forces, he would starve them out and spare his own troops of any potential danger.³⁹³ The next day, when Afranius and Petreius temporarily left camp to survey the region, the Pompeian troops decided to act. Each soldier reached out to whatever relations they had in Caesar's camp (Caes. *BCiv* 1.74.1). They contacted soldiers whom they had served with previously (*castris notum*) or who hailed from the same hometown (*municipem*).³⁹⁴ After inquiring as to Caesar's nature from their friends and relatives, Afranius and Petreius' troops decided to defect with one condition: that Caesar promise the safety of their commanders (Caes. *BCiv* 1.74.3). The defection, however, never came to fruition. After Petreius and Afranius caught wind of the defection, they drove Caesar's soldiers out of camp and forced their soldiers to reaffirm their loyalty by swearing an oath (Caes. *BCiv* 1.75).³⁹⁵

³⁹³ Caesar's soldiers, however, were unhappy with his tactics, believing that he had squandered an opportunity to win a victory over Pompeian forces, and proclaimed openly that they would not fight even if Caesar wished (Caes. *BCiv* 1.72.4: *hoc consilium Caesaris plerisque non probabatur; milites vero palam inter se loquebantur, quoniam talis occasio victoriae dimitteretur, etiam cum vellet Caesar, sese non esse pugnatueros*).

³⁹⁴ Even the Spanish chiefs who had been taken as hostages in the war reached out to their acquaintances and guest-friends in the Caesarian camp (Caes. *BCiv* 1.74.5).

³⁹⁵ Grillo (2012), 81–93 argues that Caesar uses the incident to place blame on the civil war on a few select individuals by creating a motivational gulf between Roman soldiers and their commanders.

There were several key differences between the incident at Ilerda and the episodes from the first civil war. First of all, the soldiers who defected were not under immediate duress. In fact, as Caesar's account states, they felt relieved that they had not faced the threat of impending battle (Caes. *BCiv* 1.74.2). Second, the fraternization between the troops was initiated by the soldiers considering defection rather than by the opposing commander. The troops fighting under Afranius and Petreius took it upon themselves to find out what it would be like to serve under Caesar. The soldiers wanted to know whether Caesar was trustworthy (*imperatoris fidem*) and whether they would be doing the right thing by defecting (*rectene se illi sint commissuri*). These differences illustrate that defection was not solely an issue of self-preservation. The soldiers were concerned with matters beyond their immediate safety; they were thinking about how Caesar would treat them and how they would be perceived after they had defected. This is further reinforced by the interactions of the troops with their *commilites* and kinsmen. According to Caesar, the soldiers felt remorse for fighting against their friends and family (*hominibus necessariis et consanguineis*) and for not trying to bring a peaceful end to the engagement earlier (Caes. *BCiv* 1.74.2). The opportunity to spare the lives of family members and fellow soldiers was also an important motivating factor in the decision to defect.

Though it might be argued that Caesar exaggerates the good-will of the soldiers involved to vilify his enemies in the incident at Ilerda, the same issues are at play in an episode from the same year in which Caesarian troops fighting under Curio in Africa consider defecting to the forces of the Pompeian commander, Attius Varus (Caes. *BCiv* 2.26-33).³⁹⁶ According to Caesar's version of events, soldiers on both sides play a major

³⁹⁶ Twenty-two of the soldiers in Curio's army deserted to Varus' camp and informed them that the troops were unhappy with the circumstances of their service (Caes. *BCiv* 2.27.1). The defectors urged Varus to

role in bringing about a broader discussion about defection. It is two Marsic centurions and twenty of their men from Curio's army who inform Varus of the disaffection in the Caesarian camp, and it is a soldier in Varus' army by the name of Sextus Quintilius Varus who attempts to induce the Caesarian troops to defect (Caes. *BCiv* 2.28.1).³⁹⁷ The arguments used by Quintilius Varus to convince Curio's soldiers to defect focus on the same issues brought up by the soldiers in the incident at Ilerda. Quintilius Varus makes reference to the fact that many of the troops had fought together, noting that there were soldiers in both armies who had served with Domitius Ahenobarbus at Corfinium.³⁹⁸ He claimed that it was a travesty for soldiers who had previously served together to fight against one another. Additionally, he lamented that the soldiers who were serving Curio would now be branded as deserters (Caes. *BCiv* 2.28.2: *neu contra eos arma ferrent, qui eadem essent usi fortuna eademque in obsidione perpassi, neu pro iis pugnarent, a quibus <per> contumeliam perfugae appellarentur*). Caesar also reports that financial benefits were offered to potential defectors (Caes. *BCiv* 2.28.3). As at Ilerda, it is the thought of fighting against *commilites*, the social stigma of being called a deserter and economic considerations in addition to issues of safety that are of primary concern for Curio's soldiers. These considerations are equally effective in both incidents recorded by Caesar. Quintilius Varus' words send Curio's camp into a frenzy, but ultimately Curio was able to convince the soldiers to remain loyal.

take advantage of this situation by advancing within hailing distance of Curio's army (Caes. *BCiv* 2.27.2-3). Varus took their advice and approached Curio's army.

³⁹⁷ Sextus Quintilius Varus was formerly a quaestor in Ahenobarbus' army (cf. Caes. *BCiv* 1.23.1-2).

³⁹⁸ For the siege of Corfinium, see Caes. *BCiv* 1.20-1. A large number of troops deserted from Domitius to Caesar while under duress.

There was another type of desertion that developed during the civil war between Pompey and Caesar. On several occasions, soldiers decided to abandon their commanders without defecting to the opposite side. Early on in the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar relates how two of Pompey's armies, five cohorts fighting under Thermus at Iguvium and Varus' garrison at Auximum, deserted their commander and returned home (Caes. *BCiv* 1.12-3).³⁹⁹ Caesar was not immune to such behavior either. In 47, when planning his invasion of Africa, nine of the ten legions mutinied against him (Suet. *Div. Iul.* 70; Plut. *Caes.* 51; App. *BCiv* 2.93; Cass. Dio 42.53). Though our sources played the incident off as insignificant and indicate that Caesar was able to quell the mutiny without problem, it is clear from looking at the forces that traveled with him to Africa that five legions decided to return home rather than return to service.⁴⁰⁰ While soldiers had long acted collectively to protest the terms of their military service, they had never made recourse to outright desertion to solve the problem. In the earlier period, soldiers engaged in various forms of protest to encourage their commanders to petition the Senate to change their terms of service. In the Late Republic, they simply dismissed themselves.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that Roman military communities engaged in collective action to protect their own interests from the third century BCE onwards. Such acts were motivated by a variety of factors. Roman soldiers considered their larger social standing, immediate financial objectives, the terms and conditions of their military service and the potential harm that they might cause their friends and relatives by fighting

³⁹⁹ Keaveney (2007), 82.

⁴⁰⁰ Chrissanthos (2001), 63–75 offers a corrective to the standard view that Caesar's account is more or less accurate as is.

against them. Over the course of the last century of the Republic, the frequency and intensity of such collective action increased significantly. The rise in the incidence of collective action did not happen in a vacuum; rather, it was influenced by the broader context of collective resistance towards Rome throughout the Mediterranean and the development of a culture of popular power at Rome during the first century BCE. The Roman army of the Republican period thus appears as an important locus of popular power whose actions can be tied into a broader narrative of popular power in the Roman world during the Republican period.

CHAPTER 4: MILITARY COMMUNITIES AND POLITICAL POWER

Introduction

The last chapter demonstrated that military communities were capable of acting collectively to ensure that their needs and interests were met while on campaign and that these groups were ready and willing to take on both the commander and the Senate in order to do so. This chapter establishes that Roman military communities continued to act cooperatively even after they returned home from campaign by examining the evidence for their participation in politics. It argues that in political matters that were of direct concern to its members, military communities were capable of organizing and acting collectively to protect group interests from the third century BCE onwards. Further, they were not only participants; their overwhelming physical presence made them influential in both electoral and legislative matters.

More broadly, the chapter makes two important contributions to the study of popular political power in the Roman world. First, military communities emerge as one of the few popular interest groups prior to the development of *collegia* in the first century BCE that possessed political power. Second, the findings of the chapter problematize the long-held opinion that Roman armies only became politically relevant in the first century BCE with the rise of strong men like Marius and Sulla and the eradication of property requirements for military service.

The Army in the Struggle of the Orders

The idea that military communities acted collectively to protect their political interests would not have seemed strange to the Romans. Indeed, the Romans of the Late Republic believed that military communities had long played a major role in politics. In fact, they saw the involvement of the Roman army in politics as inextricably linked to the first assertions of popular power at Rome. This is best embodied in the involvement of the Roman army in various events from the Struggle of the Orders. As such, these narratives demonstrate just how ingrained and essential the actions of military communities were in Roman political culture.

*The Secessions of the Plebs*⁴⁰¹

The Secessions of the Plebs were viewed as the foremost *exempla* of the ability of the *populus Romanus* to organize collectively for political advancement. But these incidents also highlight the central role played by military communities in winning basic political rights for the Roman people.⁴⁰² Indeed, the centrality of military communities in these narratives is emphasized by the nature of the two secessions. The Secessions of the Plebs, at least as our sources depict them, were, in fact, mass withdrawals of the Roman

⁴⁰¹ The first Secession, usually dated to 494 BCE, marked the beginning of the so-called “Struggle of the Orders” and supposedly resulted in the creation of the office of the tribunate (cf. Liv. 2.23-33; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.22-90, also Cic. *Rep.* 2.59; Asc. *Corn.* 76). The second Secession, dated to 449 BCE, brought an end to the Decemviri’s tyrannical rule and restored the office of the tribunate (cf. Liv. 3.36-54; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 10.55-11.44; also Cic. *Rep.* 2.63; Asc. *Corn.* 77; Diod. Sic. 12.24-6). The historical difficulties presented by these episodes has long been recognized by scholars (e.g. Ridley (1968), 535–554; Forsythe (2005), 170–6, 230–3; Smith (2012), 101–125).

⁴⁰² The stories of the Secessions of the Plebs were a major part of the *popularis* ideology from the late second century BCE onwards. Most powerfully, the events served as the impetus and inspiration for Gaius Gracchus’ resistance on the Aventine in 121 (cf. Mignone (2014), 137–150). For other exemplary uses of the incident, see Cic. *Mur.* 15.8; Asc. *Corn.* 76-8; Sall. *Iug.* 31.17; Sall. *Hist.* 3.34.1. Chrissanthos (1999), 27–40; Morstein-Marx (2004), 68–118 attest to the centrality of historical *exempla* such as the Secessions in *popularis* political rhetoric.

armies from the service.⁴⁰³ In the case of the first Secession, the consuls, fearing that the plebeians would continue to hold secret meetings throughout the city, decided not to disband the legions after the successful conclusion of the triple war against the Volscians, the Aequi and the Sabines (Liv. 2.32.1; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.45.1). Rather, they claimed that war with the Aequi had recommenced and, consequently, called on the soldiers to return to the field to face the enemy (Liv. 2.32.1; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.45.1). According to the patricians, these troops were still beholden to the *sacramentum* that they had sworn upon enrolling in the army. This insistence on continued military service without any attempt at political reforms on behalf of the plebeians, however, proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back. The soldiers, at first, hoped to kill the consuls and, thereby, dissolve the obligation of the *sacramentum*. Cooler heads prevailed and the legions, at the suggestion of a soldier named Sicinius, seceded to the Mons Sacer (Liv. 2.32.2; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.45.2-3).⁴⁰⁴ Here, the soldiers set up a camp bringing with them only the most basic of necessities as well as the standards that they had requisitioned from their commanders (Liv. 2.32.4; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.45.2). It should be noted that in Livy's account of the incident these troops were *not* joined by the

⁴⁰³ The only attention given to the military aspects of the secessions has centered on debates about the historicity of the episode. For example, Raaflaub (2005), 196–8 has seen the military nature of the events as the historiographical representation of an archaic conflict between the elite landed class and poor farmer-soldiers. Morstein-Marx (2011), 278 n. 79 is a rare exception in acknowledging the political power given to the army.

⁴⁰⁴ Ogilvie (1965), 311–2 discusses the development and history of the name of the soldier who initiated the first Secession.

plebeians who remained in the city. In fact, Livy observes that the plebs who stayed in the city were scared of patrician violence against them (Liv. 2.32.5-6).⁴⁰⁵

The second Secession reveals a similar pattern. Immediately after the murder of Verginia, the maiden's father and a troupe of 400 men headed toward the Roman camp at Mount Algidus and begged for the help of their fellow soldiers (*commilites*) in seeking justice (Liv. 3.50.2-6; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.40.1-5).⁴⁰⁶ The soldiers, galvanized by the tragic fate of Verginia and hoping to protect their own families from similar abuses, rushed back to Rome with Verginius and seized the Aventine Hill (Liv. 3.50.12; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.43.4-6). When the forces fighting against the Sabines, who were already angry at the Decemviri for the murder of their leader, Siccius, heard Icilius and Numitorius' accounts of the tragedy that befell Verginia, they immediately abandoned their posts and made their way to the Aventine as well (Liv. 3.51.7-10; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.44.1-2). Livy makes sure to emphasize the military character of the group's diaspora to the Aventine; he says that they marched in order and paraded the standards through the city on their way to the hill (Liv. 3.51.10: *porta Collina urbem intrauere sub signis, mediaque urbe agmine in Auentinum pergunt*). Unlike his account of the First Secession, however, Livy reports that the soldiers, after relocating from the Aventine to the Mons Sacer, were joined by the plebeians who had been in the city (Liv. 3.52.4-6). Unfortunately, Livy's account cannot be compared with that of Dionysius as the text of

⁴⁰⁵ Livy's account is at odds with that of Dionysius, who records that after the defection of the soldiers, the rest of the plebeians retreated to the Sacred Mount as well (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.46).

⁴⁰⁶ There is, of course, the lingering question of whether the story of the second Secession was merely a copy of the first (cf. Ogilvie (1965), 491; von Ungern-Sternberg (2005), 86–7), but for the purposes of the present argument, the fact that both these stories focused on the actions of armies is indicative of how closely linked Roman military communities were to popular demonstrations of power.

the Greek historian cuts off right after the secession of the second Roman army. It seems, however, that the withdrawal of those who were not serving in the army may have been a later addition to the story, as our two earliest extant sources on the matter, Diodorus Siculus and Cicero, record only the withdrawal of Roman soldiers and make no mention of the plebeians taking part in the secession (Diod. Sic. 12.24.5; Cic. *Rep.* 2.63).

In Livy's narrative of the second Secession, each of the armies organized themselves and elected their own leadership. The soldiers fighting against the Aequi selected ten men to represent the army, who were referred to as *tribuni militum* due to their status as military men (Liv. 3.51.2: *militarique honore*). Upon hearing of these steps towards collective organization, the troops who were warring with the Sabines followed suit and named ten tribunes of their own. When the army fighting against the Sabines joined the troops who had already assembled on the Aventine, they organized themselves further. The two armies requested that the twenty *tribuni militum* select two representatives to take charge of the entire group (Liv. 3.51.10). The communities of soldiers in this scene had the ability to act and organize collectively without the help of a powerful leader.

In addition to the fact that the Secessions were enacted by Roman armies in the field, much of the protesting that preceded the final act of secession in these episodes was undertaken by the soldiers as well. When Servilius, the consul in 495, failed to uphold his promise to deal with the issue of *nexum* at the end of his campaign against the Volsci (Liv. 2.24.6-7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.29.1), the soldiers harangued him, publicly demanding that he protect his troops from any harm inflicted by creditors. When he claimed that political circumstances prevented him from fulfilling his promise, the

soldiers became obstinate and did not respond to the call to arms (Liv. 2.27.10; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.34.2). The refusal to serve not only neutered the political power of Servilius but also helped the plebeians to broker a deal with the newly appointed dictator, Marcus Valerius (Liv. 2.30.5-7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.40-1).

In the case of the second Secession, when the plebeians failed to gain senatorial support for their resistance to the tyrannical Decemviri, they expressed their disapproval by not fighting bravely for their commanders.⁴⁰⁷ The armies on campaign against the Volsci chose to fight poorly with the hopes of further tarnishing the rule of the Decemviri (Liv. 3.42.2-7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.23.4-6). The soldiers fighting against the Sabines were routed and retreated to a hill between Fidenae and Crustumerium where they refused to engage with the pursuing enemy and hid behind the rampart instead of fighting (Liv. 3.42.3; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.23.4). The troops who were at war with the Aequi were even more thoroughly defeated, losing their camp in the process, and took shelter in the friendly confines of Tusculum (Liv. 3.42.5, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.23.5). The struggles that the Decemviri had in controlling the troops caused alarm at home and supposedly created a growing sense of cohesion among its staunchest patrician opponents, Valerius and Horatius.

Even assertions of plebeian political power that did not specifically involve troops enrolled in the army during the Secessions were predicated on the fact that the plebeians provided a large part of the manpower for the Roman army. Indeed, one of the most common and effective forms of protest during the Secessions was the refusal to levy.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁷ Chrissanthos (1999), 14–5, 35–6.

⁴⁰⁸ Wolff (2007), 19-25.

During the first Secession, when Volscian troops were closing in on Rome, Livy claims that the plebeians rejoiced as the imminent war presented an opportunity for them to strengthen their position vis-à-vis their patrician opponents (Liv. 2.24.2). The plebeians refused to give their names for the levy until the patricians offered some solution to the debt crisis (Liv. 2.24.2; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.23.2). Fearing potential disaster, the consul, Servilius, cut a deal with the plebeians, promising that no creditor was allowed to make a claim on the property or family of any of the participants in the campaign against the Volscians and that the larger issue of debt in the Roman state would be dealt with at the end of the campaign (Liv. 2.24.6-7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.29.1).

Not surprisingly, similar tactics were used by the plebeians involved in the second Secession.⁴⁰⁹ When the Decemviri continued to hold unchecked power in the Roman state for a third consecutive year, the Aequi and the Sabines attempted to take advantage of the political instability by conducting raids on the Roman countryside (Liv. 3.38.3-5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.3.1-3). The Decemviri attempted to consult the Senate on this matter, but no senators answered the call to the Curia.⁴¹⁰ The plebeians, believing that the patricians were expressing their opposition to the tyrannical rule of the Decemviri, refused to enroll in the levy (Liv. 3.38.10). While the actions of the plebeians proved unsuccessful in this case, it again shows how the role that the plebeians played as the manpower behind the Roman army was used for political effect.

⁴⁰⁹ It should, of course, be noted that the similar events which appear in the story of the first and second Secession may have been the result of a duplication of some elements of the original story in the Roman cultural narrative. This, however, does not change the point at hand. As far as the Romans of the first century BCE were concerned, resistance to the levy was one way in which the plebeian, as potential soldiers, made manifest their political power.

⁴¹⁰ Ogilvie (1965), 467 makes the comparison between the lack of Senate meetings in this scene and similar contexts in the 80s and in 49 after Caesar's takeover of the city.

Finally, it was the mistreatment and abuse of Roman soldiers that incited the unrest surrounding both events. In the narrative of the tumult preceding the first Secession, it was an elderly veteran dressed in filthy rags and visibly starved who embodied the injustice of debt-bondage or *nexum* (Liv. 2.23.3; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.26.1).⁴¹¹ This soldier who had earned the renown of all by fighting bravely to preserve the Roman state was now enslaved at home due to the practice of *nexum* (Liv. 2.23.4; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.26.1).⁴¹² The veteran's tale of woe stirs the plebeians to protest (Liv. 2.23.8) and brings a large number of enslaved veterans into the Forum to lament their miserable fate.⁴¹³ During the second Secession, one of the major incidents that incited upheaval was the murder of Lucius Siccus for his staunch opposition to the tyrannical rule of the Decemviri. Siccus was a soldier who had fought in over 120 battles and won countless military honors (Liv. 3.43.2; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.25.2-3).⁴¹⁴ The anger of the soldiers over the murder of Siccus stirred the army fighting against the

⁴¹¹ According to Livy, the plebeians felt "safer at war than in peace" and believed there was more *libertas* for them "among enemies rather than fellow citizens" (Liv. 2.23.2: *tutiorumque in bello quam in pace et inter hostes quam inter ciues libertatem plebis esse*). Cf. Liv. 2.23.11; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.27.3.

⁴¹² The soldier allegedly fell into debt when his farm was destroyed while serving on campaign, which left him with no means to pay his share of the war tax (Liv. 2.23.5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.26.1). As a result, he was driven into debt, which rapidly multiplied due to the usurious practices of his creditor and forced him to abrogate his ancestral property and enter into a vicious form of debt-slavery (Liv. 2.23.6; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.26.1).

⁴¹³ The protestors in Livy's narrative taunt the consuls by referring to their chains and physical deformities (Liv. 2.23.10: *uincula sua deformatatemque aliam*) as their *merita* earned while fighting in the army and Dionysius' dissenters refer to the same objects as the τὰ ἄγασθᾶ of military service (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.27.3).

⁴¹⁴ In an attempt to root out the challenge presented by Siccus, the Decemviri in charge of the army sent him on a scouting mission only to have him murdered by the men who accompanied him (Liv. 3.43.3-5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.26.1). Ogilvie (1965), 475–6 discusses the development of the myth of Siccus in the Roman historical tradition.

Sabines to rebel against the Decemviri and eventually drove them to secede to the Aventine.

Even the death of Verginia is related to the mistreatment of Roman soldiers by our sources. While the lust of the tyrannical Appius Claudius for Verginia certainly takes center stage in the retelling of the episode, part of the reason why the story unfolds as it does is the fact that her father, Verginius, was fighting against the Aequi and, consequently, unable to protect his daughter.⁴¹⁵ When Verginius attempts to elicit the support of his fellow soldiers, he appeals to the fact that he has been fighting continuously to protect Roman women and children from foreign threats and that now he needed help in ensuring that the same protection was afforded to his daughter in the city (Liv. 3.47.3).⁴¹⁶ From the Roman point of view, part of the tragedy of the Verginia episode was that Appius Claudius actively sought to harm the family of a soldier who had fought so bravely to protect his *patria*.

Other Incidents from the Struggle of the Orders

The Secessions, however, were not the only examples of Roman armies acting as a political force in the narrative of the Struggle of the Orders. Livy discusses at length the mutinous behavior of a group of Roman soldiers in Campania in 342 BCE (Liv. 7.38-

⁴¹⁵ This can be compared to the story of Lucretia where again part of the tragedy of the scene is that her family members who were fighting to protect Roman interests are ultimately unable to protect her from a tyrannical abuse of power. Joshel (2002), 163-190 argues that both of these stories are founded on analogizing of the rape of the female body to the rape of body politic more generally.

⁴¹⁶ Dionysius locates similar sentiments in Verginius' dramatic speech before Appius, noting the futility of fighting for "sovereignty and dominion" against the Sabines and Aequi, if no one was willing to oppose the tyrannical rulers at Rome who were attacking the "security and liberty" of his daughter (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.41.1).

42).⁴¹⁷ While Livy says that the annalistic accounts of the incident are discordant on the nature of events, he refers to the action taken by the soldiers as a *secessio* (Liv. 7.40.2, 40.11, 41.2, 41.3).⁴¹⁸ In the aftermath of the incident, Livy claims that his sources record that not only were the soldiers pardoned for taking part in the *secessio*, but they were able to effect the passage of multiple laws, including several military reforms and, most importantly, the *lex Genucia* which mandated that at least one consul be plebeian (Liv. 7.41.4-42.2).⁴¹⁹ The extent of the changes wrought by the army were so great that even Livy is incredulous about the enormity of their accomplishments (Liv. 7.42.2).

There are several incidents from the same period in which the army refused to follow orders of their commanders on account of political differences.⁴²⁰ While on campaign against the Veientes in 481 BCE, Kaeso Fabius was unable to command his infantry forces because they hated (*exercitus odio*) the consul for his opposition to a recently proposed land-bill (Liv. 2.43.6; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 9.3.1-2). In the midst of battle, the infantry refused to take up pursuit after the cavalry had routed the enemy and, instead, returned to their camp (Liv. 2.43.7-9; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 9.3.3-5). The general intransigence of the Roman troops continued in the following year's campaign against the same enemy under the joint command of Marcus Fabius and Gnaeus Manlius, when it

⁴¹⁷ Cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 15.3.1-15. Oakley (1998), 361-2 lays out the complicated structure of the passage and argues that the narrative likely consists of two different annalistic stories that Livy was unable to disentangle.

⁴¹⁸, Smith (2012), 104-5.

⁴¹⁹ The nature of military legislation is unfortunately irrecoverable due to textual problems (cf. Oakley (1998), 383-4).

⁴²⁰ Chrissanthos (1999), 15-17. Chrissanthos in discussing the mutinies of the first two centuries of the Republic notes four separate occasions where plebeians refuse to obey the orders of their commanders due to differences in political opinion.

took the harangues of the Veientines about the lack of bravery of the soldiers to stir them to fight in battle (Liv. 2.44-5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 9.6-10; Frontin. *Str.* 1.11.1).⁴²¹

Shortly thereafter, differences that had arisen between Appius Claudius and the plebeians over a land bill in 471 BCE allegedly boiled over into a military campaign against the Volsci (Liv. 2.58.3-6; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 9.50.3). The troops did not respond to his attempts to enforce discipline and, instead, made light of his orders (Liv. 2.58.6-7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 9.50.3-4). The soldiers refused to go into battle against the Volsci and only fought to protect the camp when it was attacked and their own safety was endangered (Liv. 2.59.1-8; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 9.50.4). When Appius attempted to call them to assembly to punish the soldiers for the disobedience, they chose to disregard that order as well (Liv. 2.59.9-11).⁴²² Most poignant, perhaps, is an episode from 414, in which Postumius Albinus was stoned to death by his soldiers after he had explicitly threatened to punish them if they were to vote in support of a land grant bill proposed by the tribune, Sextius (Liv. 4.49.6-50.5).⁴²³ The armies of the Struggle of the Orders were politically powerful and had the capability of taking action in order to effect political change that was beneficial to them.

⁴²¹ Ogilvie (1965), 351-3 discusses how both of these incidents seem to provide some insight into Livy's thoughts on the failure of Republican political system during the second and first century BCE.

⁴²² Appius was ultimately able to exact vengeance against his soldiers by decimating his army. This is the first recorded instance of decimation (cf. Goldberg (2016), 141-166 for the practice of decimation during the Republic). Ogilvie (1965), 383 argues that this episode is based on the career of Appius Claudius, praetor of 89 BCE. This, however, seems to be a bit of a stretch, as the sources for Appius' military career, provide one solitary anecdote about his command (Liv. *Per.* 79). He lost control of his army after Cinna allegedly bribed his soldiers. The incident recorded in this episode does not seem sufficient to warrant Ogilvie's comment.

⁴²³ Cf. Liv. *Per.* 75, Orosius 5.18.22. Ogilvie (1965), 609 argues that this episode appears to retroject the stoning of A. Postumius Albinus (cos. 99) by his troops during the Social War into a setting of the Struggle of the Orders and to his "ancestor."

Just as in the narrative of the first two Secessions, the actions taken by the armies in the field were supplemented by a protest of the levy at home. Resistance to conscription is ubiquitous in the record of the Struggle of the Orders. Wolff's catalogue of failed or troubled levies reveals the astonishing frequency of these events in early Roman history; there are twenty-nine reported instances where the levy failed or was conducted with difficulty in the first 146 years of the Republic. This number dwarfs the nineteen reported instances of the same phenomenon throughout the final three centuries of the Republic.⁴²⁴ The refusal to levy was viewed as a crucial means of protest during the Struggle of the Orders and reinforces the fact that plebeian power was perceived as being based in their role as the manpower of the Roman army.

Dating the Sources

Our sources reveal a belief that the Roman army had long been a major force in popular assertions of power. The Romans saw military protest in its varied forms – mutiny, secession and insubordination – as an essential part of establishing a balance of power between patricians and the plebeians throughout the Struggle of the Orders. Even when the protests against the patriciate did not involve actually military units, it was the plebeian community's role as a prospective military force that provided leverage to open negotiations with the aristocracy. In these archetypal narratives about popular power during the Republic, the Roman army takes center stage.

This, of course, does not mean that the Roman army of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE should be considered as a powerful political entity. As has been well-established, accounts of early Republican history do not provide records of events as they

⁴²⁴ Wolff (2007), 19-22.

actually happened but rather reflections of the issues, concerns and values of the period in which they were written. The historical narrative of the archaic period provides vital access to the way in which later Romans understood contemporary political controversies and ideologies.⁴²⁵ Consequently, it is worth considering when the narratives about the role of the army in early Roman history were constructed.

In the case of the involvement of the Roman army in the Secessions, this is not easy. It is not enough to look at our two sources for the events, Livy and Dionysius, and conclude that the story was a construct of the Augustan era.⁴²⁶ The accounts of the Secessions of the Plebs provided by Livy and Dionysius are so similar that it suggests that the key players and events of the episode had already been codified by the beginning of the Augustan era.⁴²⁷ Further, by the middle of the first century BCE, the role of the Roman army in the Secessions was already well-established. Asconius, in his commentary on Cicero's *Pro Cornelio*, a speech delivered in 65 BCE, quotes the orator referring to armed men being involved in the first Secession. Further, Cicero refers explicitly to the delinquency of the *milites* in his account of the second Secession in the *De re publica* roughly ten years later (Cic. *Rep.* 2.63). Cicero's contemporary, Diodorus Siculus also refers to the hostile takeover of the Aventine by Roman soldiers in his

⁴²⁵ Wiseman (1981), 375–393; Cornell (1986), 67–86; Cornell (2005), 47–74; von Ungern-Sternberg (2005), 83–5 provide essential discussions of the way that narratives of the past reflected the present.

⁴²⁶ von Ungern-Sternberg (2005), 89–90 argues that the shared source on which Dionysius and Livy depend dates from the early 30s BCE. He sees the prolonged terms of the Decemviri as an issue directly related to the Second Triumvirate in the 40s. This argument, however, does not mean that certain other elements of the story had not developed before then. It is the goal here to focus on when the issues concerning the army's involvement in the Secessions became part of the tradition.

⁴²⁷ Despite the similarities in the material they cover, Dionysius never cites Livy as an authority in his history nor does he show much in the way of animosity to Livy as a historian. Gabba (1991), 94–6 argues that Dionysius likely worked off the same annalistic sources, but their different intentions and methodologies did not bring them into conflict with one another.

account of the Second Secession (Dio. Sic. 12.24.5). The idea that the army played a central role in the events of the Secession seems to pre-date the middle of the first century BCE.

Given the stability of the narrative by the middle of the first century BCE, it follows that the role of the army in the narrative of the Secessions was codified, at latest, during the late second and early first centuries BCE. The stories of the Secessions as well the early history of Rome were a matter of particular concern to the Roman historians writing at the end of the second century BCE. Livy's account of the first Secession provides compelling evidence about this reality. The second-century historian and consul of 133, Calpurnius Piso Frugi, in writing his account of the first Secession designated the Aventine instead of the Mons Sacer as the place of protest of the Roman troops (Liv. 2.32.2-3).⁴²⁸ As Mignone has shown, Piso's deviation from the standard narrative concerning the location of the first Secession is a nod to the current events of the day; Piso refashioned the story in light of Gaius Gracchus' famous flight to the Aventine in 121 BCE.⁴²⁹ But Piso was not only concerned with the story of the Secessions and its Gracchan parallels; he was one of the first Latin historians to offer a substantial narrative of the early Republican period more generally.⁴³⁰ Piso's work was expanded upon around the turn of the second century BCE by Gnaeus Gellius, who wrote fourteen books on the

⁴²⁸ Forsythe (1994), 1–24; Cornell (2013), 230–9 discuss the political career of Piso, particularly his relationship to the Gracchi, and how it influenced his view of Roman history.

⁴²⁹ Mignone (2014), 146–7. In 121 BCE, in response to political opposition orchestrated by the consul, Lucius Opimius, Gracchus and his supporters seized the Aventine Hill with the hope of brokering a deal with the Senate (App. *BCiv.* 1.3.26; Plut. *Vit. C. Gracch.* 13–16).

⁴³⁰ Forsythe (1994), 46–8; Forsythe (2005), 62.

history of Rome prior to the Gallic Sack.⁴³¹ In the wake of the massive expansion of the tradition by Gellius, the archaic period was not treated until the publication of the histories of Licinius Macer, Valerius Antias and Aelius Tubero nearly fifty years later.⁴³² It would seem reasonable, given the fame of the story of the Secessions by the time of Cicero and the stability of the tradition represented by Livy and Dionysius, that the major plot elements were in place at the beginning of the first century BCE.

Dating the story to this time period is meaningful because scholars have conventionally seen the development of the Roman army as a political force as a direct result of the eradication of the property requirements for military service in the late second and early first centuries BCE. According to this school of thought, soldiers were no longer self-sufficient farmers fighting to protect their *patria* but poor, landless volunteers for whom military service was the only pathway out of poverty. These men had little sense of loyalty to the state and, instead, attached themselves to their commanders in hopes of social advancement.⁴³³ Sulla's march on Rome revealed the consequences of this shift in priorities: Roman armies could now be used as a political weapon and, as a result, they became an integral part of the various power struggles throughout the course of the first century BCE.⁴³⁴

⁴³¹ Badian (1966), 11–13; Cornell (1986), 70–1; Cornell (2013), 253–4.

⁴³² Forsythe (2005), 63–4. The majority of the historical works between Gellius and the three major annalists of the first century BCE focused on a particular era, event or person. In fact, Claudius Quadrigarius chose to begin his history after 390 BCE, as he believed that the historical narrative prior to the Gallic sack was unreliable.

⁴³³ Mommsen (1881), IV.6; Badian (1958), 197–8; Gabba (1976), 26–8; Keppie (1984), 42–3; Lintott (1994), 92 exemplify this traditional point of view. Gruen (1974), 371–3, Brunt (1988), 257 and de Blois (2007), 164–179 suggest that the political loyalty of these troops that served under the generals of the first century BCE has been overblown.

⁴³⁴ Badian (1958), 234–5; Keaveney (2007), 37–42 (cf. also Keaveney (1982), 72–103).

However, the existence of a late second or early first century BCE tradition that believed in a long history of military communities participating in the political process problematizes this narrative. Indeed, further problems arise when the means by which political influence was achieved – resistance to military service, mutiny and secession – are considered: the armies were exercising their political will without the aid of any commander. This vision of the political agency of military communities in Roman politics presented by the sources runs counter to the modern scholarly idea that sees powerful generals as being responsible for politicizing the army. As a result, the rest of this chapter will examine other ways in which Roman military communities exercised their political agency.

Military Communities and Political Careers

One area in which Roman military communities exerted their political agency was in the careers of their officers. The most famous example of this reality can be seen in the difficulties faced by Aemilius Paulus upon his return to Rome after the successful conclusion of the Third Macedonian War in 167 BCE.⁴³⁵ By the time Paulus had arrived in Rome, the Senate had already agreed to award him a triumph and it only remained for the *comitia tributa* to vote on whether the general would be allowed to maintain his *imperium* on the day of his triumph (Liv. 45.35.4). The vote was supposed to be a foregone conclusion, but the soldiers who had served under Paulus had other ideas.⁴³⁶ The entire army was incensed with Paulus' lack of generosity towards them during the

⁴³⁵ Pittenger (2008), 247-264 discusses how Livy frames and constructs the incident, focusing, in particular, on how Livy resolves the tension between the opinion of the soldiers and Paullus' success as a general.

⁴³⁶ Mommsen (1881), I.132; Versnel (1970), 192; Brennan (1996), 316 discuss the procedure for the special grant of *imperium* on the day of the triumph.

campaign and they decided that they would not lend their support to this measure (Liv. 45.35.7). This disaffection grew to outright opposition at the instigation of a military tribune, Servius Galba, who urged the soldiers to vote against the measure (Liv. 45.35.8; Plut. *Aem.* 30.5-6).⁴³⁷ When the *comitia tributa* was called to vote on the matter, the soldiers filled the Capitol and Galba delivered a rousing speech denouncing the practices of Aemilius during his campaign in Macedonia. In the vote that followed, the first tribe rejected the Senate's proposal (Liv. 45.36.2-8; Plut. *Aem.* 30.6-31.1). The voting, however, was brought to a halt at this point by the tribunes, who restarted the proceedings and allowed a man of consular rank, Servilius, to deliver a speech in support of Paulus (Liv. 45.36.9-10; Plut. *Aem.* 31.3-4). Servilius' appeal to those assembled in the Capitol proved successful and Paulus enjoyed a resplendent triumph the following day (Liv. 45.37-41; Plut. *Aem.* 31.4-34.8).

Galba's speech in this episode offers a clear articulation of the power that soldiers had in the political process, particularly, in relation to their officers. In attempting to rouse the troops to come out and vote against the bill proposed by the Senate, the military tribune appeals to the political power of the soldier class, claiming that while Paulus "did not consider it in his power to give money to the soldiers, it was the power of the soldiers to grant *honores*" (Liv. 45.35.9: *pecuniam illum dare non potuisse: militem honorem dare posse*). Galba reiterates this point later in his speech and asserts that the powerful men within the Roman state would soon "understand that not everything was in the hands of the *dux*, but that something was in the hands of the soldiers as well" (Liv. 45.36.6:

⁴³⁷ Briscoe (2012), 727 discusses the career of Galba after the incident and the potential factional strife that the incident may represent between the Cornelii Scipiones and the Sulpicii.

intellecturos potentis viros non omnia in ducis, aliquid et in militum manu esse). Galba's words reveal that the Roman political process provided soldiers with an opportunity to exercise power in relation to their commander.

While Galba's speech in this scene is almost certainly a Livian creation, the evidence that exists for the power of military communities during the Middle Republic coincides well with the sentiments it expresses.⁴³⁸ Soldiers seem to have played a major part in the awarding of honors to their commanders. In the Senate's investigation of a commander's triumphal claims, soldiers were summoned to a senatorial hearing and were required to testify to the deeds of their commander in the field.⁴³⁹ In fact, on two separate occasions, commanders – Marcus Claudius Marcellus in 211 and Lucius Furius Purpureo in 200 – were denied triumphs due to the fact that their troops were not present to attest to whether they were worthy of the honor (Liv. 26.21.4, 31.49.10).⁴⁴⁰ The presence and cooperation of a commander's soldiers were necessary to winning Rome's greatest military honor.

Additionally, while triumphs were generally awarded by the Senate, on rare occasions, the honor might be conferred upon them *iussu populi*.⁴⁴¹ While it would seem

⁴³⁸ It is worth noting as well that Galba's statement echoes Polybius' observation in Book 6 that the Roman people alone had the power to grant honors and punishments (Plb. 6.14.4).

⁴³⁹ Pittenger (2008), 251 n.13.

⁴⁴⁰ On both of these occasions, the army of the commanders had been left in the field while the commander had been recalled.

⁴⁴¹ Richardson (1975), 58–60; Pittenger (2008), 37–39. There are four recorded instances of the grant of a triumph *iussu populi* – two in 494 (Liv. 3.63.5), one in 356 (Liv. 7.17.9), one in 223 (Liv. 21.63.2, 23.14.4). In 294, Postumius Megellus triumphed against the will of the Senate and with the unanimous support of the people, though the event did not go to a vote – hence, not technically *iussu populi* – due to fear of the possibility of veto from the tribunes (Liv. 10.37.6–12). While it should be noted that the three earliest are certainly of dubious historicity, they nonetheless show a Roman belief that the people could be a deciding factor in a triumphal vote.

that the term *iussu populi* would refer explicitly to a vote of the civilian populace, the fact that the majority of these instances are dated prior to the middle of the 4th century BCE leaves the phrase open to another possible interpretation. Scholars have argued that word *populus*, derived from the verb *populari*, was used in the archaic period to refer explicitly to the Roman army.⁴⁴² As such, the vote of a triumph *iussu populi* may refer to a triumph voted to a general by his own soldiers. Akin to the practice of awarding a commander a triumph *iussu populi* – but on more stable grounds – was the granting of the honorific title, *imperator*. During the Republican period, the title was not official, but rather was bestowed upon a victorious general by acclamation of his troops.⁴⁴³ Though the usage of this honorific title later became a part of the ideological fashioning of powerful individuals of the late Republic, prior to the first century, the honor provided a way for the troops as a collective to recognize the exceptional leadership of their commander.⁴⁴⁴

Armies at the Ballot Box

The power that military communities had over the political careers of their officers was not just limited to awarding rare honors. The various attempts made by generals of the Middle Republican period to secure soldierly support in future elections indicate that the political power of military communities extended to the ballot box as

⁴⁴² Cornell (1995), 448; Forsythe (2005), 181-2; Smith (2006), 200.

⁴⁴³ Combès (1966), 9–27; Versnel (1970), 340-351.

⁴⁴⁴ The first commander to be awarded the title was Scipio Africanus in 210 BCE (cf. Liv. 27.19.3-6; Pol. 10.40.2-5, see Develin (1977), 110-3 for potential problems with this attribution). Prior to the first century, the honor was awarded eleven times. Brinkman (2016), 55 has observed that the honor was only bestowed on men who were *privati cum imperio* and, therefore, did not officially have *imperium*. The granting of the honor to such men, as a result, served to confer popular authority on a leader who had not been granted *imperium* by a vote of the people. If Brinkman's conjecture is correct, this would provide excellent evidence of the soldiery taking its own initiative in granting political honors.

well.⁴⁴⁵ According to Plutarch, Paulus was the only commander of his era who did not act demagogically while on campaign (Plut. *Aem.* 3.6: οὐ δημαγωγῶν ἐν τῷ στρατηγεῖν).⁴⁴⁶ Paulus allegedly eschewed the strategy of being agreeable and mild towards soldiers in order to gain their support, a ploy which Plutarch claims that other commanders of the era used in an attempt to assure a second command while they were still engaged in their first (Plut. *Aem.* 3.6: δευτέρως ἀρχὰς ταῖς πρώταις μνόμενος).⁴⁴⁷

Livy's account of the years immediately preceding Paulus' triumph lends further credence to these claims. In his discussion of Roman difficulties with the levy in 169, Livy claims that the problems with recruitment were not due to the lack of desire to fight, but rather consular leniency towards those who did not want to partake in the war. The praetors, C. Sulpicius and M. Claudius, alleged that the consuls were "eager for election" (*ambitiosis*) and, consequently, were not willing to pressure unwilling citizens to take part in the war (Liv. 43.14.3).⁴⁴⁸ Later in the same passage, Livy notes that the problems

⁴⁴⁵ Yakobson (1999), 221–2.

⁴⁴⁶ Xenophon (2016), 192 notes how Aemilius Paullus is painted as a "philosopher general" through his refusal to adhere to the unethical practices of contemporaries.

⁴⁴⁷ There is good reason to think that Plutarch and Livy's assessment of Paullus here is Polybian in origin. The Greek historian's narrative of the beginning of the second century reflects a marked moral decline for the Romans due to the lack of a powerful rival (cf. Eckstein (1995), 225–233). In Polybius' discussion of Rome's decline, Paullus is a central figure who represents old Roman virtuosity (cf. Plb. 29.20, 31.22). Although what remains of Polybius' text does not explicitly mention Paullus' outright opposition to demagoguery, it seems reasonable to suggest that there was some discussion of it in the original text. Polybius believed that love of office and increasing competition in elections as one of the major indications of a state's moral decline (Plb. 6.57.5–7). Indeed, when the Greek historian discusses the populist measures of Flaminius from 232 BCE, he ominously refers to the incident as "the beginning of the turn for worse of the Roman people" (Plb 2.21.8: τῆς ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον τοῦ δήμου διαστροφῆς). Given that Plutarch and Livy heavily relied upon Polybius in their accounts of Paullus' career, their agreement about Paullus' dislike for demagoguery may well be inherited from Polybius as well.

⁴⁴⁸ Briscoe (2012), 433–4 is skeptical of Livy's portrayal of the consuls in this scene and argues that their *ambitio* could have only resulted in election to the censorship. What matters for the argument is not so much the reality of the situation, but the fact that such leniency was viewed in this way. Feig Vishnia (1996), 152–3 discusses the practice of granting exemptions for political gain.

with the levy were of particular import because many of the soldiers who were part of the forces already fighting in Macedon had not returned to camp after being given winter furlough. The leave had been granted to these soldiers by the commanders in the field who were hoping to gain political favor through their actions (Liv. 43.14.7: *per ambitionem imperatorum*). The practice of easing up on discipline to benefit one's career was by no means restricted to the Third Macedonian War. The belief that leniency towards one's soldiers could result in political gain in combination with an impending consular election allegedly drove Scipio Africanus to spare the soldiers who mutinied against him at Sucro in 206 BCE (Liv. 28.32.4,7). Similarly, Marius, upon making the decision to stand for the consulship, immediately chose to relax his disciplinary standards because it would be most beneficial for his candidacy (Sal. *Iug.* 64.5: *quod modo ambitiosum foret*).⁴⁴⁹ It is within this context that the opposition of the soldiers towards Paulus' triumph must be interpreted. Paulus' commitment to traditional forms of military discipline was exceptional and, consequently, earned him an exceptional rebuke from his soldiers when he returned home.⁴⁵⁰

Leniency was not the only way that commanders could curry favor with their soldiers. Gifts, payments and provisions were commonly used to gain the support of the troops. When Gnaeus Manlius Vulso celebrated his triumph over the Galatian Gauls in 187 BCE, his soldiers followed his chariot and composed songs in his honor in a

⁴⁴⁹ Paul (1984), 173 notes the implicit comparison of Marius' behavior to that of Metellus and Sulla by Sallust.

⁴⁵⁰ Leigh (2004), 175-189 has argued that the differing parental styles of Demea and Micio in Terence's *Adelphoe* serve as metaphors for different types of generalship and reflect a mid-second century debate about the nature of a commander's relationship to his troops. See Chapter 1, pp. 64-5 for further discussion.

tremendous show of support for their commander.⁴⁵¹ Livy claims that the reason for such a display was the generous donative given to the troops by Manlius and refers to the general as a “lenient and popularity-seeking leader” (Liv. 39.7.3: *ducem indulgentem ambitiosum*).⁴⁵² But Manlius was not alone in distributing donatives to his soldiers; nearly every successful general from 201 to 167 BCE rewarded his soldiers with a donative and some even awarded their troops with double pay.⁴⁵³ As Gruen rightly points out, this practice of trying to buy the political support of one’s troops significantly predated the late Republic.⁴⁵⁴

Plutarch’s account of Gaius Gracchus’ quaestorship in Sardinia further emphasizes how commonplace these practices were. After the Senate had granted towns in Sardinia an exemption from supplying provisions to Roman soldiers, Gracchus visited several towns on the island and convinced them to provide supplies to the army of their own accord (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 2.2-3). When news of Gracchus’ dealings reached Rome, rumors circulated that this maneuver was an attempt to gain popular support from his soldiers for a future election (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 2.3: ταῦτα πάλιν εἰς Ῥώμην ἀπαγγελλόμενα καὶ δοκοῦντα δημαγωγίας προάγωνες εἶναι διετάραττε τὴν βουλήν). Even though Senate’s perception of Gracchus’ actions was likely colored by the career of his brother, the incident nevertheless demonstrates that generosity towards soldiers,

⁴⁵¹ Pittenger (2008), 212-230 discusses how Manlius’ triumph is a Livian commentary on the potential for transgressive behavior during the Republic.

⁴⁵² Livy levies similar charges against Manlius at 39.1.4 and 39.6.5 (cf. Briscoe (2008), 228). It is interesting to note that the chapter prior to this one (Liv. 39.6) relates that Manlius allowed military discipline to wane and permitted his soldiers to engage in every type of license while serving in Asia. He marks this as the beginning of Rome’s moral decline.

⁴⁵³ Brunt (1971), 394; Gruen (1974), 369–70.

⁴⁵⁴ Gruen (1974), 370.

regardless of the circumstance, was seen by the Roman elite as an essential part of garnering popular political support.

That Roman commanders felt the need to curry favor with their troops for political benefit should not be surprising. Earning the backing of one's soldiers was an essential part of climbing the ranks within the army. As Potter and Taylor have recently argued, centurions and decurions were elected directly by the army during the levy in the Republican period.⁴⁵⁵ The process represented a startlingly "democratic" process; the soldiers had the opportunity to select their direct superior, a figure with whom they would interact on nearly a daily basis. In such an election a good number of the soldiers serving in the legion would have been unfamiliar with and indifferent to the candidates presented before them. In this situation, the opinions of the soldiers who had served and interacted with particular candidates on previous campaigns would have had a significant impact on the outcome of the vote. It would be reasonable to presume that men seeking to become a centurion would have tried their best to impress and gain the respect of military communities in which they were serving in order to improve their chances of being elected. Even though the majority of future senators would never have participated in these processes, the public nature of this practice and its obvious similarity to the votes in the *comitia centuriata* symbolized the power that Roman military communities had over the careers of their superiors.

For these men, the necessity to gain the support of the soldiers for the sake of career advancement began with the position of the military tribunate. Though not elected directly by the army like centurions, the selection of military tribunes appears to have

⁴⁵⁵ Potter (2010), 321; Potter (2011a), 519; Taylor (2016), 5-13.

been influenced significantly by military communities as well (Plb. 6.12.6, 6.19.1). The story of Marius' election to the tribunate demonstrates the impact that soldiers could have on the outcome of these elections. Sallust claims that while Marius' physical appearance was completely unknown to voters, he was nonetheless elected by all the tribes because his military deeds were well-known throughout the city (Sall. *Iug.* 63.4-6).⁴⁵⁶ As Sallust's narrative implies, Marius did not spend his time canvassing for election nor, as a *novus homo*, did he enjoy the political advantages of coming from a family with a storied political history. How could Marius have gained such acclaim among the general populace? Perhaps, Marius' exploits were so well-known because the soldiers who had served with him on campaign had passed on these stories to their various social circles and, thereby, helped to shape a popular consensus about his candidacy for the tribunate.⁴⁵⁷ Evidence in support of this suggestion comes from the *Pro Murena* in which Cicero explicitly claims that Roman soldiers were influential in electoral matters precisely because they shared their opinions with the people they were close to (Cic. *Mur.* 38: *quae<que> cum per se valet multitudine, cum apud suos gratia*).

Further, the opinion of Roman soldiers would have been of more importance in the election of military tribunes because these candidates would have had little opportunity to campaign at Rome. The requirement for the office was a minimum of five or ten years in the field and, as such, the primary witness to their ability to hold the

⁴⁵⁶ Paul (1984), 169-170 discusses in detail the various conjectures and contradictions about the early career of Marius.

⁴⁵⁷ Contra Paul (1984), 170 who thinks that he had the support of a powerful backer like Scipio Aemilianus. It appears that popular favor remained firmly entrenched for Marius, if Sallust's account of his election to the consulship for the first time is to be believed (cf. Yakobson (1999), 13-19 who discusses the different constituencies that supported Marius). See below for more on the mechanism by which popular support could be gained through the soldiery.

position was the soldiers with whom they served.⁴⁵⁸ In a situation where the contestants for the office were significantly less well-known than the candidates for the consulship or praetorship, the consensus of various military communities about the candidates could prove decisive in creating a narrative about them. Additionally, when one considers that tribunes were elected by the *comitia tributa*, which unlike the *comitia centuriata* was not disproportionately weighted in favor of the Roman elite, the opinions of the soldiers would have been more meaningful.⁴⁵⁹ While it might be countered that the Roman people would have little concern for elections of military tribunes, it should be noted that selection of military tribunes was viewed as important popular right.⁴⁶⁰ The Senate twice attempted to make the appointment of military tribunes the responsibility of the commanding officer, but in both cases, the right to elect tribunes directly was ultimately returned to the people.⁴⁶¹

Did Military Communities Actually Vote?

The evidence above shows that Roman politicians spent a significant portion of their career attempting to gain and maintain the support of their soldiers. The candidates for nearly every elected position clearly seemed to have believed that the backing of the troops was necessary for political advancement. Indeed, prior to the first century BCE,

⁴⁵⁸ Plb. 6.19.1. Suolahti (1955), 30-3 offers an analysis of the career path leading up to the tribunate.

⁴⁵⁹ Taylor (1966), 59–84 articulates the traditional view that the *comitia tributa* was more “democratic” than the *comitia centuriata*, but Mouritsen (2014), 153 has recently called this point of view into question. Yakobson (1992), 32–52 (cf. also Yakobson (1999), 20–64) argues, however, that the *comitia centuriata* was less in favor of elite interests than previously thought. All the candidates running in the elections were elites and, as a result, would have frequently split the vote of the wealthier centuries.

⁴⁶⁰ Clark (2016), 275–297, contra Suolahti (1955), 57-145, argues that the election of tribunes by the *comitia tributa* was instituted in 311 and contends that it was an essential sticking point in the Struggle of the Orders given the essential role that military tribunes played in the management of the soldiers.

⁴⁶¹ Linderski (1990), 58–67; Taylor (2016), 17.

the requirement that magistrates had to have served for at least ten *stipendia* meant that there would have little time to build a political profile at home.⁴⁶² One of the primary ways for potential magistrates to ensure political success during this time period was to cultivate the goodwill of the soldiers whom they commanded.

While it would seem that these factors, in combination with the ability to vote their commanders special honors, would prove decisively that military communities had significant influence over the careers of their superiors, the evidence is not completely probative. It must be admitted that many of the arguments that have been used to question the political power of the *populus Romanus* can be applied to military communities as well. For instance, one could maintain that the depiction of the political power of the soldier class was nothing more than a cultural and constitutional fiction designed precisely for maintaining the oligarchic status quo.⁴⁶³ It is also plausible to contend that campaigning amongst the soldiers was not a reflection of an actual need for support, but rather a fail-safe measure in the rare case that the centuries which voted first in the decidedly undemocratic *comitia centuriata* had not already decided the election.⁴⁶⁴ Finally, it might be suggested that soldiers, like the rest of *populus Romanus*, were generally uninterested in the results of elections and, by and large, did not vote.⁴⁶⁵ In order to establish that military communities could be expected to make an impact on the

⁴⁶² Plb. 6.19.2. See also Harris (1979), 40.

⁴⁶³ E.g. Hölkenskap (2000), 203–223; Hölkenskap (2010), 17–22; Mouritsen (2014), 155. Hölkenskap argues that election instead played the role of sorting out and settling the aristocracy. Millar (1984), 1–19; Millar (1986), 1–11; Millar (1989), 138–150; Millar (1998); Yakobson (1999) contend that the *populus Romanus* actually did have a real say in Republican politics.

⁴⁶⁴ Jehne (1995), 51–77; Mouritsen (2001), 27–37; Morstein-Marx (2004), 204–240.

⁴⁶⁵ Mouritsen (2001), 90–105; Flaig (2003), 155–230.

election of their superiors, it must be demonstrated that they will have acted differently from the *populus Romanus* more broadly.

There are several reasons to believe that Roman military communities were more likely to vote in elections that had to do with the careers of their commanding officers. First, Roman soldiers had more reason to go to the polls than the average voter. Once again the resistance of the soldiers in Paulus' army to awarding their general a triumph is illustrative. In the accounts of Livy and Polybius, the impetus for the action taken by the soldiers was Paulus' lack of generosity throughout the campaign in Macedonia. Due to his devotion to traditional military discipline, he had been sparing in his distribution of booty and did not allow his soldiers to loot. The protests of soldiers were a reaction to a policy that had made a real impact on their lives. They were not making a decision based on rumors or public pronouncements; rather, they had lived with and served under Paulus for more than a year. The strong feelings of the military communities which served under Paulus marked an important difference from the civilian population, which had minimal interaction with the general and, therefore, likely had no strong opinion about his potential triumph. To generalize, soldiers who served under and lived with their commanding officer for a prolonged period of time would have felt much more strongly – for both good or for ill – about them than the average Roman citizen. Consequently, when one of their officers was running for office, soldiers who had served under them would have had more reason to go to the polls to voice their opinion than the rest of the

populus Romanus. These types of elections were a matter of personal interest for the soldiers and, consequently, drove them toward political participation.⁴⁶⁶

One might still question whether strong feelings about a particular candidate were enough to drive an individual to vote. Social psychologists and ancient historians have long noted that individuals often do not participate in collective acts like voting even when doing so would likely better their own situations because they believe their vote will have little impact on the overall outcome.⁴⁶⁷ This so-called “problem of collective action” has been used to explain low participation rates in various democratic systems of governance throughout history and seems rather fitting in explaining the larger lack of interest of the Roman voting population. It is, however, important to note, as discussed at length in Chapter 3, that one of the most important factors in driving individuals to act collectively is a sense of shared identity, that is, the feeling of belonging to a particular group.⁴⁶⁸ In these cases, individuals perceive themselves as part of a group that has the ability to bring about social change. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, this label certainly would apply to soldiers who served under the same commander; a sense of shared identity was an essential part of Roman military practice and the bonds that developed between soldiers on campaign remained strong even after discharge. The ways in which this sense of shared identity helped to engender the protest of Paulus’ triumph. Galba, though motivated by a personal vendetta against Paulus, appealed to the soldiers in the second legion by reminding them of the abuses that the entire group had endured under

⁴⁶⁶ Gruen (1974), 377–8 lists examples of soldiers coming out to vote during the late Republican period. There is no reason to believe that this practice did not predate the period.

⁴⁶⁷ Olson (1965), 2; Ober (2008), 84–90

⁴⁶⁸ See Chapter 3, pp. 120–1 for a fuller discussion.

Paulus. The feeling of resentment among the troops of the second legion spread like wildfire and soon the soldiers in the other legions which had served under Paulus joined the cause (Liv. 45.35.8).⁴⁶⁹ The close connections between the soldiers who served in different legions helped to build a powerful consensus that nearly deprived Paulus of his triumph.

The sense of collective identity that soldiers developed in a military context also marked a distinct difference from the rest of the voting population. While the *populus Romanus* consisted of many possible interest groups, the restrictions placed on group meetings and the Roman aristocracy's general suspicion of large gatherings of people made it difficult for such groups to come together and develop a coherent sense of identity.⁴⁷⁰ Thanks to the many years spent on campaign, Roman soldiers were a rare group within the populace that had the opportunity to foster a sense of community prior to the first century BCE⁴⁷¹ The cohesion of military communities helped to provide a political voice for soldiers on issues that mattered to them.

Beyond the socio-psychological reasons for higher levels of political participations in these matters, there were certain pragmatic political advantages that came with the group cohesion of Roman military communities. Cicero's discussion of *voluntas militum* sums up these advantages powerfully:

⁴⁶⁹ Briscoe (2008), 29-31 discusses the numeration of legions and Livy's methodology in assigning them.

⁴⁷⁰ Some examples include the restriction placed on night meetings in Twelve Tables, the requirement of consulting a magistrate for a quorum greater than five in the SC de Bacchanalibus as well as the legislation passed against *collegia*. It has been argued that a politically active *populus Romanus* was impossible because of the diversity of the groups that made up the voting populace. *Equites*, rural farmers and freedmen, all had different political goals and there was no way to create a consensus among these (cf. Mouritsen (2014), 157-8).

⁴⁷¹ Exceptions to this general rule include the *equites* (if the group can be referred to as a unified body). See Chapter 3, pp. 139, n. 332 for bibliography on this matter.

Num tibi haec parva videntur adiumenta et subsidia consulatus, voluntas militum, quae<que> cum per se valet multitudine, cum apud suos gratia, tum vero in consule declarando multum etiam apud universum populum Romanum auctoritatis habet, suffragatio militaris?

“Do these things seem to be minor aids and assistance for the consulship, namely, the will of the soldiers and their votes, which not only is strong in and of itself on account of its vast numbers and its influence among their close relations, but also has much authority even among the whole *populus Romanus* in selecting the consul?” (Cic. *Mur.* 38)

First and foremost in Cicero’s analysis of the political power of military communities is that they had strength in numbers. Indeed, in the protest of Paulus’ triumph, the soldiers were able to take over the space where the vote was being held and made it impossible for anyone else to take part in the vote (Liv. 45.36.6; Plut. *Aem.* 30.8). The ability of Paulus’ army to take control of a voting space does not seem to be a literary exaggeration; as Mouritsen has observed, Roman spaces for voting during the middle of the second century BCE were limited in size, accommodating at most 10,000 voters.⁴⁷² It was certainly possible from a numerical point of view for legionary armies to dominate the voting process at Rome, if they so desired. As such, the organization and strong social connections already established within Roman military communities would have enabled groups of soldiers to take advantage of the relatively small size of Roman voting spaces in order to ensure that their interests were adequately protected.

The second advantage was their ability to win over the support of both their close relations and, through them, the populace more broadly. Cicero’s belief that the opinion of the soldiers can help to create larger popular consensus echoes the words of Galba as he plans his protest of Paulus’ triumph. Galba tells the troops that if they decide to

⁴⁷² Mouritsen (2001), 20–3, contra MacMullen (1980), 454–7 who estimates between 15,000 and 20,000 voters.

oppose Paulus the rest of the populace will follow (Liv. 45.35.9: *plebem urbanam secuturam esse militum iudicia*). It is not difficult to imagine how the political opinions of various military communities could have influenced the rest of the population. Soldiers would have made their opinions known to the social circles they inhabited (*apud suos*). Those who found the message appealing, in turn, would have reached out to their own social circles and fostered broadly-based popular momentum. It is important here to distinguish the opinion of military communities from general political banter, as the soldiers had a key resource that made their opinion particularly valuable. They were actually knowledgeable about the candidates who stood for office. As demonstrated by the story of Marius' election to the military tribunate, the soldiers who were in the know about his qualifications spread knowledge of them throughout the populace and created consensus about his worthiness for the office. Thus, when it came to the election of their commanding officers, military communities possessed a special knowledge about the qualifications of these men that could be passed along to the rest of the electorate through the social networks that Roman soldiery belonged to.⁴⁷³ A strong positive or negative opinion of a military community about a candidate had the ability to enliven an otherwise indifferent populace and make a serious impact in the extremely competitive political contests of the Middle Republic.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷³ Olson (1965) discusses expert knowledge to broader political participation. For its application to the ancient world, particularly to ancient democracies see Ober (2008), 168–210.

⁴⁷⁴ It is also worth mentioning that prior to the end of the second century BCE the majority of the citizens who were serving in the Roman army would have at least been of some means (cf. Nicolet (1980), 92). The poor, as well as the recently freed, were exempt from military service, except in dire circumstances. This would have helped groups of soldiers to participate in electoral politics in two concrete ways. Since soldiers were not poor, it was not an inconvenience to participate occasionally in political matters that were of some concern to them. Going to the city to vote probably did not jeopardize the well-being of a soldier's family. Second, in the *comitia centuriata*, soldiers would not have been relegated to the lowest centuries; rather,

The Refusal of Military Service

The ability for military communities to organize collectively and recruit the support from the populace made them powerful beyond the ballot box as well. This can be seen by looking at the increasing frequency of refusal of military service throughout the second century BCE.⁴⁷⁵ While our sources tend to be sparing in detail when describing large-scale resistance to military service, they demonstrate that soldierly communities played a major role in such activity.

In some of these instances, it was military communities who directly refused to participate in warfare. As discussed in the previous chapter, in the winter of 181/0 BCE the soldiers who had served under Fulvius Flaccus in Spain refused to continue fighting and threatened mutiny if their demands were not heard (Liv. 40.35-6). While the Senate initially seemed reluctant to allow these troops to return home, they sent a full legion to replace the men who had served in Spain for at least six years as well as those who had distinguished themselves in battle.⁴⁷⁶ A similar situation arose in 193, when a large number of soldiers (*milites...frequentes*) who had been serving in the urban legions attempted to gain release from the upcoming campaign against the Ligurians by claiming

they would have been littered throughout various centuries and they would have been able to make their opinion felt during the entirety of the voting process.

⁴⁷⁵ The difficulties with the levy faced by the Romans over the course of the second century BCE have traditionally been attributed to a growing distaste for military service among the Roman citizenry due to the steady decline in *assidui* during this time period (cf. Smith (1958), 5; Taylor (1962), 20–2; Brunt (1971), 396–405; Harris (1979), 48–51). In recent years, however, both the decline in the number of *assidui* (e.g. Rich (1983), 287–331; Rathbone (1993), 121–152; Rosenstein (2004), 3–25) and the aversion for military service (e.g. Harris (1979), 49–50; Rich (1983), 316–8; Cadiou (2009), 23–32; Ligt (2012), 171–2) has been called into question. It seems more reasonable to assume that the events should be seen as reactions to more local circumstances.

⁴⁷⁶ It is possible to infer a similar issue and resolution a few years earlier in 185/4 when Calpurnius Piso and Quinctius Crispinus requested that their soldiers be allowed to return home with them (Liv. 39.38.4–12).

poor health or completion of military service (Liv. 34.56.9). These soldiers appealed to the tribunes to look into their cases, but the Senate immediately declared a *tumultus* and expressly forbade the tribunes from further action without any protest (Liv. 34.56.9-11).⁴⁷⁷

Military communities also had the ability to influence the attitudes of potential recruits towards the levy. The story of the difficult levy of 151 BCE illustrates this effectively (Plb. 35.4.2-14; Liv. *Per.* 48; App. *Iber.* 49; Oros. 4.21.2).⁴⁷⁸ According to Polybius, who was likely an eye-witness to the event, the soldiers who had served under Fulvius Nobilior in Spain and had recently returned home provided the impetus for the evasion of the levy. These men had informed the rest of the populace about the dangers of the war in Spain, emphasizing, in particular, the defeats that they had suffered at the hands of the Celtiberians (Plb. 35.4.2). The information that these soldiers relayed to the Roman people created serious misgivings about military service and a panic spread among potential recruits about serving in Spain (Plb. 35.4.3, 6-7).⁴⁷⁹ This fear was not limited to common soldiers, but also appears to have made an impact on higher ranking officers as well: for the first time in Roman history, the posts of *tribunus militum* and *legatus* went unfilled (Plb. 35.4.5).

⁴⁷⁷ The tribunes seem to have had some role in granting exemptions for military service (cf. Taylor (1962), 21; Briscoe (1981), 137; Evans (1988), 124-5). On multiple occasions, tribunes appear to have been the magistrate who was responsible for intervening on behalf of those who did not want to participate in war (e.g. Liv. 42.32.6-35.2 for the appeal to the tribunes by potential centurions). Brunt (1971), 391 notes how even soldiers who had completed their military service could be levied if necessary.

⁴⁷⁸ Cadiou (2009), 23–32 argues that this episode should be viewed as singular and totally separate from the other instances of resistance to levy during the second century BCE.

⁴⁷⁹ Walbank (1979), 3.646 states that the nature of the situation is exaggerated in order to increase Scipio's glory.

Similar circumstances may well have precipitated the difficulties that the state experienced in recruiting troops to serve in Macedon in 169 BCE (Liv. 43.14.1-11). Despite the popularity of the conflict at its outset in 171, many of the soldiers who had been given furlough returned to Italy and had no intentions of reporting back for service (Liv. 43.14.6-8). It is possible that these dissident soldiers helped to create a sense of fear and anxiety about enrolling in the legions fighting in Macedon just as troops with experience fighting in Spain would do in the case of the war against the Celtiberians more than fifteen years later. Military communities were a powerful force when it came to shaping the attitudes of the Roman people towards the levy. They provided information on the different regions in which they served to their families and friends and were capable of fostering both incredible enthusiasm and intense hatred for war.⁴⁸⁰

Not only did these communities play a major role in the refusal of military service but, more importantly, they were also able to effect changes in the practices and laws related to conscription and the terms of military service. The protests against the levy of 151 effectively illustrate how this happened. As a result of the difficulties with conscription, the state was forced to alter its policy with regard to the levy in the short term.⁴⁸¹ Livy and Appian report that in this year the levy was not conducted in the usual manner; rather, soldiers were enrolled by lot and no exemptions from service were

⁴⁸⁰ Livy 42.32.6 says that at the outset of the Third Macedonian War, there was a strong desire among the Roman people, including former soldiers and centurions, to serve due to the fact that “they saw rich men who had served in the previous Macedonian war or in the war against Antiochus in Asia” (*quia locupletes uidebant, qui priore Macedonico bello aut aduersus Antiochum in Asia stipendia fecerant*) (cf. Rich (1983), 317).

⁴⁸¹ According to Polybius, this crisis was resolved and the general populace’s will to serve in Spain was restored when Scipio Aemilianus volunteered himself to fight in Spain despite having the option to serve in Macedonia instead (Plb. 35.4.8-14). This story about Aemilianus’ bravery and selflessness, however, appears to have obscured another the actual way the matter was resolved.

granted to any individual (App. *Iber.* 49; Liv. *Per.* 48).⁴⁸² Some scholars have viewed this as an attempt by the consuls to enroll potentially unwilling recruits in a forcible manner.⁴⁸³ However, the careful execution of the levy appears to have been, at least in part, a concession to the Roman people. According to Appian, the troops who had recently returned from Spain had voiced their displeasure with the way that the levy had been conducted. They claimed that they had been treated unfairly by the consuls in the enrolment process, explicitly noting that certain individuals were chosen for easier service due to their friendship with various members of the Roman aristocracy (App. *Iber.* 48).⁴⁸⁴ The strict enforcement of the levy, then, not only ensured that the state would have enough troops to fight the war, but also that the enrolment process would be fair to all potential soldiers.

The change in the way that the Roman state conducted the levy shows how pressure from military communities could influence the state's military-based decisions.⁴⁸⁵ This reality is further reinforced by the willingness of the state's leading magistrates to withstand serious political opposition to ensure that the new policy was enforced properly. The two consuls who conducted the levy, Lucius Licinius Lucullus and Aulus Postumius Albinus, were imprisoned by the tribunes because they had not allowed the tribunes to grant exemptions from military service in Spain for their political

⁴⁸² Both Appian and Livy note the service of Scipio in the war and Livy's account appears to have lauded Scipio for his bravery as well.

⁴⁸³ Taylor (1962), 21.

⁴⁸⁴ Sage (2008), 236.

⁴⁸⁵ It is unclear who ultimately made the decision to change the way that the levy was conducted. Appian implies that the Senate was behind the alteration in policy, while Livy suggests that it was the consuls who decided to conduct the levy in a more disciplined manner (Liv. *Per.* 48: *L. Licinius Lucullus A. Postumius Albinus consules cum dilectum severe agerent nec quemquam gratia dimitterent*).

allies (Liv. *Per.* 48).⁴⁸⁶ Even punishment could not force the consuls to reverse course on their decision to implement a more fair levy.

The opinions expressed by the soldiers who had served in Spain, however, did not just result in a one-time alteration in policy. Rather, complaints about the difficulty of the wars in Spain and the unfairness of the levy continued to shape the decisions of Roman magistrates over the next few decades. Our evidence reveals that the state proceeded with caution when enrolling men to serve in Spain, particularly avoiding the drafting of veteran soldiers. Appian says that Fabius Maximus Aemilianus enlisted two legions consisting entirely of new soldiers in 145 so that those who had just served in the wars against Carthage and Macedon would not have to go to Spain (App. *Iber.* 65). Five years later, Quintus Pompeius chose not take any veteran troops with him to Spain and enlisted all new recruits instead (App. *Iber.* 78).⁴⁸⁷ The Roman state, it seems, was prepared to make concessions to veteran military communities, potentially due to concerns about the resistance that they might offer either at home or in the field.⁴⁸⁸

The reduction of the burden of military service was, however, not limited only to veterans. In 140, the former consul, Appius Claudius Pulcher proposed a limitation on the

⁴⁸⁶ This incident is a salutary reminder that the tribunate, as Bleicken (1955) and Thommen (1989) have shown, was, by the time of the Middle Republic, an office that did not look after popular rights, but rather used their magistracy as a political tool. This interpretation is at odds with Taylor (1962), 21–2 who reads the scene as an act of revolutionary politics by the tribunes, interpreting the behavior of the magistrates as an attempt to stop the undesirable levy in its tracks. Her analysis dismisses the account of Appian which asserts that the reason for the levy was the complaints of the soldiers and the fact that Livy attests that the reason for the tribune's action was that they wanted their friends to gain exemptions from service.

⁴⁸⁷ As Evans (1988), 125–6 notes, both these campaigns turned out poorly and the new troops did not fare well in either situation.

⁴⁸⁸ North (1983), 321; Evans (1988), 127. Astin (1967), 172 suggests that the tribunes imprisoned in 151 were jailed because they had attempted to gain exemption from the levy for certain veterans, though there is no evidence for this fact.

number of levies held annually (Liv. *Epit. Oxyrh.* 54). Similarly, Scipio Aemilianus chose not to hold a levy for his campaign against the Numantines in 134 on account of the state's war-weariness and, instead, recruited volunteers to serve in his army (App. *Iber.* 84). Plutarch claims that in the following year, Tiberius Gracchus, in his bid for reelection to the tribunate proposed legislation that aimed to reduce the length of military service (Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 17.1). It remains unclear whether any law was passed as a result of his proposal, but it appears that at some point in the next twenty-five years, multiple pieces of legislation proposing similar solutions were enacted. According to Asconius, Spurius Albinus, the consul of 109, is reported to have nullified several recent laws which reduced the standard term of military service (Asc. *Corn.* 68).⁴⁸⁹

The attempts to ensure that the levy was conducted fairly continued as well. In 138, the tribunes, Gaius Curiatius and Spurius Licinius, after failing to procure exemptions from service in Spain for their political allies, threw the consuls, Publius Cornelius Nasica and Decimus Junius Brutus, in jail (Liv. *Per.* 55; *Epit. Oxyrh.* 55; Cic. *de Leg.* 3.20).⁴⁹⁰ The sources imply that Curiatius and Licinius were acting in contravention of the general clamor for a more equitable levy. The heavily fragmentary Oxyrhynchus version of the *Periochae* suggests that the punishment was overturned due to popular support (*Epit. Oxyrh.* 55: *precibus populi multa re[missa...]*). While it is unclear as to whether this incident indicates a one-time re-implementation of the levy by lot or its continuous usage from 151, the use of the policy further reinforces that magistrates

⁴⁸⁹ North (1983), 319-320.

⁴⁹⁰ Quintus Cicero in the dialogue, while inveighing against the tribunate, incorrectly notes that this was the first time that this had ever happened.

continued to remain vigilant about concerns that military communities had voiced in the past.

The policy changes that were authored in reaction to the resistance to the levy are important for understanding the way that popular power functioned at Rome. It is generally acknowledged that a major limitation of the power of the Roman people was the fact that they participated minimally in the legislative process.⁴⁹¹ Though all legislation was subject to an up-or-down vote of a popular assembly, only elected magistrates could propose laws and the debates about the nature of such proposals were held behind the closed doors of the *curia*. The Roman people had no official authority to formulate and promulgate laws that served their own interests. While all of the above is true, the legislative changes that were made as a result of resistance to military service reveal another way in which the Roman people could make their voice heard. In formulating and proposing legislation, senators and magistrates were definitely not impervious to popular pressure in the form of protest and dissent.

It was, however, not easy to foment such popular pressure in the Middle Republican period. Popular pressure of a political sort required not only group coordination, but also that the matter be of some consequence to the senatorial aristocracy. In the case of resistance to the levy, the issue was of consequence to the aristocracy because war could not be fought without the physical or metaphorical support of the Roman people. As Polybius notes in Book 6, the most important of all the powers granted to the Roman people was their ability to declare war and make peace (Plb.

⁴⁹¹ Mouritsen (2001), 46-56, 63-5. Morstein-Marx (2004), 124-131 offers a different point of view which sees the *contio* as a way to debate the content of laws actively.

6.14.10-11). When voting on whether a proposed war was to be pursued (or a peace treaty was to be ratified), the Roman citizenry would gather in the *comitia centuriata* assembled in the guise of an army and, as potential participants in the conflict, vote on whether they were willing to risk life and limb in the war at-hand.⁴⁹² The Roman state could only declare war with the consent of those who had to shoulder its burdens. And their consent was by no means a given. In 200 BCE, in the immediate aftermath of the Second Punic War, in spite of strong senatorial support, the Roman people unanimously voted against starting a new war in Macedon (Liv. 31.6).⁴⁹³ Though the war was later approved by a second vote of the *comitia centuriata*, a long speech from Publius Sulpicius, the consul assigned to Macedonia, was required to convince the Roman people to change their opinion on the proposal (Liv. 31.7).⁴⁹⁴ Resistance to the levy was an effective extension of this right of refusal. It provided the Roman people the opportunity to voice their disapproval of ongoing wars in addition to prospective wars.⁴⁹⁵ Further, by the second century BCE war had become the lifeblood of aristocratic identity; it was necessary for senatorial men hoping to distinguish themselves and earn the honors

⁴⁹² Millar (1984), 4–5; Mouritsen (2014), 153.

⁴⁹³ Briscoe (1973), 70-1 argues decisively against the view that the initial rejection of the war-vote is Livy's falsification. In fact, he traces the vote to Scipionic opposition to the war and the reluctance of the veterans to serve (cf. Liv. 31.8.6, 31.15.2, 32.3.3).

⁴⁹⁴ Harris (1979), 41-2. It should also be noted that the *populus Romanus* did not only have the power to prevent the state from entering into wars which it disapproved, but it also had the ability to push the state into wars which the Senate seemed uneager to pursue. In 264 and 222, the *comitia centuriata* voted in favor of war proposals that were generally unpopular among Roman senators.

⁴⁹⁵ As Harris (1979), 42 notes, the war votes became *pro forma* in the second century and one is led to wonder whether this change in policy may have had an impact on the increasing rate at which Roman soldiers resisted the levy.

required for advancement in the highly competitive political arena.⁴⁹⁶ The state's leading magistrates were motivated to listen to the complaints of soldiers and attempted to alter policies in ways that made military service more amenable to potential recruits precisely because their own careers were at risk in the process.

Thinking of the activity of military communities at home in this light helps us to comprehend both the efficacy of their actions at home and the relative rarity of such behavior among other groups in the Republican period. Roman military communities, due to their cohesiveness, organization and strength in numbers, were uniquely positioned to take collective action in order to ensure that their interests were looked after. Such realities made them a potentially powerful political unit.

Military Communities and Land Reform

The changes in policy regarding military service were not the only reforms that benefited Roman soldiers over the last two centuries of the Republic. The livelihood of large numbers of former soldiers also changed for the better as a result of the passage of a number of bills that granted land to veteran soldiers during the first century BCE. Scholars have tended to see these bills as being facilitated by successful generals in order to maintain the loyalty and political support of their troops.⁴⁹⁷ Within this interpretive framework, the bills played “a central role in the shift of legionary loyalty from the Senate and the state to the series of individual military dynasts.”⁴⁹⁸ While it is undeniable

⁴⁹⁶ Rosenstein (1990b), 255–265; Hölkeskamp (2010), 77–95 have demonstrated that the Middle Republic was effectively an “aristocracy of office.”

⁴⁹⁷ E.g. Mommsen (1881), 3.188; Gabba (1976), 20–69; Brunt (1988), 257–261; Broadhead (2007), 157–8. Gruen (1974), 387–8; Keaveney (2007), 57–70 are more skeptical about the frequency of these grants and whether soldiers came to expect their commanders to provide land for them.

⁴⁹⁸ Broadhead (2007), 158.

that some of Rome's most successful generals did play an important part in the passage of such legislation, the role of "military dynasts" in the passage of these land bills has been overstated. Looking closely at the circumstances in which these laws were successfully proposed and implemented reveals the major role played by veterans and discharged soldiers in these affairs. The ability of Roman military communities to both come out in large numbers for the vote and frame political discourse in light of their own interests was ultimately what ensured that their needs were met.

Before discussing the role played by the Roman soldiers in these events, it is important to do away with the traditional belief that the settlement of veterans in colonies was a phenomenon introduced by powerful generals in the aftermath of the Marian reforms.⁴⁹⁹ Rather, as scholars have recently demonstrated, the settlement of veterans occurred throughout most of the second century BCE. It now appears that many of the Latin colonies founded during the first twenty years of the second century BCE acted as settlements for veteran soldiers and that generals settled their troops in *de facto* colonies in Italy and abroad throughout the era.⁵⁰⁰ In light of this new evidence, it has been argued that Tiberius Gracchus' infamous land bill had the veterans who had just finished serving in Numantia as one of its intended beneficiaries.⁵⁰¹ Caution is required when making claims about the role of military dynasts in the practice of settling time-served veterans

⁴⁹⁹ Scholars (e.g. Salmon (1970), 109–112; Schneider (1977), 257; Broadhead (2007), 148–163) have generally argued that aside from the one-time allotment of land to the soldiers in Scipio's army in 200/199, earlier Roman colonization efforts had little to do with Roman soldiers.

⁵⁰⁰ Erdkamp (2011), 113–5 had viewed the Latin colonies in the early second century BCE as evidence of veteran settlement. Tweedie (2011), 461–471 has discussed the settlement of Roman troops in areas in which they served throughout the second century.

⁵⁰¹ Tweedie (2011), 471–3.

and allow for the possibility that there may have been other groups and people involved in the process.

When the evidence for land allotment for veterans from Marius onwards is considered without presuming that powerful generals were the key drivers in these processes, the active role played by military communities in ensuring the passage of these laws becomes apparent. Take, for example, the veteran land grant bill that was passed after the successful completion of the war with the Cimbri and the Teutones in 100 BCE.⁵⁰² Our sources indicate that military communities acted collectively on several occasions to ensure that the legislation was passed. They began these efforts by attempting to root any potential obstruction to the measures that were to be proposed by killing Saturninus' rival tribune, Aulus Nunnius (*Liv. Per. 69: per milites occiso A. Nunnio competitore tribunus plebis*).⁵⁰³ This unrest, however, was only a precursor to what would ensue once the bill was put to a vote. After Saturninus proposed the bill, Appian says that he sent messengers to rural districts surrounding Rome and was confident that the soldiers from Marius' army would show up to support the bill on the day of the vote (*App. BCiv. 1.29; Plut. Mar. 28.6*).⁵⁰⁴ Saturninus saw the military communities that had returned from service as the means by which he could secure the

⁵⁰² Three years earlier, a different bill was successfully passed that granted land to the veterans from the Jugurthine War in Africa (cf. [Aur. Vict.] *De vir. ill.* 73.1; Brunt (1971), 577-580 for a full discussion and bibliography). When the bill was met with opposition by one of the tribunes, violence ensued and forced the tribune to withdraw his veto. While the violence is described by Aurelius as *facta per populum*, it is possible that the *populus* who took exception to the tribunician veto may well have been the soldiers who had served in Africa with Marius and had recently returned to Rome to celebrate their commander's triumph (*Liv. Per. 67*). Despite the evidence about the involvement of the *populus* and Saturninus, Marius is totally absent from the narrative.

⁵⁰³ *App. BCiv. 1.28* offers a different account of events, claiming that Nunnius was stabbed by Saturninus and Glaucia along with a bunch of thugs.

⁵⁰⁴ Gabba (1967), 103-4; Gabba (1976), 24

passage of the bill. Further, he trusted that the troops were interested and organized enough to come to Rome in large numbers to support the law. However, the troops did more than just provide the necessary numbers needed to secure the passage of the bill. According to Appian, there was significant opposition to the proposal not only from the senatorial elite, but also from the urban plebs (App. *BCiv.* 1.30). When Saturninus attempted to continue proceedings in spite of a bad omen, he and his supporters were driven out of the *comitia* by a mob of urban plebs armed with clubs and sticks. The soldiers, however, were not deterred by this and, instead, rallied around Saturninus and attacked the bill's detractors with their own makeshift weaponry (App. *BCiv.* 1.30; Plut. *Mar.* 29.1). After the urban plebs had been driven out, Saturninus reconvened the assembly and the bill was passed.

While the soldiers acted forcefully in conjunction with Saturninus to ensure that the bill would pass, the role played by Marius in the affair is less certain than most modern scholars have suggested.⁵⁰⁵ In the narrative of events provided by Plutarch and Appian, it is Saturninus who takes center stage while Marius is relegated to a supporting role.⁵⁰⁶ In fact, there are undertones in our sources that suggest that he may not have even been in favor of the bill's passage. For instance, Plutarch says that Marius offered a speech against the proposal in Senate, claiming that the provision of an oath of support for the legislation was completely untenable. Plutarch explains Marius' opposition to the law by claiming that he was trying to lure his rival, Metellus, into a political trap (Plut. *Mar.* 30.2). But there is good reason to question the explanation offered by Plutarch. His

⁵⁰⁵ Contra Kildahl (1968), 128–9; Santangelo (2015), 58–62.

⁵⁰⁶ Santangelo (2015), 61–2. Badian (1984), 101–147 remains the best discussion of the politics and relationships of Saturninus' tribunate.

account of the affair comes from Publius Rutilius Rufus, who was a staunch opponent of Marius and whose historical works were notoriously hostile to the six-time consul (Plut. *Mar.* 28.5).⁵⁰⁷ It would make sense that Rufus would have tried to align his personal enemy with a law that was responsible for so much disruption and violence throughout the city.

There is only one piece of evidence that explicitly connects Marius to the legislation. This is the inclusion of a provision in the law that supposedly allowed Marius to elevate three people in each colony to the status of Roman citizen (Cic. *Balb.* 48). Some scholars have viewed this as evidence of Marius' involvement in crafting the legislation.⁵⁰⁸ It is possible, however, that this provision was Saturninus' attempt to incentivize Marius to lend his support to the bill. Such an interpretation seems to be more consonant with the general apathy and absence of Marius in the events surrounding the passage of the law. It makes more sense, especially if Tiberius Gracchus' land bill was, in fact, intended for the settlement of veterans, to view the bill as an attempt by Saturninus to work in the tradition of his tribunician predecessors. Indeed, much of Saturninus' other legislation echoed the reforms of the Gracchi and he was a major supporter of L. Equitius, a candidate for the tribunate who falsely claimed to be the son of Tiberius Gracchus, (Cic. *Sest.* 101; Val. Max. 3.8.6).⁵⁰⁹ Regardless of whether Marius was responsible for the legislation, it is notable that while both he and Saturninus suffered

⁵⁰⁷ Lintott (1994), 100; Cornell (2013), 285–9 discuss Publius Rutilius Rufus as a historian and his biases, as a source.

⁵⁰⁸ Santangelo (2015), 61.

⁵⁰⁹ Lintott (1994), 97; Santangelo (2015), 60.

significant political repercussions for the episode, the provisions of the law were still enacted.⁵¹⁰

That the communities of soldiers had a major impact on veteran settlement is reinforced by the attempts made to settle Pompey's soldiers after his various campaigns.⁵¹¹ Unlike Marius, it seems clear that Pompey took a keen interest in settling his soldiers after the completion of their military service. However, it was the presence of these soldiers that ultimately determined the success of such measures. In 70 BCE, the *lex Plotia agraria* was passed with the hopes of settling the veterans who had served under Pompey during the Sertorian War (Cic. *ad Att.* 1.18.6; Plut. *Luc.* 34.4).⁵¹² The bill was passed into law under exceptional circumstances. Both Pompey and Crassus had refused to disband their armies and kept them encamped just outside the city walls to ensure that they would both be awarded a triumph and given a consulship (App. *BCiv.* 1.121; Plut. *Crass.* 12.3-4; Plut. *Pomp.* 23.1-2). The soldiers who served with Pompey and Crassus allegedly remained in and around the city for the entirety of their magistracy, leading to concerns amongst the people that another civil war might well break out between the two powerful men.⁵¹³ Consequently, Pompey's soldiers would have been present when the bill was proposed and it seems reasonable to think that they voted in favor of it. The case

⁵¹⁰ Passerini (1934), 350-2; Brunt (1971), 577.

⁵¹¹ Between Marius and Pompey, Sulla's veterans also received land after they were discharged from service. There is no information about the circumstances that conditioned the settlement of Sulla's veterans (cf. (Thein (2010), 81) and, as a result, there is no mention of pressure or protest from his soldiers. Not too much should be read into this, given the absence of evidence, it is certainly possible that they had some influence or impact on Sulla's legislative agenda as dictator.

⁵¹² Smith (1957), 82-5; Gabba (1976), 151-3.

⁵¹³ Vanderbroeck (1987), 222 discusses this incident as an example of collective action within the city of Rome.

for the participation of the soldiers in the passage of the law is strengthened by the fact that the Senate was slow to implement its provisions; Dio claims that over ten years later, in 59 BCE, no progress had been made in realizing the law's provisions (Dio 38.5.2). The lack of progress is coincident with the absence of Pompey's soldiers from the Italian peninsula, as many had been called back into duty to serve under Pompey in the wars with the Cilician pirates and Mithradates.⁵¹⁴ Without any pressure from the soldiers or Pompey, the Senate had little incentive to see that the provisions of the law were enforced.

The essential role played by military communities in the passage of such legislation is underscored further by the failed attempts of Pompey and his political allies to settle his veterans from the eastern campaigns. The Rullan land bill of 63 BCE, which aimed to secure land for Pompey's veterans before they returned home from service, failed despite the support of many powerful senators and the rest of the populace.⁵¹⁵ There were hopes that Pompey's return to Rome from the East would ensure the passage of legislation for the benefit of his veterans. In 60 BCE, a bill backed by Pompey, which sought to settle both the urban poor and veterans from his eastern campaigns, was proposed by the tribune, Flavius.⁵¹⁶ However, even Pompey, at the height of his popularity, was not able to ensure that the passage of the bill. The absence of veteran

⁵¹⁴ Smith (1957), 82-3.

⁵¹⁵ The bill was controversial, as evidenced by Cicero's discussion of the law. Gelzer (1968), 42-5; Gruen (1974), 389-395; Ward (1977), 152-162; Wiseman (1994), 351-3; Crawford (1996), 2.757-9 offer modern treatments of the legislation.

⁵¹⁶ On this attempt at legislation, see Cic. *Ad Att.* 1.18.6, 1.19.4, 2.1.6; Plut. *Luc.* 42.6, *Cato* 31.1 (cf. Brunt (1971), 312-6; Gruen (1974), 396; Greenhalgh (1980), 195-7). It is unclear what exactly Keaveney (2007), 63 is referring to when he claims that after the bill failed that Pompey's troops returned to their homes.

soldiers in both failed attempts is notable. Rullus' land bill was proposed while Pompey's soldiers were still fighting against Mithridates and Flavius' proposal occurred more than a year after the legions from the East had been allowed to return to their homes.

The matter was finally resolved in the following year with the passage of the *lex Iulia agraria*. The law, which was proposed by Caesar, the consul of 59 BCE, attempted to address some of the sticking points of the Rullan and Flavian land bills. Nevertheless, it still met with opposition, particularly from Lucullus, Cato and Caesar's consular colleague, Bibulus (Plut. *Pomp.* 48.1).⁵¹⁷ Faced with the prospect of having a land bill for his veterans defeated for a third time, Pompey called his former soldiers into the city. The veterans arrived *en masse* and put an end to the obstruction surrounding the bill through physical violence (Plut. *Pomp.* 48.1-3; App. *BCiv.* 2.10). They flung feces at Bibulus and wounded two tribunes who were not supportive of the bill. After they had driven out their opponents, they voted in favor of the bill and ensured its passage. What emerges from the various land laws proposed under Marius and Pompey is that the physical presence of former soldiers was a critical factor in the success of these bills. Because of their physical presence and their ability to organize and act collectively, military communities, even more so than their influential commanders, were capable of overcoming strong senatorial opposition to land bills.

Caesar's soldiers continued the tradition of the activism of Roman military communities in the issue of veteran settlement. In 47 BCE, soldiers who were stationed in

⁵¹⁷ Gelzer (1968), 71-4; Gruen (1974), 397-403; Greenhalgh (1980), 203-211; Meier (1995), 207-213 provide thorough discussions of the buildup to the law and its various provisions. Crawford (1996), 2.763-7 argues that certain provisions of the legislation remain intact in *Lex Mamilia Roscia Peducaea Alliena Fabia*.

Campania mutinied against Sallust, the praetor in command of the outpost, and marched to Rome to air their grievances with Caesar (Dio. 42.52.1-4; App. *BCiv.* 2.92-3). There is some confusion in our sources as to the substance of their complaints, but if the resolution of the matter is indicative of anything, one of the major issues broached was the distribution of land to time-served veterans.⁵¹⁸ As a result of the disruption, four legions were discharged from service and provisioned with land. Three years later, in the immediate aftermath of Caesar's assassination, his veterans assembled in the city and made clear that there would be severe repercussions if the land promised to them was confiscated (App. *BCiv.* 2.125). The threats of the soldiers were not in vain and, despite the obvious animosity of Brutus and Cassius towards Caesar, the Liberators nonetheless confirmed his *acta* and assured the soldiers that they would receive everything that was promised to them (App. *BCiv.* 2.126).

Looking more closely at the role played by military communities in the passage of veteran land bills reveals that the traditional narrative of these events is in need of significant reconsideration. Scholars have overemphasized the role played by powerful generals and, concomitantly, underemphasized the agency and power of communities of soldiers in these political processes. The physical presence of military communities at Rome was integral to the passage of these land bills. Even the most powerful of generals struggled to pass such legislation without the help of their soldiers. Indeed, it appears as if powerful figures made the passage of veteran settlement bills more difficult because

⁵¹⁸ Chrissanthos (2001), 63–75 argues persuasively that the repercussions of the situation indicate that the mutiny of Caesar's troops in 47 BCE was more serious than the sources suggest. See also Brunt (1971), 320 for a similar point of view. Keppie (1983), 49–58 details Caesar's programs of veteran settlement as dictator.

their personal attachment to the law made it a potential target for their enemies. This is demonstrated powerfully by the fact that the laws which provided land to veterans in the case of Gracchus, Saturninus and Caesar were carried out even when the individual responsible for the passage of the bill had been murdered. Soldiers were not mere passive recipients of land from their commanders, but were active and essential participants in the political process necessary to obtain the land.

Conclusion

In 87 BCE, Cinna, the sitting consul, had been driven out of Rome by his opponents after a violent political battle erupted over the tribal distribution of the recently enfranchised Italians.⁵¹⁹ In response to his banishment from Rome, Cinna attempted to foment a large-scale insurgence against his enemies at home, calling on slaves throughout the Roman countryside to free themselves and inciting Campanian towns to rebel (App. *BCiv.* 1.65). In response to these actions, the Senate stripped Cinna of his consulship and his citizenship as well (App. *BCiv.* 1.65). Immediately following the Senate's decree, Cinna approached Roman troops stationed at Capua who were at the time serving under Appius Claudius and made an emotional appeal to them *in contione* (Liv. *Per.* 79). Cinna claimed that he had received his consular authority from the soldiers themselves and that the Senate's decision to strip him of that power was done without their consent (App. *BCiv.* 1.65). If they did not act to reaffirm their power, the Senate would never have reason to respect the power of the *populus Romanus* in the future. After finishing the speech, Cinna rent his garments and threw himself on ground. The soldiers responded

⁵¹⁹ Lovano (2002), 32–8; Morstein-Marx (2011), 262–3 discuss the historical circumstances surrounding the event.

well to Cinna's histrionics, picking him up off the ground and placing him on the *sella curulis* with the promise that they would do whatever was needed to ensure that he remained consul (App. *BCiv.* 1.66).

If Appian's narrative is taken at face value, Cinna's words and actions reveal a level of political awareness on the part of the soldiers. Indeed, Cinna's seems to expect that the soldiers would not only believe themselves to be an essential part of the electorate but also understand the importance of the matter from a constitutional point of view.⁵²⁰ However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the level of knowledge that Roman soldiers had about constitutional issues and Appian's ability to convey accurately such knowledge are up for debate. However, in light of the present chapter, what is on more stable ground is that when Cinna communed with these soldiers, he would have been aware of a long tradition of the power that military communities possessed in politics. Cinna, like many of the leaders who jockeyed for power over the last century of the Republic, appealed to the Roman army knowing full-well of its potential as a political force and aimed to use it for his advantage.

⁵²⁰ Morstein-Marx (2011), 264–270 (see also his discussion of this issue in the case of Caesar in Morstein-Marx (2007), 159–178; Morstein-Marx (2009), 115–140).

CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

“Theirs not to make reply,/theirs not to reason why,/theirs but to do and die” wrote Tennyson in 1854 of the 600 British cavalrymen who charged into battle despite the knowledge that their marching orders were effectively a death sentence.⁵²¹ In immortalizing the unwavering patriotism and bravery of these troops, Tennyson located their excellence in their ability to perform the task at hand without questioning the orders of their commander. Tennyson’s discussion of soldierly virtue should sound familiar to Roman historians; the model for many of the European fighting forces in the eighteenth and nineteenth century was the Roman army and its emphasis on discipline, order and obedience.⁵²² Indeed, the leaders of these armies were not alone in their interest and admiration for how the Roman army functioned. From Polybius in the second century BCE to Delbrück in the twentieth century CE, scholars, both ancient and modern, have devoted significant energy to understanding how Rome’s army was able to work so effectively, examining its organization, hierarchy, recruitment, tactics and ideology in detail. In this close study of the structures and systems of the Roman army, as in Tennyson’s poem, soldiers have been relegated to the role of mere cogs in a larger military machine and their motivations, interests and goals beyond their military duties

⁵²¹ Tennyson, *Charge of the Light Brigade* vv. 13-15.

⁵²² Messer (1920), 160-2; de Landtsheer (2001), 101-122; James (2002), 7-11.

were of little concern.

Over the last fifty years, due in large part to changing perceptions about warfare after the two World Wars, studies of the Roman army have begun to focus more on the social history of the institution. One of the primary developments has been the realization that Roman armies were not just fighting forces, but they were mobile communities made up of individuals with their own interests and motivations. The ample epigraphic, papyrological and archaeological evidence that has been excavated from military bases of the Imperial period has helped scholars to get a sense of the nature of these communities. Scholars have been able to analyze the daily lives of soldiers, their relationship with one another and their relationship to the places that they inhabited.

The current project has sought to add to the rich scholarship on this topic by examining the phenomenon of military communities during the Republic. It argues that the nature and ideology of Roman military service created a sense of community among soldiers on campaign from the third century BCE onwards (Chapter 1). These feelings of community made them powerful as a group. They were capable of acting collectively to protect the social and economic interests of the group while on campaign and were willing to take on Roman power structures in order to do so (Chapter 3). Further, the agency and power that military communities possessed did not dissipate when they returned home. Rather, they continued to act collectively, particularly in political matters, to ensure that their concerns were heard (Chapter 4).

Further, this project has demonstrated that, in spite of the claims of our sources, Roman camps were not hermetically sealed, soldier-only zones. Beyond the connections that Roman soldiers established with one another, they also developed relationships with

the various non-combatants that they met while on campaign (Chapter 2). In fact, some of the bonds that were created, particularly those with local women, ultimately led to the integration of Roman soldiers within local communities and laid the foundation for Roman settlements in the region. The Roman armies of the Republican period were not just effective fighting forces, but they were dynamically constructed communities that had a significant impact on various social, economic and political aspects of the Roman world as well.

A word of caution needs to be offered with these conclusions. The point of this work is not to imply that previous understandings of the Republican army, its structures and ideology are completely misguided. The goal of this project is to problematize the traditional view of the armies of the Republican period as ruthlessly efficient and disciplined fighting machines. Roman armies were made up of human beings that had their own needs, concerns and goals. Entrance into military life did not magically transform men into fighting machines; they still made connections with the people that they lived and worked with; they still sought the same comforts, both emotional and physical, that they enjoyed at home and they were willing and able to stand up and fight for themselves. Further, the point of discussing various instances of collective action taken by soldiers is not to imply that the army was constantly resisting Roman power structures. Rather, it is to show that the effectiveness and power that Roman armies had as a fighting unit could influence other aspects of the Roman world as well.

Broader Implications

Beyond the specific conclusions drawn about the nature of Roman military communities during the Republic, the project has made contributions to the broader study

of Roman history as well. First, the dissertation suggests that the differences between the armies of Republican and Imperial periods are not great as often suggested. In particular, many aspects of military service that are seen as characteristic of the Imperial period were anticipated in the Republic. Prolonged periods of service in stationary camps, the close connection between armies and local communities and the development of unique legionary cultures all existed during the Republic, with some even appearing as early as the third century BCE. While the Augustan military reforms undoubtedly marked a watershed moment in the development of the Roman army, at least some of the changes that were made were either codifications of practices already in place or large-scale applications of practices employed in specific regions.⁵²³

The second major contribution of this project relates to the study of popular power in the Roman world. First, it provides new insights for historians of the Republic who have debated the nature of popular power during this period for the last thirty years.⁵²⁴ Previous studies, however, have focused primarily on the institutions and constitutional mechanisms of the Roman state and their limitations. This work has shown that there are other ways in which popular power was exercised during this period. Soldiers in the Roman army stood up to their commanders and the Senate through acts of insubordination and disobedience and, when they returned home, they significantly influenced legislative matters by applying pressure through their physical presence. These findings also highlight the importance of shared identity in the effective expression of popular power. Even when working within constitutional frameworks as in the case of

⁵²³ Raaflaub (1980), 1005-1025; Keppie (1984), 146-8; Gillver (2007), 184-8.

⁵²⁴ See Chapter 4, pp. 193, n. 463 for a condensed bibliography of this debate.

their participation in the elections of their officers, it was the ability of Roman soldiers to show up as a group that made them effective.

Further, the project demonstrates that manifestations of popular power should not be viewed in a vacuum. The increasing frequency of collective action undertaken by Roman soldiers against their commanders in the first century BCE occurred in a broader context of dissent. The fellow countrymen of many of these soldiers protested violently against Roman rule in the Social War, the Third Servile War and the Catilinarian conspiracy. Further, these soldiers were introduced to the burgeoning culture of popular dissent in the *contio* by military officers who relied on these methods for political support. If one wants to be more ambitious, it could even be argued that these soldiers, who were eye-witnesses to resistance against Rome in the first two Servile Wars, the Jugurthine War and the Mithridatic Wars, took inspiration from more global contexts of resistance against Rome. Thus, when it comes to assertions of popular power, it is essential to look beyond the local circumstances that conditioned it and consider how they might have been related to or inspired by similar contemporaneous movements.

The third broader contribution of this project is that it problematizes one of the most widely held explanations of the fall of the Republic. From Mommsen to Badian to Brunt, the rise of client armies – armies that were totally dependent on their commanders for social advancement – has been seen as one of the key factors that destabilized the Republic throughout the course of the first century BCE. This study, however, has shown that Roman armies cannot be considered as pawns in the hands of powerful generals; they were communities that were capable of engaging in collective action in order to ensure that their needs were addressed and their interests were protected. Beyond that, the

project has demonstrated that, during the Late Republican period, Roman military communities engaged more frequently in various forms of insubordination and disobedience than ever before. Even generals who were purported to have close relationships with their soldiers faced challenges from their armies; the historical record indicates that there were at least three large-scale mutinies against Caesar in an eleven-year period. Simply put, there was no guarantee that any Roman army would do the bidding of their general as the term “client army” might suggest. Perhaps, then, it is better to consider the loyalty of Caesar and Sulla’s troops as the exception rather than the rule.

Possibilities for Further Research

This project has touched on many areas which warrant further investigation. For example, there is ample room for more discussion about the nature and character of the connections that Roman soldiers developed with local communities during the Republican period. Future research could consider how the use of troops recruited locally, the so-called *externa auxilia*, in Roman armies fostered relationships between soldiers and indigenous communities. Prag’s recent arguments about how *externa auxilia* created connections between Roman commanders and local elites need not only apply to officer class.⁵²⁵

More broadly, in-depth studies about the lives of soldiers who settled in Spain, Gaul and Greece after they had been dismissed from service and, in particular, the bonds that they formed with local communities could be profitably connected with recent work on the nature of provinces under the Republic.⁵²⁶ This type of investigation would

⁵²⁵ Prag (2015), 281-294.

⁵²⁶ E.g. Kallet-Marx (1995); Prag (2011), 83-94; Hurlet (2015), 165-184.

provide a much needed social historical focus to the current research which has primarily focused on the administration of these provinces. This would also help to provide a broader perspective on the nature of the transition from hegemony to empire that occurred throughout the Republic as well as the role that Roman soldiers played in creating a sense of provincial loyalty.⁵²⁷

This dissertation has also begun to examine the larger culture of popular power in the Roman world. It has shown that the increasing frequency of mutiny during the first century BCE is best viewed in the context of other acts of dissent such as the Social War and the Third Servile War. Looking for similar connections in other periods of Roman history seems a promising area for future study. In addition to fleshing out our understanding of the ways in which assertions of popular power were related to one another, such examinations can also provide new insights on events that have been discussed in great detail. What, for example, can be made of the fact that the mutinies that occurred against Tiberius and Drusus in Pannonia and Germanicus in Germany happened at roughly the same time as Bato's revolt in the former province and Arminius' in the latter? A large number of the soldiers fighting in the Roman armies that mutinied would have known people who were fighting in the resistance movement. Were the mutinies a subtle form of resistance against Roman acts of aggression against their fellow countrymen? Did they reflect the penetration of an ideology of resistance into these armies?

In addition to identifying explicit connections between the groups participating in

⁵²⁷ Ando (2000), 131-174 remains the iconic discussion of the creation of a sense of consensus and provincial loyalty under the Empire.

different resistance movements, it is also worth considering how the notoriety and publicity of large-scale resistance and dissent would have influenced like-minded movements. To what extent did they influence and inspire other groups to follow their lead? Did groups look to historical precedents in shaping and modeling their dissent? Did success of certain forms of dissent lead to their increasing occurrence and, alternatively, did failure lead to a decrease in their frequency?

The possibilities for related research listed above are manifold, but they all relate to the same fundamental question: in what ways did non-elite members of the Roman world shape Rome's empire? This question has been the central concern of this dissertation as well. This work has shown that the interests and motivation of the men who served in the Roman army cannot be considered merely as a footnote to Roman history, but key drivers in the ways in which Rome's imperial rule developed. Their job was certainly more than just "to do and die."

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