

Financing War in the Roman Republic

201 BCE-14 CE

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Abstract

This dissertation is concerned with the financing and evolution of the Roman army after the Second Punic War (218-201 BCE). For several decades, most scholars thought that the second century BCE witnessed a demographic decline that ultimately led to a shortage of citizens possessing enough property to meet the minimum threshold for military service. This would have led to the so-called 'Marian reform' that supposedly created a professional army. This study challenges several well-established ideas concerning this theory and other hypotheses related to the development of the army in the late Republic. By looking at the financial and social realities of military service for Roman citizens, this dissertation aims to provide a more nuanced picture of the transformation process between a militia and a standing army. Instead of looking at Marius as a reformer, this study argues that it is the period of the civil wars that most decisively altered the traditional structure of the Republican army, a development that was finalized under Augustus.

Résumé

La présente thèse traite du financement et de l'évolution de l'armée romaine dans la période postérieure à la Deuxième Guerre punique (218-201 av. notre ère). Depuis plusieurs décennies, la plupart des historiens ont pensé que le deuxième siècle avant notre ère fut marqué par un déclin démographique qui amena éventuellement à une pénurie de citoyens possédant un avoir suffisant pour être considérés éligibles à la mobilisation. Cela aurait amené à la soi-disant « réforme de Marius » qui aurait selon certains créé une armée professionnelle. Cette étude remet en question plusieurs idées reliées à cette théorie ainsi que d'autres hypothèses ayant trait au développement de l'armée romaine à la fin de l'époque républicaine. En examinant l'impact social et économique du service militaire pour les citoyens romains, cette thèse propose une théorie plus nuancée du processus de transformation entre une armée de milice et une armée professionnelle. Loin de percevoir Marius en tant que réformateur, cette étude propose plutôt que c'est la période des guerres civiles qui fut la période charnière qui modifia de façon décisive la structure traditionnelle de l'armée républicaine. Ce fut ensuite Auguste qui compléta et officialisa ce développement.

Zusammenfassung

Diese Dissertation behandelt die Entwicklung und Finanzierung der römischen Armee nach der Zeit des Zweiten Punischen Krieges (218-201 v.Chr.). Seit einigen Jahrzehnten geht die Mehrheit der Forscher davon aus, dass im zweiten Jahrhundert ein Bevölkerungsschwund in Italien stattgefunden habe. Dieses Phänomen soll letztendlich einen Mangel an vermögenden Bürgern ausgelöst haben, die genug besessen hätten, um wehrpflichtig zu sein. Das Ergebnis dieser Krise war dann die sogenannte Marianische Reform, die, in Antwort auf die Krise, ein Berufsheer geschaffen haben soll. Die folgende Untersuchung ficht viele Voraussetzungen dieser Sichtweise sowie eine Reihe von weiteren Hypothesen an, die mit der Entwicklung der spätrepublikanischen Armee verbunden sind. Durch die Erforschung der sozialen und ökonomischen Auswirkungen des Militärdiensts für römische Bürger schlägt diese Dissertation eine nuancierte Interpretation des Wandlungsprozesses vom Milizheer in ein Berufsheer vor. Statt Marius als grandiosen Reformers zu sehen, zeigt diese Studie, dass es erst das Zeitalter der Bürgerkriege war, in dem die republikanische Struktur der Armee entscheidend verändert wurde. Dieser Prozess wurde unter Augustus abgeschlossen und in Form einer neuen Heeresordnung institutionalisiert.

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Table of Contents

Abstract/ Résumé/ Zusammenfassung	i-iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
Introduction	1
Chapter 1 Financing War and the Financial Attractiveness of Military Service	12
1-Sources and Figures for Property Qualifications	13
1.1 Ancient Evidence	15
1.2 Reduction(s) in Property Qualifications?	18
1.3 Monetary Evolutions and Property Requirements	22
2- Financial Obligations and Sources of Income of <i>assidui</i>	28
2.1 Cost of Weapons	28
2.2 War-Tax and Military Pay: <i>tributum</i> and <i>stipendium</i>	34
2.3 Other Possible Sources of Income for <i>assidui</i> : Plunder and Cash Handouts	42
3- Citizens' Attitudes towards Military Service	54
3.1 Deciding for War: Communication between the Aristocracy and the People	54
3.2 Reactions to Military Service	61
Conclusions	68

Chapter 2 Population Change in the Second Century	69
1- Population Developments and Property Qualifications	69
2- Consequences of Population Increase for <i>assidui</i>	76
2.1 Colonization and Access to <i>ager publicus</i>	76
2.2 Warfare and Landlessness	78
3- The Gracchi	80
Chapter 3 The Abolition of Tributum and the ‘Reform’ of Marius	85
1- War Indemnities as a new Type of Military Funding?	85
2- Marius	87
2.1 Marius' Use of Volunteers	88
2.2 Tactical Reform? The Development of the Cohort	91
2.3 The Disappearance of Roman citizen cavalry	93
2.4 The Disappearance of <i>uelites</i>	96
2.5 Reasons for Using <i>proletarii</i>	97
2.6 The Roman Army after Marius	103
Conclusions	113

Chapter 4 The Social War (90-88)	115
1- <i>Socii</i> as Cheap Manpower for Rome	115
2- The Outbreak of the Social War: Economic and Military Emergency	119
2.1 War without the <i>socii</i>	119
2.2 The Recourse to Auxiliaries as an Expedient	121
2.3 Financial Consequences of the War	123
Conclusions	126
Chapter 5 The Late Republic: The Return of Private Warfare?	128
1- The Roman Nobility and Military Service after the Social War	129
2- The New Financial Reality of War after the Social War	132
2.1 Private Funding	132
2.2 Plunder and <i>donatiua</i>	137
2.3 The Emergence, or the Persistence of Private Warfare?	142
3- The Financing and Recruitment of Armies <i>in situ</i>	144
3.1 Funding On-Site	144
3.2 Recruitment <i>in situ</i>	154
4- The Last Civil Wars and the Breakdown of a Precarious System	165

4.1 Donatives	165
4.2 Towards the End of the Citizen-Militiaman	171
4.3 Breaking the Bank through Desperate Expedients	176
Conclusions	180
Chapter 6 The Military Reforms of Augustus	182
1- Context of the Military Reforms	183
2- Demobilization and the Establishment of Fixed Conditions of Service	185
2.1 Discharging Veterans	186
2.2 Establishing New Conditions of Service	188
3- Military Service and Citizenship after Augustus	194
Conclusion: Army and Society: from Community to Empire	197
Sources	204
Bibliography	208
Tables	
Table 1: Evidence for Property Qualification Ratings	17
Table 2: Monetary Evolutions 218-211	25
Table 3: Cash Handouts to Soldiers, 201-167 BC (in <i>denarii</i>)	52

Table 4: Census Figures, 179 BCE - 14 CE	71
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Table 5: Cash Handouts to Soldiers 69-29 BCE	139
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Introduction

Nervos belli, pecuniam infinitam

The sinews of war, a limitless supply of money

(Cicero *Philippic* 5.5)

The army that allowed Rome to subjugate the entire Mediterranean basin has captured the imagination of both ancient and modern writers. As early as the mid second century BCE, the Greek historian Polybius tried to explain to his readers how the Romans managed to conquer the world in which he was living in a period of only 53 years.¹ Such success is indeed impressive, if not unique, in history. Polybius praised the Roman military and political institutions for their superiority over those of their adversaries, notably the Carthaginians and the Hellenistic monarchies. The Romans themselves liked to think that their superior *uirtus* and their ability to adapt to their enemies gave them an edge over them.² Modern scholars have proposed explanations that are more complex to address the rich topics of Roman expansion and the motives for Roman war-making, as well as the reasons for Roman martial success.

The Army of the Republic in Modern Scholarship

The army of the Imperial period was highly professional and was effectively separated from civil society, yet the military of the Middle Republic was a people in arms. In this

¹ Polybius 1.5-6; FGrH 839 F 1.

² On this topic see McDonnell 2006.

army, Roman citizens served at their own expense and according to what they could afford. In exchange they received a small amount of money from the state. However this did not amount to a salary, as military service was not supposed to be a trade but rather a civic obligation interrupting civilian life from time to time. Throughout the Republican period state structures to finance war were minimal and it was hoped that most campaigns would fund themselves through plunder and indemnities. Modern scholarly discussions on the structures to finance war in the Republic have been intertwined with several other topics, most notably imperialism.

In this regard the most influential work has been William V. Harris' *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327-70 B.C.*, published in 1979. Harris argues that Roman society was exceptionally aggressive and deeply militarized from top to bottom. According to Harris, war was appealing to Roman citizens because it was economically profitable for them. Plunder enriched not only the elite but also the common citizens who would receive a significant share of what had been captured. Roman expansion was thus driven mostly by economic motives. Harris' model has since been widely accepted among scholars until recently. Two important studies by Arthur Eckstein have challenged Harris' thesis on Roman expansion (*Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome*, 2006 and *Rome enters the Greek East: from Anarchy to Hierarchy in the Hellenistic Mediterranean, 230-170 B.C.*, 2008). Eckstein argues that Rome was part of an international system, which he calls an 'anarchy', in which success in war was the only way to guarantee the safety of a state. Therefore all members of this system were equally aggressive to ensure their survival. Rome was no exception, it was more skilled at marshalling its resources to maximize their effect in war. Although disagreeing with

Harris about the reasons motivating Roman expansion, Eckstein did not question the idea that war was lucrative for Roman citizens.³

Monographs on the Roman army of the Republic itself have mostly covered the evolution of military structures and the changing nature of the army after the ‘Marian reform’. Financing structures of the Roman war machine have generated less interest. For example, the classic *Heerwesen und Kriegführung der Griechen und Römer* (1928) by Johannes Kromayer and Georg Veith focuses heavily on tactical units, weaponry, and strategy.⁴ The following decades saw a series of works devoted to conditions of service and the socio-economic origins of the soldiers. Jacques Harmand’s *L’armée et le soldat à Rome: de 107 à 50 avant notre ère* (1967) zoomed in on the conditions of service for proletarian soldiers of the ‘post Marian army’. Emilio Gabba’s *Esercito e società nella tarda repubblica romana* (1973) looked at the changes in the social origins of Roman soldiers in the late Republic.⁵ Following a similar trend Heribert Aigner’s *Die Soldaten als Machtfaktor in der ausgehenden römischen Republik* (1974) studied the political involvement of the army in the late Republic while Hans-Christian Schneider’s *Das Problem der Veteranenversorgung in der späteren römischen Republik* (1977) looked at the question of rewards for discharged soldiers.⁶

Lawrence Keppie’s *The Making of the Roman Army* (1984) offers a useful narrative of the development of the Republican Army.⁷ Keppie’s emphasis is on army structure, offering a valuable update to Kromayer and Veith. Another important work that complements

³ On Imperialism, see also: Frank, 1914; Holleaux 1921; Badian 1968; North 1981, 1–9; Gabba, 1984, 115–129; Gruen 1984a, 59–82; 1984b; Ferrary 1988; Jongman 1990, 43–58; Rich 1993, 46–67; Raaflaub 1996, 273–314; Erskine 2010; Burton 2011; Smith and Yarrow 2012; Rosenstein (forthcoming).

⁴ See also Delbrück, 1920.

⁵ Review: M. Cébeillac-Gervasoni. *L’antiquité classique*, 44, (1975), 782–3.

⁶ Review for Aigner : Raaflaub, *Gnomon* 49, (1977), 486–498; for Schneider: Keppie, *Latomus*, 40, (1981), 141–143.

⁷ Review: Briscoe, *JRS*, 75, (1985), 239–243.

Keppie's is *The Roman Army at War, 100 BC-AD 200* (1996) by Adrian Goldsworthy.⁸ It is a purely a traditional military study since its focus is strictly on strategy, tactics, formations, equipment, and training.

Leaving aside traditional military history focused on combat duties, the last years of the twentieth century witnessed a focus on the logistics of the Roman army. Paul Erdkamp's *Hunger and the Sword: Warfare and Food Supply in Roman Republican Wars (264-30 BC)* (1998) and Jonathan Roth's *The Logistics of the Roman Army at War (264 BC-AD 235)* (1999) both addressed a topic that had been neglected for a long time in research.⁹

In more recent years, scholarly interest has devoted its attention to the impact of military service on Roman society. The most notable example is Nathan Rosenstein's *Rome at War* (2004). Rosenstein convincingly argued that military service, far from being always detrimental to Rome's small farmers, as often assumed in the past, could actually be beneficial to them.¹⁰ According to this view warfare employed labour not needed for agricultural purposes and was also a source of income for the citizens involved through the acquisition of plunder.

Lately, scholars have produced a variety of studies involving the army in several different ways. Michel Humm's *Appius Claudius Caecus. La République accomplie* (2005) explores, among many other things, the origins of the Roman manipular army while Arthur Keaveney's *The Army in the Roman Revolution* (2007) returns to the interaction between army and politics in the late Republic.¹¹ Michael J. Dobson's *The Army of the*

⁸ Review: Keppie, *Gnomon*, 72, (2000), 82-84.

⁹ Review for Erdkamp: Serrati, *JRS*, 90, (2000), 222-224; for Roth: Eckstein, *Journal of Military History*, 64, (2000), 182-184. See also Kehne 2004, 115-151.

¹⁰ For a review of Rosenstein's book, see: Erdkamp, *Mnemosyne*, 60, (2007), 157-163. For the old view, see most notably Toynbee 1965; Brunt 1971; Hopkins 1978. See more recently Rathbone 1993, 121-152; Lo Cascio 2001b, 111-138; Erdkamp 1999, 556-572; De Ligt 2007b, 114-131; Cadiou 2009b, 157-171.

¹¹ Review for Keaveney: Cowan, *Classics Ireland*, 15, (2008), 121-3; for Humm: Bispham *JRS*, 98,

Roman Republic (2008) offers a thorough investigation in castrametation for the camps of Numantia.¹²

Funding War in the Republic

Although they have treated many topics related to the army, none of these studies has covered the question of military financing structures.¹³ One of the few scholars to have devoted much attention to this question is Tenney Frank. His *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* (1933-40) represents an impressive *tour de force* in terms of all the evidence collected.¹⁴ Frank's calculations are based on the assumption that Republican Rome was a centralized state with regular lists of revenues and expenses. Despite Frank's best efforts and his impressive collection of the available evidence, many of his conclusions rest on a good deal of hypotheses and assumptions. Indeed, the sources detailing financial matters are not detailed enough to offer precise yearly accounts of military income and expenses.

Such a methodology is very difficult to apply to the Roman Republic for several reasons. First of all, state revenues could vary significantly from year to year. For instance, the income provided by a war tax such as the *tributum* was not regular because the total amount of money to be collected varied according to the needs of each campaign.¹⁵ This tax could sometimes be reimbursed through plunder so that the total balance of the Roman budget could be greatly influenced whether this was the case or not. Another

(2008), 188-9.

¹² Review: Goffaux, *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 41, (2011), 255-257; Fear, *Classical Review*, 61, (2011), 218-220.

¹³ For instance Matthews 2010; Cadiou 2008; Cagniard 2007, 80-95; Erdkamp 2006b, 41-51.

¹⁴ See also Jones 1948; Garcia Riaza 1999, 39-58.

¹⁵ See next chapter, section 2.2 for a discussion of the *tributum*; also Bleckmann (forthcoming), also Millar 1984, 21-2.

factor that could boost state income was war reparations paid by defeated states over several years. Moreover, not all the money recorded in the sources went into the *aerarium*. For example, it is not entirely clear what proportion of plunder was reserved for the treasury and what was distributed to soldiers on campaign.¹⁶ Finally, there was often a blurred line between private and public warfare. For instance, some citizens embarked on private naval expeditions against the Carthaginians in the First Punic War.¹⁷ During the Second Punic War private citizens were asked to make monetary contributions to pay for the fleet.¹⁸ In 215 some soldiers accepted to serve without pay at all, themselves defraying the cost of service.¹⁹ In other words, the Roman state often relied on *ad hoc* measures to finance wars.

Moreover, throughout the Punic Wars and for many years afterwards, the Romans stuck with the practice of levying militiamen who were drafted according to their wealth, served a certain amount of years on campaign or in garrison duty, and were then sent home to resume their civilian occupation. For example, during the exceptionally long and violent Second Punic War, legions stayed in service for an average time of seven years, with some serving for ten and even twelve years in a row.²⁰

High levels of military pressure frequently forced the Romans to find money through emergency measures to finance wars and to maintain militiamen in service for several years. Even though the *tributum* was clearly not enough to cover expenses during the Second Punic War, no new financing mechanism or change in the conditions of service

¹⁶ On this topic, see Chapter One, section 2.3.

¹⁷ Bleckmann 2002, 205-214.

¹⁸ Livy 24.11.7-9; Nicolet 1963, 417-436 ; 1966, 58-66.

¹⁹ Livy 24.18.

²⁰ Gschnitzer, 1981, 59-81; Nicolet 1976b, 153.

was implemented.²¹ Despite all this, the Roman attitude regarding war funding did not seem to change: they thought that wars would largely finance themselves.²² Yet, this was far from always being the case. For example, the huge indemnity of 10,000 talents (60 million *denarii*) paid by Carthage after the Second Punic War was barely enough to cover a third of the *stipendia* of the legions that fought in this conflict, to say nothing of expenses for fleet, supplies, and transport.²³

On the other hand, wars of the first half of the second century against Macedon, the Seleucids, and the last war against Carthage were lucrative and were much shorter than the First and Second Punic Wars. They provided plenty of plunder and the losers had to pay extensive indemnities. These campaigns seemed to have convinced the Senate that profit from wars would after all balance the military budget, so much so that it stopped levying the *tributum*. However there was no telling that Rome's enemies would perpetually have the financial ability to cover what Rome spent to defeat them. Over the course of the latter half of the second century, Rome came to rely increasingly on its Italian allies to man its armies. These previously formed about half the strength of a Roman consular army. Their use greatly reduced the strain on the *aerarium* since these contingents were paid for by their own communities.²⁴ Rome was only providing them with grain. The *socii* thus represented a bargain for Rome as they provided large reserves of manpower that could be mobilized at little cost to the public treasury. The Social War changed all this. The eventual enfranchisement of the Italians made them eligible to receive the *stipendium* like all Roman citizens if they were mobilized. This means that

²¹ Livy 23.48.8-11.

²² Polybius 15.18.7.

²³ Brunt 1971, 418.

²⁴ Nicolet 1978a, 1-11.

the cost of financing the army at least doubled as any force levied was now fully paid by Rome since it was entirely composed of Roman citizens.

As a result of this, in the late Republic the Senate was inclined to give more latitude to generals to finance their armies. We thus start to see generals financing armies out of their own pocket or on campaign. This was an expedient to cope with the increased cost in military funding as a result of the Social War. However this basically gave generals free reign to engage in what was effectively private warfare, something that the state had largely managed to suppress since the end of the First Punic War. The return of private warfare on a large scale in the first century ultimately contributed to the end of the Republic.

Research Approach

The aim of this study is to show that, during the Republic, the Roman state never developed sophisticated and sustainable structures to finance war, despite the fact that it managed to field armies that conquered a Mediterranean empire.

Chapter One discusses the basic financial and military organization of Republican Rome. It stresses that Rome put much of the burden of war financing on the shoulders on individual soldiers who were not guaranteed a return of their money through plunder. Moreover, changes in warfare towards the late second century, notably more garrison duty and profitless wars, made military service even less attractive and more burdensome. Chapter Two focuses on population change and its impact on military service in the second century. The latest research on demographic change in the Late Republic

challenges the old view, which argued that the population of the Italian peninsula was declining. There is now a consensus that the population was actually increasing and this created a shortage of land, leading many citizens to social demotion, as they failed to meet the property qualification for military service. The Gracchi, although sometimes viewed as innovators, actually tried to solve the problem in a traditional way. They wanted to create more militiamen owning enough land to be able to finance their own equipment.

Chapter Three addresses the much debated question of the 'Marian reform'. According to several scholars, Gaius Marius turned the army into a professional force which no longer relied on small farmers but on very poor citizens who saw the army as a trade rather than a civic obligation. The chapter argues that there was no such 'Marian reform'. This concept is a modern myth created by modern historiography. Marius did not create a professional army funded by the state resting on volunteers from the lowest echelons of society. In other words, it did not turn a citizen militia into a professional force entirely funded by the state.

Chapter Four covers the period of the Social War (90-88 BCE). This was a watershed date in terms of army financing as the enfranchisement of the Italians put much pressure on the Roman treasury, depriving it of the free services of thousands of Italian soldiers. The increasing use of foreign auxiliaries was an expedient as a consequence of the war rather than as a result of a 'Marian reform'.

Chapter Five looks at the first century BCE and the era of the civil wars. In this period the Senate gave increasing latitude to generals to fund their armies by whatever means available. Although salutary for the *aerarium*, this caused the Senate to gradually lose

control over the financing of Roman armies. Moreover, as civil war escalated into a global Mediterranean conflict, Roman generals increasingly turned to provincials and non-Romans to man their armies, paying and rewarding them by commandeering money *in situ*. This severed the link between property, citizenship, and military service that had existed for centuries as the basis of Roman military organization and financing.

Finally, Chapter Six examines how Augustus skilfully separated civilian and military life by turning the army into a professional force not only recruited from citizens but also among the free inhabitants of the empire, whatever their social or ethnic background. By doing so Augustus was officially removing the links with the old militia system in which citizens were conscripted each year and led by annually elected magistrates.

The number of legions in service reached a peak after the defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium in 31 BCE. By that time, it was no longer financially possible to keep such a high number of men under arms. Augustus finally changed the Republican military system and implemented a new military treasury funded by new taxes to finance a new permanent army. He reformed the conditions of service, increased pay and regularized rewards on discharge so that the military became a genuine trade completely funded by the state. He also forbade private military financing, so that no governor could fund and recruit troops at his own expense. Augustus' military reforms were his most radical innovation as they put an end to centuries of improvisation in terms of military financing.

Throughout the Republican period, the Senate was reluctant to implement new financing structures to fund the army and adapt it to better cope with the demands of a Mediterranean empire. The state repeatedly had recourse to expedients and *ad hoc*

measures to make up for the shortcomings of the existing system.

Chapter One

Financing War and the Financial Attractiveness of Military Service

It has often been observed that military expansion was a source of profit for the Republic.²⁵ The material rewards brought back from successful campaigns could be quite lucrative. These included not only precious metals but also artworks and slaves.²⁶ Yet war was far from being equally profitable for all of those involved. While the possibility of enrichment through war was certainly substantial for the ruling elite, the potential for profit for common soldiers was less predictable.²⁷ Generals, officers and other aristocrats profited many times more from plunder than regular soldiers did. Although the common soldiers could sometimes profit from substantial gifts, their prospects of enrichment were often meagre. This chapter wishes to highlight the cost of military service for Roman *assidui* and compare it with the rewards they could potentially receive. The Republic effectively kept providing the same minimal pay to its soldiers despite the fact that it gradually came to force people with very little means of subsistence to serve. It also kept asking recruits to pay for their weapons. It never undertook reforms to implement more sophisticated financing structures but rather relied on improvisation.

The first section of this chapter analyzes the question of the decline in property qualifications for military service in order to provide a better understanding of the

²⁵ Harris 1979 is the leading voice of the school that argues that Rome's expansion was driven by financial interest. According to Harris, expansion was materially beneficial to all Romans and therefore they kept being an aggressive state. Gruen 1984a, 59-82, argues that foreign policy was not systematically driven by the desire to acquire more riches. On Roman expansion, see also: Smith and Yarrow 2012; Burton 2011; Eckstein 2006; 2008; Bleckmann 2002; Raaflaub 1996, 273-314; Rich 1993, 46-67; 1990, 565-588; Ferrary 1988; Gruen 1984b; Badian 1968; Holleaux 1921; Frank 1914.

²⁶ Pape 1975.

²⁷ Tarpin 2009, 81-102; Harmand 1967.

economic status of poorer *assidui*. The next section will look at the balance between the financial obligations of *assidui* and the pay and cash handouts they were receiving. The third and last section will enquire into the role of the people in foreign policy as well as its attitude towards military service in the second century.

1-Sources and Figures for Property Qualifications

The Romans believed that only men with a certain amount of property could be entrusted with the defence of the *res publica*.²⁸ The sources clearly state that citizens without enough property were not normally expected to serve in the land army because their economic situation prevented them from doing so, although they could be called upon in cases of emergency.²⁹ Ancient authors provide figures for the minimum amount of property a citizen had to possess to qualify for military service. Among these writers, those giving the most detailed accounts of army organization clearly make a connection between military equipment and financial status. In other words, the qualitative differences in equipment between citizens reflected the fact that each soldier was supposed to arm himself at his own expense. For instance, Livy has the richest class of citizens equipped with helmet, shield, greaves, body armour, spear, and sword while the poorest class still eligible for military service was only armed with slings and stones.³⁰ Such a timocratic system, where citizens were responsible for providing their own equipment, is well attested in other Mediterranean states such as most of the *poleis* of

²⁸ Dionysius Hal. 4.19.3; Plutarch, Marius, 9.1.

²⁹ Aulus Gellius 16.10.10-13; Cassius Hemina *FRH* 6, F. 24; Dionysius 4.19.

³⁰ Livy 1.43. For the discussion and context of Livy's account, see below, section 1.1 and 1.2.

classical Greece.³¹ That being said, the Roman class system of the third and second century was somewhat different.

Most Roman citizens were registered in one of the five classes attested (see Table 1 below). These classes most likely excluded citizens of equestrian and senatorial status, in other words, the richest individuals, who had their own census rating.³² Unlike Athenian classes, the five Roman classes did not bear names revealing what they represented in practical terms, like πεντακοσιομέδιμνοι (500-bushel men) or ἵππεῖς (horsemen).³³ The Romans simply referred to classes by their number: first, second, third, fourth, and fifth.³⁴

The threshold for each class suggests that the five classes included fairly well-off citizens

³¹ Thucydides 6.31; Bertosa 2003, 361-379; Van Wees 2003, 45-71; 2004, 47.

³² On equestrian census, see Nicolet 1966 and 1978, 259, on senatorial census, see Nicolet 1976a, 20-38.

³³ Although the exact correspondence of the Solonian classes with a precise branch of the military has been challenged, see Gabrielsen 2002, 203-220.

³⁴ Livy 1.43: "Out of those who had a rating of a hundred thousand *asses* or more he made eighty centuries, forty each of seniors and of juniors; these were all known as the first class; the seniors were to be ready to guard the city, the juniors to wage war abroad. The armour which these men were required to provide consisted of helmet, round shield, greaves, and breast-plate, all of bronze, for the protection of their bodies; their offensive weapons were a spear and a sword. There were added to this class two centuries of mechanics, who were to serve without arms; to them was entrusted the duty of fashioning siege-engines in war. The second class was drawn up out of those whose rating was between a hundred thousand and seventy-five thousand; of these, seniors and juniors, twenty centuries were enrolled. The arms prescribed for them were an oblong shield in place of the round one, and everything else, save for the breast-plate, as in the class above. He fixed the rating of the third class at fifty thousand; a like number of centuries was formed in this class as in the second, and with the same distinction of ages; neither was any change made in their arms, except that the greaves were omitted. In the fourth class the rating was twentyfive thousand; the same number of centuries was formed, but their equipment was changed, nothing being given them but a spear and a javelin. The fifth class was made larger, and thirty centuries were formed. These men carried slings, with stones for missiles."

(ex iis, qui centum milium aeris aut maiorem censum haberent octoginta confecit centurias, quadragenas seniorum ac iuniorum; prima classis omnes appellati; seniores ad urbis custodiam ut praesto essent, iuvenes ut foris bella gererent. arma his imperata galea, clipeum, ocreae, lorica, omnia ex aere, haec ut tegumenta corporis essent; tela in hostem hastaque et gladius. additae huic classi duae fabrum centuriae, quae sine armis stipendia facerent; datum munus ut machinas in bello facerent. secunda classis intra centum usque ad quinque et septuaginta milium censum instituta, et ex iis, senioribus iunioribusque, viginti conscriptae centuriae. arma imperata scutum pro clipeo et praeter lorica omnia eadem. tertiae classis quinquaginta milium censum esse voluit; totidem centuriae et hae eodemque discrimine aetatum factae. nec de armis quicquam mutatum, ocreae tantum ademptae. in quarta classe census quinque et viginti milium; totidem centuriae factae; arma mutata, nihil praeter hastam et verutum datum. quinta classis aucta; centuriae triginta factae; fundas lapidesque missiles hi secum gerebant).

down to small farmers.³⁵ Unfortunately the sources dealing with census ratings are contradictory. Furthermore, no surviving ancient author claims to describe the reality of his own day, perhaps because they thought it superfluous to include details that their aristocratic readership would already be familiar with. Indeed, all Roman aristocrats would have at least some military experience since this was required to run for political office at the time Polybius was writing, if he is to be believed.³⁶ Moreover, a long development on the evolution of the Roman class system would have made for a lengthy and tedious digression ill-suited in histories that emphasized battle narratives and rousing speeches. This lack of interest for the developments of the Roman class system among ancient historians means that Roman census ratings must be reconstructed from various pieces of evidence relating to different periods, something that requires some detective work.

1.1 Ancient Evidence

Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus are the only authors giving the complete sets of property qualifications for all five classes of Roman citizens (see Table 1 below). They both claim to provide accounts of the political, social and military organization of Rome at the time of the mythical king Servius Tullius, whose supposed reign is most often

³⁵ Humm 2005, 284 ff; Nicolet 1963, 417-436.

³⁶ Polybius 6.19.4. The claim that ten campaigns were required before being able to hold any office seems extreme. Perhaps that Polybius is exaggerating in order to impress his Greek readers with the Romans' warlike spirit. Whether or not ten campaigns were really required makes little difference since martial prowess was the most highly praised achievement amongst the Roman elite, although this gradually changed in the Late Republic. McCall 2002, 8, suggests that cavalrymen served without interruption as soon as they were old enough and completed their ten years by their late twenties. Cato the Elder started to serve at age 17, Plutarch *Cat. Mai.* 1.6.

dated in the sixth century by modern historians.³⁷ Livy's version gives the following figures: 100,000 *asses* for the first class, 75,000 for the second, 50,000 for the third, 25,000 for the fourth, and 11,000 for the fifth. Dionysius reports 10,000 *drachmai* for the first class, 7,500 for the second, 5,000 for the third, 2,500 for the fourth, and 1,250 for the fifth.³⁸ There is unfortunately no other evidence than Livy and Dionysius for the rating of the 2nd to 4th classes. All the other sources mention the figures for the fifth and/or the first class.

³⁷ Humm 2005, 284 ff.; 346 ff.; Cornell 1995, 130-141.

³⁸ Livy 1.43; Dionysius 4.16-21. If the usually accepted equivalence of a denarius for one (Attic/Alexandrian) drachma used from the Middle Republic onwards is accepted, these figures are all consistent, except those for the fifth class. Giovannini 1978, 258: "En soi, le mot drachmê ne devrait pas prêter à confusion. Il est fréquemment utilisé, dès l'époque républicaine et plus encore à l'époque impériale, pour traduire le latin denarius."; Brunt 1950, 51: "[...] Polybius surely converted Roman values into Greek currency of the standard in the most common use among his readers throughout the Greek world, and the drachma of an Attics standard approximates to the Roman denarius."

There has been some controversy over the value of the Polybian drachma. Mattingly 1937, 99-107, (also followed by Watson 1958, 113-120), tried to show that Polybius was in fact using the Achaean drachma, which was slightly heavier than the Attic/Alexandrian one. He based his argument from this passage in Polybius 2.15.6: "The innkeepers, as a rule, agree to receive guests, providing them with enough of all they require for half an as per diem, i.e. the fourth part of an obol, the charge being very seldom higher." (ὥς μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ παρίενται τοὺς καταλύτας οἱ πανδοκεῖς, ὡς ἱκανὰ πάντ' ἔχειν τὰ πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, ἡμισσαρίου: τοῦτο δ' ἔστι τέταρτον μέρος ὀβολοῦ: σπανίως δὲ τοῦθ' ὑπερβαίνουσι). According to Mattingly, the equation one obol = two *asses* proved that Polybius was not referring to the Attic/Alexandrian drachma. It could therefore not be the equivalent of a denarius worth ten *asses*. Thomsen argued in turn that this passage most likely referred to an approximation in order to explain to his Greek audience the value of the semis, a small Roman bronze coin worth ½ *as*. Moreover, he pointed to other passages in Livy and Polybius where a denarius seems to equate a *drachma*: Polybius 34.8.7 f.: "There, too, a Sicilian medimnus of barley is sold for a drachma, and one of wheat for nine Alexandrine obols." (καὶ ὁ μὲν τῶν κριθῶν Σικελικὸς μέδιμνός ἐστι δραχμῆς, ὁ δὲ τῶν πυρῶν ἐννέα ὀβολῶν Ἀλεξανδρινῶν); Livy 34.50.6: "Polybius writes that this cost the Achaeans one hundred talents, although they had fixed the price per head to be paid to their owners at five hundred *denarii*. On that basis Achaia had one thousand two hundred." (*Polybius scribit centum talentis eamrem Achaeis stetisse, cum quingenos denarius pretium in capita, quod redderetur dominis, statuissent. Mille enim ducentos ea ratione Achaia habuit*). It is usually agreed that Polybius was referring to the most widely available standard of his time, the Attic/Alexandrian drachma to which a *denarius* corresponded closely; Cadiou 2008, 504; Rathbone 1993, 126; Crawford 1985, 146-147; Zehnacker 1983, 95-121; Boren 1983, 438-442; Giovannini 1978, 258-263; Thomsen 1973, 194-208; Brunt 1950, 50-71; Veith and Kromayer 1928, 328-332. Marchetti 1978a and 1978b 195-216 tried to prove otherwise. See Thomsen 1978, 9-30 for a response to Marchetti's arguments.

Table 1: Evidence for Property Qualification Ratings³⁹

Class	Figure
First	<p><u>125,000 asses</u>: Gellius <i>Noctes Atticae</i>, 6.13.1; 16.10.10.</p> <p><u>120,000 asses</u>: Festus <i>De verborum significatione</i>, p 100L, s.v. <i>infra classem</i>; Pliny <i>Naturalis Historia</i>, 33.43.</p> <p><u>100,000 asses</u>: Livy 1.43; Dionysius 4.16-21; Polybius 6.19.2; 6.23.15; Gaius <i>Inst.</i> 2274.</p>
Second	<p><u>75,000 asses</u>: Livy 1.43; Dionysius 4.16-21.</p>
Third	<p><u>50,000 asses</u>: Livy 1.43; Dionysius 4.16-21.</p>
Fourth	<p><u>25,000 asses</u>: Livy 1.43; Dionysius 4.16-21.</p>
Fifth	<p><u>12,500 asses</u>: Dionysius 4.16-21.</p> <p><u>11,000 asses</u>: Livy 1.43.</p> <p><u>4,000 asses</u>: Polybius 6.19.2; 6.23.15.</p> <p><u>1,500 asses</u>: Gellius <i>Noctes Atticae</i>, 6.13.1; 16.10.10.</p> <p><u>1,500 asses</u>: Cicero <i>De Republica</i>, 2.40.</p> <p><u>1,500 asses</u>: Nonius 228L.</p>

³⁹ Matthew 2006, 5, includes two other references that may, according to him, have indicated the census of the first class: Cassius Dio 56.10.2; Pseudo-Asconius 247-8 St. Both indicate 100 000 *asses* according to Matthew.

1.2 Reduction(s) in Property Qualifications?

The main challenge with the class ratings is the different figures given for the fifth class. Whereas the figures for the first class seem relatively constant with some slight differences from one source to another, those for the fifth class present much greater variations. It would be rather difficult to try to prove that the different ratings existing for the fifth class are all the result of mistakes done by copyists or errors perpetrated by misinformed authors. The most popular solution has therefore been to propose that there must have been a gradual reduction in the minimum property qualifications for military service.⁴⁰ According to this reconstruction, the census of the fifth class would have been lowered from the Livian/Dionysian figure (11,000 – 12,500 *asses*) to the Polybian one (4,000 *asses*). Such a change would have most likely taken place after the great defeats inflicted on Rome in the early years of the Second Punic War. This measure would have allowed Rome to mobilize more men in order to make up for the huge casualties suffered as well as to fill the ranks of the additional legions levied to fight a war of an unprecedented scale.⁴¹ Most historians agree that the accounts of Livy and Dionysius are unlikely to have accurately reflected 6th century BCE Roman society.⁴² It has been

⁴⁰ De Ligt 2012, Erdkamp 2011, 67; 171; Cadiou 2009b, 157-171 Cagniard 2007, 81; Rosenstein 2002, 163-191; Brunt 1971, 402-405; Gabba 1976, 7-8; also Bloch and Carcopino 1936, 112, with much condescendence : “Le recrutement ne cesse d'abaisser son niveau à tous les degrés, jusqu'au jour où Marius, tirant la conclusion des faits accomplis, décidera de remplir les légions de la République avec les déchets sociaux du peuple romain.(!)”

⁴¹ De Ligt, 2007b, 125, see section 1.3 for the monetary evolutions prior to the introduction of the denarius.

⁴² Humm 2005, 284-285: “Avec la majorité des historiens modernes, il convient dès lors d'admettre l'existence d'une organisation timocratique bien plus simple à l'origine, probablement mise en place dès le milieu du VI^e siècle lorsque l'adoption de l'armement hoplitique rendit nécessaire une réorganisation des structures institutionnelles de la cité, et qui se serait par la suite développée progressivement selon un processus historique assez complexe: la difficulté est précisément de cerner les étapes qui aboutirent au système des cinq classes censitaires «classiques».”; Rathbone 1993, 151; Gargola 1989, 234: “These authors [Livy and Dyonisius] explain the existence of each of the census classes by assigning to each slightly different arms and armor. The equipment they describe does not fit that of any historic period and is clearly the result of antiquarian speculation.”; Gabba, 1977, 15-16; Sumner 1970, 67-78.

suggested that there was probably originally only one class, composed of those citizens who could afford to buy a hoplite panoply. Only later would the system evolve in the course of the late fourth and early third century as it came to include four other classes. These newly formed classes included poorer citizens who were able to equip themselves as legionaries with cheaper and lighter body armour and equipment.⁴³ Despite the fact that this theory is sound, it oversimplifies the meaning of both 'hoplite' and 'legionary' equipment. Although Greek citizens serving as heavy infantry (hoplites) have sometimes been labelled as a “middle-class army”, Hans van Wees has recently showed that this idea was based on a misconception. Indeed, the important differences in wealth between citizens fighting as hoplites would have been obvious on the battlefield: poorer men would only be equipped with the cheapest spears and shields while leisure-class citizens would fight with elaborate armour and weapons.⁴⁴ Roman legionaries should in turn not be understood as members of a “middle-class” since, as is the case for hoplites, their socio-economic status determined how they were equipped.⁴⁵ Even if Roman military

⁴³Rosenstein 2010, 289-303; Erdkamp 2006b, 42; Humm 2005, 316-317; Rathbone 1993, 146-147; Miller 1992, 59-70; Kienast 1975, 107: “Da der neue Langschild mehr Schutz bot als der alte Rundschild, erließ man diesen Männern die Anschaffung der teuersten Waffenteile, des Panzers und teilweise auch der Beinschienen und sogar des Metallhelms.”; Nicolet 1978, 256-260; Gabba 1977, 15-16.

⁴⁴Van Wees 2004, 60.

⁴⁵Van Wees 2004, 48: “There was clearly no standard equipment, beyond shield and spear, and much variation in just how heavily armoured 'heavy' infantry was.” Van Wees emphasizes, *inter alia*, the difference between leisure-class and working-class hoplites. Also: 2004, 60: “Such is the evidence for a deeply divided hoplite militia which spanned a wide range of social and economic statuses, privately advertised by the soldiers' equipment and publicly recognised by city-states which made legal and political distinctions between 'rich' and 'poor' hoplites, and set apart the very richest citizens by organising them in special infantry units. Against this, the evidence for a solidly middle-class militia amounts to little more than a passage in Aristotle's *Politics* which suggests that hoplites were in general 'middling men' (1297b 16-28). That notion is inconsistent with the view, repeatedly expressed by Aristotle elsewhere (and repeatedly cited above), that it is primarily the 'rich' who served as hoplites, and the claim is in any case meaningless in the mouth of a philosopher who was prepared to stretch his definition of 'middling class' to include a Spartan regent and member of the royal dynasty 'because he was not a king' (1296a20). The middle-class hoplite army is, in short, a modern myth based on an isolated and ill-founded ancient generalisation.”; Gabrielsen 2002: “[...] although Athenian oligarchs liked to think that there was an economically and politically homogeneous 'hoplite class', the real hoplites on the battlefield were a rather heterogeneous group – politically, economically, and legally.” Also: Rosenstein 2002, 175-176.

equipment was different from that used in fifth and fourth century Greece, the same caveat should be made for legionaries since they were also recruited *ex censu*, that is according to the value of the property they owned.

Despite claiming to represent the reality of the mythical Servius Tullius, the Livian and Dionysian figures for class ratings seem historical, as their value seemed to match those attested by the extraordinary measures taken to equip the fleet in 214. Of course this does not mean they match the reality of sixth century Rome. In that year, we are told that special contributions were requested from citizens rated, *inter alia*, between 50,000 and 100,000 *asses*, which seems to match the figures given for the third and first classes.⁴⁶

The even lower figures for the fifth class found in later sources such as Cicero represented a reduction in population. Such a demographic decline would have meant that there were no longer enough men to meet the demands of military service, hence the need to lower the property requirements in order to have enough soldiers to serve in the legions. This process would have culminated with the abolition of all property qualifications by Marius in the late second century. Given the seemingly convergent nature of the evidence it is perhaps not surprising that this view endured for a long time.

However, such a reduction in property qualifications is nowhere explicitly attested in the sources. Christopher Matthew recently rejected the idea that there had been a reduction in the census of the fifth class on the grounds that no similar reduction is attested for the other classes. However, he does not provide any alternative interpretation to explain the existence of different figures for the fifth class, thus resting his case on an argument *e*

⁴⁶ For further discussion on this, see Nicolet 1966, 58-66; 1976a, 20-38.

silentio.⁴⁷ In an important article John Rich observed that the evidence for property qualification does not provide “support for the doctrine that there was a shortage of *assidui* in the later second century”.⁴⁸ He argues against the traditional idea of a population decline following the Second Punic War which would have of course affected the number of *assidui*. That being said, even if opinions concerning the demographic developments of Italy had changed, (see next chapter for this discussion), the idea that there was a gradual reduction in the census of the fifth class is still pertinent.⁴⁹ Such a theory does not inevitably rest on a concept of demographic decline. It is also applicable to more recent theories of population growth where pressure for land, dispersal of property, and poverty could explain a reduction of the property requirement for the fifth class.⁵⁰ Rich is perhaps too pessimistic on this matter.⁵¹ A detailed reconstruction of the census figures necessarily involves conjecture.⁵² While acknowledging the limited nature

⁴⁷ Matthew 2010, 20: “The fact that Marius had to disregard all of the property qualifications for enlistment (and not just those for the diminishing fifth class) shows that there was a need to fill positions across all levels of the army. This further demonstrates that the motivation behind Marius' reform lay in something other than a reducing amount of manpower from the fifth class level who could be enrolled only as velites. Only a reform to circumvent a reluctance by all the propertied classes to serve would account for Marius' disregard of all of the property qualifications for enlistment and his acceptance/enrolment of volunteers/conscripts into the legions from the head count.” Matthew greatly exaggerates the magnitude of what Marius did. He merely enrolled a limited body of landless volunteers rather than entirely overlooking property qualifications cf. Aigner 1974, 11-23, esp. 16: “Von einer Änderung der Heeresfassung durch ihn kann nämlich auch keineswegs gesprochen werden. Seine Anwerbung - nicht Aushebung - von zum Kriegsdienst nicht verpflichteten Leuten hat nämlich keinen Niederschlag in irgendeinem Statut - etwa in einer lex Maria - gefunden, ja man kann mit Sicherheit behaupten, daß die alte Zensus-Dienstpflcht nach wie vor bestehen blieb und auch zum Tragen kam [...]”. The question of the so-called Marian reform will be discussed in chapter three.

⁴⁸ Rich 1983, 316, also more recently: 2007, 161-162.

⁴⁹ For example: Cagniat 2007, 81; Keppie 1984, 61; Nicolet, 1976, 151. See next chapter for the discussion on demography.

⁵⁰ De Ligt 2012, 169; 2007b, 126-127; Erdkamp 2006b, 47: “Rather than decreasing in number, the peasantry of Italy possibly became increasingly poor, forcing the authorities to mobilize proletarians in the army.”; Evans 1986, 121-140.

⁵¹ Rich 1983, 315-316: “In my view, the only prudent course is to accept that speculation about the history of these census ratings is fruitless and to admit our ignorance.”

⁵² Rich 2007, 162. This has not prevented several historians from deploying much ingenuity to try to solve the problem: De Ligt 2007b, 114-131; 2007c, 3-20; Rathbone 1993, 121-152; Lo Cascio 1988, 273-262; Gabba 1976, 1-19; Nicolet 1966, 18-63, esp. 58-9: “Nulle question n'est sans doute plus embrouillée, dans la science moderne, que celle des qualifications censitaires: c'est que les sources anciennes sont elles-

of the evidence, this situation should not prevent historians from putting said evidence to good use. So, this section wishes to examine the available figures for the property qualification of the fifth class in order to provide a picture of the evolution of the socio-economic situation of poorer *assidui*.

1.3 Monetary Evolutions and Property Requirements

If this reconstruction is accepted, the next question to address is the discrepancy between the Livian/Dionysian figure for the fifth class, on the one hand, and the Polybian figure on the other. It has been proposed to date this change to 212/1. This time is widely held to be that of the monetary reform that saw the introduction of a new silver coin, the denarius.⁵³ Before this reform Roman bronze coinage was based on the libral or “heavy” aes, which weighed five-sixths of a Roman pound (327 grams, or one Roman ounce). This type of coin was depreciated several times after 217 before the reform of 212/1.⁵⁴ The new system was based on a lighter aes of one-sixth of a Roman pound, the aes sextantal (weighting two Roman ounces). The new denarius was worth ten *asses*, as its name suggests (see Table Three below). Since the monetary system changed, then what should be made of the figures from Livy and Dionysius *vis-à-vis* the figure found in Polybius? Were they all talking of the same kind of *asses*? It has been proposed that before the introduction of the denarius the figure for the fifth class (i.e. Livy's) would

mêmes contradictoires et peu sûres; en effet, tout dépend de l'idée qu'on se fait de l'histoire monétaire de Rome, et celle-ci était, jusqu'à ces derniers temps, remplie de mystères : dévaluations successives du bronze et de l'argent, permanence de la monnaie de compte, se conjuguent avec le fait que, dans des documents non pas économiques mais censitaires, les classifications ont peut-être gardé un caractère archaïque, pour faire de cette question un véritable traquenard.”

⁵³ Mersing, 2007, 224; Crawford 1985a, 57-60, 143-145; Gabba 1976, 5 ff. On Roman financial difficulties and improvisation during the Second Punic War, see Nicolet 1963, 417-436.

⁵⁴ Hollstein 2000, 114-132; Crawford 1978, 147-158; 1964, 30-31; Thomsen 1978, 10-12.

actually have been 1,100 libral *asses* (weighting 11,000 ounces). This sum would then have been converted to 4,000 sextantal *asses* (weighting 8,000 ounces) after 212/1.⁵⁵

Whatever kind of *asses* Livy and Dionysius had in mind when they wrote their account, the comparison with the figures provided by other sources for the fifth class would still fit with the idea of a decline in property qualification. For instance, if one argues that Livy, Dionysius, and Polybius all used sextantal *asses* to express their figures, then the threshold for the fifth class would have been reduced by 64 to 68 percent (11,000/ 12,500 to 4,000 *asses*, or 22,000/25,000 ounces to 8,000 ounces). If one supposes that Livy's figure means 1,100 libral *asses* (weighting 11,000 ounces) and Polybius' 4,000 sextantal *asses* (weighting 8,000 ounces), this would represent a decrease of 27 percent in terms of bronze.⁵⁶

There are good reasons to believe that the Polybian figure was probably introduced around 212/211. The Romans were then stretching their military capabilities to their limit. There were no fewer than 25 legions mobilized at that time, the highest number of the war.⁵⁷ The manpower required to field massive armies and fleets operating in Italy, Spain, Greece, and Sicily was huge. Moreover, Roman forces in Italy suffered devastating losses at the beginning of the war and the army campaigning in Spain was badly defeated in 211 and its generals killed.⁵⁸ These losses must have created unprecedented demands on a much reduced manpower pool. Whether the threshold was decreased in order to enlarge the number of potential recruits or to reduce the amount of

⁵⁵ Rathbone 1993, 144. Also Lo Cascio 1989, 101-120; Crawford 1964, 29-32; Duncan-Jones 1995, 109-117.

⁵⁶ Lo Cascio 2008, 247-248; De Ligt 2007b, 124-125, Erdkamp 2006b, 46; also: Walbank 1957, 698.

⁵⁷ Rosenstein 2002, 163-191; Nicolet, 1976b, 150-151; Brunt 1971, 418; Afzelius 1944. Also: Lo Cascio 2001, 111-138.

⁵⁸ Livy 25.34-35.

assidui wanting to evade military service because of the fear of facing Hannibal, the result is that poorer men could now officially be enlisted.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Rosenstein 2002, 101-120. Rich 1983, 287-331. It has sometimes been argued that this decrease was also connected with the introduction of the lightly armed *uelites*. Livy claims that they were introduced during the siege of Capua in 211 (26.4). However, Livy also mentions *uelites* before that time, notably at the battle of the river Trebia in 218 (21.55.11). It is most likely that Livy is referring to an improvised measure undertaken to counter Capuan cavalry by mounting *uelites* on horses in a manner similar to the Greek ἄμπλοι. Cf. Sekunda 2007, 351. On *uelites*, see section 2.1 below.

Table 2: Monetary Evolutions 218-211⁶⁰

Year	Metal	Bronze
218	Didrachms of 6 scruples	Libral, tarified at intrinsic value.
217	-Unchanged according to Crawford. -Debased according to Hollstein.	Semilibral, thus becoming fiduciary.
216	(Gold issue)	Unchanged.
215-4	-Unchanged according to Crawford. -Debased according to Hollstein.	Post-semilibral (triental to quadrantal); when quadrantal, tarified at intrinsic value again, with consequential adjustment of state payments.
214	(Tenth of didrachm)	(Decussis)
213-212	-Silver debased according to both Crawford and Hollstein.	Unchanged
211	Denarius ⁶¹	Sextantal

⁶⁰ Crawford 1985a, 60; Hollstein 2000, 98-101; 115-

⁶¹ Hollstein 2000, 99: "Die Zahlungsunfähigkeit des römischen Staates führte in den Jahren 213-212 bis zur Einführung des Denars zu den besonders stark abgewerteten Quadrigati der Gruppe V."

The dating of the lowest figure of 1,500 *asses* is more problematic. It has been suggested that Polybius' minimum census rating of 4,000 sextantal *asses* was changed to 1,500 uncial *asses* when the value of the denarius was changed to sixteen *asses* in or after 141/0. This would have coincided with the introduction of the new monetary system based on the sestertius, worth a fourth of the denarius, which became Rome's official unit of reckoning at that time.⁶² The alteration of 141/0 would have represented a decrease in silver coinage from 400 to 94 *denarii*, considerably reducing the amount of property a citizen had to possess in order to qualify for legionary service.⁶³ This dating is supported by the fact that Gellius, who distinguishes between *proletarii* rated at less than 1,500 *asses* and *capite censi* rated at no more than 375 *asses*, probably misread a reference where the threshold for the fifth class was actually 375 sesterces, the exact equivalent of 1,500 *asses*.⁶⁴

Even if this reconstruction is conjectural, there are good grounds to come to the conclusion that property requirement for the fifth class decreased. Unless one is ready to discard all these figures as incorrect and misleading, the evidence available seems to indicate that many citizens previously excluded from military service were gradually

⁶² Mersing 2007, 224-225; Crawford 1985a, 143-145. See table 1 for references.

⁶³ Rathbone 1993, 144-145 : "There can, however, be no doubt that around 140 BC, again assuming a background of rising prices, this *census* was significantly reduced in terms of its real property value."; 146: "Clearly there is an element of speculation here, but in broad terms it seems very likely that the minimum property qualification for the fifth *classis*, and hence for the *assidui*, was in the period 211-141 BC a mere subsistence farm of five or more iugera, which perhaps represented a slight reduction from the pre-212 BC qualification, and was around 140 BC reduced to a token hut and garden-plot."; also Rich 1983, 287-331. There is some controversy over the figure given by Cicero *De Republica*, 2.40. Some scholars think that the original text appears to have given 1 100 *asses* as the minimum requirement for the fifth class. The number 1,500 would be a correction made by a late antique copyist. Lo Cascio 1988, 286-288, thinks that there is no trace of this supposed correction. Rathbone 1993, 140, reports that Michael Crawford saw the manuscript and told him that traces of the correction were indeed visible. According to Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 33.45, the introduction of the sextantal *asses* did not alter the value of the military pay: "*in militari tamen stipendio semper denarius pro X assibus datus est*".

⁶⁴ Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 16.10.10; De Ligt 2012, 174-175; 2007c, 124-127; 2007d, 16-17. It is most often thought that *capite censi* and *proletarii* actually referred to the same group of people: cf. Lo Cascio, 2008, 247-248; Gargola 1989, 213-234.

incorporated in the fifth class. As already mentioned, such a reduction is nowhere discussed nor explicitly mentioned in the sources. The fact that nobody ever tried to propose an alternative to the idea of a decline in property qualifications does not mean that such a theory should merely be accepted *faute de mieux*.⁶⁵ One could argue that all sources point to the time of Servius Tullius and that the different figures would be the result of antiquarian fantasies from ancient authors. However, Polybius' figure is an exception as it is the only contemporary account for the description of the Roman army in the Republican period. His figure is the only one that can be dated with some certainty, since he was describing the Roman army of either the Second Punic War (the time where his narrative of the Second Punic war stopped to describe Roman military institutions) or the mid-second century (the time at which he was writing), not a distant mythical past that he is unlikely to have known well (i.e. the sixth century BCE).⁶⁶ The fact that the Polybian figure is lower than the one provided by the authors who give the most detailed accounts of the supposed Servian constitution should not be overlooked. Even if one would be as radical as to reject the accounts of both Livy and Dionysius as pure invention, one would still have to reckon with the fact that all later accounts indicate a significantly lower threshold than Polybius.⁶⁷

In other words, many *proletarii* became *assidui*. Those *proletarii* that did become *assidui*

⁶⁵ Rich 2007, 161-162: "The property rating required for military service was probably so low that most rural citizens qualified, and modern theories which explain the sources' discrepant figures as reflecting a progressive reduction of the rating in response to a shortage of qualified men are merely speculative and, in their most widely followed form, conflict with what is known of the development of the Roman coinage." While Rich seems quick at discarding others' theories, he does not provide any alternative explanation for the existence of different figures for the fifth class.

⁶⁶ Rathbone 1993, 141.

⁶⁷ Nicolet 1978, 254: "[...] la différence est si nette qu'aucune erreur de transmission ou de calcul ne peut en rendre compte: il faut certainement supposer des modifications dans le temps de la qualification censitaire la plus basse exigée pour le recrutement [...]".

could presumably be recruited for military service and most likely had to buy their own gear like all other *assidui*. As discussed, even if property qualifications declined, it did not necessarily follow that armour and weapons became somewhat cheaper or issued freely. To summarize, poorer citizens were gradually obliged to serve while still having to buy military equipment. What kind of financial burden did this represent for newly 'promoted' fifth-class *assidui*?

2- Financial Obligations and Sources of Income of *assidui*

2.1 Cost of Weapons

The cost of Roman weapons is not attested for the middle and late Republican periods. However, data from the Classical and Hellenistic periods indicates that similar weapons and armour were not cheap items.⁶⁸ Victor Davis Hanson argued that hoplite weapons were accessible to most Greek small farmers, proposing a cost of 75-100 *drachmai*.⁶⁹ Although he mostly ignores the great diversity of equipment between hoplites as stressed

⁶⁸ Pritchett 1956, 307, lists the following figures from *I.G.*, XII, 5, 6474:

Weapon Price Line No.

Bow (*toxon*) 7 dr. 28

Bow and quiver (*pharetra*) 15 dr. 28

Spearhead (*loche*) 5 3/3 ob. 30

Staff pole (*kontos*) 2 dr. 31

Shield 20 dr. 31

He concludes: "Our evidence is scattered, but we can safely conclude that weapons were not cheap." Also: Gröschel, 1989, 38: "Die wenigen Vergleiche zwischen den Kosten für die Waffen, den Preisen für Nahrungsmittel und einigen Löhnen beweisen eindeutig die Aussage des Aristoteles: die Ausrüstung von Hopliten ist eher Sache der Wohlhabenden als der Unbemittelten."; Kienast 1975, 99: "Im Athen des ausgehenden 6. Jahrhunderts kostete eine Hoplitenrüstung 30 Drachmen, soviel wie eine mittelgroße Schafherde."; (Using data from *IG* I2 1); Volkmann 1953, 79: "Die Hoplitenausstattung ist immer noch kostspielig [...]". Gröschel's appreciation of Aristotle's understanding of 'Wohlhabenden' citizens should be nuanced, see van Wees 2002, 61-82 and 2001, 45-71.

⁶⁹ Hanson 1995, 294-297; Bertosa 2003, 365-366: "A complete panoply could cost up to three hundred *drachmai*, or more [...]".

by van Wees, they both agree that a farmer owning some 10 to 15 acres of land (4-6 ha), worth between 2,000 to 3,000 *drachmai* would have been able to buy some sort of equipment making him a 'hoplite'.⁷⁰ Even if these numbers refer to Classical Greece and not Republican Rome, they seem quite high compared to the threshold for the Roman fifth class, especially compared to the lowest figure of 1,500 *asses* (=150 *drachmai/denarii* before 141/0 or 94 after that time). This suggests that fifth-class *assidui* rated at 1,500 *asses* were poor citizens and would have had very little to spare to buy their equipment.⁷¹ It has been proposed that the Polybian figure of 4,000 sextantal *asses* would correspond to the value of five to seven *iugera* of land given to citizens sent in colonies between 200 and 180 BCE.⁷² Dominic Rathbone suggested that the later threshold of 1,500 *asses* would amount to no more than a single *iugerum* of property, (a *iugerum* was equal to more or less 0.65 acres, a quarter of a hectare). In other words, it has been asserted that a man with a hut and a garden-plot would be eligible for service with such a low threshold.⁷³ How expensive was the equipment that such citizens were

⁷⁰ Van Wees 2004, 55; Hanson 1995, 296. One could legitimately ask what van Wees precisely means when he simply talks of a "panoply" since he frequently makes the case that there was no standard hoplite equipment: see 48 and 54: "Most hoplite armies must have presented a motley appearance, ranging as they did from soldiers who could afford no more than the cheapest mass-produced spears and shields with simple emblems to the likes of Xenophon and Alcibiades in their ornate, custom-made, highly individualized panoplies."

⁷¹ Aigner 1976, 4: "So sah man sich gezwungen, diesen Zensus über wenigstens eine Zwischenstufe auf 1.500 As zu senken, und da vor allem für die Angehörigen der letzten Klasse die Aufbringung einer einigermaßen effizienten, den Kriegsbedürfnissen der Zeit angepaßten Ausrüstung kam möglich war, mußte der Staat für die Bereitstellung der erforderlichen Waffen sorgen." Also, Cosme 2007, 239-260; Roselaar 2013, 204-205 argues that Italy's more favourable climate for agriculture probably meant that the amount of land necessary for subsistence was somewhat smaller than in Greece.

⁷² De Ligt 2012, 154-155; Rosenstein 2002, 190-191 proposes an even lower estimate for the Polybian figure. Roselaar 2009, 609-623; convincingly refuted this argument. On the price of land, see de Neeve 1985, 77-109.

⁷³ Rathbone 2007, 178 and 1993, 136; Rich 1983, 298. The idea is largely based on the testimony of the veteran Spurius Ligustinus found in Livy 42.34. This story is to be approached with caution as it represents the epitome of Roman virtue and frugality. It is unlikely that this man would still live in such poverty (i.e. a hut and an acre of land) if he really received the many rewards he is boasting about. Nevertheless, the figure of 1,500 *asses* indeed represents very little property. Brunt 1971, 395 and Keaveney 2007, 18 also doubted the authenticity of the story. Keaveney asserts that "Spurius may be fictional but his story shows

actually expected to buy?

Polybius reports that a Roman legion numbered 4,200 foot soldiers, of which 3,000 were heavy infantrymen and the rest lightly-armed *uelites*.⁷⁴ Most (οἱ πολλοί) heavy-armed soldiers wore a “heart guard” (καρδιοφύλαξ) while those possessing more than 10,000 *drachmai* (presumably members of the first *classis*) wore a coat of mail (άλυσιδωτός θώραξ). The rest of the equipment consisted of a ‘Spanish’ short sword (μάχαιρα Ιβηρική), a large oval shield (θυρεός), a bronze helmet (περικεφαλαία), greaves (προκνημίδς), and two javelins (ύσσοί). The soldiers of the third line, the *triarii*, had a thrusting spear instead of javelins.⁷⁵ *Velites* (γροσφομάχοι) were armed with light javelins (γρόσφοι), a small shield (πάρμη), a sword, and a helmet.⁷⁶

It has been argued that Roman legionary equipment was considerably less expensive than a “Classical” hoplite panoply. What is most often understood by a panoply is: metal greaves, a large round shield, a Corinthian helmet, a bronze cuirass, a thrusting spear, and a short sword. Nathan Rosenstein has defended such a view, further arguing that the equipment of a *ueles* must have been quite cheap and consequently affordable for most citizens.⁷⁷ There are no price indications for the value of a Roman legionary panoply,

us that the Romans found it easy to envisage a situation where a man of little property might take to soldiering and yet be able to preserve or possibly augment that property.” Since the entire story seems highly idealized, why should this part be considered more plausible in the eyes of average Romans? See also, Schneider 1977a, 14-16.

⁷⁴ Polybius 6.19-21.

⁷⁵ Polybius 6.23. See also Bishop and Coulston 2006, 50-72.

⁷⁶ Polybius 6.22. The census rating of cavalrymen and its relation with the equestrian class is a problem for which this is not the place to discuss, on this topic see Nicolet 1976a, 20-38 and 1966. On legionary weaponry, see also: Eichberg, 1987; Guittard 1986, 51-64; Couissin, 1926.

⁷⁷ Rosenstein 2002, 175-176: “Yet even if this were not the case, service as a *ueles* required only a simple helmet, a small shield, a sword and javelins. Even the weapons and armor of a manipular legionary were much less elaborate and therefore considerably less costly than the panoply of a classical hoplite.” It should be noted that *uelites* probably had to buy more than a bundle of javelins because they would most likely not be able to recover all of those they threw during the various skirmishes in which they fought. Furthermore, except perhaps for body armour, there is little reason to believe that Greek armament was more expensive

however, even if this would cost half of the price proposed by Hanson for hoplite gear, this would still amount to a sum of no less than 35 to 50 *denarii*. That would represent a very expensive investment for a fifth class *assiduus* rated at 1,500 *asses* after the reduction of 141/0. In other words, such people would likely find it very difficult, if not impossible to equip themselves as heavy infantry.⁷⁸ Rosenstein is certainly right to point that *ueles* equipment was cheaper and therefore more accessible to poorer citizens. It is plausible to accept the idea that the fifth class provided all the *uelites* for the legions. This view rests on Livy's and Dionysius' description of the Servian classes in which the armament of the fifth class is described as light.⁷⁹ As highlighted above, it is doubtful that their accounts accurately reflected military organization in the sixth century.⁸⁰ Furthermore, the equipment described does not correspond with what is known of *uelites*. This hypothesis is also challenged by the fact that Polybius mentions that *uelites* were provided by the poorest *and* youngest men.⁸¹ This probably means that only the youngest members of the fifth and perhaps the fourth class would be drafted as *uelites* while others would have to serve as heavy infantry. Indeed, Polybius' account implies that recruitment

than Roman gear. Why would a hoplite shield be any cheaper than an elaborate legionary *scutum* reinforced with metal and covered with leather? A Roman legionary also needed, according to Polybius, to buy two heavy javelins. Van Wees' book had not yet been published at the time that Rosenstein was writing.

⁷⁸ Gröschel 1989, 37: "So betrachtet, bedeutete selbst der Preis eines Speers von drei Drachmen, wie in den Konfiskationsurkunden von 415/4 genannt ist, für einen einfachen Lohnarbeiter mit Familie eine erhebliche Ausgabe."; Keppie 1984, 61 "Already it would seem that by the time of Gaius Gracchus the qualification had dropped below the level at which the soldier could afford to provide all his own gear."; Gabba 1976, 7.

⁷⁹ Livy 1.43: "The fifth class was made larger, and thirty centuries were formed. These men carried slings, with stones for missiles." (*quinta classis aucta; centuriae triginta factae, fundas lapidesque missiles hi secum gerebant*); Dionysius 4.17.2: "The fifth class, consisting of those whose property was between twenty-five minae and twelve minae and a half, he divided into thirty centuries. These were also distinguished according to their age, fifteen of the centuries being composed of the older men and fifteen of the younger. These he armed with javelins and slings, and placed outside the line of battle." (τὴν δὲ πέμπτην μοῖραν, οἷς ἐντὸς εἴκοσι καὶ πέντε μνῶν ἄχρι δώδεκα καὶ ἡμίσεος μνῶν ὁ βίος ἦν, εἰς τριάκοντα συνέταξε λόχους. διήρηντο δὲ καὶ οὗτοι καθ' ἡλικίαν: πεντεκαίδεκα μὲν γὰρ ἐξ αὐτῶν λόχοι τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους εἶχον, πεντεκαίδεκα δὲ τοὺς νεωτέρους. τούτους ἔταξε σαυνία καὶ σφενδόνας ἔχοντας ἕξω τάξεως συστρατεύεσθαι).

⁸⁰ Gargola, 1989, 213-234.

⁸¹ Polybius 6.21.7: "the youngest and poorest to form the velites" (τοὺς μὲν νεωτάτους καὶ πενιχροτάτους εἰς τοὺς γροσφομάχους).

for the heavy infantry (*hastati*, *principes*, and *triarii*) was determined by age and not by being a member of a certain *classis*.⁸² There were thus presumably some *hastati* better armed than some *principes* if they were richer, and vice versa.⁸³

Acknowledging that the threshold for military service declined to the point that very poor people were liable to conscription, some scholars have proposed that the Roman state must have started to provide free equipment to its poorer soldiers to compensate for their paucity.⁸⁴ Such a policy would seem quite reasonable indeed but it is not supported by the evidence. Polybius mentions, however vaguely, that recruits were sent home by the tribunes with “those instructions regarding weapons” and with the order to assemble at the given date “without weapons.”⁸⁵ It is true that Polybius indicates that the state could provide “additional weapons,” but only against deductions on pay: “but in the case of the Romans the quaestor deducts from their pay the price fixed for their corn and clothes and any additional arm they require.”⁸⁶ Furthermore he also mentions that *hastati* were *ordered* (παρήγγειλαν) to wear a full panoply.⁸⁷ Soldiers not complying with these orders were probably punished, maybe through fines in a manner similar to what is described in the military decree of Amphipolis (c. 200 BC). This inscription details the different fines

⁸² Polybius 6.21.7-8.

⁸³ Sekunda 2007, 350.

⁸⁴ Rathbone 2007, 159; Rosenstein 2002, 175-176; Nicolet 1978a, 2-3: “[...] la panoplie qu'ils recevaient à l'incorporation était donc fournie gratuitement.”; 1977, 450; Brunt 1971, 405.

⁸⁵ Polybius 6.26.1: “The tribunes having thus organized the troops and ordered them to arm themselves in this manner, dismiss them to their homes.” (τοιαύτην δὲ ποιησάμενοι τὴν διαίρεσιν οἱ χιλίαρχοι, καὶ ταῦτα παραγγείλαντες περὶ τῶν ὅπλων, τότε μὲν ἀπέλυσαν τοὺς ἄνδρας εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν); 6.21.6: “The tribunes in Rome, after administering the oath, fix for each legion a day and place at which the men are to present themselves without arms and then dismiss them.” (οἱ δ' ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ χιλίαρχοι μετὰ τὸν ἐξορκισμόν παραγγείλαντες ἡμέραν ἐκάστῳ στρατοπέδῳ καὶ τόπον, εἰς ὃν δεήσει παρῆναι χωρὶς τῶν ὅπλων, τότε μὲν ἀφῆκαν).

⁸⁶ Polybius 6.39.15: (τοῖς δὲ Ῥωμαίοις τοῦ τε σίτου καὶ τῆς ἐσθῆτος, ἅν τινος ὅπλου προσδεηθῶσι, πάντων τούτων ὁ ταμίας τὴν τεταγμένην τιμὴν ἐκ τῶν ὀψωνίων ὑπολογίζεται). Also: Veith and Kromayer 1928, 329; Harmand 1967, 195.

⁸⁷ Polybius 6.23.1: “The next in seniority called *hastati* are ordered to wear a complete panoply.” (τοῖς γε μὴν δευτέροις μὲν κατὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν, ἀστάτοις δὲ προσαγορευομένοις, παρήγγειλαν φέρειν πανοπλίαν).

Macedonian soldiers had to pay if they failed to bear the regular set of weapons.⁸⁸ To argue that equipment was freely provided by the state, without deductions, is to ignore this evidence and also that only richer soldiers wore mail armour instead of the “heart guard,” that only the youngest and poorest served as *uelites* and that cavalymen were selected according to their census rating.⁸⁹ This reasoning is difficult to propose since it would entail that the state freely gave superior armour only to richer citizens, inferior kits only to poorer classes, while equipping the richest as cavalymen. The argument is further contradicted by the fact that deductions on soldiers' pay seemed to have continued well into the imperial period as attested by Tacitus: “In fact, the whole trade of war was comfortless and profitless: ten *asses* a day was the assessment of body and soul: with that they had to buy clothes, weapons and tents, bribe the bullying centurion and purchase a respite from duty!”⁹⁰ Even in times of emergency the logic of the timocratic system was kept in place. As discussed above, in 214 when the state asked citizens to make monetary

⁸⁸ *SEG* 40.524; also Feyel 1935, 29-68; Roussel 1934, 39-47.

⁸⁹ Polybius 6.20.9: “the old system was to choose the cavalry after the four thousand two hundred infantry, but they now choose them first, the censor selecting them according to their wealth; and three hundred are assigned to each legion.” (μετὰ ταῦτα τοὺς ἱππεῖς τὸ μὲν παλαιὸν ὑστέρους εἰώθεσαν δοκιμάζειν ἐπὶ τοῖς τετρακισχίλοις διακοσίους, νῦν δὲ προτέρους, πλουτίνδην αὐτῶν γεγενημένης ὑπὸ τοῦ τιμητοῦ τῆς ἐκλογῆς; καὶ ποιοῦσι τριακοσίους εἰς ἕκαστον στρατόπεδον). Also: Cadiou 2008, 565, 567: “Jusqu'à la fin de la République, la plupart des soldats continuaient donc probablement à acquérir leurs armes, dont ils restaient ensuite propriétaires.”; Paddock, 1985, 143: “Under the Republic the soldier's equipment was his own personal property and this, allied with the stylistic variation and the different degrees of elaboration and the decoration, would seem to indicate a small scale supply by local metalworkers on an individual basis.”; Brunt 1950, 60; Veith and Kromayer 1928, 331. Polybius 30.25.1-11 details the parade organized by Antiochus IV at Daphnein 166 or 165 featuring “5,000 men in their prime of their life equipped in the Roman fashion with cuirasses of chain mail” (καθηγοῦντό τινες Ῥωμαϊκὸν ἔχοντες καθοπλισμὸν ἐν θώραξιν ἄλυσιδωτοῖς, ἄνδρες ἀκμάζοντες ταῖς ἡλικίαις πεντακισχίλιοι). These men were probably equipped by the royal treasury to impress. It does not mean that all Roman soldiers at the time wore mail armour as its price probably prevented many citizens from acquiring it. In early medieval Europe, mail armour was a mark of social and financial prestige, cf. Pedersen 2008, 207-8.

⁹⁰ Tacitus *Annales*, 1.17.6: (*enimvero militiam ipsam grauem, infructuosam: denis in diem assibus animam et corpus aestimari; hinc uestem arma tentoria, hinc saeuitiam centurionum et uacationes munerum redimi*). See also: Gros Lambert 2012, 267. See chapter five for generals improvising to provide equipment to their troops.

contributions for the war, it did so according to census ratings.⁹¹

One could assume that the existence of army pay was enough to account for the cost of armour, clothing, and food as well as providing decent benefits. However, as will be seen in the next section, military pay was minimal and offered little prospect of enrichment.

2.2 War-Tax and Military Pay: *Tributum* and *Stipendium*

Weapons were thus quite expensive items for citizens with a census rating of only 4,000 to 1,500 *asses*. What kind of compensation did these *assidui* receive to make up for the cost of equipping themselves? According to Livy the Romans introduced military pay in the context of the war against the town of Veii in the late fifth century.⁹² The veracity of that event has been contested because currency had not yet been introduced in Rome at that time. It is only in the very late fourth or early third century that the Romans started to mint their own coins. Most scholars agree that the introduction of the *stipendium* cannot be dated earlier than that time although it is possible that pay existed earlier in the form of raw bronze.⁹³ Longer and bigger wars such as the campaign against Veii meant that a larger proportion of the citizen body (i.e. poorer citizens) had to be drafted to meet military needs. Previously only well-off citizens served, and they did so entirely at their own expense. The introduction of military pay was a means to partially compensate

⁹¹ Livy 24.11; Nicolet 1963, 417–436 ; 1966, 58–66.

⁹² Livy 4.59.11: “they [the Senate] decreed [...] that the soldiers should be paid from the public treasury, whereas till then every man had served at his own costs”. (*decerneret senatus ut stipendium miles de publico acciperet, cum ante id tempus de suo quisque functus eo munere esset*); Diodorus 14, 16, 5.

⁹³ Coudry 2009, 41; Rathbone 2007, 158–165; Marchetti 1977, 117; Gatti 1970, 131–135 *contra* Mersing 2007, 215–235 and Cornell 1995, 187–188, who both argue that the Roman state could have paid its soldiers without coins, using raw bronze by weight. Also: Aguilar and Naco del Hoyo, 2002, 273–289.

poorer citizens for the cost of service.⁹⁴ It is in this context of the development of bigger, partly publicly subsidized land armies that private warfare was gradually incorporated into state warfare. This was because the possibilities of enrichment for a publicly sponsored army, especially for aristocrats, existed on a far greater scale than what it was possible to achieve with private *condottieri*.⁹⁵ The *stipendium* was financed by the *tributum*, a contribution paid by all *assidui* according to their wealth (*pro habitu pecuniarum*).⁹⁶ As Claude Nicolet put it, it was an “*impôt payé par les mobilisables au profit des mobilisés*”.⁹⁷ It was not a permanent tax; its collection could be suspended if public finances allowed it and it could even be reimbursed.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the object of the *tributum* was not to be a general contribution to public funds but was levied for a precise end: to provide pay for the soldiers levied for a specific campaign. It was thus closer to the Greek concept of *λειτουργία* than to a modern income tax. The *tributum* is most often thought of as having a fixed rate of one aes for 1,000 *asses*.⁹⁹ However it has been shown that a tax with a fixed rate is a reality only attested later in history and that

⁹⁴ Gabba 1977, 13-33; Kienast 1975, 83-113.

⁹⁵ Timpe 1990, 385: “Vor allem nämlich hat die Expansion des 5. und 4. Jh.s auch die Wirkung gehabt, dass das Interesse an Beutegewinn und persönlichen Entfaltungschancen, das hinter dem privaten Krieg stand, immer mehr, besser und risikoloser innerhalb der staatlichen Kriegsführung befriedigt wurde. Die größten Bereicherungsmöglichkeiten erlaubt der staatliche Krieg, und die Kolonisation (als seine bedeutendste Folge) eröffnet Chancen, von denen sich kein militärischer Privatunternehmer etwas träumen lassen konnte.” This is mostly true for land warfare. The different nature of naval warfare, particularly suited to quick raids, especially on coastal areas, allowed for profitable private expeditions, as demonstrated by Bleckmann 2002, esp. 209 ff; 2011, 169: “A minimum level of consensus was therefore enforced by the simple fact that individual nobles were able to attain greater measures of prestige and power only if they had recourse to serving in the state’s institutions.” Also Zimmermann 2010, 27-42; Coudry 2009, 34-35; Erdkamp 2006b, 96-11; Harris 1990, 494-510.

⁹⁶ Livy 1.42; Nicolet 1976c, 3-19. Nicolet is somewhat ambiguous when he mentions at page 7 that “[...] il ne fut en revanche jamais question de leur demander [i.e. the poor] de « contribuer » sauf pour les impôts indirects, dont la plupart furent d’ailleurs abolis en 60.” He probably meant “contribuer” in the sense that the contributions from the poor meant little on the grand scale and that the main burden fell on the rich as he wrote earlier on page 6: “En gros, seuls les riches avaient une part au *munus* militaire, à la vie politique – et aux charges financières.”

⁹⁷ Nicolet 1976b, 206-208.

⁹⁸ Dionysius 19.16.3; Livy 39.7.4-5; Boren 1983, 430; Nicolet 1976b, 209-210.

⁹⁹ Cf. Rosenstein 2004, 53-54. This interpretation is based on a passage of Livy 29.15-16, detailing the fines that mutinous allies would have to pay.

each *tributum* was levied according to current necessities, as was the case with the *dilectus*.¹⁰⁰ It could be quite a burden in times of severe crisis, such as during the Second Punic War when Livy reports that the citizens reacted with outrage when ordered to provide rowers for the fleet, along with rations and pay for them.¹⁰¹ It is most often agreed that the burden of providing the *tributum* fell mostly on the richer classes.¹⁰² Ultimately the *stipendium* provided by the levy of the *tributum* can hardly be considered a generous grant since all *assidui* had to contribute to it. Furthermore, as it will be shown, the *stipendium* it provided was far from being lavish.

Polybius records that soldiers were paid two obols a day.¹⁰³ An Attic drachma being worth six obols, Polybius' figure thus obviously represents a third of a drachma. However, in terms of Roman currency this represents a somewhat awkward division. Interpreting Polybius' two obols as a third of a denarius worth ten *asses* would give a daily pay of three and a third *asses*.¹⁰⁴ It is generally agreed that Polybius was using the Attic drachma and not the Achaean one as it has sometimes been suggested.¹⁰⁵ The simplest and most plausible explanation is that Polybius translated denarius by drachma for his Greek audience and that he literally meant a third of a denarius when he wrote two obols.¹⁰⁶ This daily pay would mean an annual total of about 120 *denarii*.¹⁰⁷ Despite

¹⁰⁰ Nicolet 1976b, 213-217 and Dionysius 4.19.1-4; Nicolet 1976c, 100: "Comme le *dilectus*, la décision de lever un tribut fait partie des attributions conjointes des magistrats et du Sénat; elle dépend d'un *decretum* et d'un *edictum*, non d'une *lex*."; also below on the same page: "D'autre part, le *tributum* n'est pas, comme on le dit, un impôt de quotité, mais de répartition: c'est son montant total et prévisionnel que décide le Sénat; et ce montant sera réparti, à son tour, entre les contribuables, *pro portione census*."

¹⁰¹ Livy 26.35.4-9.

¹⁰² Rosenstein 2004, 53-54; Nicolet 1976b 227-228.

¹⁰³ Polybius 6.39.12: As pay the foot-soldier receives two obols a day, a centurion twice as much, and a cavalry-soldier a drachma." (ὁ γρόνιον δ' οἱ μὲν πεζοὶ λαμβάνουσι τῆς ἡμέρας δύο ὀβολοὺς, οἱ δὲ ταξίαρχοι διπλοῦν, οἱ δ' ἵππεῖς δραχμήν).

¹⁰⁴ See note 15 on the controversy over the value of the Polybian drachma.

¹⁰⁵ Mattingly 1937, 99-107, followed by Marchetti 1978a, 197.

¹⁰⁶ Rathbone 2007, 159; Crawford, 1985, 146; Nicolet 1976b, 157; Thomsen 1973, 201, Kromayer and

important differences in census ratings between them, it seems that all soldiers received the same pay (except centurions and cavalrymen who were paid more). What did a third of a denarius mean in practical terms? Cicero claims that the maximum wage for manual labour in his time was twelve *asses* a day.¹⁰⁸ For further comparison, during the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) Athenian hoplites and even rowers were paid one drachma a day.¹⁰⁹ An unskilled worker in Eleusis in 329 was paid one and a half drachma a day.¹¹⁰ Three and a third *asses* a day therefore did not represent an attractive pay and would only have been an incentive to serve for very poor citizens.¹¹¹ Soldiers were probably paid at the end of each campaign, since it is only then that the total quantity of food consumed and the amount of clothing and weapons used could be calculated. They would then receive what was left after such deductions were made.¹¹² Some more cash

Veith 1928, 329.

¹⁰⁷ Boren 1983, 438-439. Ps.-Caesar *BH* 22.7 seems to imply that the light infantry received an inferior pay, though this could be seen as punishment for desertion: "if any man deserted from our side, he was shoved into some light-armed unit and drew no more than seventeen *asses* a day." (*si qui ex nostris transfugerunt, in leuem armaturam conici eumque non amplius XVII accipere*). This passage is problematic since at ten *asses* per denarius, this would amount to more than 600 *denarii* a year, a sum not matched before the third century CE. The figure may have been corrupted in the copying process. Th. Mommsen proposed to correct the text as: A(sses) VII (*in diem*) for a *stipendium* of 255 *denarii* per year (cf "Zum Bellum Hispaniense", *Hermes*, 28, 1893, 612). A. Klotz proposed to read it •X•VII, for some 84 *denarii* a year (cf *Kommentar zum Bellum hispaniense*, Leipzig, 1927, 82).

¹⁰⁸ Cicero, *Pro Roscio*, 10.28: "For those limbs could not earn by themselves more than twelve *asses*." (*illa membra merere per se non amplius poterant duodecim aeris*).

¹⁰⁹ Thucydides 3.1.7.4; 6.31.3. Thracian mercenaries were also paid one drachma a day: 7.27. For the pay of Hellenistic mercenaries, see Trundle 2013, 344-8.

¹¹⁰ Duncan-Jones 1978, 161; Pritchett 1956, 178-328.

¹¹¹ Cadiou 2008, 508; "Il est donc probable que le *stipendium* ne représentait pas en soi un attrait suffisant, ni même une compensation sérieuse à un service prolongé."; De Ligt 2004, 743; Boren 1983, 445; "The *stipendium militum* alone was not a living wage. It seems to us surprising that the sources record no general demand for an increase in the *stipendium*. It reminds us that even yet the pay was intended to be minimal; the "fringe" benefits, along with land on discharge, constituted - or was expected to constitute - more in real pay than the *stipendium*."; Gabba 1976, 7; Nicolet 1976b, 158-159: "Il est certain que la solde, au II^e et au I^{er} siècle, ne peut pas être considérée comme un attrait, ni même comme une compensation sérieuse pour un service prolongé."; Harmand 1969, 63: "Il s'agit donc d'unités formées de pauvres. À cause de cela, toute leur existence sera conditionnée, pendant près d'un demi-siècle, par le fait que la solde reçue de la république sénatoriale est misérable."; 1967, 264, also Brunt 1971, 411. Scheidel 2007a, 330, argues that the *stipendium* might have had greater purchasing power for food in peripheral regions but this does not take into account the cost of weapons which would be purchased beforehand.

¹¹² Cadiou 2008, 516-517: "La part de ces déductions est impossible à calculer, mais on convient du reste

was sometimes handed to soldiers, but only in the celebration of the triumph, and the sums distributed were not a fixed proportion of what had been captured (see section 2.3 below for the discussion of cash handouts and the possible benefits of plunder).¹¹³ Moreover, it seems that payment was sometimes delayed, as the sources occasionally mention.¹¹⁴ For example in 206 some of Scipio's (the future Africanus) soldiers revolted because they did not receive their pay.¹¹⁵

Now, what did the deductions on pay represent? Although no precise figures survive for the Republican period, several historians have tried to estimate the proportion of pay that would have been taken away for deductions.¹¹⁶ The main weakness of these theories that attempt to calculate an “average amount” for deductions is that they all assume that soldiers campaigned year-long, which was often but not always the case. Deductions for

un argument supplémentaire en faveur d'un versement en fin de campagne: les vivres utilisés, les armes endommagées, les jours effectifs de service, tout cela ne pouvait être comptabilisé qu'après et seul le reliquat était versé en numéraire. Dans les faits, le numéraire effectivement versé pour la solde des légionnaires était donc réduit.”; De Ligt 2004, 743: “Moreover, it appears from Polybius that deductions were made for food, clothing and replacement arms. This surely means that only a small part of the money theoretically due was actually paid over.”; Boren 1983, 435.

¹¹³ Tarpin 2000, 368-370, see also the table in Coudry 2009, 71-79.

¹¹⁴ Polybius 21.28.5; Livy 28.29.2; Cicero *ad Quint. fr.* 1.1.5.

¹¹⁵ Livy 24.8; Polybius 11.28.3; Appien *Iber.* 7.34.137; Cassius Dio 16; Zonaras 9.10.

¹¹⁶ Von Domaszewski 1900, 219: Deductions for food alone of 75 *denarii*; Nicolet 1977, 439: “Le soldat subit, jusqu'à la fin de la République, des retenues pour ces diverses fournitures, si bien que le débours net pour l'État peut être estimé, depuis 211, à 80/90 deniers par soldat et par an.”; Nicolet's intervention in Gabba 1978, 225: “C'est qu'au fond le *stipendium* n'est pas perçu ni vraiment ressenti comme un salaire (*merces*). Il faut relire ce qu'en dit, anachroniquement, mais de façon éclairante, Denys d'Halicarnasse, au Livre IV: c'est une “indemnité de subsistance” (ὀψώνιον), complétant un *munus* militaire qui n'est, originellement, réclamé que des riches. Ce *munus* est à la fois un devoir patriotique et un privilège, parce que la guerre est à la fois liturgie et opération lucrative, qu'elle conjugue risque et profit. Que les besoins réels de la défense et de la conquête, l'évolution démographique, aient vite rendu cette conception parfaitement caduque, c'est sûr: mais le vocabulaire, tout comme le montant, de la solde restent conservateurs. On n'y touche pas. Et, bien entendu, on trouve des solutions de remplacement, mais officieuses et parallèles: le butin, les récompenses, bientôt les lois agraires.”; Boren 1983, 435-436, using the used price of six and a third *asses* found in Livy *Periochae*, 60 and the amount of two thirds of an Attic medimna of wheat per month given by Polybius 6.39.13, estimated 20 *denarii* for food, plus 60 for clothes and weapons. Also: Brunt 1950, 52 f.; Harmand 1967: “La rétribution du légionnaire apparaît donc en elle-même comme très faible. De plus, elle est grevée par le système des distributions à titre onéreux. On manque, pour celles-ci, d'un moyen d'évaluation monétaire certain; il est néanmoins évident qu'elles ne pouvaient pas ne point réduire, dans une forte proportion, la valeur réelle d'une solde brute déjà placée fort bas sur l'échelle contemporaine des salaires, solde dérisoire, en définitive.”

food would only apply for the number of days spent on campaign. Another factor to take into account is that the number of missiles used and the amount of weapons needed to be replaced or repaired could greatly vary from one campaign to another, depending on the nature of the fighting and its intensity. All of this would have represented further expenses in addition to what was required for the original kit.

Later papyrological evidence from the first and second century CE gives an idea of how expensive deductions on pay for weapons, food, clothing, and other items could be. A papyrus from Egypt dated to 81 CE indicates that a soldier named Q. Iulius Proculus paid 69 *denarii* for food (*in uictum*), socks and sandals (*caligas fascias*), plus some 36 *denarii* on clothing (*in uestimentis*). In total this man spent some 134 *denarii* out of the 186 he received. The second soldier named, C. Valerius Germanus, spent 61 *denarii* on clothing alone. He also paid a sum of 69 *denarii* for food, socks and sandals. The deductions on his pay amounted to a total of no less than 82 *denarii* out of the 186 he received. However there is no expense recorded for his third instalment, so he may actually have been charged more than 82 *denarii*.¹¹⁷ It has been debated whether these soldiers were auxiliaries or legionaries.¹¹⁸ The fact that they were charged for hay (*faenaria*) points to an auxiliary mounted unit. This means that they had to spend more than foot soldiers in order to take care of their mounts. Although less is known about auxiliary pay, auxiliary cavalrymen were better paid than infantrymen.¹¹⁹ The pattern of deductions for hay, food,

¹¹⁷ P.Gen.Lat. 1 = Fink 1971, 68. The numbers showed here were rounded up. One Egyptian drachma was worth a fourth of a Roman denarius, see also: Alston 1994, 113-123; M. A. Speidel 1992, 87-106; M. P. Speidel 1973, 141-147. Also: MacMullen 1960, 23-40.

¹¹⁸ The interpretation of the papyrus is controversial. *Inter alia* the fact that both soldiers have the *tria nomina* raises the question as to whether they were citizens serving in an auxiliary unit or mounted legionaries. See the discussion on pp. 243-246 and in Boren 1983, 452 ff. Also, von Premerstein 1903, 1-46; Watson 1959, 372-378; 1956, 332-340.

¹¹⁹ See the suggestions of Speidel 1973, 146.

boots, and socks is the same for all instalments: 2.5, 20, and 3 *denarii*.¹²⁰ This points to obligatory deductions on each instalment. Although it is not known if such fixed deductions existed in the Republican period, it is reasonable to suppose that they did as this would have made book keeping easier.¹²¹ The greater variations for deductions on clothing probably reflected the personal needs of the soldiers. That being said, the sums charged to these two men took a large part of their pay, which was much higher than in the Republican period. However the bill was incomplete, as the most expensive items, weapons, were not even listed on this papyrus. Perhaps these soldiers were not new recruits and had already paid their arms and armour through deductions over the past years. Fortunately, other papyri from the second century CE provide information about the sums of money charged to soldiers for their weapons. One of these mentions a soldier named Dionysius who spent 103 *denarii* on weapons.¹²² The names of the soldiers mentioned on the papyrus again point to an auxiliary unit, and it is tempting to propose a cavalry unit since the amount of money seems so high. Another papyrus dated to 153 CE has a cavalryman (*eques alaris*) borrowing 50 *denarii* for weapons (*in pretium armorum*).¹²³ Finally, a papyrus from December 29th 143 CE details that 21 *denarii* and 27 1/2 obols were held *iv ἄρμυς* (= *in armis*, somewhat bizarrely transliterated from Latin, i.e. for weapons) from the pay of a soldier named Ammonius.¹²⁴ Granted, these sums vary greatly from one to another but they would all represent significant investments for

¹²⁰ P.Gen.Lat. 1 = Fink 1971, 68:

faenaria *dr x*
in uictum *dr lxxx*
caligas fascias dr xii

¹²¹ See Cosme 1993, 67-80. See Millar 2002, 89-104 for the amount of oxen and carts needed to carry coins to pay the troops, especially 93-4.

¹²² Grenfell and Hunt 1900, 105, col II, 18: “*item armorum Dionysi (denarii) CIII*”; Boren 1983, 427-460.

¹²³ CPL 189; Gilliam 1967, 233-243.

¹²⁴ P. Columbia inv. 325; Gilliam 233-243.

common Republican *assidui*. It is true that certain types of armour from the imperial period such as segmented or scale armour could be more elaborate than the cheapest Republican armour.¹²⁵ However, even if the aforementioned numbers are scaled down, such expenditures would have been a significant burden for citizens possessing no more than 400 *denarii* of property (Polybius' figure for the fifth class) and receiving pay of only 120 *denarii*, less than half of what second century CE soldiers were receiving, that is 300 *denarii* for legionaries and 250 for auxiliary infantrymen.¹²⁶

Although these examples of deductions should not be interpreted as standards, since prices could vary from province to province, they nevertheless provide an idea of how expensive military service could be. Furthermore, unlike Republican *assidui*, soldiers of the Imperial period were nearly always volunteers and they had to serve for twenty years or more. Military service was their trade and they were not expected to have another source of income. On the other hand, the majority of second century BCE soldiers were drafted and they owned a certain amount of property that presumably allowed them to earn a living. However, with the decrease in property qualifications the logic of the system must have gradually broken down as people who were supposed who were supposed to have what Nicolet has described as a “capital et de quoi vivre par ailleurs” but in reality did not, were now drafted in the army.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ On armour and weapons, see Feugère 1997; Bishop and Coulston, 1993, Couissin 1926.

¹²⁶ Gros Lambert 2012, 260; Le Bohec 2009, 39-50. Gros Lambert remarks that soldiers of the Imperial period had decent living standards because of their increased pay and *donativa*. See for instance 273: “Les soldats n’étaient pas pauvres, n’étaient pas riches. D’ailleurs, rares sont les vétérans que l’on retrouve dans les curies des cités du monde romain. Mais ils étaient à l’aise et avaient un niveau de vie moyen, et leur masse finissait pas représenter un marché non négligeable pour les populations environnantes.”

¹²⁷ Nicolet 1976b 158: “Mais il ne faut pas oublier que la solde n’est en rien assimilable à un salaire: dans l’armée censitaire, le citoyen doit, en somme, servir à ses dépens; il est supposé avoir un capital et de quoi vivre par ailleurs. La solde est une indemnité, destinée à couvrir sa subsistance et peut-être son équipement.”; Veith and Kromayer 1928, 329 : “[...] der Sold ist demnach grundsätzlich nicht als Lohn für

To summarize, the cost of a legionary panoply is not attested for the Republic but it is unlikely to have been substantially cheaper than the different arms and armour available to the various types of fifth and fourth century hoplites (estimated by Hanson to be worth between 75 and 100 *drachmai*, stressing that this was cheap enough for most Greek farmers to afford it, that is for those owning land worth between 2,000 to 3,000 *drachmai*), since only the body armour and the helmet of the latter could somewhat be more elaborate. Furthermore, as van Wees pointed out, it is difficult to calculate the “average” cost of a panoply. There was a considerable variance of equipment between hoplites drawn from different social classes, some would be considerably better armed than others and vice versa. Despite these differences the evidence available for weapon prices, be it Greek or Roman, demonstrates that they were not cheap items, quite the contrary. It seems reasonable to propose that, on a minimal account, Republican legionary weapons and armour would cost between 35 to 50 *denarii*. Moreover the evidence indicates that deductions on pay for food, clothing, and other equipment were also quite significant. They would in some cases leave legionaries with only a very small portion (if any) of their *stipendium* at the end of campaign, unless some were fortunate enough to have inherited of, or borrowed some weapons. This low *stipendium* was thus not a potent source of enrichment for Roman soldiers.

2.3 Other Possible Sources of Income for *Assidui*: Plunder and Cash Handouts

It is striking to notice that there is no evidence before Caesar for an increase in pay to

geleistete Dienste, sondern als Verpflegs- und Ausrüstungsbeitrag zu verstehen.”; The same idea is expressed by Phang 2008, 166.

make up for the fact that citizens who were almost 'property-less' were now incorporated in the army.¹²⁸ According to some historians, the failure of the Roman state to offer a pay high enough to allow poor citizens to better cope with the expenditures of military service represents the profound incomprehension of the Senate regarding the financial obligations of military duty.¹²⁹

Given the paucity of the *stipendium* and the importance of deductions on pay, it is quite unlikely that the less well-off soldiers would have been able to save much money from their *stipendium*, let alone send some home to help their family as it has been proposed.¹³⁰ It is likely that soldiers were paid at the end of each campaign. Even if, for the sake of the argument, they were not and received regular payments, it is hard to imagine a soldier campaigning in Greece or Spain finding the time and the means to send some of his few spare *denarii* to his family in Italy. It is little wonder that most scholars have come to the conclusion that donatives and plunder must have been the only possibilities of enrichment or of breaking even for many *assidui* in the second and first

¹²⁸ Suetonius *Caesar*, 26.3; Boren 1983, 446-450, argues that *stipendium* later came to mean a payment of 75 *denarii* following his reading of P.Gen.Lat. 1. Caesar would have changed both the computation from 10 *asses* to a denarius to 16 *asses* to a denarius while adding a further *stipendium* of 75 *denarii*. The change in computation would have turned the previous 120 *denarii* pay into 75 *denarii*. The additional 75 *denarii stipendium* would have raised the pay to 150 *denarii*.

¹²⁹ Harmand 1967, 264: "Du côté de l'État sénatorial, il faut reconnaître une totale incompréhension des besoins du soldat prolétaire."; Nicolet 1976b, 159.

¹³⁰ Rosenstein 2004, 92: "Wage labor in some instances might have made up shortfalls, particularly since the stipendium soldiers received allowed them to, at least potentially, to send home money with which to pay a hired hand." *contra* Cagniat 2007, 81 and Harmand 1969, 67: "Il est très peu vraisemblable qu'une épargne à partir d'une solde dérisoire soit envisageable." and Cadiou 2008, 508-509: "Sans dénier totalement à la solde une fonction économique réelle puisqu'elle permettait sans doute au soldat de se livrer durant son service à de menus achats ou bien, comme ce sera le cas sous l'Empire, de se constituer un pécule avant de retourner à la vie civile, force est de reconnaître qu'elle n'était pas destinée à lui permettre de subvenir à ses besoins au-delà du strict nécessaire."; See Veith and Kromayer 1928, 412 for the hypothesis (although based on a much later source: Vegetius 2.20) that soldiers had no access to their savings until the end of service.

centuries.¹³¹

What was the soldiers' ordinary part of plunder? There is no simple answer to that question.¹³² First, there is the basic difference between the sack of a city and the sack of an enemy camp. In both cases, the Romans seemed to have had habits that varied according to circumstances. Polybius, in a famous passage depicting the capture of Carthago Nova in 209, described the way the Romans normally sacked cities. This passage provides a picture of a perfectly ordered process where certain units were assigned to plunder while others secure the town and suppressed any resistance left. The loot seized was then divided equally between all the soldiers.¹³³ This passage seems to fit well with Polybius' narrative of Rome's military institutions where everything seems to be well organized and structured. However, Polybius' model is not corroborated by other sources, his depiction of a 'rationalized' sack is also contradicted by other accounts.¹³⁴ First, generals were sometimes unable to keep their troops from massacring and plundering when they wanted to do so. For instance, in 190, after the surrender of Phoecea who had sided with Antiochus, Roman soldiers started pillaging the town despite the

¹³¹ Sage 2008, 209; Schneider 1977a, 53: "In den letzten zwei Jahrhunderten der römischen Republik war der Soldat von der Beute abhängig, d.h. von der Generosität der Feldherrn, wollte er finanziell nicht zu sehr geschädigt aus dem Krieg zurückkehren. Spätestens seit 13 v. chr. bzw. 5 n. Chr., als zumindest in der Theorie die militärischen Belange durch Augustus geregelt waren, scheint der Soldatenberuf nicht unattraktiv im Verhältnis zu anderen Berufen gewesen zu sein."; Nicolet 1976b, 159-164; Veith and Kromayer 1928, 331: "Viel hat der römische Krieger wenigstens zu Beginn seiner Dienstzeit vom Solde jedenfalls nicht ersparen können, und tatsächlich tritt diese Art der Bereicherung weit zurück gegen die durch Beuteanteil." *Contra* Brunt 1971, 412: "One can be sure, at least, that the hope of booty was not in general an adequate incentive to enlistment."

¹³² See for instance: Rosillo López 2010b, 981-999; Coudry 2009, 21-79; Tarpin 2009, 81-102; Phang 2008, 2000, 365-376; Wolters 2008, 228-245; Churchill 1999, 85-116; Liou-Gille 1992, 155-172; Gonzalez Roman, 1908, 139-150; Shatzman 1972, 177-205; Bona 1960, 105-175; 1959, 309-370; Vogel 1948, 394-422.

¹³³ Polybius 10.15-16. Walbank 1967, 217, argues that the distribution of plunder to the soldiers *in situ* seemed to have been the most common way of disposing of it. However he admits that sharing in an equitable fashion must have been awkward.

¹³⁴ Tarpin 2000, 368: "Aucun texte portant sur la répartition du butin ne nous est parvenu, et il est plus que probable qu'il n'y en eut pas."

praetor's orders claiming that “cities were pillaged after an assault, not after a surrender, and that in any case it was the general and not the soldiers who decided.”¹³⁵ In 189 the officer commanding a body of the army under the command of consul Cn. Manlius Vulso operating against the Galatians could not keep his men from plundering the enemy camp. After having defeated another Galatian tribe, a different part of the same army remained in the enemy camp to plunder it instead of pursuing its opponents.¹³⁶ Even a general as experienced as Julius Caesar could not prevent his troops from massacring the entire population of the Gallic town of Avaricum in 52.¹³⁷ Finally, the story of the sack of Cremona in 69 CE has looters running amok in the streets and even fighting each other out of greed.¹³⁸ The latter account, although much later and dealing with a professional army, is completely at odds with Polybius' account. Moreover, his model implies that Roman officers would always be able to force thousands of armed men still bloodied and under the adrenaline rush of recent combat to share their plunder with others. The above examples prove that this was not always the case. Also, the idea of an equal share of plunder for everybody assumes that the Romans did not know cupidity and that no soldier ever had the thought of stealing some goods without declaring it.¹³⁹ It is more likely that the way a sack was conducted greatly varied according to the harshness of the fighting, the attitude of the commander, the mood of the troops, and the wealth of the city sacked.

¹³⁵ Livy 37.32.11-13: “With such shouts, as if they had received a signal from the praetor, they rushed off in every direction to plunder the city. Aemilius at first opposed and tried to recall them, saying that captured, not surrendered, cities were plundered and that even so in these cases the decision rested with the commander, not the soldiers.” (*Ab hac uoce, uelut signo a praetore dato, ad diripiendam urbem passim discurrunt. Aemilius primo resistere et reuocare, dicendo captas, non deditas, diripi urbes, et in iis tamen imperatoris, non militum, arbitrium esse*).

¹³⁶ Livy 38.23.2-4; 38.27.3-5.

¹³⁷ Caesar *BG*, 8.28. In 57 Caesar (*BG* 2.33.1) evacuated his troops from a town that had surrendered to prevent them from committing violence against the population.

¹³⁸ Tacitus *Historiae*, 3.33.1-3.

¹³⁹ Ziolkowski 1993, 87-90

To summarize, Polybius' picture of the way the Romans looted cities is most likely an idealized version of reality. The evidence suggests that in many, if not most cases, it was a matter of first come, first served. Perhaps Polybius wanted to emphasize the organized character of the sack of Carthago Nova in order to further idealize Scipio, just like when he is also depicted as a virtuous man when he refused to accept as a gift an attractive young woman offered to him by his men.¹⁴⁰

All this does not mean that the soldiery was always immediately let loose in captured cities and camps. When important state treasuries, deposits of money or exquisite works of art were known to exist, generals took precautions to keep the soldiers away from them. This was done by generals perhaps not only with the intention of enriching themselves or the state but also out of fear that soldiers could become excessively rich if they had access to such large sums of cash. Since Roman social hierarchy was based on wealth, this could have somewhat altered the social order of the Republic, something the nobility certainly wanted to avoid.¹⁴¹ In 212, shortly after the Romans invested Syracuse, Marcellus sounded the recall and sent his quaestor with a carefully selected unit to prevent the royal treasures from being plundered by the soldiers.¹⁴² In 210, after capturing Agrigentum, Laevinus enslaved the inhabitants, sold the plunder and sent all the money to Rome.¹⁴³ Furthermore, before letting his soldiers pillage Epirus in 167,

¹⁴⁰ Polybius 10.19.6.

¹⁴¹ Liou-Gille 1992, 169-170: "Par ailleurs, la crainte avouée du patriciat, c'est que, si la répartition du butin n'est pas contrôlée, l'ordre social n'en soit affecté. En effet, la société romaine est une société censitaire, dont la hiérarchie repose sur l'évaluation de la fortune. Si les citoyens sont lâchés sans freins sur leur proie, ils peuvent s'enrichir brutalement et leur répartition dans les différentes classes en sera bouleversée; les conséquences de ces transformations sont imprévisibles, mais assurément très graves." Although Liou-Gille refers to the *patriciat* of early republican Rome and not to the later patrician-plebeian nobility, the argument is still valid for the middle and late Republic. On the formation of the Roman nobility, see Beck 2005; Bleckmann 2002; Hölkeskamp 1987/2011; 1993, 12-39.

¹⁴² Livy 25.30.12; 31. 8-9.

¹⁴³ Livy 26.40.13.

Aemilius Paullus took care of having all the gold and silver removed from the targeted cities.¹⁴⁴ He also gave orders for the Macedonian royal treasure to be handed directly to his quaestors.¹⁴⁵ Scipio Aemilianus, after the fall of Carthage, let his soldiers pillage for some days all that was not gold, silver and offerings.¹⁴⁶ In 58 Cato sold the treasure of King Ptolemy in Cyprus and sent the money to Rome.¹⁴⁷ The fact that generals usually seized treasuries and the most valuable objects means that soldiers had to be content with common goods and less valuable objects that were left. This further demonstrates that the idealized model described by Polybius where each soldier has an equal share of loot is not accurate, unless he meant an equal share of what was left after the general commandeered what he wanted for the state and/or for himself. Moreover, a point which is often overlooked in discussions about plunder is the physical limit of what soldiers could carry. As an example, modern reconstructions of Roman shields weigh more than 10 kg and this does not even take into account armour and offensive weapons. So a soldier's equipment further restricted what he could actually loot during a sack unless the army would spend several days on-site.¹⁴⁸

Two other important sources of profit resulting from war were captives and captured weaponry. Prisoners of war were most often sold into slavery for the benefit of the *aerarium*. Scipio had the Africans captured at the battle of Baecula in Spain sold as slaves by his quaestor. When the camp of Hanno was taken after the battle of Beneventum in 214, the soldiers were exceptionally permitted to keep all the plunder while the prisoners were again taken over by the state. The selling of prisoners could be

¹⁴⁴ Livy 45.34.2-4.

¹⁴⁵ Plutarch *Aemilius Paullus*, 27.

¹⁴⁶ Appian *Pun.* 133.

¹⁴⁷ Plutarch *Cato Minor*, 36.4.

¹⁴⁸ Bishop and Coulston 2006, 61-2.

quite lucrative: those captured after the battle of the river Metaurus were sold for a total sum of 300 talents that was deposited in the public treasury.¹⁴⁹ The weaponry collected from the defeated army was sometimes burned or sent to Rome but never given to the soldiers. For example, the arms and armour taken from the Gauls at Telamon in 225 were sent to the *Vrbs*. After the battle of Pydna, Aemilius Paullus sent the most highly decorated weapons to Rome and burned the rest. Scipio Aemilianus did so as well after the capture of Carthage. Similarly, Marius burnt most weapons after the battle of Aquae Sextiae and kept the most beautiful for his triumph. On the other hand, Sulla simply abandoned the enemy weapons made of iron after the battle of Orchomenos.¹⁵⁰

So plundering was not always as ordered and with equal opportunities for all soldiers as Polybius described it. Although sources are somewhat imprecise about the share of the soldiers, the fact that commanders often took care to remove the most valuable goods and cash deposits before letting the soldiers loot a city probably means that it was not the rule to leave all the loot to the soldiers.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, the most valuable items to be acquired

¹⁴⁹ Livy 27.19.2; Livy 24.16.5; Polybius 11.3.2. Same practice: Livy 10.20.15-16; 10.31.3-4; 23.37.13; 27.49.6; Appian *Hisp.* 68; 98; Sallust *Iug.* 91.7; Zonaras 8.11.

¹⁵⁰ Polybius 2.31.3; Livy 45.33.1-2; Appian *Lib.* 133; Plutarch *Marius*, 22.1; *Sulla*, 21.4; Tarpin 2000, 370. Appian *Lib.* 127 mentions soldiers chopping gold off a statue with their swords in a temple during the final assault on Carthage. Scipio apparently did not confiscate that gold when he found out what happened. Mundubeltz 2000, 86-89 doubts that Scipio would have really let the soldiers keep the gold they took despite their officers' orders: "L'historien semble donc sous-entendre non seulement que le général [Scipion] ne punit pas réellement les fautifs[ceux qui ont pillé l'or de la statue], mais également qu'il ne leur avait même pas confisqué le produit de leur forfait. Une telle attitude paraît tout à fait surprenante; il est possible qu'Appien, qui paraît avoir résumé sa source à outrance, ait simplement omis de mentionner cette confiscation. Cette source semble en effet avoir été Polybe, ce qui donne une valeur particulière à ce récit. L'historien grec était en effet présent aux côtés de Scipion tout au long de sa campagne africaine et semble avoir participé en personne à l'assaut final, ce qui pourrait signifier qu'il avait personnellement assisté au pillage du temple d'Apollon. Il serait cependant très étonnant que Polybe, historien laudateur de Scipion Émilien, ait été à la fois à l'origine du discours menaçant du consul et d'une version du pillage dans laquelle les fautifs étaient restés impunis. Il nous faut donc soit admettre qu'Appien n'a restitué qu'une partie du récit de Polybe, soit qu'il a contaminé celui-ci par une autre source." See also Beck 2003, 73-92 who makes the case that the destruction of captured weaponry was a way to prevent an incoming commander from claiming the military glory achieved by his predecessor.

¹⁵¹ Besides the examples cited above, Pausanias 7.16.8 has Mummius taking possession of the most

from the battlefield, slaves and weapons, were most often taken over by the state.

It is possible to be more precise with a procedure that is better documented: cash handouts after campaigns. There is indeed good evidence for the regular practice of giving sums of money to soldiers after victorious expeditions (see table 4 below).¹⁵² Donatives could on some occasions cover the expenses of weapons and clothing or even provide benefits. Still, the great diversity in the sums handed out indicates that there was no rule set in stone ordering generals to give a given proportion of what the campaign yielded. Although the amounts of cash handed out from year to year are inconstant, none of these handouts can be seen as lavish (except the figures for 167), on the contrary, they seem rather modest and sometimes plainly negligible such as the figures for 197-96 and 133.¹⁵³

exquisite votive offerings and works of arts in Corinth before setting the town on fire. Coudry 2009, 26: “Les textes qui évoquent l'affectation du butin aux soldats précisent rarement que la totalité du butin leur revient: doit-on supposer que lorsque cette précision ne figure pas, il en va autrement?”; 28: “Sur la part laissée aux soldats, les textes sont imprécis: non seulement comme on l'a vu plus haut ils ne détaillent pas la composition de ce butin, ce qui pourrait s'expliquer par sa nature nécessairement hétérogène, mais ils sont tout aussi vagues sur sa quantité; *magna praeda*, *tanta praeda*, et surtout *praeda ingens* sont les expressions couramment employées, cette dernière revenant avec une régularité frappante (plus de la moitié des occurrences).”; 50: “Tout au long de la République le partage du butin est demeuré un enjeu mettant aux prises trois destinataires concurrents, les soldats, le peuple romain, et le général. Jamais ne s'est établi un consensus sur la quotité revenant à chacun. On cherche en vain les indices d'une norme en la matière - tout comme on ne parvient pas à identifier avec certitude un “droit du triomphe”.” For these reasons, since this study is concerned with soldiers, it seems more fruitful to focus on patterns of what they could expect rather than to get involved in the complex debate of the definition of *praeda*, *manubiae*, and *spolia*. The reader interested in this topic can consult the authors referenced in note 139 above.

¹⁵² Tarpin 2000, 370: “Enfin, et c'est la solution la plus classique, les soldats reçoivent d'ordinaire une gratification à l'issue du triomphe. Importante lorsque le général tient à s'attacher ses troupes, elle est plus maigre lorsque le général est vertueux et intéressé au bien de l'État, ou vindicatif comme Paul-Émile, qui cumule les deux caractéristiques. L'importance de la solde est déterminée par le général. Mais le triomphe est justement un moment où l'on peut saisir à quel point les soldats sont éloignés des prises précieuses, puisque, dans le défilé, elles figurent à l'avant du cortège, alors qu'ils sont eux, placés derrière le triomphateur.”

¹⁵³ Roselaar 2010, 193 seems to overestimate the value of donatives. She mentions that a donative of 30 *denarii* as attested in 179 amounted to a hundred days of *stipendium*, which is true. However, as pointed out, the *stipendium militare* can hardly be compared with wage labour as it was much lower. The fact remains that on many occasions benefits in cash handouts were minimal and could hardly have been an incentive to serve except for very poor people.

Let us take the second biggest figure in the table, that of 100 *denarii* for the year 167, in order to put the amount of this donative in perspective. Livy mentions that the total amount of gold and silver taken in Macedonia on that occasion amounted to a sum of no less than 120 million sesterces. If he was talking about *denarii* worth sixteen uncial *asses*, this would give the amount of 30 million *denarii*. The strength of the army that campaigned in Macedonia has been estimated at ca. 40,000, including a number of Thracian and Cretan allies.¹⁵⁴ If the Italian *socii* made up about half of the army, the Roman element probably consisted of some 18,000 to 20,000 men, most likely four legions. Since there were normally 300 Roman cavalry per legion, this would give a total of 16,800 to 18,800 Roman foot soldiers.¹⁵⁵ The donative of 100 *denarii* would thus represent between 1,680,000 and 1,880,000 *denarii*, only about five or six percent of the value of the total amount of gold and silver seized in Macedonia.¹⁵⁶ From this point of view the donative hardly seems generous. However, despite the fact that 100 *denarii* is

¹⁵⁴ Hammond 1984, 46; Plutarch *Aemilius Paullus*, 15.7; Livy 44.38.5, has Aemilius Paullus tell his army that they are inferior in numbers to the Macedonians who, according to Plutarch (13.4) had 4 000 cavalry and 40 000 infantry. The number of Thracian and Cretan allies was probably not very high since Plutarch mentions (15.7) that they represented only a small part of a force given to Nasica. Pfeilschifter 2007, 27, assumes that *socii* normally received the same amount of cash that was given to Roman soldiers because of the fact that they were angry during the triumph of C. Claudius Pulcher in 177 (Livy 41.13.6-8) for having received less than their Roman comrades. In the case of the Macedonian triumph, it seems that only Roman citizens were rewarded because Livy (45.40.5) talks about voting, a right that the *socii* did not have until after the Social War: "Each infantryman received one hundred *denarii*, each centurion, twice the amount, and each cavalryman, three times as much. It is thought that double the amount would have been given to the infantry, and proportionately to the rest, if they had supported Paulus' triumph in the voting, or had cheerfully applauded the announcement of the gift as actually given." (*Pediti in singulos dati centeni <denarii>, duplex <centurioni, triplex> equiti. <Alterum> tantum pediti daturum fuisse credunt et pro rata aliis, si aut in suffragio honori eius fauissent, aut benigne hac ipas summa pronuntiata acclamassent.*)

¹⁵⁵ Polybius 6.20.9.

¹⁵⁶ Tarpin 2009, 99, makes similar calculations: "De ce point de vue, il est assuré que la somme distribuée aux soldats à Rome ne représente qu'une fraction minime du butin. Le rapport avec ce qui est porté au trésor le montre bien, même si la variabilité est de règle en ce domaine. Dans le cas de Manlius Vulso, par exemple, qui a déposé 2 103 livres d'or et 220 000 livres d'argent (Liv., XXXIX, 5, 7-14; 7, 1-2), on sait que les soldats ont reçu 42 deniers (le double pour un centurion, le triple pour un cavalier, selon une règle assez régulière). Si l'on prend le chiffre arbitraire de 10 000 bénéficiaires, cela ne représente que 5 836 livres d'argent. Même avec un très gros effectif, le Sénat pouvait se considérer comme gagnant face à la rapacité proverbiale des légionnaires. En outre, le nombre de soldats susceptibles de toucher cette somme n'est jamais précisé."

much more than previously attested sums handed out and that the soldiers also received 200 *denarii* from the pillage of Epirus, they still thought they should have received more in comparison with the amount of wealth taken from this region and from Macedonia.¹⁵⁷ These 300 *denarii* were certainly enough to cover the deductions on pay and offer a substantial bonus to the *stipendium*. It is somewhat puzzling to hear of such grievances when the soldiers just received far more in reward than any of their predecessors. Perhaps soldiers expected a bigger percentage of what had been seized. That being said, the exceptional donative they enjoyed did not make them rich men. It nevertheless surely improved their social status, especially for those belonging to the fifth class and owning next to nothing. One thing is certain, however, this donative was exceptionally high compared to any other before and is clearly an exception that confirms the rule, that is that cash rewards were normally much more meagre.

To summarize, the Roman state and its generals usually took charge of the most important sources of profit that resulted from warfare.¹⁵⁸ Soldiers could often only plunder what was left after their general had seized all the gold and silver. Moreover, nothing could guarantee them any given sum in donatives as the amount was left to the general's discretion.¹⁵⁹ Sometimes these made for decent benefits but they often proved to be quite low. In some occasions the levied citizens would have gained nothing at all. In short, in most cases the profits from war were unpredictable and inconstant for Roman

¹⁵⁷ Livy 45.35.6: "He had held the soldiers to old-fashioned discipline; he had given them less of the booty than they had hoped for from such lavish royal resources, though had he given rein to their greed, they would have left nothing to be deposited in the public treasury." (*Antiqua disciplina milites habuerat; de praeda parcius quam sperauerant ex tantis regiis opibus dederat nihil relicturis, si auiditati indulgeretur, quod in aerarium deferret*).

¹⁵⁸ Even for the state, wars were not always profitable. Von Ungern-Sternberg 2009, 247-264, argues that it is only during Rome's eastern expansion that wars became profitable.

¹⁵⁹ Brunt 1971, 412: "No recruit could foresee what his opportunities might be."

soldiers. So if substantial material rewards could not be guaranteed, how could *assidui* be motivated to serve?

Table 3: Cash Handouts to Soldiers, 201-167 BC (in *denarii*)¹⁶⁰

Date	Sum Given			Source
	Infantrymen	Centurions	Cavalrymen	
201	40	n/a	n/a	Livy 30.3 African triumph of Scipio.
200	12	n/a	n/a	Livy 31.20.7 Spanish <i>ovatio</i> of L. Cornelius Lentulus
197	7	14	21	Livy 33.23.7 Gallic triumph of C. Cornelius Cethegus.
196	8	24	24	Livy 33.37.11 Gallic triumph of M. Claudius Marcellus.
194	27	54	81	Livy 34.46.2 M. Porcius Cato's Spanish triumph.
194	25	50	75	Livy 34.52.4 T. Quinctius Flamininus' Greek and Macedonian triumph.

¹⁶⁰ This table is a modified and translated version of the tables found in Nicolet 1976b, 163-164 and Coudry 2009, 71-77.

191	12,5	25	37,5	Livy 36.40.12 Gallic triumph of P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica
189	25	50	75	Livy 37.59.3-5 Cn. Cornelius Scipio Asiagenus' Asian triumph.
187	25	50	75	Livy 39.5.14- 15 M. Fulvius Nobilior's Greek triumph.
187	42	84	126	Livy 39.7.1-2 Cn. Manlius Vulso's Asian triumph (plus double pay for all).
181	30	n/a	n/a	Livy 40.34.8 L. Aemilius Paullus' Ligurian triumph.
180	50	100	150	Livy 40.43.5 Q. Fulvius Flaccus' Spanish triumph.
179	30	60	90	Livy 40.59.2 Q. Fulvius Flaccus' victory in Liguria.
178	25	50	75	Livy 41.7.1-3 Victories in Spain of L. Postumius Albinus and Ti. Sempronius Gracchus.
177	15	30	45	Livy 41.13.6 Victory in Histria and Liguria of C. Claudius Pulcher.

167	200	n/a	400	Livy 45.34.5 Sack of Epirus by L. Aem. Paullus.
167	100	200	300	Livy 45.40.5 Victory of L. Aem. Paullus over Macedonia.
167	45 [Given to sailors.]	90 [Given to pilots.]	135 [Given to captains.]	Livy 45.43.4 Victory of L. Anicius Gallus over Illyria.
132	7	n/a	n/a	Pliny the Elder 33.141. Victory of Scipio Aemilianus over Numantia.

3- Citizens' Attitude towards Military Service

3.1 Deciding for War: Communication between the Aristocracy and the People

As stressed above, the idea that warfare was always lucrative for all classes is misleading. The previous section tried to demonstrate that generals and the *aerarium* actually received the great majority of war spoils. This is not to deny that economic motives could entice citizens to serve but since the profits from war were difficult to gauge beforehand, such an explanation is not sufficient. It has indeed been acknowledged for some time in research that coherence and consensus mechanisms in societies are complex phenomena and they cannot be explained by a single overarching cause.¹⁶¹ So why did Roman citizens generally agree to go to war if economic motives were not always the main

¹⁶¹ For instance Jehne and Pfeilschifter 2006, 6 : “Seit einiger Zeit hat sich in der Geschichtswissenschaft die Erkenntnis durchgesetzt, daß die Kohärenz von Gesellschaften nicht als ein einmal erreichter Zustand aufgefaßt werden kann, den man gewissermaßen voraussetzen darf, um sich von dort aus den eigentlichen interessanten Fragen zuzuwenden.”

impulse?

The most common example used to support the idea that Roman common citizens were profoundly bellicose and bent on warfare is the outbreak of the First Punic War.¹⁶² On that occasion, Polybius reports that οἱ πολλοί, envisaging the financial benefits of the war, finally decided in favour of intervening in Sicily.¹⁶³ This has most often been interpreted as ‘the people’. However there are good reasons to believe that Polybius did not actually mean that it was ‘the people’ as a political body who took the decision to go to war. According to Eckstein the phrase κυρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ δόγματος ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου points to a *senatus consultum* since Polybius always uses δόγμα to refer to such a decree when he describes specifically Roman customs.¹⁶⁴ Eckstein further argues that Polybius uses οἱ πολλοί to generally refer to the common people, not the in sense of a popular assembly for which Polybius consistently uses δῆμος.¹⁶⁵ So Polybius referred here to a decision made by the majority of the *Senate* (οἱ πολλοί), not the people gathered in an

¹⁶² A view most recently defended by Hoyos 2011, 139-140.

¹⁶³ Polybius 1.11.1-3: “[The Romans] debated the matter for long and, even at the end, the Senate did not sanction the proposal for the reason given above, considering that the objection on the score of inconsistency was equal in weight to the advantage to be derived from intervention. **The commons** however, worn out as they were by the recent wars and in need of any and every kind of restorative, listened readily to the military commanders, who, besides giving the reasons above stated for the general advantageousness of the war, pointed out the great benefit in the way of plunder which each and every one would evidently derive from it. They were therefore in favour of consenting; and when the measure had been passed by the people they appointed to the command one of the Consuls, Appius Claudius, who was ordered to cross to Messene. (πολὺν μὲν χρόνον ἐβουλευσάντο, καὶ τὸ μὲν συνέδριον οὐδ’ εἰς τέλος ἐκύρωσε τὴν γνώμην διὰ τὰς ἄρτι ῥηθείας αἰτίας. ἐδόκει γὰρ τὰ περὶ τὴν ἀλογίαν τῆς τοῖς Μαμερτίνοις ἐπικουρίας ἰσορροπεῖν τοῖς ἐκ τῆς βοήθειας συμφέρουσιν. οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ τετρυμένοι μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν προγεγονότων πολέμων καὶ προσδεόμενοι παντοδαπῆς ἐπανορθώσεως, ἅμα δὲ τοῖς ἄρτι ῥηθείσι περὶ τοῦ κοινῆς συμφέροντος τὸν πόλεμον καὶ κατ’ ἰδίαν ἐκάστοις ὠφελείας προδήλους καὶ μεγάλας ὑποδεικνύοντων τῶν στρατηγῶν, ἔκριναν βοηθεῖν. κυρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ δόγματος ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου, προχειρισάμενοι τὸν ἕτερον τῶν ὑπάτων στρατηγὸν Ἀππίον Κλαύδιον ἐξαπέστειλαν, κελεύσαντες βοηθεῖν καὶ διαβαίνειν εἰς Μεσσήνην.)

¹⁶⁴ Eckstein 1980, 179-80; also: *Polybios-Lexikon* s.v. δόγμα, where the first main definition is “Beschluss” then “senatus consultum”; Polybius 6.12.3, 12.4, 13.2; 18.44.1, 44.2, 44.5, 45.1, 45.3; 24.10.3; 28.3.3, 13.11, 16.2; 29.27.2; 30.5.12, 5.16, 19.6, 21.3, 30.3, 31.20; 33.18.11.

¹⁶⁵ Polybius 1.11.3, 17.1, 62.8, 63.1; 3.21.2, 29.3, 103.5; 6.14.6, 19.5, 19.7; 15.1.3, 4.8, 8.9, 8.13; 18.42.3, 42.4; 21.24.3, 30.16, 32.1; 23.14.2.

assembly.¹⁶⁶ Eckstein thus proposes that Polybius' text should be translated as follows:

“(1.10.9) The Roman Senate ... debated for a long time (1.11.1) and the Senate was not at all agreed on the proposal, because of the reasons stated above. For it seemed that the arguments concerning the inconsistency of helping the Mamertines were balanced by the advantages to be gained from intervention. (11.2) But the majority, though worn out by the previous wars and needing restoration of every sort, still listened to the consuls, who pointed out the advantages mentioned above that the war would bring the state, and also the obviously great amount of booty which would accrue to each man individually; so they voted to help. (11.3) The decree of the Senate having been ratified by the People, they appointed to the command Appius Claudius, one of the consuls, ordering him to cross to Messana and help the city.” The appeal to plunder looks even more plausible in the light of what has been observed above, that is that the nobility profited far more from plunder than the common soldiers. Finally, according to the sometimes ignored *Periocha* of Livy, it was also the Senate who took the decision to send help to the Mamertines: “*auxilium Mamertinis ferendum senatus censuit*”.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Calderone *et alii* 1981, 7-78. Especially 10: “All'interno di questa aporia è facile rilevarne un'altra: una volta ammesso che οἱ πολλοὶ valaga assemblea popolare, e che essi, in quanto tali, ἐκρίναν βοηθεῖν, perché mai ripeterebbe Polibio (κυρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ δόγματος ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου) quello che or ora ha detto? E il δόγμα (del δήμος in questo caso) come potrebbe essere oggetto di ratifica (κυρωθέντος) da parte... dello stesso organo che l'ha espresso?” Also, 60: “Stando a queste risultanze sul significato di δόγμα, sembrerebbe, dunque, che, per Polibio il δόγμα κυρωθέν ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου non potesse essere altro che un *Senatus Consultum*.”; 65: “Per quanto riguarda οἱ πολλοὶ, il Walbank stesso non può negare, che “this phrase can certainly mean ‘the many, the majority’”. Il fatto gli è, che ciò è vero, non solo e non tanto in termini logici (“since the phrase comes to mean ‘the masses’ because they are in fact ‘the majority’”); ma lo è in termini di usus scribendi polibiano. Se è indubbio, che οἱ πολλοὶ ha diversi significati in Polibio, tra cui quello di “organo costituzionale popolare” (riconosco l'impertinenza del mio dubbio in proposito), è altresì vero, che sia Deininger, che Derow han dimenticato di considerare, tra le molte “nuances” di οἱ πολλοὶ, quella di “maggioranza” (probabilmente perché per questa voce bisogna ancora rifarsi all'indice di Schweighäuser, per molti versi, come si sa, insufficiente).”; 66: “In conclusione, non si capisce perché in Polyb. 1.11.2 οἱ πολλοὶ non possa avere - se ciò perché con il resto - valore di “la maggioranza (del senato)”. See also: Hoyos 2011, 140-141; Eder 1990, 12-32; Gabba 1997, 266-271, 1984, 115-129; Eckstein 1980, 157-190. Eckstein points to Polybius 5.49.5 where οἱ πολλοί refers to the majority of King Antiochos III's council.

¹⁶⁷ Livy *Periocha* 16: “After much debate, the Senate resolves to succour the Mamertines against the

Let us now consider another case that is well suited for the discussion of the composition of Roman popular assemblies. In 200, the only known popular rejection regarding a declaration of war occurred when the consul Publius Sulpicius Galba formally proposed to go to war against Philip V of Macedon. This is often thought to be the exception that would prove the rule according to which Roman citizens were extremely bellicose mostly because of potential economic benefits. On this occasion the proposal to go to war took place just one year after the end of the particularly long and extremely bloody Second Punic War. Losses on the battlefield had been enormous and Hannibal's long activity in Southern Italy had caused much death and destruction. The first proposal to go to war was soundly defeated and the senators urged the consul to summon the assembly again.¹⁶⁸ When the consul did so, the justifications he used for declaring war had nothing to do with economic gains, but rather with the need to help Rome's allies and protect Italy from Macedonian intervention.¹⁶⁹ The second vote was favourable to the proposal and war was declared.¹⁷⁰ As we can see there is no mention of the war being economically profitable

Carthaginians, and against Hiero, king of Syracuse.” (*contra quos [Carthaginenses] et Hieronem, regem Syracusanorum, auxilium Mamertinis ferendum senatus censuit, cum de ea re inter suadentes ut id fieret dissuadentesque contentio fuisset*).

¹⁶⁸ Livy 31.6.5.

¹⁶⁹ Livy 31.6.3: “The motion regarding the Macedonian war was defeated at the first meeting of the assembly by the votes of almost all the centuries.” (*rogatio de bello Macedonico primis comitiis ab omnibus ferme centuriis antiquata est*).; 31.7.1-2: “it seems to me, citizens, that you do not realize that the question before you is not whether you will have peace or war – for Philip will not leave that matter open for your decision, seeing that he is preparing a mighty war on land and sea – but whether you are to send your legions across to Macedonia or meet the enemy in Italy.” (*'ignorare' inquit 'mihi videmini, Quirites, non, utrum bellum an pacem habeatis, vos consuli—neque enim liberum id vobis Philippus permittet, qui terra marique ingens bellum molitur—, sed, utrum in Macedoniam legiones transportetis, an hostes in Italiam accipiat*). Also in the case of Perseus: Livy 42.30.10-11: “The Fathers, with the wish that it might be well and of good omen and fortune for the Roman people, instructed the consuls to present on the first possible day to the people, assembled in their hundreds, the resolution that, whereas Perseus, son of Philip, King of Macedonia, contrary to the treaty made with his father and renewed with himself after the death of his father, had invaded allies of the Roman people.” (*patres, quod bonum faustum felixque populo Romano esset, centuriatis comitiis primo quoque die ferre ad populum consules iusserunt ut quod Perseus Philippi filius, Macedonum rex, adversus foedus cum patre Philippo ictum et secum post mortem eius renovatum socii populi Romani arma intulisset*).

¹⁷⁰ Livy 31.8.1.

for the common people. However, to think that the nobility simply lied to the citizenry assembled on the forum is missing the point. This begs the question: who was actually there in the *comitia centuriata* to listen to the consul?

The Roman citizens that could actually come to Rome to attend assemblies were a minority. Moreover only a tiny amount of those living in Rome itself would have had the time to get involved in politics.¹⁷¹ Furthermore the mere physical constraints of the Saepta on the Campus Martius where the *comitia centuriata* met only allowed for a limited number of citizens to assemble. Henrik Mouritsen thus calculated that in the mid second century about one percent of all Roman citizens could be involved in legislative assemblies.¹⁷² Finally, as the minority of citizens participating in the assemblies was likely from Rome itself, it did not represent at all the citizens that would be mobilized who were mostly recruited from those dwelling in the countryside. In other words the persons present at the popular assemblies were not the same who formed the legions and allied contingents.¹⁷³ The fact that it was the Senate who generally decided war is made

¹⁷¹ Mouritsen 2001, 27-33; 36-7, *contra* Taylor 1966, 54.

¹⁷² Mouritsen 2001, 19-33. He argues that the *comitium* could only hold about 3,600 people. MacMullen 1980, 454-457; Taylor 1966.

¹⁷³ Brunt 1962, 85-6; Also: Mundubeltz 2000, 468: “En dehors des *socii* qui n'avaient pas le droit de vote, les levées reposaient essentiellement, dès l'époque de la deuxième guerre punique, sur les citoyens romains des campagnes italiennes, qui n'avaient pas toujours l'opportunité de venir voter à Rome.”; Morstein-Marx 2004, 120-121: “[...] orators speak to whatever contional audience has assembled before them as if it were identical to *populus Romanus* and thus rhetorically transform their continually changing, proportionally negligible, and, as we shall see, self-selected audiences into the citizen body of the Republic.”; Mouritsen 2001, 16: “[...] this study argues that the failure to distinguish consistently between the 'people' as a political concept and the 'people' as the sum of individuals making up the citizen-body is the main weakness of the 'democratic' interpretation.”; 16 “The small scale of the popular political institutions meant that they quite literally, represented the few rather than the many, There was a marked contrast between the “democratic” potential of these institutions and their limited format, which in reality excluded the masses they formally represented.”; 37 “Before the late second century, the vast majority of citizens in the city probably never appeared in the *contiones*, which may traditionally have been gatherings of the *boni*, for whom participation in politics was a natural pursuit and pastime.”; Pina Polo 1996, 10-11: “Im Gegensatz zum demokratischen Athen wurde im republikanischen Rom die aktive Beteiligung der Bürger an der Politik nie gefördert. Nur die angesehensten Bürger waren in der Praxis befugt, Entscheidungen zu treffen, obwohl sich an ihnen theoretisch alle beteiligen konnten. Nur die Inhaber von Ämtern, Mitglieder der Elite,

manifest by what the praetor M. Iuventius Thalna did in 167. On that occasion he tried to put forward a *rogatio* for war against Rhodes without having consulted the Senate. Two tribunes used their veto to prevent the proposal from being brought before the people because “previously the Senate had always been consulted first about war and it was then brought to the people according to the Senate's will”.¹⁷⁴

Since most propositions of war brought forward in a popular assembly had been approved by the Senate and were the product of a consensus reached after a debate that took place strictly within the Roman nobility, citizens had no way of actually proposing war against a particular enemy.¹⁷⁵ The only option possible was for the citizens present in the assembly to answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to a question they could not discuss beforehand.¹⁷⁶ Indeed, the political culture of the Roman Republic and its structures made it so that common citizens had very limited channels of communication through which they could

waren befähigt, Gesetzesinitiativen einzubringen, und die römischen Bürger konnten in den *comitia* lediglich mit Ja oder Nein auf Gesetzesvorschlag des Magistraten antworten, ohne eine Abänderung oder Ergänzung einer *rogatio* herbeiführen zu dürfen.”

¹⁷⁴ Livy 45.21.5: “whereas previously the Senate had always been consulted first about war, and then the question brought before the people on the authority of the Senate” (*cum antea semper prius senatus de bello consultus esset, deinde <ex auctoritate> patrum ad populum latum*).

¹⁷⁵ There are of course exceptions. The most notable is represented by the Gracchi brothers. They will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁷⁶ Mommsen 1854-5 I, 810, rather laconically: “In der Regel standen die Leute da und sagten ja zu allen Dingen.”; Pina Polo 1996, 9: “Der Begriff Republik, mit dem wir uns auf die Zeit zwischen dem 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr. und Augustus beziehen, verweist auf Parlamentarismus, Wahlen usw. Die römischen Bürger besaßen das Wahlrecht, ein entscheidendes Merkmal der heutigen Demokratien. Der lateinische Terminus *res publica* kann aber nicht ohne weiteres mit Republik im heutigen Sinne übersetzt werden, und das bloße Vorhandensein von Wahlen bedeutet nicht automatisch eine demokratische Staatsform. Wenn die Römer von *res publica* sprachen, bedeutet das nicht, daß es sich um eine demokratische Staatsform handelte”; 176: “Das Volk war passiv und durfte nur anhören, was der Herrscher ihm mitzuteilen hatte. Die Rede war ein althergebrachtes Privileg der „besten Bürger“.”; Hölkeskamp 1995, 35: “In aller Regel, kamen die Akteure in den Contionen, ob Magistrate, oder *privati*, eben nicht aus dem Volk.”; Flaig 1995, 85-86: “Was zählte war die Präsenz [in the popular assembly]. Das präsente Volk galt als das Gesamtvolk.” For a completely different interpretation of the political mechanics of the Roman Republic, that is, democratic, see Millar 1998. For a response to Millar's theory, see Hölkeskamp 2010, esp. 76 ff.; 2000, 203-223. On the people's role in the Republican political system, see also: Morstein-Marx 2004; Yakobson 1999; Gabba 1997, 266-71; Eder 1991, 169-196; North 1990, 277-287.

affect foreign policy.¹⁷⁷ In a society in which public speech was the only real medium of mass communication, the Roman common citizens only had access to the opinion(s) of members of the ruling elite.¹⁷⁸ Most propositions of war were therefore bound to be presented in a favourable light since it was the nobility's duty to convince the common people of the validity of its decisions.¹⁷⁹ The result of the willingness of the Roman people to accept the legitimacy of the rule of the nobility is indeed that 'Roman citizens' (actually those present at the popular assemblies) almost always accepted to go to war when asked to do so. As Egon Flaig put it, the popular assemblies were: "*ein Konsensorgan – ein Organ, in welchem das römische Volk seinen Konsens mit der Politik der Aristokratie ausdrückte, im Zweifelsfall mit demjenigen Aristokraten, der gerade die Volksversammlung leitete.*"¹⁸⁰

Even though declarations of war were not supposed to take place without the agreement of the people, wars were sometimes actually initiated without even a vote from the

¹⁷⁷ Hölkeskamp 1995, 32: "Gerade weil die Nobilität und der Senatsadel sich also – den unbestritten geltenden Regeln wie dem eigenen ideologischen Anspruch nach – aus dem *populus* und vor allem durch den *populus* eben nicht bloß eine passive, amorphe Masse, sondern jedenfalls als Institution selbst ein Subjekt, das in der Interaktion mit seiner Elite eine unverzichtbare Rolle spielte. Deswegen mußte der *populus* in der *contio* eines der wichtigsten Foren der Selbstdarstellung und -bestätigung der Elite sein – eben die größte Bühne des *nobilis* als Redner."

¹⁷⁸ Hölkeskamp 1995, 16: "[...] eine *face-to-face society*, in der die öffentliche Rede nach wie vor das einzige und daher unverzichtbare Medium der Kommunikation und Interaktion war [...]"

¹⁷⁹ Yakobson 2006, 398: "The People's acquiescence and support could not be commanded – it had to be earned. A Roman senator was constantly concerned to gain and retain it; senatorial politics cannot be properly understood without taking this fact into consideration."; Flaig 2003, 13-31. There are eight well attested war votes from the First Punic War to the end of the Republic:

-Against Carthage (war avoided because Carthage agreed to cede Sardinia), Polybius 1.88.10; 3.10.1; 3.27.7; 3.28.1; Appian *Lib.* 5; Orosius 4.12.2; Zonaras 8.18.12.

-Second Punic War, Livy 21.17.4; Polybius 20.1-8; Appian *Iber.* 13; Dio fr. 55.9, Zonaras 8.22;

-Second Macedonian War, Livy 31.5-8; Justin 30.3.6; Zonaras 9.15.1.

-Syrian War, Livy 36.1.1-6; Appian *Syr.* 15.

-Third Macedonian War, Livy 42.30.8-11; Appian *Mac.* 11.9.

-Third Punic War, Polybius 36.3.12; Appian *Lib.* 75; Livy *Periochae*, 49; Zonaras 9.26.2.

-Jugurthine War, Livy *Periochae*, 49; Orosius 5.15.1.

-First Mithridatic War, Appian *Mithr.* 22.1.

¹⁸⁰ Flaig 1995, 89, also Jehne 2000, 207-235: "Die sozialen Rangunterschiede wurden im eingetragenen Ritual der Volksversammlungen durch Symbole des Respekts überbrückt, indem etwa *libertas* häufig verbalisiert, noch regelmäßiger aber mit dem jovialen Habitus der Senatoren evoziert wurde."

assembly.¹⁸¹ Indeed, some Roman generals did undertake wars of their own initiative. Some of these generals were prosecuted on the grounds that the wars they initiated were not *iusta* but others got away with it without causing anger within the Senate.¹⁸²

To summarize, it is crucial to differentiate between the people who were present in assemblies and those serving in the legions. It was not the soldiers who decided against whom they were going to campaign but the senators who actually did. The citizens who were at the assembly were then presented with a legitimate case for war and they nearly always acquiesced.

3.2 Reactions to Military Service

It must be said that there was never a widespread occurrence of draft dodging among the Roman citizens, something that can be surprising for modern readers.¹⁸³ The Roman Republic continued to fight large-scale wars on a frequent basis until the end of its existence.¹⁸⁴ However it does not mean that citizens were always happy to serve in the legions.

The fact that there is little evidence for the ‘common people’ to have voted in favour of war for economic reasons did not mean that citizens were completely oblivious to the

¹⁸¹ Polybius 6.14.10; Livy 38.45.5-7; 41.7.7-8; Cicero *Piso*, 50. Sallust *Cat.*, 29.2.

¹⁸² Undisputed: Flaminius in Boeotia in 196: Livy 33.29.8. Disputed: Livy 41.7.7-8. The Galatian campaign of Cn. Manlius Vulso provoked some discontentment (Livy 38.45.6) despite the fact that the Senate anticipated the matter: Livy 37.51.10. See also: Rosenstein 2009, 88; Eckstein 1987; Rich 1976, 13-17. Eckstein 1987, 319-322 argues that it was often expected of generals to make crucial decisions without informing the senate for reasons of time and efficiency, especially in remote areas. The senate was more active for campaigns taking place closer to the Roman such as northern Italy.

¹⁸³ On desertion, see: Wolff 2009 and Mundubeltz 2000. Also Cadiou 2009a, 23-32.

¹⁸⁴ Although military commitments became more irregular after the 160s. See Rich 1983, 287-331. The debate on the fall of the Republic is both complex and vigorous, its bibliography very rich, see for example: Flower 2010; Jehne 2009, 141-160; Mackay 2009; Gruen 1974; Meier 1966; Syme 1939.

potential material benefits that could result from warfare. On the contrary in the case where they would be drafted plunder was most often their only hope of making good the expenditures that military service required, as emphasized above. There were, however, cases where citizens were eager to serve. This happened when they heard that good prospects of enrichment could be expected. However, the opposite was also true: news of a difficult and profitless war was likely to deter many citizens from answering the call to the levy. In 214, the censors punished 2,000 men who had not served during any of the last four years by disenfranchising them from their tribes. Since these men did not have any suitable reason to be excused from military service, it is likely that they did so because they feared facing Hannibal who had inflicted a series of catastrophic defeats to the Romans over the previous years.¹⁸⁵ Similarly in 209, many *equites* (*magnum numerum*) who were of military age at the beginning of the war and had managed to avoid service were degraded to the *aerarii*.¹⁸⁶ In 200, the Senate decreed that only volunteers could be recruited from Scipio's veterans for the ongoing war against Macedon. 2,000 of the men enrolled in 199 claimed that they had been drafted without their consent despite the Senate's decision.¹⁸⁷

On the other hand, at the outbreak of the Third Macedonian War in 171 citizens were eager to enlist because they had seen that those who campaigned against Philip or Antiochus became rich men.¹⁸⁸ However, unless Scipio's and Flamininus' men who fought against these kings managed to acquire vast quantities of plunder, they can hardly

¹⁸⁵ Livy 24.18.7-8.

¹⁸⁶ Livy 27.11.14-15.

¹⁸⁷ Livy 31.8.6; 32.3.2-7.

¹⁸⁸ Livy 42.32.6: "likewise many enlisted voluntarily, because they saw that those who had served in the former campaign or against Antiochus in Asia had become rich." (*et multi voluntate nomina dabant, quia locupletes videbant, qui priore Macedonico bello aut adversus Antiochum in Asia stipendia fecerant*).

be described as rich as they only received 25 *denarii* from their general (see table four above). This is unlikely in the case of Flamininus' army since it is known that only a part of the benefits of the plunder acquired on the battlefield were given to the troops.¹⁸⁹ The appeal for the war against Perseus changed by 169 as it was dragging on without noticeable progress. The consuls had difficulties completing the levy as young men were avoiding enlistment (*iuniores non responderent*). The praetors had to take the matter in their own hands and conducted the levy themselves.¹⁹⁰ To make things worst, in 168 a senatorial commission discovered that the troops campaigning in Macedon were greatly suffering from a shortage of food and clothing. They were also still expecting their *stipendium* which was late. Many sailors had died of sickness and others simply deserted and fled back to their homes, despite the harsh punishment they would face if their deed was to be discovered by the authorities.¹⁹¹

The conflict in Spain between 154 and 133 saw an unprecedented amount of discontentment among the troops.¹⁹² This was caused by the prolonged and difficult nature of the fighting as well as by the harsh living conditions. During the winter of 153-

¹⁸⁹ Livy 33.11.2.

¹⁹⁰ Livy 43.14.2-6; 15.1

¹⁹¹ Livy 44.20: "Also winter is an added obstacle to an active campaign. The soldiers are being supported in idleness and have grain for no more than six days. The Macedonian forces are said to number thirty thousand. If Appius Claudius had sufficient strength in the region of Lychnidus, he could have distracted the king with a second front; as it is, Appius and the force with him are in the greatest danger unless either a full-fledged army is quickly sent him or his present force is extricated. As to the fleet, we heard after we left the camp that some of the sailors have been lost by disease, and some, especially the Sicilians, have gone home, so that the ships lack crews. Those who are there have not received their pay and are insufficiently clothed." (*hiemem etiam insuper rebus gerendis intervenisse. in otio militem ali, nec plus quam VI dierum frumentum habere. Macedonum dici triginta milia armatorum esse. si Ap. Claudio circa Lychnidum satis validus exercitus foret, potuisse eum ancipiti bello distinere regem: nunc et Appium, et quod cum eo praesidii sit, in summo periculo esse, nisi propere aut iustus exercitus eo mittatur, aut illi inde deducantur. ad classem se ex castris profectos sociorum navalium partem morbo audisse absumptam, partem, maxime qui ex Sicilia fuerint, domos suas abisse, et homines navibus deesse; qui sint, neque stipendium accepisse neque vestimenta habere*).

¹⁹² Cadiou 2009b, 157-171; 2008, Cagniard 2007, 81: "Spain was the nightmare and the cancer of Roman foreign involvements."; Richardson 1986, 115-118 ; Harris 1979, 49 ff. In 151 and 138, the consuls were imprisoned by the tribunes of the plebs, cf. Livy *Per.* 48, 55; Polybius 35.3.7-8; Appian *Iber.* 49.

152, after suffering several setbacks at the hands of the Celtiberians, M. Fulvius Nobilior had his army take their winter quarters in deplorable conditions. His men had to build rudimentary dwellings and then suffered from the lack of supplies, as there was no possibility of bringing in food from neighbouring regions. The weather itself proved harsh with a lot of snow and cold temperatures. As a result of this, many soldiers died during the winter.¹⁹³ The following year, the soldiers were having difficulties coping with local food to which they were not accustomed, as there was apparently no wine, no salt, no vinegar, and no oil available. Many suffered of dysentery and several died of it. To make matters worse, the Romans were also struggling with famine.¹⁹⁴

Furthermore, in 151 there was widespread terror in Rome among the citizenry eligible for service because of the heavy losses sustained against the Celtiberians.¹⁹⁵ On that occasion *assidui* were offering ‘disgraceful excuses’ to avoid the levy.¹⁹⁶ Ten years later, during the winter of 140-139, the army of Q. Pompeius also suffered from dysentery, losing many men both to disease and to enemy ambushes.¹⁹⁷ Similar sufferings are mentioned during the retreat *à la Bérézina* of M. Aemilius Lepidus' army in 136-135.¹⁹⁸ Moreover in 138 a deserter from the army serving in Spain was severely beaten and then sold for a

¹⁹³ Appian *Iber.* 47.197: “Then Nobilior in despair went into winter quarters in his camp, sheltering himself as well as he could. He suffered much from scantiness of supplies, having only what was inside the camp, and from heavy snowstorms and severe frost, so that many of his men perished while outside gathering wood, and others inside fell victims to confinement and cold.” (καὶ ὁ Νοβελίων ἀπιστῶν ἅπασιν ἐν τῷ στρατοπέδῳ διεχέιμαζε, στεγάζας ὡς ἐδύνατο, καὶ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἔχων ἔνδον, καὶ κακοπαθῶν αὐτῆς τε τῆς ἀγορᾶς τῇ ὀλιγότητι καὶ νιφετοῦ πυκνότητι καὶ κρύους χαλεπότητι, ὥστε πολλοὶ τῶν στρατιωτῶν οἱ μὲν ἐν τοῖς φρυγανισμοῖς, οἱ δὲ καὶ ἔνδον ὑπὸ στενοχωρίας καὶ κρύους ἀπώλλυντο).

¹⁹⁴ Appian *Iber.* 54. Already during the Second Punic War, supply problems could be quite serious. In 215 the army received no pay, no supplies, and no clothes. *Publicani* had to be called upon. Cf. Livy 23.48-49.

¹⁹⁵ Appian *Iber.* 56. 15,000 men were killed by the Lusitanians. On this episode, see also the comments from Cadiou 2009a, 23-32.

¹⁹⁶ Polybius 35.4; Livy, *Per.* 48; Orosius 4.21.1.

¹⁹⁷ Appian *Iber.* 78.

¹⁹⁸ Appian *Iber.* 82.

single sesterce.¹⁹⁹

In addition to diseases, ferocious enemies, strange foreign food, lack of supplies, and harsh weather were poor opportunities of plunder. Indeed, material rewards in Spanish campaigns were quite dissatisfying, to put it mildly. For instance, Scipio Aemilianus only gave the negligible sum of seven *denarii* to each of his men after the fall of Numantia in 133, a campaign that had been long and tough.²⁰⁰

The mood was quite different in 149 when the Senate decided to go to war against Carthage. Citizens again seemed to have been willing to serve in this war since they believed it was going to be an easy victory and thus presumably because they thought they could expect good profits from the war without encountering much danger.²⁰¹ Unfortunately for them, the war proved to be much harder and deadlier than they had anticipated, as it dragged on for three years.

All this evidence does not prove that Roman citizens suddenly became disinclined to answer the call for the levy.²⁰² It nevertheless shows that Roman attitude towards military

¹⁹⁹ Livy *Per.* 55.2.

²⁰⁰ Pliny *NH.* 33, 141: “After the destruction of Numantia, the same Africanus gave to his soldiers, on the day of his triumph, a largess of seven *denarii* each — and right worthy were they of such a general, when satisfied with such a sum.” (*Numantia quidem deleta idem Africanus in triumpho militibus VII dedit. O viros illo imperatore dignos, quibus hoc satis fuit!*) Also, Erkamp 2006, 48: “To be sure, many young farmers would still have welcomed the opportunity to sign up for a campaign that promised immense booty, but in general, military service became a burden for the men of (moderate) property. In short, the attractiveness of military service declined for the assidui as there was less underemployment among the landowning smallholders and better alternatives for making money.” Also: Evans 1986, 121-140.

²⁰¹ Appian, *Lib.* 74-75: It should be noted that on this occasion, Appian simply wrote that the Senate decided for war alone and sent the consuls forward with the army and the fleet.

²⁰² Cadiou 2009a, 30: “Selon moi, il ne faut pas s’y tromper : le service militaire, comme l’impôt auquel il est lié, a été conçu depuis l’origine comme une charge lourde et contraignante, ce qui explique, d’une part, la volonté permanente des citoyens de faire respecter leurs droits en ce domaine, et notamment le respect des *uacationes* et des *stipendia iusta*, ainsi que, d’autre part, le souci du sénat de veiller à sa répartition. Comme en matière fiscale, l’immunité en matière de conscription a toujours été considérée comme un privilège enviable, mais concédé en revanche avec parcimonie, pour des raisons bien particulières.” See also Roselaar 2009, 609–623.

service after the Second Punic War *varied* according to circumstances: not all of Rome's enemies were as rich as Syracuse and Macedon. It also demonstrates that citizens did not always view war as an easy and potent source of enrichment.²⁰³ The Roman state did not consider military service a trade, and accordingly did not grant its citizen-soldiers a salary worthy of this name, only a modest *stipendium*.

Some very poor citizens may have seen military service as a way of surviving, but many poor tenants and small land owners must have been reluctant to answer the call for distant campaigns against enemies they had never seen or heard of before, especially considering what they had to spend and suffer for service.²⁰⁴ In the light of the evidence discussed above concerning the cost of service and the possible material rewards it could bring, it is difficult to agree with Rosenstein's thesis concerning the economic effects of war on small farmers.²⁰⁵

Rosenstein argues that the departure of young men for military service was beneficial for families because this represented labour not used on farms. Furthermore, since Roman men tended to marry in their late twenties or early thirties, military service would not have prevented them from marrying (except in the case of death in battle). This reasoning is

²⁰³ De Ligt 2012, 171-172; Raaflaub 2005, 196-197; Erdkamp 1998, 265. See also Mundubeltz 2000, 476-7: "Il semble en effet qu'après avoir tenté d'échapper au service par tous les moyens légaux qui étaient à leur disposition, quitte à ce que ceux-ci ne fussent pas très glorieux, ils n'osèrent généralement pas, lorsqu'ils avaient échoué, se soustraire à leurs obligations par une action illégale. Une désertion les aurait en effet condamnés à mener une vie d'errants, en territoire hostile, qui était probablement encore moins enviable que le métier des légionnaires, même lorsque ceux-ci étaient confrontés aux pires conditions du service."

²⁰⁴ De Ligt 2012: 169: "If, however, the three decades between 163 BC and 133 BC witnessed a simultaneous expansion of the free rural population and of the number of rural slaves in central-western Italy, it is easy to imagine how the holdings of an increasing number of peasants could have shrunk to fewer than 4 or 5 iugera. In other words, if the number of free country-dwellers continued to grow, this could have had the seemingly paradoxical effect of reducing the number of citizens eligible for legionary service."

²⁰⁵ Rosenstein 2004, esp. 63-106. Erdkamp 2006b, 47: "This is not to say that army pay was high, but rather that additional income to the household generated by superfluous manpower was very low." The same could often be said of the income brought by military service.

perfectly correct, except Rosenstein neglects to take into account how the sons' equipment would be purchased. If most Roman men in their early twenties were not married then they were probably under the *potestas* of their father. Despite the fact that they could possess money, it is doubtful that many among them would be financially independent. It is thus likely that many young citizens still under the *potestas* of the *pater familias* had to be armed at his expense if they were mobilized.²⁰⁶ This must have represented a particularly heavy burden for fathers of the fifth class, especially after the minimal census had been reduced to only 1,500 *asses*.²⁰⁷ Being fully equipped by the state against deductions on pay would only have made an already derisory pay seems even less attractive. Moreover, it is likely that the argument of self-defence used by the nobility to convince the people to go to war gradually lost his power of persuasion after the Third Macedonian War. After that time wars tended to be fought far away from Italy and the peninsula itself was no longer threatened until the invasions of the Teutones and Cimbri in the very late second century.

²⁰⁶ Hin 2008, 208-209 : "A proportion of the adult males, however, were *alieni iuris*, and because they could not own property they owned no *tributum*."; Hin 2013, 180: "Most fathers were probably not sufficiently well-to-do to afford giving away a substantial amount of cash or property while they were still alive, simply because they did not have a large surplus of resources".

²⁰⁷ Roselaar 2009, 615: "The assiduus was the ideal Roman farmer-soldier, who worked his own land, provided for his family, and was rich enough to supply his own weapons and equipment for the army. An allotment of only two iugera would not have enabled him to match this ideal. This becomes clear when we look at the census limit in force in the third century BC. It is assumed that the census qualification was lowered in or around 212 BC; before the Second Punic War the amount of property a man was supposed to have in order to count as an assiduus was most likely 11,000 sextantal *asses*. Two iugera of private land were certainly worth much less than that. On the other hand, a seven-iugera plot, such as were granted in some viritane distributions, may have been sufficient to qualify as an assiduus in the third century."; 618: "If, therefore, five iugera were sufficient to turn a man into an assiduus after the census qualification had been lowered in 212, it is likely that the amount of two iugera granted in the Roman colonies of the fourth and third centuries BC was certainly not enough to make the settlers in such colonies become assidui. It is therefore difficult to maintain that the census threshold for the fourth class was as low as three iugera in the third century." *contra* Rosenstein 2002, 190: "No source informs us of the minimum number of iugera that a citizen would have had to have owned during the middle Republic in order to qualify as an assiduus. Quite probably no fixed figure existed, since the value of land would vary according to its location and fertility, and by setting the threshold for assiduate status in terms of money, differing amounts of land of varying quality could be fairly compared. [...] This conclusion clearly implies that the threshold for assiduate status could be possession of a farm as small as two iugera."

Conclusions

This chapter argued that the cost of war was largely born by the citizen-soldiers themselves who had little to say in terms of foreign policy. It was they who paid the *tributum* and the only thing provided to them by the state was a small *stipendium* which did not amount to a professional salary. Soldiers could sometimes profit from donatives but this was not regularized and the money was not disbursed by the state: it was an expedient used by generals to bolster their popularity and compensate the low *stipendium*. As wars were fought further away from Rome and not always against rich opponents, military service came to represent a heavier burden than before for citizens. Despite acquiring a Mediterranean empire over the course of the third and second centuries, the Romans did not implement any new funding structures to cope with the changes brought by the acquisition of that empire. The introduction of pay had been the only novelty and this appeared quite early. Instead of reforming the system, the Romans answered with expedients like the lowering of property qualifications. Reliance on improvisation to fund the military was a trend that would continue until the end of the Republic.

Chapter Two

Population Change in the Second Century

There is an intense scholarly debate about the size and change of the population of Italy after the Second Punic War. This population change is often thought to have changed the way the army was drawn from propertied classes. Recent progress in demographic studies has changed this picture.²⁰⁸ The object of this chapter is to examine how demographic developments influenced army financing in the second century.

1- Population Developments and Property Qualifications

From the late nineteenth century until recently, it was thought that Italy experienced steady population decline during the second century BCE.²⁰⁹ This interpretation proposed

²⁰⁸ The study of Roman demography has been a very popular topic among ancient historians over the past years. The debate on the size of the Roman population in the republic is not merely a squabble over numbers, it is crucial for the understanding of Roman history. Recent years witnessed considerable progress in this discipline as several new studies have been published in quick succession: Hin 2013; De Ligt 2012; Launaro 2011; Roselaar 2010; De Ligt and Northwood 2008; Patterson 2006. The bibliography for this topic is enormous and comprises archaeological, economical, agricultural, social, and political studies.

²⁰⁹ This theory was made famous by Julius Beloch in his magisterial *Die Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt*, published in 1886. His ideas have been developed and refined, most notably by Brunt (1971) and Hopkins (1978). It must be said that Beloch's book initially created some controversy, see for instance U. van Wilamowitz's harsh comment in a letter to E. Meyer about his *Die Zahl der römischen Bürger unter Augustus* supporting Beloch's view: "Sie haben in Ihrer Geschichte dem gecken Beloch sehr viele auf seiner profunden Ignoranz beruhenden Behauptungen geglaubt." c.f. Calder III, W. M. 1994, *Further Letters of Ulrich van Wilamowitz-Moellendorf*, Hildesheim, 121. One of the most debated issues concerns which classes of citizens were included in the census figures. Beloch's assumption is still often accepted, cf. 1886, 314: "Wir sehen, die *civium capita* sind in der That das, wofür sie sich geben: die Summe aller erwachsenen römischen Bürger männlichen Geschlechts." See also Zumpt 1841, 19-20; Hildebrand 1866, 86-88; Mommsen 1876, 59: "Damit ist denn weiter der Satz erwiesen, den ich in meinem Staatsrecht 2, 371. 383 nicht in seinem vollen Umfang erkannt habe, dass die römischen Censuszahlen, so weit sie überhaupt als historisch beglaubigt angesehen werden können, auf die *tabulae iuniorum* (Liv. 24. 18. 7) sich beziehen, das heisst damit die männlichen römischen Bürger vom Anfang des 18. bis zum Ende des 46. Lebensjahres gezählt worden sind."; Herzog 1877, 124-142; Frank 1924, 329-241; Jones 1948, 7:

that the scale and length of warfare, incessant and waged over distant lands since the First Punic War, was incompatible with the agricultural pattern of small farmers who made up the bulk of Rome's armies. This category of citizens was altogether undermined by the large scale of conflicts in which Rome was involved over the course of the third and second centuries.

The profit from these wars led in turn to an influx of slaves which were used to work on large agricultural estates, the so-called *uillae*, where cash crops were cultivated. Incapable of competing with these estates, many small landholders were forced to sell their farms to rich land owners and to move to Rome and other urban centres. This eventually led to a demographic crisis that the Gracchi brothers tried to resolve with their agrarian legislation.

This view rested mainly on the accounts of Appian and Plutarch, who report that in the late second century the common people were being driven from the land by the rich.²¹⁰

"Here again we are faced by a difficulty of interpretation, for certain German scholars have argued that the imperial figures include the whole citizen population, women and children as well as men. As, however, their main argument is that the leap from 910,000 in 70 B.C. to 4,063,000 in 28 B.C. is otherwise unaccountable, they may be safely ignored. The difference between the figures is accounted for by the improvement in the machinery of counting. For under Augustus the census of each municipality was conducted by the local authority and the figure forwarded to Rome, so that, by and large, a tolerably accurate count would have been made."; Gabba 1949, 173-209; Bourne 1952b, 129-135; Pieri 1968, 180-182; Wiseman 1969, 59-75; Shochat 1980, 9-45, Lo Cascio 1999, 163-164. See also Dyson 1978, 251-268, 1979, 91-95.

²¹⁰ Appian *BC*, 1.7: "The Italian people dwindled in numbers and strength, being oppressed by penury, taxes, and military service." (τοὺς δ' Ἰταλιώτας ὀλιγότης καὶ δυσανδρία κατελάμβανε, τρυχομένους πενία τε καὶ ἐσφοραῖς καὶ στρατείαις); Plutarch *Tib. Grac.* 8.3: "But later on the neighbouring rich men, by means of fictitious personages, transferred these rentals to themselves, and finally held most of the land openly in their own names. Then the poor, who had been ejected from their land, no longer showed themselves eager for military service, and neglected the bringing up of children, so that soon all Italy was conscious of a dearth of freemen, and was filled with gangs of foreign slaves, by whose aid the rich cultivated their estates, from which they had driven away the free citizens." (ὕστερον δὲ τῶν γειτνιώντων πλουσίων ὑποβλήτοις προσώποις μεταφερόντων τὰς μισθώσεις εἰς ἑαυτούς, τέλος δὲ φανερώς ἦδη δι' ἑαυτῶν τὰ πλεῖστα κατεχόντων, ἐξωσθέντες οἱ πένητες οὔτε ταῖς στρατείαις ἔτι προθύμους παρῆχον ἑαυτούς, ἡμέλουν τε παίδων ἀνατροφῆς, ὥστε ταχὺ τὴν Ἰταλίαν ἄπασαν ὀλιγανδρίας ἐλευθέρων αἰσθέσθαι, δεσποτηρίων δὲ βαρβαρικῶν ἐμπεπλησθαι, δι' ὧν ἐγεώργουν οἱ πλούσιοι τὰ χωρία, τοὺς πολίτας ἐξελάσαντες).

Up to the 1990s most modern historians assumed that because citizens were without land to support a family, fertility rates declined, and with it, the population. Such a theory seemed to be further supported by the census figures preserved primarily in Livy. Indeed, the figures between 164 and 130 BCE indicate a steady decline in the number of Roman citizens (337,022 to 318,823, see table 1 below). Given the seemingly convergent nature of the evidence, it is perhaps not surprising that historians at first believed the picture of manpower shortage provided by Appian and Plutarch.

Table 4: Census Figures, 179 BCE - 14 CE

Year	Census figure	Source
179/8 BCE	258 794	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 41
174/3 BCE	269 015	Livy 42. 10
169/8 BCE	312 805	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 45
164/3 BCE	337 022	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 46
159/8 BCE	328 316	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 47
154/3 BCE	324 000	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 48
147/6 BCE	322 000	Eusebius Arm. Ol. 158. 3
142/1 BCE	327 442	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 54
136/5 BCE	317 933	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 56
131/0 BCE	318 823	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 59
125/4 BCE	394 736	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 60
115/4 BCE	394 336	Livy <i>Periochae</i> 63
86/5 BCE	463 000	Hieronymus Ol. 173, 4
70/69 BCE	910 000	Phlegon fr. 12. 6
28 BCE	4 063 000	<i>Res Gestae</i> 8. 2
8 BCE	4 233 000	<i>Res Gestae</i> 8. 3
14 CE	4 937 000	<i>Res Gestae</i> 8. 4

In a series of important contributions, the Italian scholar Elio Lo Cascio reacted to this traditional view by proposing that the last two centuries BCE (and up to the second century CE) actually represented a period of rapid population growth in Italy. Lo Cascio's central argument is that the census figures do not accurately reflect the actual number of Roman citizens. According to his interpretation, for most of the Republican period the census did not succeed in registering a majority of citizens.²¹¹ Rather, the numbers these figures show would hide a much larger total population. This approach is most often referred to as the 'high count'.

More recently an important number of studies have further highlighted several weaknesses of the traditional view and have decisively moved away from the idea of population decline.²¹² Such studies have notably argued that the long-term effects of the

²¹¹ Lo Cascio assumed a very high rate of under registration in the census, particularly among the *proletarii*. He thus dismissed the census figures as highly unreliable and no true indicator of real demographic trends. The fluctuations between figures found in the census would therefore be best explained as being the result of a variety of factors affecting the number of citizens recorded (Lo Cascio 2008, 244 and 253). For example, the great increase attested between 70/69 and 28 BC would be explained by a new and decentralized registration procedure for the census created by Caesar. This would have dispensed citizens that were *sui iuris* to travel to Rome and would have greatly increased the efficiency of the census and therefore the number of citizens registered (Lo Cascio 1997, 3-76; 1999, 164; 2001a, 565-603; 2005, 11; also 1994a; 1994b; 2001b; 2004a; 2004b; 2008; 2009. Moreover, to explain such a theory of population increase Lo Cascio stressed the specialization and development of Italian agriculture that would have allowed high rates of productivity and therefore high rates of demographic growth: Lo Cascio 2004a, 115: "E comunque la trasformazione dell'economia agraria doveva significare una netta efficientizzazione nella gestione delle unità produttive, come portato anche della specializzazione delle colture: la migliore conferma della persistenza, e della vitalità, della piccola unità contadina nell'Italia che vede l'affermarsi di quella che Rostovzev (sic) definiva l'"agricoltura metodica e capitalistica" è proprio il fatto che la presenza delle piccole unità fondiarie (di proprietari e di affittuari) era strutturalmente necessaria all'efficienza stessa del sistema della villa. Ma dev'essere stato, soprattutto, l'incremento dell'area coltivata, attestato, come si è detto, dalla documentazione dei survey in varie regioni della penisola, a rappresentare il fattore cruciale." See also: Lo Cascio 2005, 18-32; 2010, 89-100.

²¹² Hin 2013; 2008; De Ligt 2012; 2008; 2007a; 2007b; 2007c; 2006; 2004; Launaro 2011; Roselaar 2010; Scheidel 1996; 2004; 2006; 2008; Witcher 2008; Morley 1996; 2001, 50-62; 2006, 299-323; 2008, 121-137; Rosenstein 2007; Kron 2005, 441-495; Vallat 2004. Also Nicolet 1988; Evans 1980; Rich 1983; Nagle 1979; Frederiksen 1971; Skydsgaard 1969. Although most recent demographic reconstructions agree on population increase, there is no consensus about the magnitude of this phenomenon. Lo Cascio's high count theory is thought provoking but it is often viewed as too extreme by several scholars: cf. De Ligt 2012, 10, 2009, 259-280; Roselaar 2010, 191-200; Hin 2008, 187-238; Scheidel 2008, 48: "None of this means that any model of a – by historical standards- very large and prosperous population of Roman Italy is

Hannibalic War have been greatly exaggerated. In fact, such studies argue that the war created circumstances favourable to population growth. For example the high casualties suffered by Rome during this conflict and the confiscation of land after its conclusion meant that most Romans were actually able to find land for themselves through distributions of confiscated property. Moreover, the fact that far fewer female citizens

necessarily incorrect; yet it is certainly implausible and therefore requires solid evidentiary support to merit serious consideration. The less likely a reading is, the better the supportive data have to be. In a situation such as this, the exact opposite is the case: the data for the Roman period are generally poor, contested, and ambiguous, whereas the comparative evidence in support of long-term Malthusian constraints is fairly consistent and of better quality.”; 62: “This survey has failed to produce a conclusive answer to the question of the size of the population of Roman Italy. The census data are open to too many conflicting readings to offer any simple solution. A number of features do not strongly favor either 'high' or 'low' estimates of overall population size: by my reckoning these include urbanization rates, military mobilization rates in the republican period, data generated by field surveys, and potential carrying capacity. Some facts speak against population pressure and, although they may not directly support any specific scenario, are more readily consistent with the low count: slave imports, costly recruitment in the late Republic, falling military participation rates in the early monarchy, [i.e. imperial period] and, conceivably, elevated living standards all belong in this category.”; Nicolet 1988, 145: “Il est exclu qu'en quarante-deux ans la population civique romaine ait plus que quadruplé. Il est donc clair qu'un changement est intervenu: le plus sûr est d'admettre qu'à partir de 28 on donne la population civique totale - femmes et enfants compris- alors qu'en 70-69 on ne comptait toujours que les mâles adultes.” More precisely the interpretation of the important increase in population between the census of 70/69 and the Augustan census of 28 continues to create controversy: Nicolet 1991, 119-131, especially 130: “Si Rome, en 14 ap. J.-C., avait réellement compté près de 5 millions de citoyens mâles adultes, on ne voit pas comment le remplacement des 6.000 à 8.000 soldats que libéraient annuellement les 25 légions aurait pu créer tant de souci à l'empereur. On ne voit pas comment Pline, résumant les calamités de la fin du règne, après le désastre de Varus, aurait pu parler de la *iuventutis penuria* (VII, 149). On s'explique mieux tout cela, au contraire, si les mêmes charges incombait à une population totale – c'est-à-dire si les mâles adultes n'étaient que 1.500.000 ou 2.000.000.” *contra* Lo Cascio 1994a, 31: “[...] there is no evidence whatsoever for the inclusion of women and children in the Augustan figures.”; 1994b, 99: “Al di là di qualsiasi argomento filologico, mi sembra che si possa dire che la soluzione belochiana va respinta precisamente per la stessa ragione per la quale è sembrato sinora che dovesse essere necessariamente accolta come l'unica soluzione possibile: perché è quella che pare configurare la situazione demograficamente meno plausibile.”; 2004b, 135-152, especially 138: “Étant donné qu'à l'époque républicaine tous les hommes adultes avaient été dénombrés, Auguste aurait compté toute la population de condition citadine, hommes, femmes et enfants. La raison pour laquelle Beloch aboutit à cette conclusion était qu'elle devait être, à son avis, la seule conclusion démographiquement plausible. Beloch retenait qu'il était impossible qu'en 42 ans, on puisse en arriver à un nombre si élevé de *civium capita*, si ces derniers avaient été uniquement des hommes adultes, puisqu'une telle augmentation aurait dû être, du moins en partie, le résultat d'un accroissement naturel. Mais le fait est que l'hypothèse qu'il pouvait y avoir une telle modification des buts du recensement, et par conséquent, de ses résultats, ne s'appuie sur aucun témoignage ancien.”; Pina Polo 1987, 159: “Por otra parte, nuestras fuentes para el período no son muy abundantes, lo que presupone notables lagunas en la información. Esto ha hecho que, en muchas ocasiones, se aplicaran a zonas de las que se tienen pocos datos los pertenecientes a otras que conocemos mejor. O bien se han obtenido conclusiones generales para toda la Península a partir de una información aislada; es lo que Evans llama « método anecdótico ». Evidentemente, esto conduce a reconstrucciones falsas.”; Also, Terrenato 1998a, 94-114; Mattingly and Witcher 2004, 173-186.

were killed during the war created more marriage opportunities for young men, and may have led to a temporary lowering of the average age of men at first marriage. The conditions created by the Second Punic War thus allowed for rapid demographic growth.²¹³

Recent research has also stressed that the importance of slavery in the economy has been exaggerated.²¹⁴ Indeed it has been argued that ‘commercial’ agriculture on estates staffed with slaves was not widespread and was limited to areas located close to major urban markets.²¹⁵ The growth of slavery after the Second Punic War can thus no longer be viewed as a decisive factor causing widespread impoverishment amongst Italian small farmers.

In order to reconcile the picture of demographic growth with an apparent decrease in the census figures for the period 160-130, historians have proposed four main explanations. First, it has been argued that the low figures for these years could be explained by an actual increase in poverty that was caused by a steady population growth. In a nutshell, the expanding population caused an increase in the number of *proletarii*, that is, citizens falling below the minimum property qualifications for military service. Because of its lower importance for military service this class of citizens was presumably being less efficiently registered than *assidui*, citizens possessing enough property to qualify for military service.²¹⁶ Because of the increase in the numbers of *proletarii*, the census

²¹³ De Ligt 2012, 147; Roselaar 2010, 192.

²¹⁴ De Ligt 2012, 168; Roselaar 2010, 184-185.

²¹⁵ De Ligt 2012, 164; Roselaar 2010, 180-185; Jongman, 2003, 113-114; 1990, 50-51; Duncan Jones 1982, 327; Columella *RR*, 3.3.8; Pliny *NH* 17.215.

²¹⁶ *Proletarii* could however serve as rowers in the navy. Roselaar 2010, 195-196; De Ligt 2006b, 169: “I have argued that the slow decline during these years reflects an increase in rural poverty that was caused by continuing population growth. The basic idea behind this interpretation is that proletarians were registered

figures became increasingly unreliable during this period, as a larger part of the citizen body was no longer registered. The second explanation proposes that an increased unwillingness to serve in distant theatres of operations where little prospect of plunder was expected, such as in Spain, would have contributed to alter the results of the census.²¹⁷ Some citizens would have preferred to avoid being registered in order to escape the obligation to be sent into a very dangerous and profitless war. A third hypothesis highlights new opportunities in other economic sectors available to farmers. As new markets for wine, olive oil and luxury goods emerged in second century Italy, some farmers were able to make better use of available manpower and profit from these new opportunities. This also resulted in reluctance to be registered in the census in order to avoid military service, as warfare was thought to be less financially attractive than before for those who could benefit from the emerging new markets.²¹⁸ The fourth reason brought forward to explain under-registration is the suspension of the war-tax, the *tributum*. Victory in the Third Macedonian War brought so much plunder to Rome that the state was able to get rid of this tax. Since the census was a way of assessing property

less efficiently than *assidui*. In other words, during the years 164-130 BC the census figures became increasingly unreliable because the number of proletarians kept increasing.” Also: De Ligt 2006a, 590-605; Rosenstein 2006, 241.

²¹⁷ De Ligt 2004, 744; Shochat 1980, 46-76.

²¹⁸ Erdkamp 2006b, 48: “The attitude of recruits and their households always resulted from consideration of the prospects of profit from a particular campaign compared to the opportunities to make a living at home. The point is that this balance changed. As some parts of Italy became prosperous and towns and cities grew, markets emerged not only for basic food stuffs such as grain, wine and olive oil, but also for products such as textiles and luxury goods. Farmers could adjust their crops to their situation and thus make better use of available manpower, both by increasing labour input and by spreading their labour input more evenly over the year. The towns and cities became the destinations of seasonal workers and permanent migrants, who were attracted by the employment opportunities, offered by public and private building, trade, and the growing need for transportation. The landowning and wealthy farmers that served in the legions were the ones that could profit most from the economic boom. To be sure, many young farmers would still have welcomed the opportunity to sign up for a campaign that promised immense booty, but in general, military service became a burden for the men of (moderate) property. In short, the attractiveness of military service declined for the *assidui* as there was less underemployment among the landowning smallholders and better alternatives for making money.” For the financial attractiveness of military service, see pp. 28-53.

and taxes, the loss of its relevance perhaps caused the censors to be less zealous to register all those who could pay a tax that had just been abolished.²¹⁹ It is probable that all four of these factors together contributed to explain why the census figures show a decrease in numbers for the period 160-130.²²⁰ Scholars defending such views have been labeled ‘low-counters’ because they propose a more moderate population growth than Lo Cascio and his followers.²²¹

2- Consequences of Population Increase for *assidui*

2.1 Colonization and Access to *ager publicus*

The previous summary showed that there is now a consensus among scholars regarding population change in the second century. The new *communis opinio* is that the picture of a desolated Italian countryside provided by the sources is exaggerated. The Italian population was actually increasing.²²² How did this affect the class of farmers that made up the bulk of Roman armies?

Between 201 and 173 large scale distributions of land allowed many citizens to be settled

²¹⁹ On the census see Northwood 2008, 257-270.

²²⁰ Plutarch *Aemilius Paulus*, 38.1; Cicero *De officiis*, 2.76; Valerius Maximus 4.3.8; Hin 2013, 167-168. On the *tributum*, see Northwood 2008, 257-270; Mersing 2007, 215-235; Marchetti 1977, 107-133; Nicolet 1976c; Schwahn 1939, 1-78. De Ligt 2006b, 169; 2004, 753-754: “There are, however, no good reasons for doubting the validity of the census figures for 125/4 and 115/4 BC, which demonstrate that the number of Roman citizens continued to grow throughout the second century BC. Since there are no indications that this increase was accompanied by a corresponding expansion of the amount of agricultural land available for cultivation by this Italian subgroup (especially after the large-scale assignments of the early second century BC had come to an end), it follows that a growing number of country-dwelling citizens were reduced to poverty during the decades preceding the Gracchan land reforms.”; 2006a, 603 *contra* Rosenstein 2004, 181-182.

²²¹ See for instance De Ligt 2012, 167 ff.

²²² A notable exception is Keaveney 2007, 20, who still thinks there was a demographic decline.

in colonies in northern and southern Italy. This surely contributed to keep the number of *proletarii* at a low level. However no distribution of land is attested between 173 and 133, meaning that citizens needing land at that time had to find other means to acquire it.²²³ Settlers receiving plots of land located close to public land (*ager publicus*) may have used it to supplement their income. Other small landholders most likely profited from *ager publicus* as well, whether legally or not. For those not possessing enough land to ensure their subsistence access to *ager publicus* was essential for survival.²²⁴

Although conditions after the Second Punic War were favourable to population growth, such a demographic increase eventually put pressure on available agricultural resources, especially after 173 when distributions of land through the establishment of colonies stopped.²²⁵ One of the consequences of such pressure on the land was the gradual privatization of public land.²²⁶ Although it is impossible to tell how many farmers were affected by this phenomenon, it is reasonable to assume that it contributed to create a shortage of land. Despite the fact that some farmers were able to work their land more intensively and modify their production according to the demand of new markets, as mentioned above, such methods of improving production were sometimes beyond the reach of small farmers because of their cost.²²⁷

Another consequence of population growth was the fragmentation of property through partible inheritance. As the population of Italy increased, land holdings became more

²²³ On land distribution, see De Ligt 2012, 152 ff; 168; Bispham 2006, 73–161; Hermon 2001; Moatti 1993.

²²⁴ Roselaar 2010, 206–213.

²²⁵ De Ligt 2012, 167–169.

²²⁶ Roselaar 2010, 213: “Privatization of public land was not simply the result of the ‘greed of the rich’, who were trying to monopolize all the land for their selfish gains. Instead, it was a logical conclusion of increased demands placed on scarce resources; the wish of commercial producers to acquire more land undoubtedly played a role, but this was a logical of the growing market and not due to a decline in the morals of the rich, as the sources would have it.”; Goodchild and Witcher, 2009, 187–220.

²²⁷ Roselaar 2010, 214.

fragmented. This must have caused many *assidui* to suffer social demotion as some had now become too poor to be counted as such. They were therefore registered in the poorest class, the *proletarii*, who were dispensed from legionary service.²²⁸ For instance, a father having four sons and possessing 12,000 *asses* worth of property and dividing his land equally amongst them would thus leave to the Republic four citizens below the minimum property requirements of the fifth (and lowest) class rated at 11,000 *asses*.²²⁹

2.2 Warfare and Landlessness

In a groundbreaking study Nathan Rosenstein challenged the assumption that long term warfare led to the extinction of Rome's small farmers. He argued that the patterns of Roman warfare were not incompatible with actual agricultural practice.²³⁰ Moreover, he showed that marriage habits did not interfere with war making or agricultural activities. Since Roman men tended to marry around the age of thirty, this created a reserve of unmarried young men which could not always be employed on small farms. Furthermore,

²²⁸ Rosenstein 2006, 131: "The effects of conscription on the demography of Rome and Italy were complex. Some were beneficial. Conscription eased pressure on farms with limited land. It also buffered the risks inherent in subsistence agriculture, since war brought booty. Deaths increased the availability of land and the overall productivity of small scale agriculture. However, inevitably, sooner or later, population would have to exceed the supply of available farmland, helping to create the widespread poverty and landlessness that were the underlying causes of the "crisis without alternative"."

²²⁹ De Ligt 2012, 169-173 : "In other words, if the number of free country-dwellers continued to grow, this could have had the seemingly paradoxical effect of reducing the number of citizens eligible for legionary service."; Launaro 2011, 177: "[...] a decline of *assidui*, not Roman citizens *tout court*."; Evans 1988, 131: "If, for example, an *agrestis* owned a *fundus* whose land and *instrumenta* were valued at 12,000 *asses*, he would be ranked with the *assidui* and consequently be liable for military service. But if he had four sons, and each succeeded to one-quarter of his estate, each of them would be ineligible for service because, unlike their father, they would have failed to satisfy the census requirement and would accordingly be enrolled among the *proletarii*. It simply has to be recognized, therefore, that an increase in population, and the dispersal of property that necessarily accompanied such an increase, would have the same negative impact on the availability of manpower for the legions as the deracination of the peasantry through war and expropriation." This is based on the highest figures for the fifth class given by Livy 1.43 and Dionysius 4.16-21. See chapter one for the discussion on property qualifications.

²³⁰ Rosenstein 2004, 26-62; 2007, 75-88.

when these men did reach the age of marriage, they would most likely serve with the less exposed *principes* or *triarii* (soldiers posted in the second and third lines) if they would ever be called upon again.²³¹ In other terms Roman agriculture was characterized by the presence of unemployed labour, and military service was thus not systematically preventing citizens from taking care of their farms.

Military service was therefore a way of easing pressure on the land by removing some of the unemployed labour force. Recent research has shown that Roman citizens often answered the levy calls with enthusiasm because war provided them with seasonal jobs that added income in times when not much labour was needed on the family farm. The military was thus seen as a way to gain financial benefits through pay and plunder.²³² According to this view Roman citizens went to war mainly because it was economically profitable.

After the end of the Third Macedonian War in 168 Roman military commitments, decreased significantly.²³³ In the context of the demographic increase, highlighted previously, this had the impact of putting even more pressure on the land since more citizens stayed home instead of going abroad with the army. This likely resulted in further fragmentation of property, reduction in per capita resources, and perhaps an increase in the number of tenants.²³⁴ The emerging picture is one of population increase

²³¹ See chapter one for more details on army organization

²³² Erdkamp 2006b, 41-52. See next chapter for a detailed discussion of war benefits.

²³³ Brunt 1971, 424, 432-3; Vell. Pat. 2.1.1: "For, when Rome was freed of the fear of Carthage, and her rival in empire was out of her way, the path of virtue was abandoned for that of corruption, not gradually, but in headlong course. The older discipline was discarded to give place to the new. The state passed from vigilance to slumber, from the pursuit of arms to the pursuit of pleasure, from activity to idleness." (*quippe remoto Carthaginis metu sublataque imperii aemula non gradu, sed praecipiti cursu a virtute descitum, ad vitia transcursum; vetus disciplina deserta, nova inducta; in somnum a vigiliis, ab armis ad voluptates, a negotiis in otium conversa civitas*).

²³⁴ De Ligt 2000, 377-391; Scheidel 1994; Foxhall 1990, 97-114; De Neeve, 1984a.

and at the same time of an increase in poverty.

In such circumstances it is reasonable to propose that the property qualification was lowered to the figure of 1,500 *asses* found in Cicero, Aulus Gellius, and Nonius. This *ad hoc* measure that opened the legions to poorer citizens did not change the logic that citizens were still expected to contribute to the cost of war by buying their own weapons while receiving only a modest *stipendium*.

3- The Gracchi

The political actions of the Gracchi brothers have often been seen as a turning point in Roman Republican politics. Modern historians most often think of this period as the beginning of the 'Late Republican Period' and of the use of violence in political life, culminating with the civil wars that brought an end to the Republic.²³⁵ It was indeed the first time that political figures and their supporters were killed by their senatorial opponents. According to the testimony of Appian and Plutarch, Tiberius Gracchus was reacting to widespread impoverishment and depopulation among rural dwellers.²³⁶ As discussed above, this picture is exaggerated.

The Gracchi's most famous political move is their proposal to distribute public land (*ager publicus*) to poor citizens. Recent works have proposed that the Gracchi correctly understood the problem of impoverishment but wrongly thought that the population of

²³⁵ Appian *BC* 1.2. For a different attempt at periodization, see Flower 2010, 82 ff.

²³⁶ Appian *BC* 1.7; Plutarch *Tib. Gr.* 8.3. In modern scholarship see: Hin 2013, 166-167; Marzano 2009, 31-46; Gargola 2008, 487-518; Rich 2007, 155-166; 1983, 303; De Ligt 2004; 725-757; Shochat 1980; Nagle 1976, 487-489; Frederiksen 1971, 330-357; Keaveney 2007, 20.

Italy was declining. Tiberius Gracchus could have been misled by the census figures as, they appear to show a demographic decline. The precise level of under-registration is unknown, but it might have been affected by a greater reluctance towards military service amongst well-off citizens reluctant to be drafted for profitless garrison duty. Although there was not a problem of manpower as already noted, the Gracchi most likely reasoned like their contemporaries: they thought that good soldiers were citizens living on the land, earning enough to provide their own weapons. This highlights the link between citizenship, property, and military service that seems to have been prevalent in Roman society.²³⁷ Such reasoning is also clearly illustrated in the timocratic organization of the army described by Polybius in Book Six.²³⁸

It has been calculated that the Gracchan distributions of land could have settled some 15,000 people.²³⁹ With a property qualification of only 1,500 *asses*, even a modest grant of land was surely enough to turn the beneficiary into an *assidui*. Although this increased the number of *assidui*, the Gracchan land reforms did not reform the way the army was financed. Rather than implementing a state monopoly on military financing, the Gracchi's solution was simply to maintain the traditional system by bolstering the number of self-equipped citizen-soldiers through grants of land.²⁴⁰

Although distribution of land was a way to preserve the traditional structures of army financing, there is some evidence that the Gracchi proposed limited modifications to what

²³⁷ Sallust *Iug*, 86.2-4; Plutarch, *Marius*, 9.1; Le Bohec 1997, 14.

²³⁸ Polybius 6.19 ff.

²³⁹ Roselaar 2010, 252-253.

²⁴⁰ Erdkamp 2011b, 111: "The Roman authorities were undoubtedly aware of the fall in status that threatened the offspring of farmers with too many sons. Giving land to *assidui* ensured that they remained *assidui*. In other words, in a situation of population growth assigning land to *assidui* helped to avoid that their families plunged into proletarian status."; Roselaar 2010, 215-218. Erdkamp 2006b, 41-51 argues that the expansion of the city of Rome led several peasants to cultivate cash-crops. This required them to work their land more intensively and reduced the attractiveness of military service.

citizens had to contribute for military service. Indeed, a law proposal by Gaius Gracchus that forbade deductions on pay for the soldiers' clothing (ἐσθῆτα) supports this argument.²⁴¹ In other words this law proposed that troops be provided with clothes at state expense. This should be seen as an effort to improve the net value of the *stipendium* by reducing the amount of money normally deducted from it. It is reasonable to suggest that Gaius was reacting to the decrease in property qualification and the inclusion of poorer citizens in the legions. It may look surprising that the law mentions that clothes, rather than weapons, should be provided free of charge. Weapons are indeed the first items that come to mind as far as military service is concerned. They are what differentiated the citizen in civilian life from the citizen-soldier. Arms were also much more expensive than clothes, as discussed in the previous chapter. Providing free weapons would have removed the biggest deduction made on pay and improved the value of it much more than free clothes. Emilio Gabba once argued that Plutarch, the author who recorded the law, abridged his text and that in this context the word ἐσθῆτα referred not only to clothes, but also to the weapons needed by a soldier.²⁴² Since eligibility to service had been extended to citizens with very little means, such a hypothesis would make sense, as these were indeed the most expensive items on a recruit's shopping list before going on campaign. However, Gabba's argument rests on speculation as there is no indication that ἐσθῆτα could be the equivalent of weapons (όπλα) or equipment

²⁴¹ Plutarch *G. Grac.* 5: "Of the laws which he proposed by way of gratifying the people and overthrowing the Senate, one was agrarian, and divided the public land among the poor citizens; another was military, and ordained that clothing should be furnished to the soldiers at the public cost, that nothing should be deducted from their pay to meet this charge, and that no one under seventeen should be enrolled as a soldier." (τῶν δὲ νόμων οὓς εἰσέφερε τῷ δήμῳ χαριζόμενος καὶ καταλύων τὴν σύγκλητον, ὁ μὲν ἦν κληρουχικὸς ἀνανέμων τοῖς πένησι τὴν δημοσίαν, ὁ δὲ στρατιωτικὸς ἐσθῆτά τε κελεύων δημοσίᾳ χορηγεῖσθαι καὶ μηδὲν εἰς τοῦτο τῆς μισθοφορᾶς ὑφαιρεῖσθαι τῶν στρατευομένων, καὶ νεώτερον ἐτῶν ἑπτακαίδεκα μὴ καταλέγεσθαι στρατιώτην).

²⁴² Gabba 1976, 7; followed by Erdkamp 2006b, 46.

(παρασκευή). Speculation though it is, the suggestion remains sound as it is otherwise difficult to understand why Plutarch would have chosen to write ἐσθῆτα rather than ὅπλα. It has also been argued that since the law only mentions clothing this would then suggest that weapons were already freely supplied to soldiers by the state.²⁴³ This theory is attractive and would seem sound considering the increase in poverty among some of the *assidui*. However, as mentioned earlier in Chapter One, a passage from Tacitus' *Annales* indicates that deductions for food, clothing, tents, and weapons were still in place in the early first century CE, which makes this hypothesis improbable.²⁴⁴ Providing free weapons to all soldiers meant a significant increase in state expenditure that would have required the implementation of a sustainable way to finance it. This means something more important than the *tributum*, which was intended to provide the *stipendium*. Even if the *tributum* had not been levied since 167, it could be argued that the amount of plunder captured in Macedon could have covered the cost of an army fully equipped by the state. However the Polybian evidence makes this suggestion unlikely since this author, writing around the middle of the second century, clearly states that weapons were not freely issued. Only additional weapons were supplied to soldiers and their cost was deducted from pay.²⁴⁵ Finally, nothing implies that Gaius' law was successfully passed and applied.²⁴⁶

In summary the Gracchi distributed land in order to attempt to increase the number of

²⁴³ Rosenstein 2002, 176: "Equally telling is C. Gracchus' law requiring that clothing (not, as often believed, clothing and weapons) be furnished to soldiers at state expense, Plut. *G. Grac.* 5.1: The most plausible explanation for why the law did not also provide weapons and armour at public cost, certainly far more expensive items than tunics, is that these were already being supplied to recruits." Followed by Serrati 2007, 489; Rathbone 2007, 159.

²⁴⁴ Tacitus *Annales*, 1.17.6.

²⁴⁵ Polybius 6.39.15.

²⁴⁶ Brunt 1971, 411.

those who corresponded to the Roman ideal of the citizen-soldier living on the land and able to finance his weapons in case of mobilization. The limited attempt at proposing state sponsored clothing is at best a timid move towards the idea of an army fully financed by the state.

Chapter Three

The Abolition of *Tributum* and the ‘Reform’ of Marius

1- War Indemnities as a new Type of Military Funding?

As seen in the previous chapters, the Roman state did little in terms of army financing to cope with the fact that legions were now opened to poorer citizens. The Senate most often hoped that plunder would offer enough to pay for the costs of the war and ideally to offer something to the soldiers as well. However profit from plunder was irregular and it was impossible to know beforehand whether it would balance expenditures. There are indeed a surprisingly high number of campaigns in which the Roman state won less than what it disbursed. In the second century, only a small number of victories in the East brought enough plunder to maintain a stable budget and make up for campaigns that were financially unprofitable.²⁴⁷

In 167, so much plunder had been captured during the campaign against Macedon that the Senate decided it could indefinitely suspend the *tributum*, the main source of income to finance the army.²⁴⁸ The campaign had brought some 300 million sesterces or 75 million *denarii* to the treasury. This was enough to pay the *stipendium* of some 120 legions. According to Brunt, between 167 and 135 there was an average of about seven

²⁴⁷ Rosenstein 2011b, 145-6, 153-8 with sources as well as Rosenstein (forthcoming). Cadiou 2008, 501-2, argues that provincial taxation had not yet been systematically implemented to fund military activity.

²⁴⁸ Pliny the Elder *NH* 33.56: “Aemilius Paulus also after the defeat of King Perseus paid in to the treasury from the booty won in Macedonia 300 million sesterces; and from that date onward the Roman nation left off paying the citizens’ property-tax.” (*intulit et Aemilius Paulus Perseo rege victo e Macedonica praeda [mmm], a quo tempore populus Romanus tributum pendere desiit*).

legions mobilized each year. The money taken from Macedon was enough to provide the *stipendium* for seven legions for some 17 years.²⁴⁹ The Senate thus had good reason to be confident enough to suspend the collection of the *tributum*.

Another reason for such confidence was probably the appearance of a new trend in army financing that had emerged over the course of the second century: war indemnities. The Romans had demanded such payments earlier although such a practice was rare. The most notable early case is that of the First Punic War, in which Rome requested 3,200 talents, but even this did not cover all the expenses of the war.²⁵⁰ The tendency became more frequent after the Second Punic War: between 200 and 167 Rome received some 140 million *denarii* in indemnities from enemies it had defeated (Carthage, Macedon, Sparta, Antiochus III, and the Aitolians).²⁵¹ These payments were surely what made the Senate confident enough to suspend the collection of the *tributum*.

However these were again expedients not accompanied by the implementation of sustainable measures. It is possible that these payments were considered to be enough by the Senate to ensure financial stability for a few years. The current system might thus have been deemed good enough for the time being. However it was rather precariously based on the existence of enemies rich enough to be able pay for Rome's war expenditure, something that could not be guaranteed in the future. In fact Rome did often go to war against peoples that did not have the means to cover war expenses, as several

²⁴⁹ Brunt 1971, 432.

²⁵⁰ The Romans later demanded 1,200 additional talents: Polybius 1.62.8-63.3, 88.12; Von Ungern-Sternberg 2009, 256: "Nun waren auch 3 200 Talente in keiner Weise für einen Krieg von 23 Jahren Dauer - bei im insbesondere die kostspieligen Flottenbauten zu berücksichtigen sind - kostendeckend. Allein schon der Jahressold einer Legion ist mit ca. 100 Talenten anzusetzen. Die gesamten Kriegskosten veranschlagt Tenney Frank auf mindestens 100 Millionen Denare (ca. 16 500 Talente)."; Kehne 2008, 281-288.

²⁵¹ Carthage: Polybius. 15.18.7; Livy 30.37.5; Macedon: Polybius 18.44.7; Sparta: Livy 34.34.11; Antiochus III: Polybius. 21.17.4-5; Aitolians: Polybius 21.30.1-2.

campaigns show. For example, between 200 and 167 it has been calculated that some 17 to 19 campaigns brought in less money than what was spent on them.²⁵² In summary, despite the irregularity in sources of income brought by warfare, it was still largely believed that wars would ultimately pay for themselves. This system did work for a long time but Rome did not yet develop sophisticated and sustainable ways of financing war, regardless of what a campaign would yield.

At the level of the citizen-soldier, although the *tributum* had been suspended, the system of the self-arming militia described by Polybius remained in place, despite the introduction of poorer elements of society in the legions as seen in Chapter One.

2- Marius

Less than twenty years after Gaius Gracchus' assassination, one of the newly elected consuls for 107, Gaius Marius, was given the command for the war against King Jugurtha of the kingdom of Numidia in North Africa. The war had been dragging on since 112 and Marius boasted that he could quickly bring it to an end by being less timorous than his predecessor and former commander-in-chief Metellus. To reinforce the army already present in Africa, Marius enrolled volunteers among whom there were many men who were poor and of low status. In other words, these were men who did not meet the property qualification for military service. By doing so, Plutarch and Sallust, our most detailed accounts for this matter, both record that Marius acted 'contrary to law and

²⁵² Rosenstein 2011b, 152-158.

custom' since only men with property were usually conscripted.²⁵³ This has often been interpreted by modern historians as a major reform in recruitment practices and a shift from a militia army to a professional one after years of proletarianization.²⁵⁴ Several important nuances should be made regarding what Marius did. Indeed, a careful analysis of the sources indicates that too much has been attributed to him by modern scholarship.²⁵⁵

2.1 Marius' Use of Volunteers

First of all, there is no indication that Marius altered recruitment *ex classibus* on a permanent basis, nor is a law attested that would have proposed to do so.²⁵⁶ Armies were

²⁵³ Sallust, *Iug*, 86.2-4: "He himself in the meantime enrolled soldiers, not according to the classes in the manner of our forefathers, but allowing anyone to volunteer, for the most part the proletariat. Some say that he did this through lack of good men, others because of a desire to curry favour, since that class had given him honour and rank." (*ipse interea milites scribere, non more maiorum neque ex classibus, sed uti quousque libido erat, capite censos plerosque. id factum alii inopia bonorum, alii per ambitionem consulis memorabant, quod ab eo genere celebratus auctusque erat et homini potentiam quaerenti egentissimus quisque opportunissimus, quoi neque sua cara, quippe quae nulla sunt, et omnia cum pretio honesta videntur*); Plutarch, *Marius*, 9.1: "He was triumphantly elected and at once began to levy troops. Contrary to law and custom he enlisted many a poor and insignificant man, although former commanders had not accepted such persons, but bestowed arms, just as they would any honour, only on those whose property assessment made them worthy to receive these, each soldiers being supposed to put his substance in pledge to the state." (ἀναγορευθεὶς δὲ λαμπρῶς εὐθὺς ἐστρατολόγει, παρὰ τὸν νόμον καὶ τὴν συνήθειαν πολλὸν τὸν ἄπορον καὶ φαῦλον καταγράφων, τῶν πρόσθεν ἡγεμόνων οὐ προσδεχομένων τοὺς τοιούτους, ἀλλ', ὥσπερ ἄλλο τι τῶν καλῶν, τὰ ὄπλα μετὰ τιμῆς τοῖς ἀξίοις νεμόντων, ἐνέχυρον τὴν οὐσίαν ἐκάστου τιθέναι δοκοῦντος).

²⁵⁴ For instance: Christ 2002, 61: "Das neue Berufsheer verlor somit die timokratischen - auf Vermögensklassen beruhenden - Grundlagen der alten republikanischen Armeen. Es ging von der Freiwilligkeit des Dienstes, insbesondere von der Anwerbung der ärmeren Landbevölkerung aus, weniger von jener des hauptstädtischen Proletariats, das für den harten, disziplinierten militärischen Dienst weithin ungeeignet war." Also: Serrati 2013, 155-168; Flower 2010, 107; Matthew 2010; 2006, 1-17; Patterson 1993, 92-112; Marino 1980, 354-364; Gabba 1976, 1-23; Sordi 1972, 379-385; Erdmann 1972; Harmand 1969, 61-74, 1974, 289: "En 107, du fait d'un seul individu, Marius, la légion, restant un corps civique, devint un groupement de pauvres et par là scandaleuse."; Carney 1961, 31-33.

²⁵⁵ Rankov 2007, 31-32.

²⁵⁶ Keaveney 2007, 28; Paddock 1985, 142-159; Keppie 1984, 61; Aigner 1974, 16: "Von einer Änderung der Heeresfassung durch ihn kann nämlich auch keineswegs gesprochen werden. Seine Anwerbung - nicht Aushebung - von zum Kriegsdienst nicht verpflichteten Leuten hat nämlich keinen Niederschlag in irgendeinem Statut - etwa in einer lex Maria - gefunden, ja man kann mit Sicherheit behaupten, daß die alte

not exclusively made up of volunteers after Marius, and the traditional levy, the *dilectus*, did not disappear. It was still frequently used during the first century.²⁵⁷ For example, in 49, Pompey ordered a levy to raise troops to confront Caesar. Pompey's draft was not popular, as many citizens were reluctant to show up for the levy and thought that he and Caesar should settle their dispute peacefully.²⁵⁸ Indeed, when one of Pompey's legates later retreated rather than confront Caesar, his troops deserted and returned to their homes (*domum reuertuntur*).²⁵⁹ The lack of enthusiasm among the civilian population shows that military service had not exclusively become a matter of calling volunteers but rather that

Zensus-Dienstpflicht nach wie vor bestehen blieb und auch zum Tragen kam [...]"; Schneider 1977a, 100: "Freilich bestand weiterhin das alte dilectus - System fort, gerade im Verlaufe der Bürgerkriege wurde oft noch der Eintritt in die Armee erzwungen."

²⁵⁷ Appian *BC* 2.34; 3.91; Plutarch *Pompey*, 59.2. See next chapter five the discussion of the evolution of recruitment practice during the civil wars.

²⁵⁸ Plutarch *Pompey* 59.2: "But when Pompey began to levy recruits, some refused to obey the summons, and few came together reluctantly and without zest, but the greater part cried out for a settlement of the controversy." (ἀρξάμενου δὲ τοῦ Πομπηίου καταλέγειν οἱ μὲν οὐχ ὑπήκουον, ὀλίγοι δὲ γλίσχρως καὶ ἀπροθύμως συνήσαν, οἱ δὲ πλείους διαλύσεις ἐβόων).

²⁵⁹ Caesar *BC* 1.13. After Caesar had decided to cross the Rubicon news of his advance caused panic in Rome. Pompey left the city and stopped the levies he had ordered around the *Vrbs* (*BC* 1.14). At Capua one of his legates levied settlers and gladiators. He gave horses to the latter, hoping to use them as cavalry. They were later disbanded because many officers were disagreeing with such procedure. However it was probably the use of slaves which offended the Pompeians, not the fact that recruits could receive mounts free of charge and presumably other kind of equipment as well (*BC* 1.14). As Caesar kept advancing through Picenum, the local towns welcomed him and offered their help. Caesar asked for soldiers, and the towns complied with his wish (*BC* 1.15). He probably expected to receive these reinforcements fully armed as he had little time to stop and manufacture weapons for them. They were thus locally equipped, either privately or publicly at the towns' expense. Caesar also held a levy afterwards, cf. *BC* 1.16. Cassius Dio 41.8.6 reports that Caesar's army was almost entirely made up of Barbarians: "On the contrary, inasmuch as the larger part of his army consisted of barbarians, they expected that their misfortunes would be far greater in number and more terrible than the former ones." (μέτριον οὐδὲν οὐδὲ ἐς τὸν Καίσαρα ὑπόπτειον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολὺ πλείω καὶ δεινότερα, ἅτε καὶ βαρβαρικοῦ τὸ πλεῖστον τοῦ στρατοῦ αὐτοῦ ὄντος, πείσεσθαι προσεδόκων). This is certainly an exaggeration as other sources explicitly refer to recruitment of legions in Italy. Some legionary troops were raised amongst non-citizens such as the *Alaudae* legion but Italians still formed the core of Caesar's army. Moreover while he was besieging Corfinium Caesar received further reinforcements from Gaul as well as 300 cavalry from the king of Noricum. Caesar was once again calling upon non-Romans (Caesar *BC* 1.18). Once Pompey reached Brundisium, he concentrated there all the troops he had levied, including shepherds and slaves. In a similar fashion to what had been done by one of his legates at Capua, he gave them horses to serve as cavalrymen: Caesar *BC* 1.24: "He orders that all the forces drawn from the new levies should be brought to him from every quarter; he arms the slaves and husbandmen and furnishes them with horses, making out them about three hundred horsemen." (*copias undique omnes ex nouis dilectibus ad se cogi iubet; seruos; pastores armat atque iis equos attribuit; ex his circiter CCC equites conficit*). It could be argued that this is only Caesar slandering Pompey. However, whether or not slaves were actually included, the principle of receiving mounts itself is merely repeated as if it were something unexceptional. Moreover the shepherds mentioned were probably citizens, albeit poor ones, but so was a substantial part of the legionary infantry.

forced conscription was still used.

Moreover Marius' army was also not entirely made out of *proletarii/capite censi*. He only enrolled a limited body of men as reinforcements (*supplementum*) for the legions already present in Africa. Even this *supplementum* was not fully composed of *proletarii*, as Marius called upon veterans, some of whom he knew personally, while others had heard of his reputation before.²⁶⁰ There is no indication whatsoever in the sources that makes Marius responsible for far-reaching military reforms. No evidence supports the idea that Marius created a standing professional army made up of landless volunteers who signed up for a precise amount of years and received free equipment. Such a system would only later appear in the Augustan period.

It must also be stressed that Marius' use of *proletarii* was not without precedent. Indeed, *proletarii*, and even slaves, were sometimes used in the context of a *tumultus*, an emergency levy. It is said that *proletarii* were first used in 280 by Q. Marcius Philippus for the war against Pyrrhus and Tarentum, most likely in the context of a *tumultus*.²⁶¹ After the disasters of Lake Trasimene and Cannae, Rome had to recruit slaves and freedmen to make up for the terrible losses suffered in those two battles.²⁶² What is new here is that Marius' levy was not done in the context of a *tumultus*. However, nothing

²⁶⁰ Sallust *Iug.* 84.2: "All the while he gave his first attention to preparation for the war. He asked that the legions should be reinforced, summoned auxiliaries from foreign nations and kings, besides calling out the bravest men from Latium and from our allies, the greater number of whom he knew from actual service but a few only by reputation. By special inducements, too, he persuaded veterans who had served their time to join his expedition." (*Interim quae bello opus erant prima habere, postulare legionibus supplementum, auxilia a populis et regibus sociisque arcessere, praeterea ex Latio fortissimum quemque, plerosque militiae, paucos fama cognitos accire, et ambiundo cogere homines emeritis stipendiis secum proficisci*). Keppie 1984, 42, estimates the strength of the *supplementum* at 3,000 men. See also Pelling 2002, 221.

²⁶¹ Cassius Hemina *FRH* 6. F. 24: "Cassius in the *Annals*, book 2: then Marcius the praetor armed the proletarians for the first time." (*Cassius Hemina annali libro II: Tunc Marcius praeco primum proletarios armavit*); Orosius 4.1.3; Rankov 2007, 32.

²⁶² Livy 22.57.11; 23.14.2-4; 23.35.5; 24.10.3; 24.14.3; 25.6; 26.35.5; 31.1; 35.5-9; 37.1-11; Appian, *Han.* 27; Florus, 1.22.23; Frontinus *Strat.* 4.7.24; Eutropius 3.10. On slaves in war, see Rouland 1977.

formally institutionalized what he did, which was the recruitment of a few thousand extra soldiers to reinforce the African army.

The use of a limited number of volunteers by Marius was also not a novelty; it is attested on several occasions before. In 205 Scipio was said to have gathered 7,000 volunteers for Africa.²⁶³ In 200 P. Sulpicius Galba was authorized to recruit volunteers from Scipio's veterans.²⁶⁴ In 190, 5,000 volunteers gave their names for the Syrian War against Antiochus III.²⁶⁵ Appian also reports that Scipio Aemilianus took 4,000 volunteers with him for the war against Numantia. These were drawn from his friends and clients and were not drafted through a normal *dilectus* since the Senate refused to allow Scipio to conduct one.²⁶⁶ These examples show that in actual practice, the use of volunteers to reinforce an army was not uncommon, and this did not turn the Roman army into a professional force filled with revolutionaries.²⁶⁷

2.2 Tactical Reform? The Development of the Cohort

A further argument made to support the idea that Marius permanently dropped the property requirements and created a professional army has been the introduction of a new tactical unit. According to this view, Marius would be responsible for the invention of the cohort (*cohors*), a unit of ca. 500 men which replaced the smaller and older maniples

²⁶³ Livy 38.45-46.

²⁶⁴ Livy 31.8.5-6.

²⁶⁵ Livy 37.4.3.

²⁶⁶ Appian *Iber.* 84 ff.

²⁶⁷ Van Ooteghem 1964, 148 : "Ce serait d'ailleurs une erreur de penser que la réforme de Marius concernant l'enrôlement était une totale innovation." Also: Wolff, 2010, 18-28; 2009; Rankov 2007, 31-32.

(*manipulus*) of 120 men.²⁶⁸ However, there are several instances where cohorts are mentioned before Marius. There are numerous references to cohorts in Livy, with more instances in Polybius.²⁶⁹ M. J. V. Bell convincingly defended the idea that Polybius, when he did not transliterate *cohors* in Greek, translated the term by σπεῖρα.²⁷⁰ He proposed that the cohort was actually the product of a slow development that was probably first tried in Spain and eventually came to become a regular tactical unit. Furthermore, cohorts are also mentioned in action in Africa during the War against Jugurtha before Marius took command, indicating that he was not responsible for this innovation.²⁷¹ Moreover, there is almost nothing in the sources supporting the idea that Marius would be the author of such a quick reform in tactical units. It also seems wrong to argue that cohorts were a Marian innovation necessary to defeat the Cimbri and the Teutones.²⁷² These peoples relied on an initial fearsome charge to overcome their opponents. However, this tactic is similar to the one used by Gallic tribes, enemies the Romans faced and defeated many times before without the need to change the manipular system.²⁷³ More recently it has been argued that the maniple and the cohort could actually have existed together and that the development of the latter had nothing to do with conditions peculiar to Spain. Both maniples and cohorts were different ways of adapting

²⁶⁸ A view most recently defended by Matthew 2010, 29-37. Regrettably this author mostly ignores academic works in languages other than English in his monograph on Marius' reform. See also Carney 1961, 31-33 and Parker 1928.

²⁶⁹ Livy 14.1; 14.7; 14.10; 15.1; 19.9; 19.10; 20.3; 20.5; 25.39.1; 27.18.10; 28.13.8; 28.14.17; 28.23.8; 28.25.15; 28.33.12; 34.12.6; 34.15.1. Cadiou 2001, 176, claims to have identified 27 instances in the first decade of Livy but admits that their meaning is ambiguous.

²⁷⁰ Bell 1965, 404-422; Polybius 11.23.1: "the usual number of velites and three maniples (a combination of troops which the Romans call a cohort)". (καὶ πρὸ τούτων γροσφομάχους τοὺς εἰθισμένους καὶ τρεῖς σπεύρας - τοῦτο δὲ καλεῖται τὸ σύνταγμα τῶν πεζῶν παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις κοόρτις); 11.33.1: "he led his main force from the camp in four cohorts, and attacked the infantry." (ἄγων ἐκ τῆς παρεμβολῆς ἐπὶ τέτταρας κοόρτις προσέβαλε τοῖς πεζοῖς). See also Sage 2008, 199-204.

²⁷¹ Sallust *Jug.* 38.6; "*cohors Ligurum*"; 77.4: "*cohortes Ligurum*"; Erdkamp 2006b, 45 *contra* Keppie 1984, 44.

²⁷² Matthew 2010, 29-38; Watson 1969, 22; Parker 1928, 26-28.

²⁷³ Polybius 2.33.1; McCall 2002, 103; Bell 1965, 409-414.

to different tactical situations and the latter was not the product of encountering enemies fighting in a style unknown to the Romans.²⁷⁴

In sum, to attribute the invention of the cohort to Marius because its development is nowhere explicitly attested, is to make an argument *e silentio*. Even more problematic is the fact that it argues against all the available evidence attesting to the existence of cohorts before the time of Marius. Arguing in favour of a long development seems a more prudent and realistic way of interpreting the sources available, rather than try to fit the introduction of the cohort in some sort of Marian package deal.

2.3 The Disappearance of Roman citizen cavalry

Some scholars have argued that Marius disbanded the citizen cavalry and replaced it with professional auxiliary cavalry in order to support the argument that recruitment *ex classibus* ceased after the ‘Marian reform’.²⁷⁵ The fact that Roman/Italian cavalry is last mentioned in Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum* is often pointed out to support this idea.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Cadiou 2001, 168 : “A mon sens, on ne peut écarter la possibilité d’un véritable emploi tactique régulier de la cohorte dès la Seconde Guerre Punique, dont le domaine hispanique, pour des raisons que nous allons développer, conserve davantage la trace que d’autres théâtres d’opérations.” ; 175-176: “Pas plus que l’opposition tactique de la cohorte et du manipule, l’exception hispanique n’apparaît donc clairement dans les sources. Si la manière de combattre des Barbares, et notamment des Celtibères, avait contribué à imposer le recours exclusif à une nouvelle formule tactique, il est curieux que les récits liviens pour 185 et 182 ne fassent aucune référence à la cohorte comme parade au *cuneus*, alors même qu’il s’agit là de deux des descriptions de bataille parmi les plus détaillées que nous possédons pour l’*Hispania* de cette époque et que nous connaissons par Polybe le recours à la cohorte en péninsule Ibérique depuis au moins 206. A l’inverse, il n’apparaît nullement gênant à Bell que cette mention polybienne, la moins ambiguë de celles dont nous disposons, prenne place à l’intérieur du récit de la bataille d’Ilipa, c’est-à-dire d’un affrontement en formation contre une armée carthaginoise où l’infanterie lourde africaine, et non sa composante indigène, est présentée comme l’élite des troupes.”

²⁷⁵ Parker 1928, 43; Erdkamp 2006b, 44, assumes that since the last time *equites Romani* and *uelites* are recorded is in Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum*, they must have disappeared by end of the second century.

²⁷⁶ Sallust *Iug.* 95.1: “During the attack on the fortress the quaestor Lucius Sulla arrived in camp with a large force of horsemen which he had mustered from Latium and the allies, having been left in Rome for that purpose.” (*ceterum, dum ea res geritur, L. Sulla quaestor cum magno equitatu in castra venit, quos uti*

However it is difficult to draw a clear line about the use of the word *auxilia* by Sallust, as he seems to use it both for Italian allies and foreign auxiliaries.²⁷⁷ Moreover, other sources indicate that the Jugurthan War did not see the sudden disappearance of Roman cavalry. For instance Valerius Maximus mentions Roman horsemen (*Romani equites*) being routed by the Cimbri in 102.²⁷⁸ Another reference is provided by Suetonius, when he claims that the grammarian L. Orbilius Pupillus served in the cavalry, probably in the late 90s.²⁷⁹ The details of this are unclear, but the reference does not support the theory that Marius undertook a reform of the Roman citizen cavalry. However it does seem to have gradually disappeared, as Caesar had no Roman cavalry at all in his Gallic campaign.²⁸⁰ Rather than see the disappearance of citizen cavalry as a sudden change, it should be seen as a gradual trend.

It has been proposed that the second century provided other opportunities for prestige for young Roman nobles that lessened the importance of cavalry service.²⁸¹ Two of these

ex Latio et a sociis cogeret, Romae relictus erat.)

²⁷⁷ Sallust *Iug.* 39.2: “but in the meantime he enrolled reinforcements, summoned aid from the allies and the Latin peoples.” (*et tamen interim exercitui supplementum scribere, ab sociis et nomine Latino auxilia arcessere*); 43.4: “Furthermore, in making these preparations the Senate aided him by its sanctions, allies, Latin cities, and kings by the voluntary contribution of auxiliaries.” (*Ceterum ad ea patranda senatus auctoritate, socii nomenque Latinum et reges ultro auxilia mittendo*); 90.2: “He gave all the cattle which had been captured on previous days to the auxiliary cavalry to drive”. (*Pecus omne quod superioribus diebus praedae fuerat equitibus auxiliariis agendum adtribuit*); 100.4: “sent the auxiliary cavalry before the camp.” (*pro castris equites auxilarios mittere*).

²⁷⁸ Val. Max. 5.8.4: “A body of Roman horsemen who were routed by a Cimbrian attack at the river Athesis fled in terror to Rome deserting Consul Catulus.” (*cum apud Athesim flumen impetu Cimbrorum Romani equites pulsi, deserto Catulo, urbem pauidi repeterent*). Although the text says *urbem* and not *Romae*, it is reasonable to think (as the Loeb translation does) that Valerius refers to ‘the *ubrs*’ i.e. Rome since *Romani equites* are mentioned before. Aslo: Rankov 2007, 32-33.

²⁷⁹ Suetonius *Gramm.* 9: “at first earned a living as an attendant on the magistrates. He then served as a subaltern in Macedonia, and later in the cavalry.” (*primo apparituram magistratibus fecit; deinde in Macedonia corniculo, mox equo meruit*). There is also the mention in Plutarch *Sulla* 29.5 of the most illustrious young men of Rome attacking Sulla’s troops on horseback during his second march on the city. Also: McCall 2002, 101; Nicolet 1966, 965.

²⁸⁰ Although Pompey had *magna equitum Romanorum manus* at Pharsalus (Frontinus *Strat.* 4.32). The question of the composition of the armies of the civil wars will be covered in the next chapter.

²⁸¹ On the demilitarization of the Roman nobility in the Late Republic, see Blösel 2011, 55-80.

opportunities were the growing importance of advocacy and rhetoric. The latter was becoming especially important to practice the former.²⁸² Lawyers had the advantage to be able to stay in Rome with the electorate and remain visible.²⁸³ It is likely that military prowess in the cavalry, though still valued, was less of a source of social prestige than before. As the Roman legions came to incorporate poorer men with less individual voting power, many members of the elite may have looked at law courts as better venues for gaining social and political capital.²⁸⁴

The other growing source of prestige for members of the elite was the monetization of the Roman economy and the growing importance of wealth in politics.²⁸⁵ Although the traditional source of income for Roman aristocrats had always been landed property, in the course of the second century other activities became increasingly important for the income of members of the senatorial and equestrian classes.²⁸⁶ The great wars of the first

²⁸² Morstein-Marx 2004; McCall 2002, 118-122; David 1992; 2011, 157-171, esp. 160: “La conjonction de tous ces phénomènes donna à l'éloquence judiciaire une position de premier plan dans la vie politique de la République des deux derniers siècles avant notre ère: d'une part, l'activité judiciaire en se développant devenait un des lieux majeurs de la compétition et de l'affrontement entre membres de l'aristocratie et de l'autre, elle s'ouvrait, techniquement et juridiquement, à des individus qui ne lui appartenaient pas et qui pouvaient imaginer jouer un rôle politique. La compétence rhétorique tenait une place décisive dans ce processus.”

²⁸³ Cic. *Mur.* 19–21 ; McCall 2002, 121.

²⁸⁴ McCall 2002, 118-123, esp. 121: “For the aspiring or established aristocrat, advocacy as a means to acquire a reputation also had some distinct advantages over cavalry service. The advocate ingratiated himself with clients by protecting their interests in court, and these services could potentially translate into future votes. Furthermore, the advocate was continually present at Rome and, therefore, was highly visible to the electorate, whereas the cavalryman's deeds occurred far away and had to be reported to Rome to have any effect. The proximity of the advocate to the voters could be a potential advantage in electoral contests. Finally, the perceived value of distinguishing oneself in battle may have diminished as the social composition of the Roman legions changed.”

²⁸⁵ Cf. Beck, Jehne, Serrati, and Dupla (forthcoming). *Money and Power in the Roman Republic*.

²⁸⁶ Rosenstein 2008, 1-26. See the remarks of Blösel 2011, 72-73: “Der Redner [i.e. Cicero *Planc.* 65 f.] hat nach eigener Aussage aus der Erkenntnis, daß die Römer nur schlechte Ohren, aber sehr gute Augen hätten, für sich die Konsequenz gezogen, die Hauptstadt möglichst nicht mehr für längere Zeiten zu verlassen, sondern förmlich auf dem Forum zu wohnen und für jedermann zugänglich zu sein. Um so größer war Ciceros Klage, als er dann doch im Jahr 51 eine Statthalterschaft im fernen Kilikien antreten mußte. Hinter der Apologie, daß wahrer Ruhm ohnehin nur in Rom selbst zu gewinnen sei, verbirgt sich doch ein sicherlich repräsentatives Zeugnis für die kaum zu überschätzende Unlust der meisten *nobiles*, für mehr als ein paar Wochen all der hauptstädtischen Annehmlichkeiten, Gespräche und Neuigkeiten zu entbehren.

half of the second century massively enriched the Roman elite.²⁸⁷ Success in politics depended to a great extent on wealth to provide games, bribes, and favours to clients.²⁸⁸ The *equites* in particular benefited from public contracts in the newly conquered provinces. Tax farming in the province of Asia was immensely lucrative both to the state and to individuals. Money-lending, trade, and commercial agriculture were also flourishing, and the possible gains in social prestige these activities could bring must have enticed many *equites* to view cavalry service as less financially attractive and less prestigious than it had been before. More generally, the influx of wealth to Rome created increased competition in the display of wealth.²⁸⁹

This shift happened gradually: it was not the result of a wide-ranging reform done by Marius who transformed the cavalry into a professional force.²⁹⁰ It was the result of the aforementioned social, economic, and political developments. The Social War also played an important role in this trend, as will be seen in the next chapter.

2.4 The Disappearance of *velites*

Besides citizen cavalry, Marius has also been seen as responsible for the disappearance of the light infantry, the *velites*, because they are supposedly also last mentioned in Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum*.²⁹¹ M.J.W. Bell claimed that “velites had wholly disappeared by the

Wichtiger war jedoch noch, daß bei einer Abwesenheit von einem oder gar mehr Jahren Einbußen im finanziellen wie im politischen Bereich drohten.”

²⁸⁷ Cf. Scheidel 2007a, 322-346.

²⁸⁸ Rosillo López 2010a; 2010b 981-999; Walter 145-166; Yakobson 1999, 25-26.

²⁸⁹ See next chapter for the military implications of the display of wealth.

²⁹⁰ Sage 2008, 206-208; McCall 2002, 13-25. The Polybian requirement of ten campaigns to be able to hold any political office attested in Polybius 6.19.2 is likely to have progressively been abandoned.

²⁹¹ Sallust, *Jug.* 46. 7: “Accordingly, he himself led the van with the light-armed cohorts as well as a picked

time of Caesar.”²⁹² According to him, Lucullus was the commander responsible for their disappearance.²⁹³ Trying to find one general 'responsible' for disbanding the *uelites* is an approach that seems too simplistic. As with citizen cavalry, it is unlikely that *uelites* suddenly disappeared. *Uelites* are last mentioned in the army of Sulla in Greece for the year 86.²⁹⁴ There is no doubt that light infantry continued to be used afterwards, as they are often mentioned after Marius, and not always with the mention that they are foreign *auxilia*.²⁹⁵ It is likely that their disappearance was a consequence of the Social War, as will be argued in the next chapter.

2.5 Reasons for Using *Proletarii*

Now to deal with the most important question concerning what Marius did: why did he call upon the *proletarii*? Earlier research has argued that this was due to a demographic decline, but this has been shown to be wrong, as the population of Italy was still growing in the late second century BCE, as discussed in the previous chapter.

According to Sallust, the Senate thought that conscription would be unpopular for this campaign and gladly voted a *supplementum* so that Marius would either lose the means to

body of slingers and archers, his lieutenant Gaius Marius with the cavalry had charge of the rear, while on both flanks he had apportioned the cavalry of the auxiliaries to the tribunes of the legions and the prefects of the cohorts. With these the light-armed troops (*uelites*) were mingled” (*itaque ipse cum expeditis cohortibus, item funditorum et sagittariorum delecta manu apud primos erat, in postremo C. Marius legatus cum equitibus curabat, in utrumque latus auxilios equites tribunis legionum et praefectis cohortium dispertuerat, ut cum iis permixti uelites*).; Keppie 1984, 66; Harmand 1967, 39-41.

²⁹² Bell 1965, 19, see also Sage 2008, 204-206.

²⁹³ Bell 1965, 20.

²⁹⁴ Frontin. Str. 2.3.17.

²⁹⁵ Ps.-Caesar BH 22.7; BH 26.1

reinforce the army in Africa, or lose the sympathy of the people.²⁹⁶ Sallust mentions that there was a lack of 'better men' (*inopia bonorum*) and that Marius enrolled *proletarii* since he owed his fame to members from the lower classes of society.²⁹⁷ What does *boni* mean here? Should it automatically refer to men officially meeting the property qualifications as opposed to *proletarii*? It is possible that this is correct answer, but even if this were the case, by the time of the late second century, the difference between the threshold for *assiduus* and *proletarius* status was probably almost meaningless.²⁹⁸ There must not, therefore, have been an important difference between the poorest volunteers from the fifth class and *proletarii*. As discussed above, the conditions of military service had already for some decades been attractive mostly for poor citizens, not necessarily *proletarii*. However the dearth of lucrative wars seemed to have been over, as this time citizens came forward with great hopes of plunder.²⁹⁹ If people thought that the war was going to be lucrative, then why do we only hear of poor citizens and not also of moderately well-off citizens? If there were plenty of volunteers, why would Marius choose to recruit *proletarii*?

²⁹⁶ Sallust *Iug.* 84.

²⁹⁷ Sallust *Iug.* 86.

²⁹⁸ Brunt 1971, 406; Schochat 1980, 63; Cadiou 2009a, 26-7.

²⁹⁹ Sallust *Iug.* 84.4: "But such a desire of following Marius had seized almost everyone, that the hopes of the Senate were disappointed. Each man imagined himself enriched by booty or returning home a victor, along with other visions of the same kind." (*Sed ea res frustra sperata; tanta lubido cum Mario eundi plerosque inuaserat. Sese quisque praeda locupletem fore, uictorem domum rediturum, ali huiusmodi animis trahebant*). Frontinus *Str.* 4.2.2; Val. Max. 2.3.2; "The handling practice of weapons was taught to soldiers from P. Rutilius, consul, colleague of Cn. Mallius, onwards: Without following the example of any general before himself, through gladiatorial instructors from the school of M. Aurelius Scaurus he generalised in the legions a more subtle method of avoiding hits and of hitting." (*Armorum tractandorum meditatio a P. Rutilio consule Cn. Malli collega militibus est tradita: is enim nullius ante se imperatoris exemplum secutus ex ludo C. Aureli Scauri doctoribus gladiatorum arcessitis vitandi atque inferendi ictus subtiliorem rationem legionibus ingenerauit.*) Matthew 2010; 2006, 1-17 argues that the use of gladiatorial instructors to train the soldiers supports the idea that Marius' army was entirely composed of *proletarii*. This theory rests on assumptions and the sources do not say that this was institutionalized in any way. This additional training was likely felt necessary to overcome opponents who had inflicted very heavy casualties to the Romans on several occasions.

François Cadiou recently proposed that the entire episode of the Marian *dilectus* of 107 has been heavily tainted by the moralizing tone of Sallust. He argued that Sallust wanted to portray the moral degeneration of the Senate by portraying it as having lost its warlike spirit, wrongly believing that the people thought alike. Sallust's goal was thus not to portray a lack of *assidui*, but the moral decline of the good citizens, the *boni*. Considering the importance of the topic of moral decline in Sallust's monograph, Cadiou's argument indeed seems convincing.³⁰⁰ *Proletarii* or not, the most important thing that Marius did was sending a message to the citizens through his gifts of land.

Since he did provide land afterwards, it is indeed probable that Marius made it a promise to his troops as an extraordinary reward for their service.³⁰¹ This would explain why citizens were eager to enlist for a war that had been dragging on for years, especially in a period in which lucrative wars had been rare. This does not mean that land distribution is to be connected specifically with the inclusion of *proletarii* in the army. Many tenants and near-landless men must also have welcomed that opportunity, especially at a time where it was difficult to find land in Italy because of the limited availability of agricultural land caused by the expanding citizen body.³⁰²

³⁰⁰ Cadiou 2009a, 26: "On pense parfois qu'en levant le supplementum dont il avait besoin sans tenir compte de la limite censitaire, Marius contournait habilement le piège que lui tendait un sénat parfaitement au fait de l'impopularité de la conscription à cette époque. Mais Salluste n'écrit pas exactement cela : il affirme que le sénat « croyait » que la levée était impopulaire, ce que démentit du reste l'enthousiasme des très nombreux volontaires qui étaient désireux de partir avec le nouveau consul. Pour ma part, j'interprète cette présentation des faits par Salluste comme une péjoration délibérée de l'état d'esprit de la nobilitas dont le sénat était le bastion. L'historien popularis veut dire que cette élite était si dévoyée qu'elle était même incapable de comprendre que le reste du populus n'avait pas, comme elle, perdu jusqu'au goût des armes. Je me demande si ce n'est pas en ce sens qu'il faut alors comprendre l'expression *inopia bonorum* employée plus loin par Salluste. Il ne s'agirait pas d'une référence à une insuffisance numérique des *adsidui*, comme on l'affirme généralement, mais plutôt à un déclin moral des bons citoyens (les *boni*), un thème constant dans l'oeuvre de Salluste."

³⁰¹ Cagniard 2007, 81-82; Broadhead 2007.

³⁰² De Ligt 2012, 173; Holleran 2011, 155-180; Marzano 2009, 31-46; Broadhead 2007, 159; Rosenstein 2006, 241.

Moreover, the news of the disastrous defeats suffered against the Cimbri and Teutones in Noricum and Gaul must have encouraged some citizens to volunteer for another theatre of operations where they would not have to fight such fearsome opponents. These defeats probably encouraged the Senate to give Marius *carte blanche* for the levy of his *supplementum* in order to get rid of Jugurtha as quickly as possible. This would free some manpower and make it available to deal against the northern threat that was becoming a real concern for the Senate.³⁰³

In order to pass a law providing land for his African veterans Marius allied himself in 103 with the tribune of the plebs L. Apuleius Saturninus. The law did pass, but things did not go smoothly. Saturninus' colleague Baebius opposed the law, and the people threw stones at him. Further violence happened when Saturninus had the chair of the praetor Glaucia broken by his accomplices to punish him for holding court the same day that he was presiding over an assembly.³⁰⁴ Marius and Saturninus tried to accomplish a similar political victory in 100 for the veterans of the campaigns against the Cimbri and the Teutones. However, Marius eventually chose to stop aligning himself with Saturninus as his tendency to openly use violence for political ends could have been detrimental to Marius' reputation. A *senatus-consultum* having given him the responsibility to preserve

³⁰³ Van Ooteghem 1964, 147: “En effet la situation était devenue alarmante aux frontières du Nord, où les Romains essuyaient défaite sur défaite. Il est donc vraisemblable qu’une des raisons qui poussèrent le Sénat à laisser carte blanche à Marius pour son *dilectus* était le désir d’en finir au plus tôt avec Jugurtha afin de pouvoir parer à toute éventualité du côté du Nord.”

³⁰⁴ Ps. Aur. Victor *De Vir. Ill.* 73: “Lucius Apuleius Saturninus, a seditious tribune, in order to gain the favour of Marius’ soldiers, made a law stating that each veteran would receive 100 iugera in Africa. His colleague Baebius opposed to it but was driven away by the people throwing stones at him. The day he was addressing the people, since the praetor Glaucia had diverted some of the attendants by holding court, Saturninus broke his chair to appear more popular.” (*Lucius Apuleius Saturninus, tribunus plebis seditiosus, ut gratiam Marianorum militum pararet, legem tulit, ut ueteranis centena agri iugera in Africa diuiderentur; intercedentem Baebium collegam facta per populum lapidatione submouit. Glaucia praetori, quod is eo die, quo ipse contionem habebat, ius dicendo partem populi auocasset, sellam concidit, ut magis popularis uideretur*); 158-9; *CIL* 8.26181, 15450, 15454-5, 26270, 26275, 26281; Cicero *Pro Balb.* 48.

the Republic, Marius captured Saturninus and he was later killed by stoning.³⁰⁵

The African veterans of Marius received no less than a hundred *iugera* of land, an amount much greater than what was normally given to colonists of the early second century.³⁰⁶ Under these circumstances, military service was, in this case, surely seen as attractive even in the face of substantial danger if one's general was to do almost everything in his power to secure a sizable grant of land for his men after their term. Providing land to soldiers created a new dimension to the understanding of military service. Previously, rewards largely depended not only on how generous a general might be, but also on how lucrative a campaign was, for even the most generous of generals could not give gold that he did not possess. Grants of land now offered the prospect of a reward *regardless* of what was captured while campaigning. It also created the idea that the army could create social mobility as a way of acquiring landed property at a time when there was much pressure on the land in Italy. Whereas previously legionary service was the privilege of a somewhat 'middling class', now Marius sowed in people's mind the thought that military service could actually be a way to become a member of such a 'middling class', or at least a class of citizens possessing some property.

There was however, nothing 'official' that was done. No law forced future generals to give land to their soldiers upon discharge, and land grants did not become a standard feature on discharge in the Republic. The fact that the initiative did not come from the Senate seems to imply that the majority did not feel that a reform of the conditions of service was necessary at that time.

³⁰⁵ Ps. Aur. Victor *De Vir. Ill.* 73; Brunt 1988, 278-280.

³⁰⁶ See De Ligt 2012, 153-154; Erdkamp 2011b, 116; Roselaar 2009, 609-623. According to Livy 31.49.5, Scipio Africanus' veterans received two *iugera* for each year served. Regarding the number of years they served, this means between two and twenty *iugera*. Cf. Schneider 1977a, 58 ff.

Concerning the cost of the equipment, it is possible that Marius also promised the recruits of his *supplementum* that he would exceptionally arm them at his own expense. If he needed to borrow any cash to do so, he was certainly able to easily reimburse his creditors after the campaign. Indeed, Marius brought back to Italy 3,000 pounds of gold (three million *denarii*), more than 5,700 pounds of silver (410,400 *denarii*), and 287,000 *denarii* in cash.³⁰⁷ This probably allowed him to give a donative to his troops as well. One cannot really speak of public funding for weapons from this time onwards since nothing made it an official and regular measure. The simplification of certain items of the panoply such as helmets is not enough to support the idea of a centralized state-funded mass production of weapons.³⁰⁸ Plutarch remarks that generals before Marius “distributed (νεμόντων) weapons only to citizens whose property assessment made them worthy to receive them”.³⁰⁹ In my view, this is simply a way of stressing the traditional link between property, citizenship, and military service. It might even mean that some generals before Marius did freely distribute equipment to the poorest recruits meeting the property requirements, and thought that *proletarii* were unfit to receive such a privilege. However this was not standard practice as Gaius Gracchus’ law concerning deductions on pay suggests. Again, the Roman state did not reform the way the army was funded, rather it chose once more to have recourse to expedients since such practice had proved to be sufficient in the past.

³⁰⁷ Plutarch *Marius*, 12.6.

³⁰⁸ Sievers 1997, 275: “Von einer strengen Normierung, die als Folge der Heeresreform des Marius denkbar gewesen wäre, kann man hingegen nicht sprechen.” The mention of an *officinam armorum* in Cicero *Piso* 87 does not imply any implication of the state.

³⁰⁹ Plutarch *Marius* 9.1. See note 25 above. Aigner 1976, 4: “Diese Stelle läßt erkennen, daß dem nach dem Zensuschema zum Kriegsdienst Verpflichteten beim Einrücken eine Waffenrüstung zur Verfügung gestellt wurde, ähnlich wie dies auch in den modernen Armeen praktiziert wird.” Aigner’s argument better fits the time of the Social and Civil Wars, when circumstances forced the recruitment of larger armies and consequently increased demand for equipment.

To sum up, contrary to what is often assumed, Marius did not create a professional standing army with fixed conditions of service for which volunteers would sign up for a predetermined period of time. Rather, the Romans progressively adopted professional attitudes towards warfare after the long wars they had fought, notably against Carthage, various Gallic tribes, and the Hellenistic monarchies.³¹⁰ The establishment of a professional standing army would only be a transformation that occurred during the Augustan period. Marius also did not abolish recruitment based on property requirements, he merely enrolled a few thousand troops to complete another army already levied in the ordinary manner by his predecessor Metellus.³¹¹

2.6 The Roman Army after Marius

Despite the fact that the evidence concerning a ‘Marian reform’ is quite scanty it is still common to find this label in modern scholarship. One notorious example of this is that of Sulla. He is most often remembered for being the first Roman general to have used his army against the state but it is frequently thought that he was able to do so because of the ‘Marian reform’. Indeed, scholarly discussions of his *coup* are often tainted by the idea that Marius transformed the army and that Sulla’s troops represented a professional ‘post Marian army’ filled with impoverished revolutionaries.³¹²

After the end of Social War, both Marius and Sulla desired to receive the command for

³¹⁰ Cadiou 2002, 76-90.

³¹¹ Potter 2010, 312: “[...] Marius’ army was essentially that of Metellus with the *supplementum* including men below the usual census qualifications that Marius had brought with him.”

³¹² On Sulla, see Vervaeke 2014, 215; Flower 2010, 118 ff; Santangelo 2007; Keaveney 2005b; Christ 2002. See Appian *BC* 1. 77 for his previous military career. See also below, note 254.

the war against Mithridates, king of Pontus, and their rivalry for this command led to violence in Rome.³¹³ After Sulla learned that Marius' ally, the tribune of the plebs Sulpicius, finally managed to pass a law giving the command of the war to Marius, he summoned his troops to a meeting. There he complained about Marius' and Sulpicius' behaviour and exhorted his men to be ready to obey his orders.³¹⁴ The soldiers were eager for the war as they thought that the campaign against the wealthy Pontic kingdom would be highly profitable and they "feared that Marius would enrol other soldiers in their place".³¹⁵ This feeling had perhaps been communicated to them by Sulla, who probably thought like Marius, which is to say that the campaign was seen as an easy going and lucrative business against a rich opponent.³¹⁶

It has been argued that Sulla's troops should be seen as a professional army only made up of volunteers, mostly *proletarii*.³¹⁷ However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the Roman army was not drastically changed by Marius' *dilectus* of 107. Maybe there were indeed some *proletarii* in Sulla's army but that alone does not explain why his army chose to follow him and march on Rome. Sulla's soldiers probably comprised many men who had fought in the Social War and a certain number of newly enfranchised Roman citizens. In other words, men who had some fighting experience but saw soldiering as a trade. Even if a portion of the army was made up of soldiers who had fought throughout

³¹³ On the outbreak of the war: Appian *Mith.* 11 ff.

³¹⁴ Appian *BC* 1.55-58; Plutarch *Sulla*, 8-9.

³¹⁵ Appian *BC* 1.57: "They were eager for the war against Mithridates because it promised much plunder, and they feared that Marius would enlist other soldiers instead of themselves." (καὶ τόνδε τῆς ἐπὶ τὸν Μιθριδάτην στρατείας ὀρεγόμενον τε ὡς ἐπικερδοῦς καὶ νομίζοντα Μάριον ἐς αὐτὴν ἐτέρους καταλέξειν ἂνθ' ἑαυτῶν).

³¹⁶ Appian *BC* 1.55: "Marius, for his part, thought that this would be an easy and lucrative war and desired the command of it." (Μάριος δὲ τὸν πόλεμον εὐχερῇ τε καὶ πολύχρυσον ἡγούμενος εἶναι καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν τῆς στρατηγίας ὑπηγάγετό).

³¹⁷ Christ 2002, 61: "Das neue Berufsheer verlor somit die timokratischen - auf Vermögensklassen beruhenden - Grundlagen der alten republikanischen Armeen."

the Social War, this did not make it a professional force in any way different from previous Roman armies. Furthermore, the fundamental and traditional link between property and private weaponry, albeit partially overlooked by Marius for some of his volunteers, is unlikely to have been completely disregarded following Rome's precarious financial situation after the Social War. There was a shortage of funds that limited the amount of money that could be allocated to Sulla's expedition, and some public treasures, supposedly set apart by Numa Pompilius and reserved for sacrifices to the gods, had to be sold in order to gather enough funds.³¹⁸ Considering this desperate financial situation, it is likely that most of Sulla's men provided their own weaponry following the system described by Polybius, or still had it from previous service.³¹⁹ It is thus probable that Sulla's original army enlisted for the Mithridatic War was mostly recruited among property owners, notably veterans from the Social War.

To argue that Sulla's army would have been a force of "ne'er-do-wells" armed by the state and disconnected from civilian society would be to commit an anachronism.³²⁰ Professionalism alone cannot explain why Sulla's men agreed to follow him to Rome. If Sulla only had the lowest echelons of society at his disposal, nothing would have prevented them from simply seizing the city of Rome for themselves. The fact that they did not indicates that they had no desire of simply overthrowing the state. Some of Sulla's men feared that they might not be sent to a lucrative campaign and be deprived of much plunder. It is reasonable to think that many genuinely thought that their general was the victim of illegal political practices, i.e. the use of armed violence. After all, their

³¹⁸ Appian *Mithr.* 22; Keaveney 2005b, 71.

³¹⁹ If we take the somewhat arbitrary but reasonable figure of 50 *denarii* proposed in chapter one for a panoply, arming a legion of c. 5,000 men would cost around 250,000 *denarii*.

³²⁰ The word is used by Keppie, 1984, 49.

general was a legal consul while Marius was only a *privatus*.

Rather than point to the social composition of the army, the explanation for what happened should be sought in connection with the unusually bitter struggle over the command for the Mithridatic War. Competition among the Roman nobility for commands and offices had always been fierce but nobody ever openly threatened the consuls with death and used armed mobs as Sulpicius did.³²¹ Since Sulla had effectively been expelled from Rome by force, he had little recourse but to use force in turn. He used his army both to settle the score with his political opponents and to conduct some reforms he deemed essential for the Republic. In this sense, the social composition and supposed professionalization of Sulla's army cannot explain its political involvement. It was the changing habits in politics observable since the Gracchi that is responsible for that.³²² After all it was Sulla who made the move and had to convince his men to march on Rome, not the opposite.

Plutarch laments the rapacity of Sulla and his men, claiming that Aemilius Paullus once commanded men “used to a frugal way of life and used to obey their commanders in silence.”³²³ However it has been pointed out in Chapter One that Paullus' men did precisely express their discontent with the donative they had received, even if it had been better than any other before. Now, Plutarch continues, generals were obliged to act as

³²¹ Appian *BC* 1.56; Plutarch *Sulla*, 8. See Bleckmann 2002 for aristocratic competition during the First Punic War; also Hölkeskamp 1993, 12-39.

³²² Flower 2010, 135-153.

³²³ Plutarch *Sulla*, 12.7: “But these were lawful commanders of men who were self-restrained and had learned to serve their leaders without a murmur, and they were themselves kingly in spirit and simple in their personal expenses, and indulged in moderate and specified public expenditures, deeming it more disgraceful to flatter their soldiers than to fear their enemies.” (ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι μὲν ἀνδρῶν τε σωφρόνων καὶ μεμαθηκότων σιωπῇ τοῖς ἄρχουσι παρέχειν τὰς χεῖρας ἡγούμενοι κατὰ νόμον, αὐτοὶ τε ταῖς ψυχαῖς βασιλικοὶ καὶ ταῖς δαπάναις εὐτελεῖς ὄντες, μετρίοις ἐχρῶντο καὶ τεταγμένοις ἀναλώμασι, τὸ κολακεύειν τοὺς στρατιώτας αἴσχιον ἡγούμενοι τοῦ δεδιέναι τοὺς πολεμίους).

demagogues since they all needed their armies to fight each other.³²⁴ There is no need to emphasize the idealization of the past in that passage. If similar political violence and civil war had erupted at the time of Paullus, he would probably have had no other choice than to offer donatives or other rewards to ensure the loyalty of his men and corrupt the troops of his opponents. Whether or not most of Sulla's men possessed farms seems to be of little importance to explain what happened.

To reward his troops, Sulla gave land and property confiscated from the Italians to the men of the 23 legions that had fought for him. He distributed land in part for reasons of security so that he would have garrisons throughout Italy.³²⁵ Marius also distributed land to his soldiers but again, the gift of land does not prove that Sulla's army was entirely composed of *proletarii*. It is worth recalling that land was also distributed to veterans of the Second Punic Wars and it is generally agreed that most were property holders.³²⁶

Another famous example often used to reflect the idea of the 'post-Marian army' is the campaign of Lucullus against Mithridates.³²⁷ One of the main sources for this is

³²⁴ Plutarch *Sulla*, 12.8: "The generals of this later time, however, who won their primacy by force, not merit, and who needed their armies for service against one another, rather than against the public enemy, were compelled to merge the general in the demagogue, and then, by purchasing the services of their soldiers with lavish sums to be spent on luxurious living, they unwittingly made their whole country a thing for sale, and themselves slaves of the basest men for the sake of ruling over the better." (οἱ δὲ τότε στρατηγοὶ βίᾳ τὸ πρωτεύον, οὐκ ἀρετῇ, κτώμενοι, καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπ' ἀλλήλους δεόμενοι τῶν ὅπλων ἢ τούς πολεμίους, ἡναγκάζοντο δημαγωγεῖν ἐν τῷ στρατηγεῖν, εἴθ' ὧν εἰς τὰς ἡδυπαθείας τοῖς στρατευομένοις ἀνήλiskon ὠνούμενοι τούς πόνους αὐτῶν, ἔλαθον ὧνιον ὅλην τὴν πατρίδα ποιήσαντες ἑαυτοὺς τε δούλους τῶν κακίστων ἐπὶ τῷ τῶν βελτιόνων ἄρχειν).

³²⁵ Appian *BC*, 1.96; 100. Appian later claims (104) that there were 120,000 men in Italy who had recently served under him and had received great rewards from him, a number which is rather coherent with the claim of 23 legions of c. 4,200 - 5,000 men. Brunt 1971, 300-12, gives the estimate of 80,000. On Sullan colonization, see most recently Santangelo 2007, 147-157.

³²⁶ Livy 31.4.1-3; 31.49.5; Erdkamp 2001b, 112: "Proletarians did participate in war, but in a much less significant capacity than the assidui who formed the core of the Roman army. Hence, the soldiers serving in the legions, not the proletarians, were the most natural beneficiaries of the distribution of *ager publicus*."; Broadhead 2007, 155.

³²⁷ After having first served as a military tribune during the Social War Lucullus distinguished himself as one of Sulla's quaestors during the First Mithridatic War. Among other duties, he was entrusted to collect

Plutarch's *Life of Lucullus*. It is characterized by frequent oppositions between the general's nobility of mind and his troops' lack of morality.³²⁸ Such contrast is fuelled by *topoi* depicting the soldiers as little more than vultures bent on plunder. Such a style evidently served the purpose of highlighting the strength of Lucullus' character, the hero of Plutarch's narrative. It should not be surprising that Roman soldiers were attracted by the prospect of plundering; their behaviour had not changed because of Marius.³²⁹

The great wealth of the Pontic kingdom again evidently made the campaign seem attractive for *assidui*. The massacre of large numbers of Italians and Romans by Mithridates in 88 probably fuelled many recruits with a desire to avenge their fellow citizens and protect their homeland. As is in the case of Marius this does not necessarily mean that most of Lucullus' men were landless volunteers. They heard that the campaign would likely be lucrative.

As both Sulla's and Marius' men had received land, some recruits may have had hopes of a similar grant. Small farmers would also have welcomed the opportunity to acquire additional land, not only *proletarii*. The desire to receive land is expressed in a speech by the young P. Clodius Pulcher who was serving in Lucullus' army: he deplored that "Pompey's soldiers, having been made citizens, were living quietly with their wives and children on fertile land or in cities."³³⁰ Even if the prosperity of Pompey's soldiers may

the money of the fine imposed by Sulla to the cities of the province of Asia: Plutarch *Lucullus* 2, 4 and 6; Tröster 2008, 101-2.

³²⁸ On Lucullus, see Keaveney 1992 and Tröster, 2008.

³²⁹ See the discussion in Tröster 2008, 113 ff; Pelling 2002, 221: "Indeed, he [Plutarch] is not really interested in the soldiers at all."; "He has little notion that the veterans might have *genuine* loyalties, worth discussing and analysing." See chapter one, section 2.3 for the discussion on plunder.

³³⁰ Plutarch *Lucullus*, 34.4: "while the soldiers of Pompey, citizens now, were snugly ensconced with wives and children in the possession of fertile lands and prosperous cities, - not for having driven Mithridates and Tigranes into uninhabitable deserts, nor for having demolished the royal palaces of Asia, but for having fought with wretched exiles in Spain and runaway slaves in Italy." (οἱ δὲ Πομπηίου

be exaggerated, it seems that the idea of a grant of land on discharge had become a more common expectation. If recruits still had to buy their weapons themselves, and they most likely did, they may have seen military service as a somewhat safe investment since gifts of land and/or better rewards were now becoming more frequent since the time of Marius.

Appian provides a valuable clue concerning the social composition of Lucullus' army. Shortly before the Roman general was relieved of his command, the governor of the province of Asia sent heralds claiming that the Romans were accusing him of prolonging the war more than what was necessary, that they were demobilizing the men under his command, and would confiscate the property of those who would not obey. The only ones who stayed were a small number of very poor citizens who did not fear this penalty.³³¹ This suggests that Lucullus' army was mostly composed of propertied citizens and not landless volunteers.³³²

Plutarch gives a rather different view of Lucullus as being both a virtuous general and a

στρατιῶται δῆμος ὄντες ἤδη που μετὰ γυναικῶν καὶ τέκνων κάθηνται γῆν εὐδαίμονα καὶ πόλεις ἔχοντες, οὐ Μιθριδάτην καὶ Τιγράνην εἰς τὰς ἀοικήτους ἐμβαλόντες ἐρημίας, οὐδὲ τῆς Ἀσίας τὰ βασίλεια καταρρίψαντες, ἀλλὰ φυγᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐν Ἰβηρίᾳ καὶ δραπεταῖς ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ πολεμήσαντες).

³³¹ Appian *Mithr.* 90: "When Lucullus was already encamped near Mithridates, the proconsul of Asia sent heralds to proclaim that Rome had accused Lucullus of unnecessarily prolonging the war, and had ordered that the soldiers under him be dismissed and that the property of those who did not obey this order should be confiscated. When this information was received the army disbanded at once, except a few who remained with Lucullus because they were very poor and did not fear the penalty." (ὁ τῆς Ἀσίας στρατηγὸς περιπέμπων ἐκήρυξε Ῥωμαίους ἐπικαλεῖν Λευκόλλῳ πέρα τοῦ δέοντος πολεμοῦντι, καὶ τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτῷ τῆς στρατείας ἀφιέναι, καὶ τῶν οὐ πειθομένων τὰ ὄντα δημεύσειν. ὧν ἐξαγγελθέντων ὁ στρατὸς αὐτίκα διελύετο, χωρὶς ὀλίγων. ὅσοι πάνυ πένητες ὄντες καὶ τὴν ζημίαν οὐ δεδιότες τῷ Λευκόλλῳ παρέμενον). Tröster 2008, 125-6.

³³² In addition to the troops Lucullus levied and brought with him, he also took command of two legions which had previously served under C. Flavius Fimbria. This man had served in the province of Asia as legate under suffect consul L. Valerius Flaccus. Fimbria ended up murdering Flaccus after several disputes between the two men and he took command of his troops. These became famous for their lack of discipline, having a record of unruly behaviour ever since Fimbria's revolt cf. Plutarch *Lucullus* 8.5; Appian *Mithr.* 72. On Fimbria see Appian *Mithr.* 51 ff.

very avaricious man.³³³ As noted above, Plutarch often portrayed him in conflict with his soldiers over questions of plunder and of leadership. For example, as Lucullus was ravaging the countryside instead of seeking a decisive engagement with the Pontic king, his soldiers complained bitterly that since he was winning over cities through diplomacy instead of assault he was depriving them of valuable plunder. Lucullus replied that his strategy was precisely to let Mithridates rebuild his forces so that he would offer battle instead of seeking refuge in the mountains of the Caucasus. Moreover, if he would seek the aid of his son in-law Tigranes of Armenia, both could be dealt with in a single encounter.³³⁴ The account itself is not implausible, as Roman generals would often try to win the trust of their men by explaining their strategy to them.³³⁵ The story may have been inserted to highlight the rapacity of the soldiers. Whether or not it happened, the anger of the troops would have been understandable since many probably showed up to the levy in the hope of sacking the wealthy cities of Asia Minor instead of roaming through deserted areas.

Another instance of the supposed cupidity of Roman soldiers is the escape of Mithridates after a defeat. As they were about to seize the Pontic king, Roman soldiers encountered a mule carrying gold, so they stopped to pillage it and quarrel about its load.³³⁶ The story is

³³³ Ballesteros Pastor 1999, 331-343 argues that these conflicting views reflect the political rivalries of the Late Republic. From chapter 39 onwards, Plutarch begins to describe Lucullus' *penchant* for luxury.

³³⁴ Plutarch *Lucullus* 14.2-8. Prior to this Lucullus had first moved against Mithridatic troops and won several victories over them, despite the fact that some of these were now armed in the Roman fashion Plutarch *Lucullus* 7.4: "he collected horses that were well trained rather than richly caparisoned, and a hundred and twenty thousand footmen drilled in the Roman phalanx formation." (ξίφη μὲν ἡλαύνετο Ῥωμαϊκά καὶ θυρεοὺς ἐμβριθεῖς ἐπήγνυτο καὶ γεγυμνασμένους μᾶλλον ἢ κεκοσμημένους ἤθροϊζεν ἵππους, πεζῶν δὲ μυριάδας δώδεκα κατεσκευασμένων εἰς φάλαγγα Ῥωμαϊκὴν). ; Appian *Mithr.* 87. 394: "He divided them into squadrons and cohorts as nearly as possible according to the Italian system, and handed them over to Pontic officers to be trained." (τοὺς δ' ἐς ἴλας τε καὶ σπεύρας ἀγχοτάτω τῆς Ἰταλικῆς συντάξεως καταλέγων Ποντικοῖς ἀνδράσι γυμνάζειν παρεδίδου).

³³⁵ Tröster 2008, 121; De Blois 2007, 164-179.

³³⁶ Plutarch *Lucullus* 17.7; Appian *Mithr.* 82; Sallust *Hist.* 4.9-11M provides an account that may have

found in Plutarch and is certainly a *topos* about the limitless rapacity of the common soldier.³³⁷ It seems quite difficult to believe that soldiers pursuing Mithridates would have stopped at the slightest glimpse of precious metal. The mere fact of capturing the king would perhaps have secured them a reward more lucrative than what they could have plundered from the mule in the first place. It is thus likely that the entire story is an invention whose purpose was to denigrate both kingship and the common soldiery. The same can be said of the next few lines where soldiers tasked with capturing the king's secretary realized upon finding him that he was carrying 500 gold coins in his belt and killed him instead of bringing him to Lucullus. These dubious accounts can hardly be used to support the idea of a post-Marian *proletarii* army.

The soldiers are again depicted as thieves and brutes in the episode of the sack of Amisus. When the city was finally about to fall after a long and difficult siege, the Pontic commander in charge of defending the place set it on fire before fleeing.³³⁸ Lucullus tried to save the city and exhorted his men to put out the flames. However the soldiers were too eager for plunder and he was forced to let them have their way. While they scattered to pillage, carrying torches to light their path, they actually set fire to several of the houses, destroying many of them. Even if the story is plausible it does not contrast with earlier accounts of sacking, on the contrary, Roman soldiers were no more perfectly disciplined robots before Marius than they were an undisciplined rabble after him.³³⁹

inspired Plutarch; Phlegon 12.3.

³³⁷ Keaveney 1992, 90-91 reports the story but does not offer any judgement concerning its accuracy. Mundubeltz 2000, 202 believes the story. Tröster 2008, 116-7, points to the ambiguous nature of the evidence.

³³⁸ Plutarch *Lucullus* 19.1-3; Appian *Mithr.* 78.346 claims that the inhabitants threw bears and even swarms of bees into the Roman mining tunnels (!).

³³⁹ See chapter one, section 2.3.

The picture given by Plutarch of soldiers pillaging everything they saw is hard to reconcile with a later passage where he wrote that some of Lucullus' men supposedly threw their empty coin purses at him, "telling him to return fight Tigranes and Mithridates alone since he alone was benefitting from the spoils."³⁴⁰ The anecdote is difficult to believe in light of the donatives that Lucullus gave to his men even given the fact that these complaints were voiced by the soldiers of the Fimbrian legions who had quite a lengthy record of insubordination. Indeed from the spoils (ἀπὸ τῶν λαφύρων) of the Armenian capital Tigranocerta Lucullus handed the unprecedented sum of 800 *drachmai* to each of his men.³⁴¹ This represented the equivalent of nearly six years of pay, in addition to what the soldiers could loot during the sack of the city, a considerable reward indeed.³⁴² Moreover, in the context of his triumph Lucullus gave 950 *drachmai* to his soldiers.³⁴³ It is not certain whether these 950 *drachmai* should be understood as including the 800 received after the sack of Tigranocerta; however, considering how rich the regions where Lucullus campaigned were, it might well have meant another 950 *drachmai* added to the earlier donative of 800. Taken together these sums represent some 14 and a half years' worth of base *stipendium*, a reward dwarfing any previous attested donative.³⁴⁴ Would these numbers have been excessively inflated to match the complaints

³⁴⁰ Plutarch *Lucullus*, 35.4: "But they rejected his advances, and threw their empty purses before him, bidding him to fight the enemy alone, since he alone knew how to get rich from them." (οἱ δ' ἀπετρίβοντο τὰς δεξιώσεις καὶ κενὰ προσερρίπτουν βαλάντια, καὶ μόνον μάχεσθαι τοῖς πολέμοις ἐκέλευον, ἀφ' ὧν μόνος ἠπίστατο πλουτεῖν).

³⁴¹ Plutarch *Lucullus*, 29.3-4: "The royal treasures in the city he took into his own charge, but the city itself he turned over to his soldiers for plunder, and it contained eight thousand talents in money, together with the usual valuables. Besides this, he gave to each man eight hundred drachmas from the general spoils." (καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐν τῇ πόλει θησαυροὺς παρελάμβανε, τὴν δὲ πόλιν διαρπάσαι παρέδωκε τοῖς στρατιώταις, μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων χρημάτων ὀκτακισχίλια τάλαντα νομίσματος ἔχουσιν. χωρὶς δὲ τούτων ὀκτακοσίας δραχμὰς κατ' ἄνδρα διένειμεν ἀπὸ τῶν λαφύρων).

³⁴² Yet more plunder and prisoners are taken later in Plutarch *Lucullus*, 31.8.

³⁴³ Plutarch *Lucullus*, 37.6.

³⁴⁴ See table 3 in chapter one. Tröster 2008, 118; Scheidel 2007a, 330. This is the first attested donative whose value is known since 132.

of Lucullus' troops and drive home Plutarch's point regarding the cupidity of the soldiers? This does not seem to be the case as much larger sums are later frequently attested in other sources. In fact Lucullus' *donatium* was actually smaller than several later occurrences.³⁴⁵

Despite such rewards Jacques Harmand argued that Lucullus “*agit comme s’il n’avait pas compris la situation psychologique nouvelle créée par les réalités de l’armée post marienne*”.³⁴⁶ However it has been showed that such a view exaggerates the importance of the so-called ‘Marian reform’. Furthermore it neglects the important rewards that Lucullus gave to his men.³⁴⁷ Quarrels between generals and soldiers about plunder were not something new, they had happened frequently before. The disputes we find in Plutarch (if they are to be believed at all) should not give us the impression that we are dealing with a completely different beast created by Marius.

Conclusions

In light of the previous discussion, the concept of a ‘Marian reform’ seems misleading and should be abandoned. The whole idea is based on an excessive interpretation of a few lines in Plutarch and Sallust. Furthermore it overlooks the *longue durée* trend. If Marius really created a standing professional army, then why do we regularly hear of very large

³⁴⁵ See chapter five, section 4.1.

³⁴⁶ Harmand 1967, 283. See the very harsh criticism of Harmand's book by Rambaud 1967, 112-146, esp. 115: “Une réforme – ne fût-ce que de l’armée – jaillit rarement toute prête de la cervelle d’un homme, s’appelât-il Marius. Elle a eu des prodromes, quelquefois des précédents; au moins y a-t-il dans la situation qui précède un besoin, une nécessité et c’est cette exigence, qui pour ainsi dire, l’appelle et la crée. Pour l’auteur, la réforme marienne semble aller de soi; la *nobilitas* n’était qu’un ramassis d’incapables, occupés seulement à s’enrichir aux dépens des prolétaires en général, des peuples vaincus et des légionnaires en particuliers.”

³⁴⁷ Tröster 2008, 118-120.

recruitment operations to levy entire armies throughout the first century if a professional army already existed? Of course many soldiers stayed under arms for years and effectively became professionals, but this was not because Marius reformed the army. It was because some citizens were unable to find other work and therefore had to resort to such a life. A professional army had conditions of service fit for such a force and a precise length of service, not only a meagre indemnity that could sometimes be compensated by plunder if an offensive war was waged. When Augustus did reform the army and turned it into a standing army we hear precisely of such measures regarding conditions and length of service.³⁴⁸ Even if it seems convenient to attribute to Marius many of the changes that are later attested in the Roman army, it is not right to do so uniquely on the basis that he supposedly acted contrary to the *mos maiorum*.

Marius did not create the cohort, as such formations are attested long before him and nothing in the sources hints at such an innovation. This unit was most likely developed by successive generals and then integrated into a formal tactical unit of the legion. Finally, it is unlikely that *equites Romani* and *velites* were suddenly disbanded by Marius. Such a reform was not tactically nor socially needed. Marius apparently used an expedient by giving land to his veterans but he did not institutionalize anything. One cannot thus speak of a military reform in the sense of army structure. Marius did, however, fight bitter political battles to secure grants of land for his men, but this was hardly something new, as generals before Marius had secured grants of land to distribute amongst their men. Marius' grant of land was thus largely following the traditional Roman mentality, built on the old connection between land and military service. He did not implement any

³⁴⁸ See Chapter Six for Augustus' reform.

measures to create a professional army entirely funded by the state.

What is noticeable about Marius is the leeway given to him by the Senate for his levy. Sure enough, there were only limited numbers of *proletarii* enrolled, but this nonetheless shows that the Senate was willing to let generals improvise regarding funding and recruitment as long as it allowed them to be successful on campaign. Generals of the first century would build on the latitude given to them to such an extent that they effectively ended up supplanting the Senate for military funding and recruitment. Indeed, it can be said that the generations of generals after Marius did far more to change the pattern of recruitment and funding of the army. This is largely due to the fact that these generals were operating after the Social War, an event that drastically changed the way Rome organized the funding of its armies.

Chapter Four

The Social War (90-88)

The Social War was a turning point in army financing. Before this conflict the Roman state could count on the participation of large numbers of Italians in its armies without having to pay a single denarius for their *stipendium*. The enfranchisement of the *socii* changed this drastically by multiplying the cost of army expenditure. This paved the way for the private financing of armies that would ultimately contribute to the Republic's demise.

1- *Socii* as Cheap Manpower for Rome

It is well known that Rome's Italian allies played an important role in its military success. The recourse to Italian soldiers was more advantageous to Rome than a mere increase in manpower for its own armies. Indeed the *socii* were also a very cheap source of manpower because Rome was not responsible for paying them. Moreover the Italian soldiers were also financing their own gear in a similar manner to Roman citizens.³⁴⁹ *Socii* did receive free grain from Rome, but they themselves had to provide pay for the contingents they were providing to the Romans, a sum much more important than what

³⁴⁹ Nicolet 1978a, 5 : "Comme l'armée romaine elle-même, l'organisation des contingents alliés reposait sur une base censitaire. Nous en avons une preuve formelle, pour les colonies latines, dans la différence marquée entre les *pedites* et les *equites* lors des déductions de colonies [...]". Cf. Livy 40.34.2; 37.50.8; 35.9.7; 35.40.5.

was only required for grain.³⁵⁰

Although the sources only provide glimpses of the Roman-to-ally ratio, it seems nonetheless that the reliance upon the *socii* increased in the latter second century. Appian reports that the allies provided twice as many men as the Romans during the Hannibalic war although this should probably be seen as exceptional, given the unprecedented magnitude of this conflict.³⁵¹ Polybius, writing in the middle of the second century, records that the *socii* provided as many infantrymen as the Romans did. They also fielded three times more cavalry than Rome.³⁵² According to Velleius Paterculus, the Italians provided twice as many men as the number fielded by Rome before the Social War.³⁵³ Furthermore, Appian reports that Italians (Ἰταλιῶται) were worn down by taxes and military service at the time of the Gracchi. This supports the picture of an increasing reliance on the Italians for military duties in the late second century.³⁵⁴ Whereas Roman

³⁵⁰ Nicolet 1978a, 1 : “[...] il est clair, en effet, que les Alliés Italiens payaient, pour l’entretien des contingents qu’ils devaient fournir aux Romains à chaque dilectus, des sommes au moins équivalentes à celles que versaient les citoyens romains sous le nom de tributum. Peut-être même, en fin de compte, l’entretien de ces contingents revenait-il plus cher, aux trésors des cités latines ou alliées, que celui des soldats légionnaires au Trésor romain.” ; Rosenstein 2011b, 140-3.

³⁵¹ Appian *Han.* 8: “When the Romans in the city learned of this third defeat on the Po (for they had in fact been beaten by the Boii before Hannibal arrived), they levied a new army of their own citizens which, with those already on the Po, amounted to thirteen legions, and they called for double that number from the allies.” (οἱ δ’ ἐν ἅστει Ῥωμαῖοι πυθόμενοι, καὶ τρίτον ἤδη πταίοντες περὶ Πάδον ἤτηντο γὰρ δὴ καὶ ὑπὸ Βοιωτῶν πρὸ Ἀννιβίου, στρατιάν τε παρ’ αὐτῶν ἄλλην κατέλεγον, σὺν τοῖς οὔσι περὶ τὸν Πάδον ὡς εἶναι τρισκαίδεκα τέλη, καὶ τοῖς συμμάχοις ἐτέραν διπλασίονα ταύτης ἐπήγγελλον. ἤδη δὲ αὐτοῖς τὸ τέλος εἶχε πεζοὺς πεντακισχιλίους καὶ ἵππεις τριακοσίους).

³⁵² Polybius 6.26.7: “The total number of allied infantry is usually equal to that of the Romans, while the cavalry are three times as many.” (τὸ δὲ πλῆθος γίνεται τὸ πᾶν τῶν συμμάχων, τὸ μὲν τῶν πεζῶν ἴσους τοῖς Ῥωμαῖοις στρατοπέδοις ὡς τὸ πολὺ, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἵππεων τριπλάσιον).

³⁵³ Vell. Pat. 2.15.2: “every year and in every war they were furnishing a double number of men, both of cavalry and of infantry, and yet were not admitted to the rights of citizens in the state which, through their efforts, had reached so high a position that it could look down upon men of the same race and blood as foreigners and aliens.” (*per omnis annos atque omnia bella duplici numero se militum equitumque fungi neque in eius ciuitatis ius recipere, quae per eos in id ipsum peruenisset fastigium, per quod homines eiusdem et gentis et sanguinis ut externos alienosque fastidire posset*).

³⁵⁴ Appian *BC* 1.7: “The Italian people dwindled in numbers and strength, being oppressed by penury, taxes, and military service.” (τοὺς δ’ Ἰταλιώτας ὀλιγότης καὶ δυσανδρία κατελάμβανε, τρυχομένους πενία τε καὶ ἐσφοραῖς καὶ στρατείαις). Even if Ἰταλιώτας refers to the Italian allies (cf. Nicolet 1978, 8; Roselaar 2010, 246), Roman citizens probably did not have it any better. Nicolet 1977, 444.

citizens had been dispensed from paying the *tributum* since 167, the Italians were not granted the same privilege. They were still paying a war tax for the contingents which they had to provide to the Romans.³⁵⁵

The Italian scholar Virgilio Ilari has calculated that the ratio of Italians serving in the Roman army in the second century increased by up to five percent, nearly reaching sixty percent of the entire Roman army on some occasions.³⁵⁶ This supports the validity of Velleius Paterculus' ratio as Ilari's is close to that of the Roman historian.³⁵⁷ The ratio of Romans to allies thus seems to have evolved over the latter half of the second century. A greater reliance on the *socii* was a way for Rome to spare a great deal of money since two thirds of the army were not paid by the *aerarium*. This great economical advantage is perhaps one of the reasons why the Senate was disinclined to give citizenship to the Italians as such a measure would more than double military expenditure.³⁵⁸ Indeed, if all soldiers fielded by Rome were Roman citizens, then their pay would have to be financed by the *aerarium*. Considering this huge financial advantage, it is not surprising that the Senate bitterly resisted any proposal to grant citizenship to the allies. Victory over Macedon had allowed Rome to dispense its citizens from paying the *tributum* but this

³⁵⁵ Nicolet 1978a, 1 : “[...] il est clair, en effet, que les Alliés Italiens payaient, pour l'entretien des contingents qu'ils devaient fournir aux Romains à chaque dilectus, des sommes au moins équivalentes à celles que versaient les citoyens romains sous le nom de tributum. Peut-être même, en fin de compte, l'entretien de ces contingents revenait-il plus cher, aux trésors des cités latines ou alliées, que celui des soldats légionnaires au Trésor romain.”

³⁵⁶ Ilari, 1976, 171 : “La percentuale degli alleati è più alta nel periodo 200-168 a.C. (59,7%), toccando la punta massima nei primi venti anni (61,3%): la minima (54,1) è raggiunta durante la seconda guerra punica.”; Ilari makes the following calculations on p. 172 :

Percentuali Romani-Alleati:

Anni 340-219: 44, 5 - 55, 5

Anni 218-201: 45, 9 - 54, 1

Anni 200-168: 40, 3 - 59, 7

Anni 167-91: 42, 65 - 57, 35

³⁵⁷ See also: Kendall 2012, 105-122; Mouritsen 2008, 481; Erdkamp 2006b, 44, 2008, 137-152; Baronowski 1984, 248-252, 1993, 181-202; Shochat 1980, 93-4; Brunt 1962, 74; 1971, 677-86; Afzelius 1944.

³⁵⁸ Kendall 2012, 116-7; Keller 2007, 43-58.

was only possible because its armies were to a great extent composed of Italians whose pay was not the Senate's problem. However, the outbreak of the Social War completely changed this dynamic.

2- The Outbreak of the Social War: Economic and Military Emergency

2.1 War without the *Socii*

The Social War forced Rome to inject more money in the army as the greater part of its military was composed of Roman citizens who had to be paid by the public treasury.³⁵⁹ Indeed, the state had to mobilize a very high proportion of its manpower to face the danger that threatened it. Not only did Rome lose its former allies, but they had actually become fierce enemies. The Romans and the Italians were indeed waging a war against one another for the first time in centuries. They had previously fought together in battle for decades, uniting their manpower to defeat Rome's enemies.³⁶⁰ Neither of the two parties had gone to war on their own for a very long time and, therefore, both sides had no experience of preparing for a conflict with only one's own resources. In such circumstances Rome was obliged to enroll an exceptionally high proportion of its citizens. Appian reports that the Romans mobilized an army of some 100,000 men from their citizenry.³⁶¹ Since the census figure for 115/4, the last before the war, indicates 394,336 Roman citizens, the rate of mobilization must have been excessively high, surpassing even the efforts sustained during the Second Punic War, if these numbers are

³⁵⁹ For the causes of the war and the Italians' motives, see Mouritsen 1998; Brunt 1965; 90-109.

³⁶⁰ Flower 2010, 111.

³⁶¹ Appian *BC* 1.39. See also Rich 1983, 328; Brunt 1971, 441-5.

to be believed.³⁶² Fortunately for Rome, there were some Italians who remained loyal to it. Velleius Paterculus thus tells the story of a certain Minatius Magius who raised a private army among the Hirpini to fight on the Roman side.³⁶³ However this kind of help was an exception and it was certainly not enough to make up for the defection of most of Rome's Italian allies.

This time Rome was fighting to keep its position as the dominant polity in the Mediterranean world. It was a matter of life and death, as the Romans were fighting to defend their homeland against what was most likely the biggest threat to their safety since the Hannibalic invasion in the late third century. 100,000 men represent at least 20 legions, so it is likely that it is actually at this time that *proletarii* were needed in the army, and not only them, but any citizen able to wield a sword. Indeed the fact that even freedmen had to be mobilized to guard coastal areas supports the idea that most citizens available had already been enrolled and that the Senate was desperate to find more men.³⁶⁴ Under the circumstances it is plausible that the lack of manpower forced Rome to mobilize even *equites* as heavy infantrymen, the backbone of the legions.³⁶⁵ These men were more familiar with the Roman legionary system than foreigners would have been,

³⁶² Livy *Periochae* 63; Scheidel 2008, 17-70; Rosenstein 2002, 163-191. Even allowing for substantial under registration this still represents a very important percentage of the citizen population.

³⁶³ Vell. Pat. 2.16.1-3.

³⁶⁴ Appian *BC* 1.49: "The Senate, fearing lest they should be surrounded by war, and unable to protect themselves, garrisoned the sea-coast from Cumae to the city with freedmen, who were then for the first time enrolled in the army on account of the scarcity of soldiers." (δείσασα οὖν ἡ βουλή, μὴ ἐν κύκλῳ γενόμενος αὐτοῖς ὁ πόλεμος ἀφύλακτος ᾗ, τὴν μὲν θάλασσαν ἐφοῦρει τὴν ἀπὸ Κύμης ἐπὶ τὸ ἄστυ δι' ἀπελευθέρων, τότε πρῶτον ἐς στρατείαν δι' ἀπορίαν ἀνδρῶν καταλεγέντων). Similar measures were taken during the Second Punic War when slaves were enlisted to compensate the terrible losses suffered at the battles of Trebia, Lake Trasimene, and Cannae, cf. Livy 22.2. It is certain that these hastily levied soldiers did not serve according to their property rating as slaves could not possess property: Livy 22.61.2 : "not wishing either to exhaust the treasury, on which they had already made a heavy draft to purchase slaves and arm them for service." (*quia nec aerarium exhauriri, magna iam summa erogata in servos ad militiam emendos armandosque*). As a consequence it can be assumed that the freedmen levied for the Social War were also armed at public expense in a similar manner.

³⁶⁵ McCall 2001, 105-106.

and they certainly had the means to finance their gear. Citizens who would earlier have been recruited as *uelites* were probably also pressed into service as heavy infantry for the same reason. The Social War thus created more uniformity among Roman citizens serving in the army than a supposed ‘Marian reform’.

2.2 The Recourse to Auxiliaries as an Expedient

Levyng citizens *en masse* as heavy infantry created a dearth of light infantry and exacerbated the shortage of cavalry created by the defection of the allies. Indeed according to Polybius the *socii* normally provided three times more cavalry than Rome did.³⁶⁶ The recourse to auxiliaries in this context must have been a necessity to fill tactical gaps. It was more expedient to enroll all citizens available as heavy infantry and to recruit skilled horsemen and light infantry from abroad as auxiliaries, and having them fight in a way they were accustomed to rather than train them from scratch to serve as legionaries. The need to hire auxiliaries to compensate for the lost manpower in cavalry and light infantry probably further contributed to the disappearance of the Roman citizen cavalry discussed in the previous chapter.

The Romans had a tradition of using foreign troops provided by allies, and this became much more important from the Social War onwards.³⁶⁷ More than mere reinforcements,

³⁶⁶ Polybius 6.26.7: “The total number of allied infantry is usually equal to that of the Romans, while the cavalry are three times as many.” (τὸ δὲ πλῆθος γίνεται τὸ πᾶν τῶν συμμάχων, τὸ μὲν τῶν πεζῶν ἴσους τοῖς Ῥωμαϊκοῖς στρατοπέδοις ὥς τὸ πολὺ, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἱππέων τριπλάσιον).

³⁶⁷ Livy 38.21.2: “A moderate distance in front of the standards marched the skirmishers and Cretan archers and slingers furnished by Attalus and the Trallianians and Thracians.” (*Ante signa modico intervallo velites eunt et ab Attalo Cretenses sagittarii et funditores et Tralli et Thraeces*); 38.29.4 : “ A hundred slingers were recruited from Aegium and Patrae and Dymae.” (*Centum funditores ab Aegio et Patris et Dymis acciti*).

the recourse to auxiliaries was also a financial expedient as the cost of the war was certainly huge for Rome. It is reasonable to suppose that some, if not most, of the auxiliary detachments were probably paid by the allied community that provided them, just as the Italian allies were themselves paying for the troops that they were providing to the Roman army before the Social War.³⁶⁸ The use of allied auxiliaries would have reduced the strain on the *aerarium* in a period in which it was under heavy pressure to finance a war of a great magnitude.

Auxiliaries from several backgrounds are attested to in the sources throughout the conflict. At the beginning of the war, a large force exclusively composed of Gallic and Numidian auxiliaries is mentioned when the consul S. Iulius Caesar rushed to help the town of Acerrae.³⁶⁹ Auxiliaries are again described fighting on both sides when Appian tells how a large Gaul in the Italian army challenged Sulla's men to a duel. The man that stepped forward to accept his challenge was a Mauritanian of small stature who nevertheless got the upper hand in the fight.³⁷⁰ The veracity of the story should be questioned, since it is a literary *topos* among Roman authors to have a huge, arrogant Gaul stepping forward before the battle-line to challenge Roman soldiers to a one-on-one fight, only to be defeated by a smaller but courageous and skilled opponent.³⁷¹ However even if the actual duel did not take place, Appian thought it normal to mention that Gauls and Mauritanians were an ordinary sight in both armies. Indeed, since the Jugurthine war Mauretania was an ally (σύμμαχος) of Rome and this may have included the obligation to

³⁶⁸ Nicolet 1978a, 1-11.

³⁶⁹ Appian *BC* 1.42.

³⁷⁰ Appian *BC* 1.50.

³⁷¹ For instance: Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 9.13.6-19.

provide troops for Rome.³⁷²

Appian seems to indicate that the Italians were just as short on manpower as the Romans were. Indeed it seems that the Italians were recruiting every man they could find, not only auxiliaries but also slaves and even Roman prisoners.³⁷³ Like the Romans, the *socii* armies were normally recruited according to their census rating.³⁷⁴ If they were reduced to recruit captured Romans, it is reasonable to suppose they had already levied their poor as well.

2.3 Financial Consequences of the War

The most important consequence of the Social War was that Rome lost access to cheap Italian manpower to field its armies. Before the war, up to sixty percent of the soldiers fighting for Rome were not paid by the Roman state. Now that all Italians had been granted Roman citizenship, every consular army was to be composed of legions staffed by Roman citizens who were all paid from the *aerarium*. More citizens technically meant more people to pay the *tributum*, the main way of financing the *stipendium*. However it is unlikely that the Senate would have risked reintroducing the *tributum* right after granting citizenship to the Italians. Depriving them from a privilege enjoyed by Roman citizens for almost 80 years directly after the end of the war would have enraged the Italians. Such a policy would have been unthinkable. In fact the next time that the sources mention

³⁷² Plutarch *Marius* 32.4.

³⁷³ Appian *BC* 1.42.

³⁷⁴ Nicolet 1978a, 5 : “Comme l'armée romaine elle-même, l'organisation des contingents alliés reposait sur une base censitaire. Nous en avons une preuve formelle, pour les colonies latines, dans la différence marquée entre les *pedites* et les *equites* lors des déductions de colonies [...]”. Cf. Livy 40.34.2; 37.50.8; 35.9.7; 35.40.5.

the *tributum* is for the year 43.³⁷⁵ The enfranchisement of the Italians thus meant that Rome's former allies were no longer obliged to finance their own troops as they surely also benefited from the exemption of *tributum* granted to Romans citizens in 167.³⁷⁶ Moreover the practice of asking defeated opponents to pay a war indemnity to cover the cost of military expenses was also impossible in this case. It would have been preposterous to fine newly enfranchised citizens as if they were still humbled enemies. So the recourse to both *tributum* and war indemnities was a highly unpractical solution to defray the cost of the Social War.

From now on the Roman state now had to provide pay for all of the Italian contingents of the armies it would subsequently mobilize. This means that the cost of financing an army of any given size had now more than doubled. For example, before the Social War an army of four legions supported by about twice this number of allied soldiers would have cost 2,505,600 *denarii* a year in *stipendium* (4,200 infantrymen per legion x 120 + 240 x 60 centurions + 360 x 300 cavalrymen x 4 = 2,505,600 *denarii* according to the numbers given by Polybius 6.20.8; 39.12).³⁷⁷ After the Social War the same number of men, now all citizens paid by Rome, would cost over five million *denarii* in *stipendium*. However, according to P. A. Brunt's calculations there were never less than 15 legions under arms

³⁷⁵ Santangelo 2007, 226; Cicero *ad Fam.* 12.30: "the money in the public treasury is incredibly scarce – money that is being called in from every quarter to fulfil the promise made to the troops who have served the state so well; and I do not think that can be done without imposing a property-tax." (*incredibiles pecuniae publicae, quae conquiritur undique, ut optime meritis militibus promissa soluantur; quod quidem fieri sine tribute posse non arbitror*).; Philip. 2.37: "Where are the seven hundred millions entered in the account-books at the Temple of Ops? Moneys, ill-omened, it is true, but which, if not returned to their owners, might yet set us free from property taxes." (*Ubi est septiens miliens, quod est in tabulis, quae sunt ad Opis? Funestae illius quidem pecuniae, sed tamen quae nos, si iis, quorum erat, non redderetur, a tributis posset vindicare*).

³⁷⁶ Nicolet 1978a, 1-11.

³⁷⁷ Although a legion's strength could be brought up to 5,000 in times of emergency: Polybius 6.20.8. The numbers provided by Pliny *NH* 33.17 concerning what was in the *aerarium* seem quite low compared to the cost proposed here for a mere four legions (six million sesterces in 157 and thirty million in 49.) Pliny adds an important amount of gold and silver ingots that could presumably be exchanged or melted and coined.

each year (almost ten million *denarii* in *stipendium*), and often many more, for the period between 79 and 50.³⁷⁸ Moreover, according to Plutarch, state income before Pompey's expedition in the east in the early 60s was of 50 million *denarii*, at a time when Rome did not experience civil war and was in control of most of its provinces.³⁷⁹ Furthermore, immediately after the Social War, Rome was involved in a war with Mithridates that deprived it from the revenue of its most profitable provinces for several years. Therefore Plutarch's figure of state income for the early 60s was most likely much smaller for the period following the Social War. It is important to stress that the expenses listed here comprise nothing more than the *stipendium*, which is the only data that we can calculate with a certain degree of accuracy. Expenses for fleets, transport, and supplies would probably have at least doubled the military expenditures already listed here. In other words, the military was now monopolizing an even greater part of the Roman budget.

The increasing appearances of auxiliaries in the sources from the Social War onwards are not the result of a reform implemented by Marius but rather a reflection of the increased burden of financing the army after the loss of the *socii*. Many of these auxiliaries were probably providing troops and paying for them according to a *foedus* with Rome, much like the Italian *socii* were doing before the Social War. The recourse to these auxiliaries was thus a way of making up for the loss of the *socii*. This was an expedient not followed by the implementation of new funding structures for the army.

³⁷⁸ Brunt 1971, 449; Keppie 1984, 48.

³⁷⁹ Plutarch *Pompey* 45.4.

Conclusions

In summary, the Social War greatly increased the cost of financing the army. Before the conflict, the Roman state had the opportunity to save a lot of money by relying on its Italian allies to fight for its interests. The *socii* had formerly provided the Senate with a very large reservoir of manpower that required little financing from Rome. The revolt and then the enfranchisement of the Italians changed all this. However no financing reform of the military is attested to match the increased cost of the army. This is unlikely to have taken place, as implementing new taxes would have been nothing short of provoking the newly enfranchised Italians immediately after the Social War. Rather, the state had to turn once more to recourses such as the use of foreign auxiliaries.

Concerning the use of *proletarii* in the army, given the magnitude of the conflict it is reasonable to argue that the Social War had a much greater effect on recruitment procedure than Marius.³⁸⁰ If Rome had to resort to levy freedmen, then it is probable that this implies that *proletarii* had already been mobilized and given whatever equipment the state could spare for them. It was because Rome's allies had entered into open revolt and had thus deprived the Roman army from roughly half of its manpower that these two categories of people had to be mobilized. The war was not fought for plunder or with expansionistic aims, it was a conflict in which Rome's hegemony, or even its very survival, was at stake. It was thus fought by a very large portion of the citizen body, not only a select core of professional volunteers.

Throughout the second century, the Roman state used several *ad hoc* measures to finance

³⁸⁰ A point already made by Rich 1983, 328.

its army rather than to develop a sustainable way of providing funds for the army. Among those *ad hoc* measures were an increasing reliance on the *socii*, the imposition of war indemnities to defeated enemies rich enough to pay these, and the use of foreign allied troops from the Social War onwards. After this war, Rome found itself in a situation in which the traditional way of collecting funds for the pay of the soldiers, the *tributum*, was politically no longer possible after the enfranchisement of the Italians. It is unlikely that Rome could gather as many allies as there were Italians in the army to make up for the fact that the latter were now paid by Rome. War indemnities were also out of the question, as this would have infuriated the Italians and made them look like humiliated enemies. A new system, or rather new expedients, would be necessary.

Chapter Five

The Late Republic: The Return of Private Warfare?³⁸¹

The objective of this chapter is to look at the ways in which army financing was transformed during the final decades of the Republic. As discussed in the previous chapter, the enfranchisement of the Italians after the Social War caused a very important increase in military expenditure. As a result, the senate became willing to allow generals to pay for their armies on their own. However, the result of this trend meant a gradual loss of control by the senate over the financing of its armed forces. Indeed, the leeway given to generals allowed armies to effectively become private entities paid for by prominent *imperatores*. Finally, the lavish rewards given to soldiers during this period

³⁸¹ The decades leading to the end of the Republic have attracted considerable attention among scholars. The question of what caused it to end continues to spark discussion. Much ink has been spilled to try to address this questions and the debate is far from settled. Niccolò Machiavelli argued in his *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* (1517) that “Se si considera bene il procedere della Republica romana, si vedrà due cose essere state cagione della risoluzione di quella Republica: l’una furon le contenzioni che nacquono dalla legge agraria; l’altra, la prolungazione degli imperii: le quali cose se fussono state conosciute bene da principio, e fattovi i debiti rimedi, sarebbe stato il vivere libero più lungo, e per avventura più quieto (3.24).” Montesquieu stated in his *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (1734) that “Si César et Pompée avaient pensé comme Caton, d’autres auraient pensé comme firent César et Pompée, et la République, destinée à périr, aurait été entraînée au précipice par une autre main (ch. 11).” Meier 1966 also thought that the Republic was beyond salvation. The elite’s inability to transform the state created a “Krise ohne Alternative” as he famously put it. Brunt 1971b, 1-92, points to the loss of cohesion among the ruling elite to explain the collapse of the Republic. Gruen 1974 provocatively argued that the Republic was still functioning as it did over the previous decades and that the system was not structurally flawed. See also: Schneider 1977b; Brunt 1988; Eder 1996, 439-461; Bleicken 1999; Jehne 2006a, 3-28; 2009, 141-160; Rosenstein and Morstein-Marx 2006, 625-637; Walter 2009, 27-51, esp. 31-32: “Einerseits sind wir durch einer Fülle von Informationen versehen, die nach gängigen Sprachgebrauch in die Kategorien Ereignis und Intention, Zufall und Kontingenz fallen. Das gilt für das Schlachtenglück bei Pharsalos ebenso wie für die Ermordung Caesars oder den nicht eben erwartbaren Entschluß eines neunzehnjährigen C. Octavius, als C. Iulius Caesar nach Rom zu gehen – um nur drei markante Punkte zu nennen, deren weitreichende Auswirkungen unbestreitbar sind. Andererseits sind die meisten modernen Historiker davon überzeugt, daß der historische Prozeß in seiner Gesamtheit und vor allem das Ergebnis alternativlos, also notwendig waren.”; Dahlheim 1992, 156: “Letztlich ist die Republik an dem Mißverständnis der Mittel und Aufgabe gescheitert.”

turned soldiering into a lucrative trade rather than a civic duty entrusted to propertied Roman citizens. It will be seen that the traditional link between citizenship, socio-economic status and military service was severed during the period of the civil wars. Moreover it will be argued that the incapacity of the traditional funding mechanisms of the army to successfully adapt to the realities of a Mediterranean empire caused the Senate to lose control of its armed forces.

1- The Roman Nobility and Military Service after the Social War

In the Late Republic there was a clear trend towards a demilitarization of the Roman nobility. What used to be the highest form of glory for Roman senators, military success, gradually lost the appeal it formerly held.

Indeed, in the first century there was a growing tendency among praetors to remain in Rome rather than to accept a provincial governorship. Furthermore it seems that those praetors who did not go on to become provincial governors but remained in Rome had a better chance to be elected consuls.³⁸² Even consuls, the military office *par excellence* of the Republic, were increasingly reluctant to leave Rome for a province. Up to half of the 55 consuls of the years 80 to 53 did not become provincial governors.³⁸³

One of the most important reasons to explain this trend is that the eventual economic profits to be made in a province were not as lucrative and as steady as previously assumed by modern scholarship. The famous cases of governors such as Verres reaping

³⁸² Blösel 2011, 62-9 with tables.

³⁸³ Blösel 2011, 61; Flower 2010, 143.

in huge financial benefits were exceptional. Most governors did not show such ruthlessness when administering their provinces in order to avoid accusations *de repetundis*.³⁸⁴ Senators had plenty of other methods at their disposal to make money. They engaged in lucrative activities such as money lending, in which they did not risk being prosecuted as it could be the case for governors who extorted provincials.³⁸⁵

The traditional aristocratic emphasis on military achievements for obtaining high office and prestige was also on the decline. The opportunities to win great military glory were not numerous for the praetors as the number of provinces including important military forces was low.³⁸⁶ The writings of Cicero point to a strong distaste in provincial service. According to this orator, real glory was to be attained at Rome itself.³⁸⁷ This could be interpreted as Cicero trying to conceal his lack of talent for military activity, but the tendency for aristocrats to refrain from such endeavours is clear. Thirteen triumphs are attested between 81 and 69, but only five for the next two decades.³⁸⁸ Military success and the triumphs that went with them were increasingly monopolized by a few

³⁸⁴ Badian 1972, 157 and Shatzman 1975, 53-63, argue that the governors were regularly making important benefits, *contra* Blösel 2011, 70-72, who thinks that most governors were rarely as ruthless as Verres; Rosenstein 2001b, 152: "Apart from the spectacular opportunities for enrichment afforded by a few exceptional wars like that against Mithridates or Caesar's conquest of Gaul, most consuls and proconsuls interested in filling their purses therefore may well have preferred to govern a peaceful province rather than go on campaign. A peaceful province meant no army clamoring for a share of the plunder, no need to hand over any manubiae to the treasury on his return, and no jealous rivals eager to raise accusations of theft. But when a war did have to be waged, one may suspect that generals left the praeda and manubiae mainly to the soldiers and the aerarium and concentrated instead on the kinds of graft that fell within the scope of the laws against extortion rather than peculatus."; Gnoli, 1979; Schulz 2011, 93-111.

³⁸⁵ Rosenstein 2008a, 1-26; Blösel 2011, 72: "Diese Möglichkeiten dürften die Übernahme einer Statthalterschaft für den durchschnittlichen *nobilis*, der keine militärischen Ambitionen hegte, nicht attraktiver gemacht haben."

³⁸⁶ See Brunt 1971, 432-3, see also Dahlheim 1997,

³⁸⁷ Cicero *ad fam.* 2.12.2: "All foreign service (and this has been my conviction from the days of my youth) is obscurity and squalor for those whose active services at Rome can shine forth in splendour." (*omnis peregrinatio (quod ego ab adolescentia iudicaui) obscura et sordida est iis, quorum industria Romae potest illustris esse*); 1.7.9.

³⁸⁸ Blösel 2011, 73; Brennan 2000, 534.

generals.³⁸⁹

Why was that so? The most important factor was probably the Sullan proscriptions that resulted in the death of many of the old aristocracy. This means that unlike the previous centuries, many senators had little or no military experience. This greatly diminished the cohesion that had once existed among the aristocracy.³⁹⁰ As Harriet Flower puts it: “There was simply no one left who was playing the old republican game, among either the old or the new senators [...]”. It has been emphasized before that the financing of the army had always rested on a good deal of improvisation and *ad hoc* measures. In some ways, the small number of great generals of the last century of the Republic were acting like their predecessors: they were using expedients to fund their army. However the expedients they were using were on an entirely different scale, a scale that allowed them to fund their own armies and thus enjoy a freedom of action unequalled by earlier generals. Indeed, Polybius mentions that generals were kept in check by the Senate since it was responsible for sending pay and supplies.³⁹¹ However the leeway given to generals to use whatever expedients to finance their armies meant that the Senate gradually lost control over the financing of Roman armies.

³⁸⁹ Cornell 1993, 162.

³⁹⁰ Val. Max. 9.2.1, gives the figure of 4,700 killed during the proscriptions. Flower 2010, 138.

³⁹¹ Polybius 6.15.4-5 : “For it is obvious that the legions require constant supplies, and without the consent of the Senate, neither corn, clothing, nor pay can be provided; so that the commander’s plans come to nothing, if the Senate chooses to be deliberately negligent and obstructive.” (δῆλον γὰρ ὡς δεῖ μὲν ἐπιτέμπεσθαι τοῖς στρατοπέδοις ἀεὶ τὰς χορηγίας: ἄνευ δὲ τοῦ τῆς συγκλήτου βουλήματος οὔτε σῖτος οὔθ’ ἱματισμὸς οὔτ’ ὀψώνια δύναται χορηγεῖσθαι τοῖς στρατοπέδοις ὥστ’ ἀπράκτους γίνεσθαι τὰς ἐπιβολὰς τῶν ἡγουμένων, ἐθελοκακεῖν καὶ κωλυσιεργεῖν προθεμένης τῆς συγκλήτου).

2- The New Financial Reality of War after the Social War

As discussed in the previous chapter, after the enfranchisement of the Italians, Rome had to provide a much higher sum to pay its armies since all soldiers now required a *stipendium* paid for by the state. Despite this new development, the Senate continued to think as it did in the past. It still assumed that wars would provide enough to finance themselves, and also had recourse to expedients. However, as noted in the previous chapter, Rome's military commitment remained high in the period following the Social War and up to the outbreak of civil war.

2.1 Private Funding

A great deal of the extraordinary wealth available to the great generals of the late Republic, such as Caesar, was used to finance their expensive political careers. This included increasingly large displays of wealth such as games, handouts, electioneering, and banquets.³⁹² However, a new phenomenon was that these generals were now also spending their own money on armies which were supposed to represent the Senate and People of Rome.

The richest man in Rome in the first half of the first century, Marcus Licinius Crassus, is said to have declared that a man wanting to be pre-eminent in the state needed to have

³⁹² On elections see Yakobson 1999, on corruption among the elite see Rosillo López 2010 and Walter 2010, 145–166; Rosenstein 2006a, 374–5; Morley 2006, 307: “One of the key changes in the late Republic is a dramatic increase in the resources available to some members of the elite, especially successful generals, to fund their bids for status. This produced an equally dramatic increase in the levels of munificence, traditional forms [...] and innovations [...]”.

enough money to maintain an army out of his own pocket.³⁹³ There is an interesting passage in Plutarch's *Life of Crassus*, which may be related to this remark. During the war against Spartacus, one of Crassus' legates, Mummius, was badly defeated and some of his men threw their weapons away during the rout. When he rounded up his soldiers after the debacle, Crassus severely reprimanded Mummius for what happened. He gave new weapons to his men and had them swear that they would not throw them away.³⁹⁴ It has been proposed that weapons issued this way were actually loaned and had to be returned at the end of service.³⁹⁵ Such a procedure makes perfect sense, but is only attested later. It is however not unreasonable to argue that it could have existed at this time, given the state of emergency. In any case the passage does not seem to indicate that the new weapons were the soldiers' property.

This could mean that generals of that period were forced by circumstances to make up for the shortcomings of the *aerarium*, especially after the Social War, which had more than doubled the cost of the army. The remark of Crassus suggests that the public display of wealth for the nobility in the late Republic included the capacity to equip an army at

³⁹³ Cicero *off.* 1.25: "Marcus Crassus, for example, not long since declared that no amount of wealth was enough for the man who aspired to be the foremost citizen of the state, unless with the income from it he could maintain an army." (*ut nuper M. Crassus negabat ullam satis magnam pecuniam esse ei, qui in re publica princeps vellet esse, cuius fructibus exercitum alere non posset*).; *Paradoxa Stoicorum* 6.45: (*multi ex te audierunt cum diceres neminem esse diuitem nisi qui exercitum alere posset suis fructibus, quod populus Romanus tantis uectigalibus iam pridem uix potest*).; Pliny *NH* 33.134: "M. Crassus, a member of the same family, used to say that no man was rich, who could not maintain a legion upon his yearly income." (*M. Crassus negabat locupletem esse nisi qui reddito annuo legionem tueri posset*).; Plutarch *Crassus*, 2.9: "He was not right, however, in thinking, and in saying too, that no one was rich who could not support an army out of his substance." (τὸ μηδὲνα νομίζειν μηδὲ φάσκειν εἶναι πλούσιον, ὃς οὐ δύναται τρέφειν ἀπὸ τῆς οὐσίας στρατόπεδον.); Cassius Dio 40.27.3: "as to pity those who could not support an enrolled legion from their own means, regarding them as poor men." (ὥς πένητας οἰκτεῖρειν τοὺς μὴ δυναμένους στρατόπεδον ἐκ καταλόγου οἰκοθεν θρέψαι). See the discussion in Whitehead 1986, 71-74.

³⁹⁴ Plutarch *Crassus*, 10.2: "and when he armed his soldiers anew, made them give pledges that they would keep their arms." (τοὺς στρατιώτας ὀπλίζων αὐθις ἐγγυητὰς ἦται τῶν ὀπλων, ὅτι φυλάξουσιν).

³⁹⁵ Aigner 1976, 5, "Dieser Sachverhalt einer "Haftpflcht" scheint darauf hinzudeuten, daß die gesamte Equipierung nach geleistetem Kriegsdienst wieder an den Staat zurückgestellt mußte, um nach entsprechender Ausbesserung neuen Rekruten übergeben zu werden." Also: Nuber 1972, 483-507; Gilliam 1967, 233-243.

one's own expense.³⁹⁶

The example of Crassus is not isolated; there was a clear trend in the late Republic towards the use of private money to finance military activity. Pompey is a notorious example. His career started in a most unorthodox fashion, completely against the rules of the *cursus honorum*, and even more so considering the stricter rules later applied to the *cursus* by Sulla.³⁹⁷ When the latter returned to Italy in 83 after settling peace with Mithridates, Pompey joined his side and recruited three legions. The soldiers raised by this private levy were equipped at Pompey's own expense. Indeed before joining Sulla he acquired supplies, vehicles and all other necessary material (καὶ τὴν ἄλλην πᾶσαν παρασκευήν), which surely means, among other things, all the equipment of the soldiers.³⁹⁸ Plutarch reports that he levied troops "in good order" (κατὰ κόσμον); this could mean that he held a levy *ex censu* but this is unlikely to have been the case. A closer look at the text suggests that κατὰ κόσμον refers to the appointment of officers, not to the recruitment of soldiers.³⁹⁹ According to Plutarch, Pompey was motivated to raise this army by the desire not to be perceived like a beggar asking for help. He did not want to look like he was seeking refuge at Sulla's side, rather he wanted to appear as the one doing Sulla a favour. His behaviour can be connected with the remark of Crassus

³⁹⁶ Hollander 2007, 151-153., esp.151: "The more important role of private wealth in financing armies, games and other public events and institutions gave new opportunities to bankers, elite financiers and traders."

³⁹⁷ Appian *BC* 1.100; Caesar *BC* 1.32; Cicero *ad fam.* 10.25; Keaveney 2005b, 144 ff; Christ 2002, 124 ff; Seager 2002.

³⁹⁸ Plutarch *Pompey*, 6.6: "so that in a short time he has mustered three complete legions, and provided them with food, baggage-waggons, carriages, and other needful equipment." (οὕτω κατανείμας ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ τρία τάγματα τέλεια, καὶ τροφὴν πορίσας καὶ σκευαγωγὰ καὶ ἀμάξας καὶ τὴν ἄλλην πᾶσαν παρασκευήν).

³⁹⁹ Plutarch *Pompey*, 6.3: "Then he proceeded to levy soldiers, and after appointing centurions and commanders for them all in due form, made a circuit of the other cities, doing the same thing." (στρατιώτας κατέλεγε, καὶ λοχαγούς καὶ ταξιάρχους κατὰ κόσμον ἀποδείξας ἐκάστοις τὰς κύκλῳ πόλεις ἐπήει τὸ αὐτὸ ποιῶν).

mentioned above about the importance of being able to maintain an army out of one's own funds if one wished to be counted among the most prominent citizens. Pompey acted as he did precisely after he had seen the most prominent men hurrying to Sulla's camp.⁴⁰⁰ Furthermore, when Sulla in turn marched to help Pompey while he was facing numerous enemies, Pompey ordered his officers to equip (ἐξοπλίζειν) his army in the most exquisite manner to impress Sulla, hoping that the latter would confer him great honours.⁴⁰¹ Caesar also followed the same pattern. According to Suetonius he raised legions out of his own pocket for his campaign in Gaul and also defrayed the cost of their *stipendium* until 56.⁴⁰²

These men were not acting in an illegal fashion by funding their own forces. Indeed, nothing is said in the sources against the practice of privately levying an army. Unlike Marius' limited use of *proletarii* there is never the mention in any source that this was done contrary to law and custom. The use of private money to fund armies was not frowned upon by the Senate quite simply because it eased the burden of financing war. It should be understood as a continuation of the recourse to improvisation and provisional arrangements rather than the implementation of sustainable sources of funding for the army. The use of private money in the army was thus another expedient used to help cope with increasing military expenditures after the Social War.

⁴⁰⁰ Plutarch *Pompey*, 6.1: "And when he saw the best and most prominent citizens forsaking their homes and hastening from all quarters to the camp of Sulla as to a haven of refuge, he himself would not deign to go to him as fugitive, nor empty-handed, nor with requests for help, but only after conferring some favour first, in a way that would gain him honour, and with an armed force." (ὁρῶν δὲ τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους καὶ βελτίστους τῶν πολιτῶν ἀπολείποντας τὰ οἰκεία καὶ πανταχόθεν εἰς τὸ Σύλλα στρατόπεδον ὥσπερ εἰς λιμένα καταθέοντας, αὐτὸς οὐκ ἡξίωσεν ἀποδρᾶς οὐδὲ ἀσύμβολος οὐδὲ χρήζων βοηθείας, ἀλλὰ ὑπάρξας τινος χάριτος ἐνδόξως καὶ μετὰ δυνάμεως ἔλθειν πρὸς αὐτόν).

⁴⁰¹ Plutarch *Pompey*, 8.1: "But when Pompey learned that he was near, he ordered his officers to have the forces fully armed and in complete array, that they might present a very fine and brilliant appearance to the imperator; for he expected great honours from him and he received even greater." (γνοὺς δὲ ὁ Πομπήϊος ἐγγὺς ὄντα προσέταξε τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν ἐξοπλίζειν καὶ διακοσμεῖν τὴν δύναμιν, ὥς καλλίστη τῷ αὐτοκράτορι καὶ λαμπροτάτῃ φανεῖν μεγάλας γὰρ ἤλπιζε παρ' αὐτοῦ τιμάς, ἔτυχε δὲ μειζόνων).

⁴⁰² Suetonius *Caesar*, 24.2: "he added to the legions which he had received from the state others at his own cost" (*qua fiducia ad legiones, quas a re publica acceperat, alias priuato sumptu addidit*).

Moreover, being able to finance an army privately was surely seen as prestigious, as it was a way to display the extent of one's own resources. This trend seems to have become incorporated into the highly competitive political culture of the Roman Republic. The example of Pompey equipping troops at his own expense in order not to look like a man of little means points to the importance devoted to the display of wealth through military spending.

Such expressions of aristocratic competition could be part of the explanation as to why the property qualification was sometimes ignored for the levy. In these cases, generals would display their financial capacities by providing equipment (presumably without deductions on pay) to some or even to all of their men. From this perspective, it could be argued that this new trend of aristocratic behaviour partially contributed to the gradual demise of the traditional *dilectus ex classibus* in which each citizen served at his own expense according to his wealth.⁴⁰³ These private investments in military expenditure were made possible because the Roman elite had become richer than ever before over the course of the second century, thanks to the influx of wealth brought by a series of successful wars against the richest powers in the Mediterranean.⁴⁰⁴

Legal though it was, the practice of private funding actually changed the very essence of what military service was. What used to be, in modern terms, a sort of private-public partnership and civic obligation in which both the state and the individual citizen shared

⁴⁰³ During one encounter between Pompey's private *exercitus* and Sulla's enemies Pompey was personally attacked by Gallic horsemen fighting for his opponents but managed to defend himself and slew one of his adversaries (Plutarch *Pompey* 7.2). Yet another mention of foreign cavalry fighting in Italy confirms that Roman citizen cavalry was becoming a rare sight at that time.

⁴⁰⁴ The Third Macedonian War and the Third Punic War were particularly lucrative for the Roman state and its elites. This does not necessarily mean that armies became entirely private, though the dividing line is thin. See the discussion in Keaveney 2007, 30-35. Also Aigner 1974, 175: "Da nun nicht jedes Mitglied der Nobilität in der Lage ist, wie Crassus ein Heer aus den eigenen Einkünften zu erhalten oder wie Pompeius ein solches aus Klienten aufstellen zu können [...]" Also Flower 2010, 148.

the cost of warfare gradually became a private endeavour in which the Senate played an increasingly limited role.

2.2 Plunder and *Donativa*

In parallel with private funding, in the first century there was also an explosion in the amount of money given in donatives to the soldiers. These were most often financed by plunder, whose ownership is disputed in modern scholarship, as discussed in chapter one. The numbers are strikingly higher than anything attested earlier in the second and third centuries. The highest donative figure attested before the first century, was of 200 *denarii* given to each soldier after the sack of Epirus by L. Aemilius Paullus.⁴⁰⁵ This sum itself far exceeded any previous donative. However the gifts of money in the first century are of another order of magnitude entirely. Out of 20 recorded gifts, only three are less than 100 *denarii*, the rest comprise sums amounting to hundreds of *denarii*, often reaching more than 1,000 (see Table 5 below). This trend should be interpreted in the context of the increased monetization of politics in the late Republic.⁴⁰⁶ In a political culture where competition among the aristocracy had always been fierce, the display of wealth was now reaching new heights through grandiose distributions of money to the army. By increasing the rewards given to soldiers, generals continued a trend started by Marius and Sulla. The consequences of these distributions of money were twofold. First, they were contributing to give the idea that military service, rather than being a civic obligation that

⁴⁰⁵ Livy 45.34.5. See chapter one for the discussion of these figures.

⁴⁰⁶ Buckhardt 2010, 223 : “Je mehr man davon [i.e. money] hatte, desto größer waren die Möglichkeiten, damit Einfluß zu nehmen, sich Beziehungen zu schaffen, Popularität zu suchen, Leute an sich zu binden, Prozesse und Wahlen zu beeinflussen.”; 224 : “In der stark hierarchisierten römischen Gesellschaft war Geld ein Maßstab, um den Status einer Person festzulegen.”

could bring limited benefits, had in fact become a highly lucrative trade. Second, they were also dramatically increasing the odds for future aristocrats who would wish to surpass their predecessor's lavishness.

Table 5: Cash Handouts to Soldiers 69-29 BCE⁴⁰⁷

Year	Amount and Donor (in <i>denarii</i>)	Source
69	800 (Lucullus)	Plutarch <i>Luc.</i> 29.
63	950 (Lucullus)	Plutarch <i>Luc.</i> 37.
61	1,500 (Pompey)	Pliny <i>NH</i> 37.17.
51	50 (Caesar)	Caesar <i>BG</i> 8.4.1.
49	500 (Caesar)	Suetonius <i>Caes.</i> 38.
48	25 (Q. Cassius Longinus)	Ps.-Caesar <i>B.Alex.</i> 48.
47	1,000 (Caesar)	Plutarch <i>Caes.</i> 51.
46	25 (M. Porcius Cato Minor)	Ps.-Caesar <i>B.Afr.</i> 87.
46	5,000 (Caesar)	Appian <i>BC</i> 2.102; Plutarch <i>Caes.</i> 55.1; Vell. 2.56.2.
43	500 (Octavian)	Appian <i>BC</i> 3.40.
43	500 (Octavian)	Appian <i>BC</i> 3.48.
43	100 (Antony)	Cassius Dio 45.13.
43	2,500 (Octavian)	Appian <i>BC</i> 3.94.
42	1,500 (Cassius and Brutus)	Appian <i>BC</i> 4.100-101.
42	1,000 (Brutus)	Appian <i>BC</i> 4.118.
42	2,000 (Brutus)	Plutarch <i>Brut.</i> 44 (promised), 46 (paid).
36	500 (Octavian)	Appian <i>BC</i> 5.129.
29	1,000 (Octavian)	<i>RGDA</i> 15.

⁴⁰⁷ A similar table (with fewer figures) can be found in Scheidel 2007a, 330-331. Scheidel chose to follow Brunt 1971, 452-512 and included the number of beneficiaries for each donatives. He then adds up the numbers to arrive at 400,000 recipients. However such a method is too simplistic as it overlooks the fact that the same soldiers received several donatives. The table does not list the donatives that the sources mention as being only promised to the troops. Instances of such promises are found in Appian *BC* 2.92: 1,000 *denarii* promised; 3.74; confirmation of a promise of 5,000 *denarii*; 3.90: 5,000 *denarii* are mentioned but it is not clear whether this a repetition of another promise, also Plutarch *Ant.* 23.

The ostentatious nature of the donatives is demonstrated by what Lucullus did during his Eastern triumph. Not only did he give 950 *denarii* to each of his men, but in order to advertise his benevolence and the great amount of riches he had captured, he inscribed on signs the amount of the unprecedented donative he gave to his men.⁴⁰⁸ These signs were carried in the triumphal procession so that everyone attending the triumph in Rome could see them.

It is surely not a coincidence that Pompey gave more than Lucullus did after his own campaign against Mithridates.⁴⁰⁹ Indeed Pompey gave to each of his men the enormous sum of 1,500 *denarii* in the context of his triumph, surpassing the donative given by Lucullus. The officers enjoyed even more spectacular rewards: some 25 million *denarii* according to Pliny.⁴¹⁰ He was certainly aware of the amount of the donative given by Lucullus as it had been recorded and displayed on signs.⁴¹¹ As noted earlier, aristocratic competition through such extravagant gifts of money to the army could potentially become destabilizing for the Republic. Indeed as generals wished to outbid one another, the extent of cash rewards steadily rose. Financing a political career was already costly enough in the late Republic, often forcing *nobiles* to borrow money.⁴¹² Donatives worth more than 1,000 *denarii* per soldier meant that some personal investment must have been necessary when plunder was not enough to cover their cost.⁴¹³ In other words, it was

⁴⁰⁸ Plutarch *Luc.* 37.

⁴⁰⁹ Taking into account the donative of 950 *denarii* given at Lucullus' triumph.

⁴¹⁰ Plutarch *Pompey* 45.4; Appian *Mithr.* 116.565; Pliny *NH* 37.17. Plutarch adds that Pompey's eastern reorganization made Rome's public income increase from 50 million to 85 million *denarii*.

⁴¹¹ Plutarch *Lucullus* 37.4: "There were also tablets with records of the sums of money already paid by Lucullus to Pompey for the war against the pirates, and to the keepers of the public treasury." (ἐν δὲ δέλτοις ἀναγραφαὶ τῶν ἤδη δεδομένων χρημάτων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ Πομπηΐῳ πρὸς τὸν πειρατικὸν πόλεμον καὶ τοῖς ἐπὶ τοῦ δημοσίου ταμείου, καὶ χωρὶς ὅτι στρατιώτης).; *Pompey* 45.4.

⁴¹² Rosillo López 2010a, 225 ff.

⁴¹³ Rosillo López 2010a, 199: "Pour certains Romains, l'endettement impliquait de vivre au bord de l'abîme; il fallait emprunter suffisamment pour vivre aisément, pour survivre en politique ou tout

becoming even more expensive than before to be a general. This meant that generals wishing to compete with his achievements would need either a very well furnished coin purse or a great amount of plunder. It is striking that such handouts to the soldiers did not seem to have created controversy among the nobility. Indeed, there is not a single law that tried to restrain such spending. This is even more striking considering the fact that several sumptuary laws trying to limit expenditures for banquets and other displays of wealth are attested.⁴¹⁴ Such laws had a highly moralistic discourse and they say much about the identity of the Roman nobility and what it understood as being contrary to the *mos maiorum*.⁴¹⁵ It is somewhat puzzling for us that it was felt that the lavishness of public banquets and festivals was something that needed to be toned down, but not the cash handouts given to the soldiers. One would think that the consequences of giving hundreds of *denarii* to thousands of citizens would create more concern about social cohesion than the abusive consumption of luxury foodstuffs such as dormice and shellfish. This is, of course, an indication that such laws were concerned with the social cohesion of the elite, whose members were the only ones able to purchase such luxury. However the fact that there were not any laws regulating military expenditure does not mean that such lavish donatives could not create serious problems, as aristocratic competition could potentially get out of hand, financially speaking. Perhaps the reason why such generous *donativa* were tolerated is because they were largely financed by plunder, something that was not considered entirely private.⁴¹⁶

simplement pour payer les intérêts des emprunts.”

⁴¹⁴ For a list of such laws, see Zanda 2011, 113-128.

⁴¹⁵ On the *mos maiorum*, see Blösel 2000, 25-98.

⁴¹⁶ See the discussion on plunder in chapter one section 2.3, with the relevant literature. Of course late Republican generals also reaped important personal benefits from conquest even though they could not entirely do as they saw fit: Churchill 1999, 109-115; Tarpin 2009, 81-101.

Considering such rewards it can be said that military service was truly a lucrative business after the end of the Social War. The increasingly large donatives given to soldiers probably started to create the idea that military service was in fact a very good trade, rather than a civic duty with limited benefits. However the sustainability of such a system was highly questionable. A system based on a bidding contest between generals using grandiose distributions of cash to large numbers of citizens could not be sustained forever; it was going to break down at some point as there was not an endless series of rich kingdoms that could be plundered at will. Generals could thus not continue to increase the odds *ad vitam aeternam*. Donatives would nonetheless continue to increase and to be offered even more frequently than before. However this trend is to be connected with the consequences of civil war rather than with aristocratic competition.

2.3 The Emergence, or the Persistence of Private Warfare?

Does this mean that armies of the mid first century were becoming ‘private’ rather than ‘public’ because they were increasingly privately financed? This strict separation that modern historians make may be inaccurate for the Roman Republic. Bruno Bleckmann pointed out that the term *bellum priuatum* did not exist in antiquity.⁴¹⁷ Indeed the sources do not make a clear difference between public and private warfare. The competition among the nobility for military glory was gradually channelled, as it were, by the fact that playing by the rules of ‘public warfare’ allowed for far greater resources and opportunities than what could be achieved by launching expeditions only with one’s

⁴¹⁷ Bleckmann 2002, 210, note 3: “Den Terminus *bellum priuatum* gibt es in der Antike nicht.”

retinue of *amici*.⁴¹⁸ For this reason, what we would in the present day call private warfare was thus eventually supplanted by public warfare, even though occurrences of private expeditions are still attested in the middle Republic.⁴¹⁹ Bleckmann further observed that the consequences of aristocratic competition in the middle Republic were limited by the fact that the contestants did not have the means to levy whole armies out of their own pocket.⁴²⁰ However, by the mid first century, the nobility had grown quite rich, as highlighted above. The result of this was that some members of the elite now had the means to levy armies at their own expense. It can be said that one of the features that bridled aristocratic competition in the Middle Republic effectively disappeared in the first century. In other words, some Roman nobles now had the financial means to “continue politics by other means” to use Carl von Clausewitz’s famous phrase.⁴²¹ As it will become clear in the course of this chapter, the failure of the existent mechanisms to curb aristocratic competition meant a return of what would today be labeled private warfare but on a much larger scale than what was possible in the fourth and third centuries because of the means now available to men like Pompey and Crassus.

That being said, state-funding still existed but it was being monopolized by military dynasts. For example Pompey had armies in Libya and Spain for which he received 1,000

⁴¹⁸ Bleckmann 2002: 210-11: “In Rom war die Staatliche Kriegführung mit ihrer seit den Samnitenkriegen immer perfekteren Organisation jedem irregular geführten Bandenkrieg so sehr überlegen, daß für Aristokraten die Rekrutierung privater Kriegergruppen gegenüber der Einordnung in die staatliche *disciplina* keine interessante Alternative darstellen konnte, auch wenn diese Einordnung und die damit verbundene Herausbildung des staatlichen Kriegsmonopols am Anfang gewisse Schwierigkeiten gemacht haben dürfte, von denen in der Torquatus-Legende oder in der Geschichte des Konflikts zwischen Fabius Rullianus und Papirius Cursor einige Spuren erhalten geblieben sind.”

⁴¹⁹ See note 111 in chapter two for more details and references on private warfare, notably in the First Punic War.

⁴²⁰ Bleckmann 2011, 169: “But some of these internal conflicts were already being fought in the third century with a ferocity and intransigence that are completely comparable with the later period of the civil wars. The consequences are much more limited only because the adversaries in this period did not have the means to pay armies out of their own fortune.”

⁴²¹ *Vom Kriege*, 1.1.24: “Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln.”

talents (6 million *denarii*) a year from the public treasury.⁴²² When open conflict against Caesar begun in early 49, Pompey and the Senate levied money and took precious offerings from temples. Troops were raised and weapons were ordered (*imperantur*). According to Appian, Pompey was trying to levy a force of 130,000 Italian soldiers.⁴²³ Senators even offered their own private resources to Pompey to provide for the troops (στρατιωτικά).⁴²⁴ This illustrates how the line between ‘private’ and ‘public’ military funding could sometimes be blurred.

3- The Financing and Recruitment of Armies *in situ*

3.1 Funding On-Site

Not only did generals begin to pay for their troops and offer large rewards over the course of the first century, they also started to finance and recruit them *in situ* on a much larger scale than before, in the provinces or even in foreign territory. Rather than change the

⁴²² Plutarch *Caesar*, 28, 5.

⁴²³ Caesar *BC* 1.6: “Levies were held throughout Italy, arms were requisitioned, sums of money are exacted from the municipal towns and carried off from the temples.” (*tota Italia dilectus habentur, arma imperantur, pecuniae a municipiis exigentur, e fanis tolluntur*); Appian *BC* 2.34: “but the Senate, thinking that Caesar’s army would be slow in arriving from Gaul and that he would not rush into so great an adventure with a small force, directed Pompey to assemble 130,000 Italian soldiers, chiefly veterans who had had experience in wars, and to recruit as many able-bodied men as possible from the neighbouring provinces.” (ἡ δὲ βουλή νομίζουσα Καίσαρι τὸν στρατὸν ἀπὸ Κελτῶν σὺν χρόνῳ παρέσεσθαι καὶ οὐποτε αὐτὸν ὀρμήσειν ἐπὶ τηλικούτον ἔργον σὺν ὀλίγοις προσέτασσε Πομπηίῳ τρισκαίδεκα μυριάδας Ἰταλῶν ἀγείρειν, καὶ μάλιστα αὐτῶν τοὺς ἐστρατευμένους ὡς ἐμπειροπολέμους, ξενολογεῖν δὲ καὶ ἐκ τῶν περιοίκων ἐθνῶν ὅσα ἄλκιμα). Base *stipendium* for 130,000 men would amount to 15,600,000 *denarii*, plus some 6,500,000 *denarii* if these men were armed at state expense at 50 *denarii* each. These expenses would be inflated by the donatives that were now the norm. For instance if soldiers would ‘only’ be given a donative of a 1,000 *denarii*, this would add 130,000,000 to the bill.

⁴²⁴ Appian *BC* 2.34: “They voted him for the war all the money in the public treasury at once, and their own private fortune in addition if they should be needed for the pay of the soldiers.” (χρήματα δ’ ἐς τὸν πόλεμον αὐτῷ τὰ τε κοινὰ πάντα αὐτίκα ἐνηφίζοντο καὶ τὰ ἰδιωτικά σφῶν ἐπὶ τοῖς κοινοῖς, εἰ δεήσειεν, εἶναι στρατιωτικά: ἔς τε τὰς πόλεις ἐφ’ ἕτερα περιέπεμπον σὺν τε ὀργῇ καὶ φιλονικίᾳ, σπουδῆς οὐδὲν ἀπολείποντες ὀξύτατης).

way military funding worked the Senate relied increasingly on the latitude it gave to generals to fund and recruit their armies so that it eventually lost effective control over these fields. Exceptional circumstances also created precedents that subsequent generals followed. Sulla is the first well-documented case of a general funding his army exclusively *in situ*, a situation caused by the political situation at Rome.

As he waging war in Greece against Mithridates and his allies, Sulla received reports that his political enemies had profited from his absence and started to make military preparations in Italy.⁴²⁵ It is quite certain that the Marian faction now holding Rome stopped sending him money and supplies for his army.⁴²⁶ As mentioned above, according to Polybius, this was the way in which the Senate could control generals as they were at its mercy to obtain supplies such as food, clothing and money for their troops.⁴²⁷ However this did not stop Sulla, but prompted him to find other sources of funding for his army. To make up for the lack of funds and supplies from Rome, Sulla proceeded to seize the treasures of the sanctuaries of Epidauros and Olympia as well as the wealth of

⁴²⁵ Sulla had first dealt with his enemies in Italy before leaving for Greece. When he entered Rome with his army to seize power Sulla encountered his enemies Marius and Sulpicius. These had called upon the city's population and opposed him near the forum with all the men they could arm. Appian mentions that this was a "war with trumpets and military standards" but he probably only referred to the Sullan side. Appian probably wanted to picture the fighting as a regular pitched battle to embellish his narrative rather than sordid street fighting between a real army and an unorganized force. Although Marius and his supporters made some preparations before Sulla's arrival, the sources do not mention that they conducted a formal levy: Plutarch *Sulla*, 9.3: "Marius and his partisans, then, busied themselves with preparations." (οἱ μὲν οὖν περὶ τὸν Μάριον ἐν παρασκευαῖς ἦσαν). Appian's text seems to mean that they only armed their retainers with whatever was at hand: Appian *BC* 1.58: "Marius and Sulpicius went, with some forces they had hastily armed, to meet the invaders near the Esquiline forum." (Μάριος δὲ καὶ Σουλπίκιος ἀπὸ τῶν περὶ τὴν Αἰσχύλειον ἀγορὰν μεθ' ὧν ἐφθάκεσαν ὀπλίῃσι); Plutarch *Sulla*, 9.7: "Meanwhile, Marius, who had been driven back to the temple of Tellus, made a proclamation calling the slaves to his support under promise of freedom; but the enemy coming on, he was overpowered and fled from the city." (τούτων δὲ γινομένων Μάριος ἐξωσθεὶς πρὸς τὸ τῆς Γῆς ἱερὸν ἐκάλει διὰ κηρύγματος ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ τὸ οἰκετικὸν ἐπελθόντων δὲ τῶν πολεμίων κρατηθεὶς ἐξέπεσε τῆς πόλεως). Plutarch *Sulla*, 12.1; Appian *Mithr*, 30 ff. Also De Blois 2007, 167.

⁴²⁶ Keaveney 2005b, 71.

⁴²⁷ Polybius 6.15.4-5.

the Delphic Amphictyony.⁴²⁸ Furthermore when Athens finally fell, Sulla led his men into the city to kill and pillage. 40 pounds of gold (about 40,000 *denarii*) and 600 pounds of silver (about 43,200 *denarii*) were taken from the sack and this was surely added to Sulla's own military treasury.⁴²⁹

Furthermore, after he had driven back Mithridates' armies from Greece Sulla inflicted the enormous fine of 20,000 talents to the province of Asia to punish the communities that supported the Pontic king. Added to this, he also had his soldiers lodged in private houses at the expense of the owner who also had to pay for their evening meal and provide sixteen *drachmai* a day to each man.⁴³⁰ Even if these sixteen *drachmai* are considered an exaggeration and even if this sum would be divided several times, it would still account for a much better pay than the two obols per day reported by Polybius. Sulla was cut off from Rome, which was controlled by his enemies, and yet he had to pay and feed his army.⁴³¹ Even if Sulla's quaestors did register the sums to deduct for equipment from the pay of the legions that fought against Mithridates, it seems that he made sure his men would have had more than enough funds to cope with the expenses thanks to the special measures he took.⁴³² By such methods and by commandeering all these riches, Sulla was

⁴²⁸ Plutarch *Sulla*, 12.5-9.

⁴²⁹ Appian *Mithr.*, 39. Nothing is said of the distribution of plunder but Sulla did burn most of the Piraeus when he took it, including some important art works, and sold the slaves. Plutarch *Sulla*, 14.4.-12; Appian *Mithr.*, 38. On the extent of the devastations that occurred during the sack, see Santangelo 2007, 39 ff.

⁴³⁰ Plutarch *Sulla*, 15 ff; Appian *Mithr.*, 41 ff. Some Greeks and Macedonians joined Sulla before the battle of Chaeronea. Plutarch *Sulla*, 25.4-5; Appian *Mithr.*, 62.259-261.

⁴³¹ Cadiou 2008, 486-487 : "Ainsi, la nécessité imposée par les circonstances amena Sylla à développer des solutions nouvelles lors de sa campagne d'Orient, puisqu'il se trouvait coupé du gouvernement de Rome avec lequel il était en conflit."; Keaveney 2005b, 93 : "As the *publicani*, whose exactions had done so much to madden the Greeks, had all fled for their lives or been killed when Mithridates overran the province, there now existed no machinery for collecting these monies, and Sulla was thus forced to proceed to rough *ad hoc* methods. For the purpose of collecting the indemnity Asia was divided into forty-four regions. So far from spending the winter in idleness, as is generally assumed, many of Sulla's soldiers were busy men indeed, going from region to regions to collect the cash."

⁴³² Plutarch *Sulla*, 27. Sulla's men offered him some of their money to finance his campaign.

able to overcome the traditional means of control that Rome had exercised over its generals. Since that was the only way to prevent potentially rogue generals from acting against the will of the Senate, then it shows the fact that this system had probably been designed at a time when Roman generals were campaigning exclusively in Italy. Campaigning with limited resources and closer to Rome, they would effectively have been prevented from carrying on operations if the Senate would have deprived them from money and supplies. However, this system was now obsolete as generals like Sulla had at their disposal economic resources that would have seemed incredible to fourth century generals.

In 83 Sulla returned to Italy to confront his enemies.⁴³³ His enemies, who conscripted (κατέλεγον) the best army they could from Rome and from Italy, managed to raise a very large force. According to Appian they had 200 cohorts, some 20 legions. Plutarch reports that Sulla faced 450 cohorts or some 45 legions. Velleius Paterculus gives the strength of 200,000 men for the Marian side.⁴³⁴ Sulla was thus outnumbered as he initially only had

⁴³³ Appian *BC*, 1.79. There is also the strange passage in Plutarch *Sulla*, 27.7-8 where one of Sulla's legates, Marcus Lucullus, hesitated to attack because most of his men were not armed. What followed is puzzling: a breeze swept some wild flowers on the shields and helmets that Lucullus' men should not have had according to the previous sentence. Invigorated by this, they charged the enemy and were victorious despite being unarmed: "And still further, at Fidentia, when Marcus Lucullus, one of Sulla's commanders, with sixteen cohorts confronted fifty cohorts of the enemy, although he had confidence in the readiness of his soldiers, still, as most of them were without arms, he hesitated to attack. But while he was waiting and deliberating, from the neighbouring plain, which was a meadow, a gentle breeze brought a quantity of flowers and scattered them down upon his army; they settled of their own accord and enveloped the shields and helmets of the soldiers, so that to the enemy these appeared to be crowned with garlands. This circumstance made them more eager for the fray, and they joined battle, won the victory, killed eighteen thousand of the enemy, and took their camp." (ἐτι δὲ Μάρκος Λεύκολλος, εἰς τῶν ὑπὸ Σύλλα στρατηγούντων, περὶ Φιδεντίαν ἑκκαίδεκα σπείραις πρὸς πενήκοντα τῶν πολεμίων ἀντιταχθεὶς τῇ μὲν προθυμίᾳ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἐπίστευεν, ἀνόπλους δὲ τοὺς πολλοὺς ἔχων ὤκνει. βουλευομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ διαμέλλοντος, ἀπὸ τοῦ πλησίον πεδίου λειμῶνα ἔχοντος αὖρα φέρουσα μαλακὴ πολλὰ τῶν ἀνθέων ἐπέβαλε τῇ στρατιᾷ καὶ κατέσπειρεν, αὐτομάτως ἐπιμένοντα καὶ περιπίπτοντα τοῖς θυρεοῖς καὶ τοῖς κράνεσιν αὐτῶν, ὥστε φαίνεσθαι τοῖς πολεμίοις ἐστεφανωμένους, γενόμενοι δὲ ὑπὸ τούτου προθυμότεροι συνέβαλον καὶ νικήσαντες ὀκτακισχιλίους ἐπὶ μυρίοις ἀπέκτειναν καὶ τὸ στρατόπεδον εἶλον).

⁴³⁴ Appian *BC*, 1.82. Plutarch *Sulla* 27; Velleius Paterculus 2.24.3. Brunt 1971, 445, believe such figures by argues that units were probably understrength: "It looks as if even at the last the Marians had 230 or 240

five legions at his disposal plus an unknown number of auxiliaries. However he eventually managed to recruit, or bribe, from his enemies a force of 23 legions.⁴³⁵

The cost of so many legions was crippling. Furthermore, the Marians had been cut off from Rome's most lucrative provinces by the Mithridatic War. They were so short of money that they had to melt gold and silver ornaments taken from temples to provide pay for their soldiers.⁴³⁶ Sulla used the money he collected in Asia and the plunder he took from Mithridates to finance his army. Pliny the Elder mentions that Sulla had 15,000 pounds of gold and 115,000 pounds of silver carried during his triumph over Mithridates in 81. Since this likely only represents what was left after expenses it gives an idea of the magnitude of Sulla's military expenditures.⁴³⁷

To the cost of the forces involved in the civil war put in perspective, if we add up the armies of both sides, some 60 legions, the value of the *stipendium* alone (without accounting for other major expenditures such as fleets, food, weapons, and clothing) would already amount to 36 million *denarii*. According to Plutarch, state income before Pompey's expedition in the east in the early 60s was of 50 million *denarii*, at a time when

cohorts in the field, after many of their legions had been destroyed or melted away or deserted. It is quite credible that they had originally mobilized 450 cohorts. But the average strength of those cohorts may never have been 500, as Appian no doubt supposed; equally the 23 Sullan legions were probably at all times less than 5,000 strong. Commanders who raised troops hurriedly were apt to form new units which they hoped to bring up to full strength in the course of time [...]; in the conditions of 83-82 these units were flung into battle before the hopes could be realized. It would be prudent to suppose that the average cohort in this war never exceeded 400. On this basis not more than 270,000 men, mostly or all Italians, were ever in the field." Brunt is evidently right to suppose that the troops were mostly from Italy as the war was fought there. However the number of soldiers he proposed seems very high considering the census figures for that time and the fact that few citizens living in the provinces were conscripted.

⁴³⁵ Appian *BC* 1.100; Frank 1933, 232.

⁴³⁶ Val. Max. 7.6.4 : "When consuls C. Marius and Cn. Carbo were contending with L. Sulla in the civil war [...] gold and silver temple ornaments were melted down by decree of the Senate to provide pay for the troops." (*autem Mario Cn. Carbone consulibus civili bello cum Sulla dissidentibus ... senatus consulto aurea atque argentea templorum ornamenta, ne militibus stipendia deessent conflata sunt*).

⁴³⁷ Pliny *NH* 33.5. According to Plutarch *Sulla* 19, Mithridates paid an indemnity of 2,000 talents and Asia also paid 20,000 talents (Plutarch *Sulla* 22;8 and 23). Frank 1933, 232 argues that the sum attested in Pliny would represent four fifth of the money collected in Asia.

Rome did not experience civil war and was in control of most of its provinces.⁴³⁸ The recourse to temple ornaments to provide pay is thus quite understandable given the circumstances.

Despite Sulla's implementation of several political reforms after his victory in the civil war, he did not change the financing structures of the army. Perhaps he felt this was unnecessary since he had managed to finance and win the war by relying on indemnities, confiscations, and plunder taken from his campaign in Greece. Besides, he also gained more money through proscriptions. However Sulla set a dangerous precedent: that it was possible to fund an army entirely independently from Rome's support. He showed that just like the Senate had done, a general could also have recourse to expedients to finance his own army.

Like Marius, Sulla did not reform the way the army was recruited and funded in any official way.⁴³⁹ He acted as he did because circumstances dictated him to do so. Even if Sulla and Marius did not set anything in stone, the examples of generals recruiting and financing their armies using irregular measures on-site would not be easily forgotten by their successors.

The death of Sulla did not trigger the implementation of a tighter grip of the Senate's control over war finances. A clear example of this is Pompey's campaign against Sertorius.⁴⁴⁰ After having fought a brief civil war against Lepidus and his accomplices,

⁴³⁸ State income was increased to 85 million by Pompey: Plutarch *Pompey* 45.4; Brunt 1971, 400-1, thinks the total number of Italians enrolled amounted to some 200.000 men, some 40 legions.

⁴³⁹ Brunt 1971, 312: "There is no ground for thinking that Sulla envisaged that discharged soldiers were regularly to receive land allotments."

⁴⁴⁰ Jehne 1997, 38, has labeled Pompey "die personifizierte Extrawurst der späten römischen Republik, der von allen üblichen Vorschriften für die politische und militärische Laufbahn dispensiert worden war, hatte

Pompey was awarded the command of the war against Sertorius in Spain, though the way he obtained it was far from conventional. It is probably closer to reality to say that he scared the Senate enough to have it declare that the command was to be his. Indeed, Pompey kept his army around Rome instead of disbanding it, always coming up with excuses to buy time when he was ordered to do so. Since he kept his army against the Senate's will, it is likely that he himself paid for what was required to maintain it in the field, as it seems dubious that the Senate was going to allocate funds to an army which was being illegally kept in service. According to Plutarch one senator remarked sarcastically that Pompey should be sent to Spain not as proconsul but in place of both consuls.⁴⁴¹

Once Pompey arrived in Spain, he realized that Sertorius was a very skilled opponent, often preventing him from foraging and checking his advance. He eventually ran into financial difficulties because the Senate was not sending him money for pay and supplies. This was not entirely due to Pompey's enemies in the Senate. Rome was in a dire financial situation; several armies had to be maintained in Cilicia and Asia against Mithridates, added to the armies in Spain.⁴⁴² Pompey bitterly complained to the Senate

als Gehilfe Sullas Krieg in Sizilien und Africa geführt und sogar einen Triumph gefeiert. Danach hatte er jahrelang in Spanien gekämpft, ehe er 70 als erstes reguläres Amt gleich das Consulat übernommen hatte. Seither hatte er seinen Ruf als großer Feldherr noch ausgebaut. 67 war ihm ein umfassendes Kommando gegen die Seeräuber übertragen worden, denen er tatsächlich mit einer organisatorischen Meisterleistung das Handwerk legte, und 66 war er mit der Führung des Krieges gegen den pontischen König Mithradates betraut worden, dener zu einem endgültigen erfolgreichen Abschluß brachte."

⁴⁴¹ Plutarch *Pompey*, 17.4: "On this occasion, too, they say that a certain senator asked with amazement if Philippus thought it necessary to send Pompey out as proconsul. "No indeed!" said Philippus, "but as pro-consuls," implying that both the consuls of that year were good for nothing." (ὅτε καὶ φασιν ἐν συγκλήτῳ πυθομένου τινὸς καὶ θαυμάζοντος εἰ Πομπήϊον ἀνθύπατον οἴεται δεῖν ἐκπεμφθῆναι Φίλιππος· "Οὐκ ἔγωγε," φάναι τὸν Φίλιππον, "ἀλλ' ἀνθ' ὑπάτων," ὥς ἀμφοτέρους τοὺς τότε ὑπατεύοντας οὐδενὸς ἀξίους ὄντας).

⁴⁴² Sallust 2.47 M: "For our generals in Spain are calling for money, men, arms and supplies – and they are forced to do so by circumstances, since the defection of our allies and the retreat of Sertorius over the mountains prevent them from either contending in battle or providing for their necessities. Armies are

about it, claiming that for three years he had mostly paid himself for the upkeep of his army and had received less than a year's worth of what was needed. Now he had spent all his personal credit and claimed he was not able to keep on fighting without funds from Rome. He even went so far as to threaten to bring back his army to Italy if he did not receive the money.⁴⁴³ Luckily for Pompey, one of Sertorius' officers eased his task by assassinating his general. The murderer tried to take command but was not as skilled in warfare as Sertorius was and Pompey was eventually able to decisively defeat him. Desperate though his financial situation had been, Pompey was still able to pay for his army for three years before having to ask for funds from Rome. This shows the extent of his resources and the increasing independence of generals from the *aerarium*.⁴⁴⁴

maintained in Asia and in Cilicia because of the excessive power of Mithridates, Macedonia is full of foes, as is also the sea-coast of Italy and of the provinces. In the meantime, our revenues, made scanty and uncertain by war, barely suffice for a part of our expenditure; hence the fleet which we keep upon the sea is much smaller than the one which formerly safeguarded our supplies." (*Namque imperatores Hispaniae stipendium, milites, arma, frumentum, poscunt; et id res cogit, quoniam defectione sociorum et Sertori per montis fuga neque manu certare possunt neque utilia parare. Exercitus in Asia Ciliciaque ob nimias opes Mithridatis aluntur; Macedonia plena hostium est, nec minus Italiae Maritima et prouinciarum; cum interim uectigalia parua et bellis incerta uix partem sumptuum sustinent. Ita classe, quae commeatus tuebatur, minore quam antea nauigamus*). On this topic, see Naco del Hoyo 2011, 387-9. I find this passage of Sallust difficult to reconcile with Frank 1933, 323 who argues that state income in 80 amounted to no less than 40 million *denarii*.

⁴⁴³ Sallust *Hist.* 2.98. M : "Wearied with writing letters and sending envoys, I have exhausted my personal resources and even my expectations, and in the meantime of three years you have barely given me the means of meeting a year's expenses. By the immortal gods! Do you think that I can play the part of a treasury or maintain an army without food or pay? [...] You are our only resource; unless you come to our rescue, against my will, but not without warning from me, our army will pass over into Italy, bringing with it all the war in Spain." (*Fessus scribundo mittundoque legatos, omni opes et spes priuatas meas consumpsi, cum interim a uobis per triennium vix annuus sumptus datus est. Per deos immortalis, utrum me aerarii praestare creditis an exercitum sine frumento et stipendio habere posse ... Relicui uos estis; qui nisi subuenitis, inuito et praedicente me exercitus hinc et cum omne bellum Hispaniae in Italiam transgredientur*).; Plutarch *Lucullus* 5.3; *Pompey* 20.1: "When Pompey had exhausted most of his private resources and spent them on the war, he asked money of the Senate, threatening to come back to Italy with his army if they did not send it." (Πομπήϊος δὲ τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν ἰδίων ἐξανηλωκῶς καὶ κατακεχρημένος εἰς τὸν πόλεμον, ἤτει χρήματα τὴν σύγκλητον, ὥς ἀφιζόμενος εἰς Ἰταλίαν μετὰ τῆς δυνάμεως εἰ μὴ πέμποιεν).

⁴⁴⁴ Nicolet 1977, 450-51 : "[...] la dernière période de la République romaine, qui voit, avec les campagnes d'Orient de Sylla et de Pompée, puis avec la conquête des Gaules, une reprise très nettes des entreprises impériales et de la constitution, avec l'armée des Gaules, d'*exercitus* d'un type nouveau : financés en partie, d'abord, sur le terrain lui-même, à l'initiative du général qui les commande [...]" ; Cadiou 2008, 486-487: "[...] les difficultés de ce dernier [i.e. Pompey], provoquées avant tout par l'évolution de la guerre et l'habileté de Sertorius, tenaient sans doute aussi à des rivalités internes de la politique romaine. La question

As we have seen, prior to 167 the *stipendium* was provided by the *tributum* and after that date Rome had mostly relied on plunder and indemnities to make up for the suspension of the *tributum*.⁴⁴⁵ Rome's difficulties in funding Pompey make it manifest that these measures, although enough for a few years, were not adequate in the long run to finance large forces that were increasingly needed in the provinces, especially after the Social War and the doubling or tripling of army expenditure. In other words the reliance on expedients to fund the army had only been previously manageable because the Romans had reaped huge benefits from very rich enemies such as Macedon. The leeway given to generals to fund their armies by whatever means they thought best was another expedient used by the Senate to make up for the increasing cost of the army. This adds further weight to Crassus' remark about the importance of wealth for those wishing to become Rome's *principes*.

A further example of an army largely funded *in situ* is that of Lucullus in the East. When the latter captured the Armenian capital Tigranocerta, along with the treasure of the king of the Gordyeni, this allowed him to finance the war without funds from Rome.⁴⁴⁶ He

de la solde, dans la première moitié du Ier siècle, était encore un moyen de contrôle et de pression de la part du sénat. Ceci n'était évidemment possible que si les fonds provenaient toujours de l'*aerarium Saturni*. Ceci explique, d'ailleurs, pourquoi ce fut surtout à partir de cette période qu'apparurent des tentatives de financement des armées en partie sur le terrain, à un moment où les tensions entre les généraux et le sénat tendirent à se multiplier."

⁴⁴⁵ Nicolet 1976c, 79: "C'est une question beaucoup plus délicate d'essayer d'apprécier la pression fiscale dans les années qui précèdent la période des Gracques, et jusqu'à la fin de la République. C'est un truisme nécessaire de remarquer d'abord que nous manquons pour tout le IIe siècle à partir de 167, de sources relativement précises, comme Tite Live."

⁴⁴⁶ The campaign against Tigranes of Armenia was largely triggered by Lucullus' ambition. The same can be said of his intentions towards the Parthians: Plutarch *Lucullus*, 30.2: "Accordingly, when Lucullus was apprised of this, he determined to ignore Tigranes and Mithridates as exhausted antagonists, and to make trial of the Parthian power by marching against them, thinking of it a glorious thing, in a single impetuous onset of war, to throw, like an athlete, three kings in succession, and to make his way, unvanquished and victorious, through three of the greatest empires under the sun." (ὥς οὖν ταῦθ' ὁ Λούκουλλος ἤσθετο, Τηγράνην μὲν ἔγνω καὶ Μιθριδάτην παρελθεῖν ὥσπερ ἀνταγωνιστάς ἀπειρηκότας, ἀποπειρᾶσθαι δὲ τῆς Πάρθων δυνάμεως καὶ στρατεύειν ἐπ' αὐτούς, καλὸν ἡγούμενος μιᾷ ῥύμῃ πολέμου τρεῖς ἐφεξῆς ὥσπερ ἀθλητῆς βασιλεῖς καταπαλαῖσαι καὶ διὰ τριῶν τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν ἥλιον μεγίστων ἡγεμονιῶν ἀήττητος καὶ νικῶν

was thus praised for making “the war pay for itself” (αὐτὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ διώκει τὸν πόλεμον).⁴⁴⁷

When Pompey inherited Lucullus’ command in 66, he also largely financed his army *in situ*. When the king of Armenia, Tigranes, visited Pompey to make amends for his previous hostility against Rome, he brought with him 6,000 talents, enough to cover the *stipendium* of nearly ten legions. He thus almost singlehandedly provided pay for all of Pompey’s army that was twelve legions strong.⁴⁴⁸ Tigranes also provided an additional bonus of 50 *drachmai* to each soldier, 1,000 to each centurion and 10,000 to each tribune.⁴⁴⁹

διεξελεῖν). Arthur Keaveney assumed that the *Lex Cornelia de maiestate* passed under the dictatorship of Sulla in 81/80 which forbade a governor to campaign outside his province without the consent of the Senate did not apply to Lucullus. According to Keaveney since the sources do not explicitly accuse Lucullus of treason he must not have been bound to it, cf. Keaveney 1992, 86-87 and 228: “Since no source taxes Lucullus with treason I assume that he received such an exemption.” On this law, see Blösel 2011, 58-9. However Plutarch and Appian do not mention that he was given free reign by the Senate either. It might have been the case that the law was simply ignored after Sulla’s death. As argued in chapter two, the reasons brought for accusations of illegal warfare could vary according to the political context.

⁴⁴⁷ Plutarch *Lucullus*, 29.7-10. The phrase is similar to that of Cato found in Livy 34.9.12: *bellum se ipse alet*. Of course Roman generals always tried to use local resources but campaigns were far from being always lucrative as seen in chapter three, also: Tarpin 2009, 96: “Il est donc rare qu’une guerre rapporte au Sénat de quoi payer véritablement la guerre.” It has been argued that Lucullus tried to emulate Alexander to enhance his prestige by actions such as his victory at the river Aesepus that Plutarch identifies as the Granicus, and his treatment of Mithridates’ relatives afterwards: Plutarch *Lucullus*, 18; 11.8; Appian *Mithr.* 76.329; Tröster 2008, 142-3; Ballesteros Pastor, 1998, 77-85. Tröster 2008, 139; Plutarch *Lucullus*, 24; 33. Generals on campaign enjoyed a lot of freedom of action but they had previously relied on some financial support from Rome with a few exceptions. For instance in Livy 23.48.4-5 the generals operating in Spain against Carthage were asking the Senate for clothes and pay but realized the *aerarium* was probably empty and said they would find the way to find pay *in situ* but would need Rome to send the rest: “but that money for pay, also clothing and grain, were lacking for the army, and for the crews everything. So far as pay was concerned, if the treasury was empty, they would find some method of getting it from the Spaniards. Everything else, they said, must in any case be sent from Rome, and in no other way could either the army or the province be kept.” (*sed pecuniam in stipendium vestimentaue et frumentum exercitui et sociis navalibus omnia deesse. quod ad stipendium attineat, si aerarium inops sit, se aliquam rationem inituros quomodo ab Hispanis sumatur; cetera utique ab Roma mittenda esse, nec aliter aut exercitum aut provinciam teneri posse*). Cicero *ad fam.* 1.9.25; 3.8.2; 3.10.6; *ad Att.* 7.74; *Pro Milo* 39; Vell. Pat. 2.89.3; Cassius Dio 39.56.

⁴⁴⁸ Brunt 1971, 449.

⁴⁴⁹ Appian *Mithr.* 104.489-490. Same numbers in Plutarch *Pompey* 33.6 although Plutarch mentions one talent for tribunes. The figures may be inflated but they did surely give Pompey some financial independence.

3.2 Recruitment *in situ*

Armies not only began to be funded locally but their recruitment also started to be carried out on a local level. As discussed in the previous chapter, the use of foreign auxiliaries during the Social War was a financial expedient to make up for the lost Italian manpower and the cost of the war. The practice continued afterwards as some of these units were provided by Rome's *amici* as per treaty obligations and paid by the community providing them. In the first century the use of foreign auxiliaries is widely attested. It is likely that they were mustered by the Roman general on his journey to the theatre of operations so that the Senate had nothing to do with their recruitment or pay. For example, the cavalry that Lucullus brought with him to confront Tigranes consisted of some 3,000 men who are described as being Thracians and Gauls (or Galatians according to how one translates Γαλάτας, the latter seems more likely since they lived much closer to the theatre of operations).⁴⁵⁰

Caesar initially had four legions for his governorship of Gallia Transalpina and Cisalpina. As he was preparing to fight the Helvetii in 58 he was quick to add to his forces by locally recruiting soldiers in his province.⁴⁵¹ These men were presumably Roman citizens

⁴⁵⁰ Plutarch *Lucullus* 27.2; 28.2: “Thracian and Gallic horsemen.” (Θρᾷκας μὲν ἱππεῖς καὶ Γαλάτας). This further supports the argument developed in chapter three that the Romans were now predominantly or even exclusively relying on foreign auxiliaries as horsemen.

⁴⁵¹ Caesar *BG* 1.7; Keppie 1984, 58. The main source for Caesar's campaign in Gaul is his own account, the *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, sometimes simply called *Bellum Gallicum*. Though much more detailed than the descriptions preserved for any other general of the same period or before, one must be cautious using it precisely because it has been written by the winner who most likely did everything in his power to portray himself in a good light. Other accounts, though less detailed, are provided by Plutarch and Cassius Dio. On the *Bellum Gallicum*, see most recently Kraus 2009, 159-174, also: Rambaud 1966; Caesar accused the Helvetii of wanting to enslave all of Gaul, cf. Caesar *BG* 1.2; Plutarch *Caesar* 18; Cassius Dio 38.31 ff. offers a different picture. He basically holds Caesar responsible for the war; Suetonius *Caesar*, 24.3 suggests that Caesar's political opponents wanted to hand him over to the enemy: “After that he did not let slip any pretext for war, however unjust and dangerous it might be, picking quarrels as well with allied, as with hostile and barbarous nations; so that once the Senate decreed that a commission be sent to inquire into the condition of the Gallic provinces, and some even recommended that Caesar be handed over

but given the fact that Caesar later recruited non-Romans in the legions it is not impossible that some of them were actually *peregrini*. In 57, in preparation for the war against the fiercest of all Gallic tribes, the Belgae, Caesar levied yet two more legions in Cisalpine Gaul.⁴⁵²

Although levying Roman citizens from the provinces was not something entirely new, Caesar went further and raised an entire legion composed of Transalpine Gauls who did not even have Roman citizenship but received it later on.⁴⁵³ As mentioned earlier, until 56

to the enemy.” (*nec deinde ulla belli occasione, ne iniusti quidem ac periculosi abstinuit, tam foederatis quam infestis ac feris gentibus ultro lacessitis, adeo ut senatus quondam legatos ad explorandum statum Galliarum mittendos decreuerit ac nonnulli dedendum eum hostibus censuerint. sed prospere decedentibus rebus et saepius et plurimum quam quisquam umquam dierum supplicationes impetrauit*). Plutarch *Caesar* 22.4 says that it was Cato who actually wanted to do so. Jehne 1997, 51: “In der römischen Republik war nichts so prestigeträchtig wie ein erfolgreiches militärisches Kommando. Ehrgeizige Statthalter waren folglich darauf aus, ihre Amtszeit zur Kriegführung zu nutzen, doch für Caesar stellte dieser mögliche Gewinn an Ansehen und Macht nicht nur eine schöne Prämie dar, die jeder gerne mitnahm, sondern bei ihm ging es um die politische Existenz: Die Feinde, die er sich in seinem Consulat gemacht hatte, betrieben seine Vernichtung, und die Koalition mit Pompeius und Crassus, mit deren Hilfe Attacken auf die Rechtmäßigkeit seiner Gesetze derzeit unterdrückt werden konnten, war eine prekäre Angelegenheit. Caesar blieb gar nichts anderes übrig, als die Erhöhung seines Eigengewichts und die Übertönung seiner Gegner durch völlig unbestreitbare Leistungen anzustreben, und das hieß konkret: Er benötigte militärischen Ruhm, zudem die finanziellen Mittel, die im Kriege zu gewinnen waren, schließlich die treue Anhänglichkeit, die eine Kette von Siegen mit den entsprechenden Beuteverteilungen bei Soldaten und Offizierskorps erzeugen konnte.” Caesar was also heavily in debt as he owned some 830 talents, cf. Shatzman 1975, 344-5; Appian *BC* 2.8; Plutarch *Caesar* 11.1-2; *Crassus* 7.6; Suetonius *Caesar* 18.1.

⁴⁵² He mustered more in Italy: Caesar *BG* 1.10: “himself hurried by forced marches into Italy. There he enrolled two legions, and brought out of winter quarters three that were wintering about Aquileia.” (*ipse in Italiam magnis itineribus contendit duasque ibi legiones conscribit et tres, quae circum Aquileiam hiemabant*). Caesar had also locally recruited troops earlier in his career in Spain: Plutarch *Caesar* 12: “At any rate, as soon as he reached Spain he set himself to work, and in a few days raised ten cohorts in addition to the twenty which were there before. Then he led his army against the Callaici and Lusitani, overpowered them, and marched on as far as the outer sea, subduing the tribes which before were not obedient to Rome.” (τῆς γοῦν Ἰβηρίας ἐπιβὰς εὐθὺς ἦν ἐνεργός, ὥσθ’ ἡμέραις ὀλίγαις δέκα σπεύρας συναγαγεῖν πρὸς ταῖς πρότερον οὖσαις εἴκοσι, καὶ στρατεύσας ἐπὶ Καλαϊκοὺς καὶ Λυσιτανοὺς κρατῆσαι καὶ προελθεῖν ἄχρι τῆς ἕξω θαλάσσης τὰ μὴ πρότερον ὑπακούοντα Ῥωμαίοις ἔθνη καταστρεφόμενος); Caesar *BG* 1.1: “Of all these peoples the Belgae are the most courageous.” (*horum omnium fortissimi sunt Belgae*); Caesar *BG* 2.2.

⁴⁵³ Suetonius *Caesar*, 24.2: “one [legion] actually composed of men of Transalpine Gaul and bearing a Gallic name too (for it was called *Alauda*), which he trained in the Roman tactics and equipped with Roman arms, and later on he gave every man of it citizenship.” (*unam etiam ex Transalpinis conscriptam, uocabulo quoque Gallico —Alauda enim appellaba—, quam disciplina cultuque Romano institutam et ornatam postea uniuersam ciuitate donauit*); Pliny the Elder *NH*, 11.121: “the small bird that was formerly named from this peculiarity the crested lark and subsequently was called by the Gallic word *alauda* and gave that name also to the legion so entitled.” (*praeterea paruae avi quae, ab illo galerita appellata quondam, postea Gallico uocabulo etiam legioni nomen dederat alaudae*). The existence of this legion is

Caesar himself paid for the additional legions he raised.⁴⁵⁴ The sources do not provide details as to why he chose to raise a legion of Gauls. It is plausible to argue that there were not enough Roman citizens at hand in the provinces and that this was an expedient used by Caesar to ensure that he could quickly increase the strength of the legionary component of his army without having to send legates to Italy. This legion was probably raised in 52 when Caesar was hard pressed by the revolt led by Vercingetorix and he suffered a setback at Gergovia. Since he also levied a force of 22 cohorts locally the same year, it makes sense to argue that the Gallic legion was levied because he did not have the time to go to Italy to perform levies precisely because the military situation was critical.⁴⁵⁵ Previously Caesar had tried to recruit men in Italy: in 53, when he was in need of reinforcements after he had lost an entire legion plus five other cohorts in a devastating ambush. On that occasion he was able to send his legates to Italy and asked Pompey if he could use the recruits he had levied in 55 while the latter was consul and enjoyed extraordinary powers over the levy.⁴⁵⁶

Caesar was also recruiting locally for his auxiliaries. As discussed in the previous chapter, the reliance on foreign ally troops was a practice that gained importance from the Social War onwards to decrease military expenditure in order to make up for the loss of cheap Italian manpower that the *socii* represented. Caesar levied a cavalry force locally in Transalpine Gaul, its strength initially amounting to some 4,000 men. While some of

attested well into the first century CE, cf. Tacitus *Histories* 1.61; 2.43. Its name still exists in modern French as *alouette* (lark); Keppie 1984, 70: "The new legions were raised by virtue, it would seem, of a proconsul's right to call out local forces in defence of his province."

⁴⁵⁴ Suetonius *Caesar*, 24; Cicero *ad fam.* 1.7.10; Plutarch *Caesar* 21.3; Shatzman 1975, 346-7. It is at their meeting in Lucca in 56 that Pompey and Crassus agreed to give Caesar money for his army, cf. Plutarch *Caesar* 21.3.

⁴⁵⁵ Caesar *BG* 7.65.

⁴⁵⁶ Caesar *BG* 5.32 ff.; 6.1; Cicero *Ad Att.* 4.1.7; Plutarch *Caesar* 25.2. Other mention of reinforcements from Italy: 7.7.5.

these men were levied in *Gallia Narbonensis* itself, others were enrolled amongst the Aedui and their allies.⁴⁵⁷ A later passage in the *Bellum Gallicum* confirms that none of Caesar's horsemen were actually recruited in Italy, although some of the officers could be Roman citizens.⁴⁵⁸ Indeed before Caesar met the German king Ariovistus, the latter insisted that they only bring cavalry as their escort to the meeting. Caesar was reluctant to rely on his Gallic horsemen to protect his life so he ordered them to dismount and gave their horses to the men of one of his Roman legions, the tenth.⁴⁵⁹

Many auxiliaries other than Gallic cavalry are also mentioned, sometimes with their nationality or specialty.⁴⁶⁰ Numidians, although perhaps more famous as light cavalrymen, are described as performing the role previously fulfilled by *uelites*.⁴⁶¹ Other types of foreign light infantry are mentioned. For instance Balearic slingers and Cretan archers were used for their particular skills with weapons the Romans themselves had

⁴⁵⁷ Caesar *BG* 1.15 : "the whole of his cavalry, four thousand in number, which he had raised from the whole of the Province, from the Aedui, and from their allies." (*equitatumque omnem ad numerum quattuor milium, quem ex omni prouincia et Haeduis atque eorum sociis coactum habebat*); 2.24.4: "horsemen of the Treveri [...] their state has sent them to Caesar as auxiliaries." (*equites Treueri [...] qui auxilii causa ab ciuitate ad Caesarem missi uenerant*). One passage mentions Spanish cavalry and another horses bought in Spain: 5.26.3; 7.55.3.

⁴⁵⁸ Caesar *BG* 1.23 : "Lucius Aemilius, a troop-leader of the Gallic horse." (*L. Aemilii, decurionis equitum Gallorum*).

⁴⁵⁹ Caesar *BG* 1.42.

⁴⁶⁰ Auxiliaries are mentioned in Caesar *BG* 1.49: "he left two legions there and a part of the auxiliaries." (*duas ibi legiones reliquit et partem auxiliorum*); 1.51: "in full view of the enemy, he posted all the allied troops." (*omnis alarios in conspectu hostium pro castris minoribus constituit*). Before the Social War, *ala* used to refer to the detachments provided by the *socii*. It later became a way of referring to auxiliary units, even if they were not always posted on the wings. In the imperial period the term came to mean a unit of auxiliary cavalry. Other references to auxiliaries in the *Bellum Gallicum*: 3.18; 3.20; 3.25; 3.6.5; 3.12; 5.5; 5.58; 6.4; 6.5; 6.7; 6.53; 7.37; 8.5; 8.10; 8.11; 8.18; 8.25; 8.36.

⁴⁶¹ See the previous chapter on the gradual disappearance of *uelites*. In 56 Caesar decided to build a fleet when he decided to attack the Veneti, a people famous for its naval skills. He had it built *in situ* and levied rowers and crews in the province. This seems again to have been done without Rome's financial support. In 54 when he planned to return to Britannia, instead of writing to the Senate he imported what he needed to equip and repair his fleet from Spain, most likely using the contacts he had acquired there during his governorship. When a storm destroyed part of his fleet while he was in Britannia the same year he wrote to his legate Labienus, ordering him to build more ships. Caesar *BG* 3.9; 5.1; 5.11.

never been recorded to use much.⁴⁶²

Finally, towards the end of the war Caesar tended to rely increasingly on German mercenaries to support his other troops, especially his Gallic and Spanish cavalry. The Germans are first mentioned for the year 52 where Caesar claims that a force of 400 Germans was with him since the beginning of the war.⁴⁶³ Caesar later seems to contradict himself when he claimed that since he was cut off from the province and Italy, notably because of the enemy superiority in cavalry, he had no choice but to recruit these troops from the tribes living beyond the Rhine he had already subdued over the previous years.⁴⁶⁴ Since these valuable troops were provided by peoples who had been vanquished, it is likely they were responsible for their upkeep.⁴⁶⁵

Since he liberally recruited provincials and non-Romans it seems clear that Caesar did not care much about the property qualification for at least some of his provincial levies. Indeed it can be said that he recruited as if he were a state himself.⁴⁶⁶ When all the

⁴⁶² Caesar *BG* 2.7: “Numidian and Cretan archers and Balearic slingers.” (*Numidas et Cretas sagittarios et funditores Baleares*); 2.10: “the light-armed Numidians, slingers, and archers.” (*levis armaturae Numidas, funditores sagittariosque*); 2.19.4: “with the slingers and archers” (*cum funditoribus sagittarisque*); 2.24: “sutlers, horsemen, slingers, Numidians.” (*calones, equites, funditores, Numidas*).

⁴⁶³ Caesar *BG* 7.13.

⁴⁶⁴ Caesar *BG* 7.65: “Caesar was aware that the enemy were superior in mounted troops and that, as all the lines of communications were interrupted, he could in no wise be assisted from the Province and from Italy; accordingly, he sent across the Rhine into Germany to the states which he had reduced to peace in previous years, and fetched horsemen from them and light armed-infantry trained to fight along with the horsemen”. (*Caesar, quod hostes equitatu superiores esse intelligebat et interclusis omnibus itineribus nulla re ex prouincia atque Italia subleuari poterat, trans Rhenum in Germaniam mittit ad eas ciuitates quas superioribus annis pacauerat, equitatesque ab his arcessit et levis armaturae pedites qui inter eos proeliari consueant*).

⁴⁶⁵ Caesar *BG* 7.67; 7.70; 7.80; 8.13. Sander 1955, 225-254 argued that Caesar’s use of cavalry prefigured the dominance of the medieval knight (!). See also Saddington 1982, 5-14.

⁴⁶⁶ Crawford 2008, 636: “Caesar recruited as if he was a state, in the areas he ruled between 59 BC and 50 BC; and what he met in 49 BC in the Spain governed by Pompeius was a state ready for war. These alternative states, for that is what they were, also provided a whole career structure that was alternative to the normal *cursus*: most of the men who had begun their career with Sertorius in an alternative state were quietly reinserted into the Roman political structure; the legati of Pompeius against the pirates acquired *imperium* not as a result of the vote of the people, but on his nomination; men as different as Cicero’s younger brother Quintus, Crassus’ younger son Publius, whom we have already met, the jurist Trebatius, all

different ethnicities mentioned in Caesar's army are added together, the picture that emerges is that of a cosmopolitan entity comprising Romans, large numbers of Gauls, Germans, Balears, Numidians, Cretans, and Spaniards. This was much more like the army of the Early Empire than an army of the second century BCE made up almost entirely of Italians. War was no longer an Italian matter largely funded by *assidui* and the *tributum* but rather included elements of various ethnic backgrounds and was financed by various improvised measures.

Understanding Caesar as a mere rogue general bent on destroying the state is to miss the point. He was operating in a system built on the Senate's tolerance of generals' use of various *ad hoc* means to finance and recruit their troops. The fact that generals were essentially given free rein by the Senate to fund their armies led it to lose control over the financing of armed forces. The outbreak of civil war between Caesar and Pompey confirmed the Senate's complete loss of control over military finance and recruitment. Throughout the civil war of 49-48, recruitment procedure continued to become increasingly decentralized, often not including Italy at all. Although there is some limited evidence for the preservation of some of the traditional recruitment procedures, the circumstances of the civil war most likely accelerated the complete disappearance of the *dilectus ex classibus* in which each recruit was a Roman citizen providing his own equipment.

Caesar's opponents also largely operated on a local basis to recruit his army. When

chose to look to Caesar in Gaul for the furtherance of their careers, long before anyone thought that there that there might be political and military choices to be made. What underpinned all those alternative states, of course, was the scale of Roman (and Italian) settlement overseas from the middle of the second century BC onwards [...] but their existence meant that all of the dynasts had on the spot in the provinces men who could be recruited as their assistants and advisers, as their supporters, as their soldiers: few men left Italy with Sertorius; and it was not at Venusia that the poet-to-be Horace was recruited to fight at Philippi."

Pompey decided to flee from Brundisium to Greece, Caesar chose to turn to Spain to face Pompey's legates and troops left there after he received the governorship of Spain in 55.⁴⁶⁷ Anticipating Caesar's approach, Pompey's legates in Spain, Afranius and Petreius, proceeded to levy large numbers of auxiliaries in Celtiberia, from among the Cantabrians, and the peoples bordering the Atlantic Ocean. These forces were considerable and amounted to around 30 cohorts of infantry (some 15,000 men) and 5,000 cavalry.⁴⁶⁸ These important levies of 20,000 men took place exclusively among non-Romans. Considering that Afranius and Petreius also had five legions at their disposal these natives thus formed roughly half of their forces. Never before had a Roman army depended so much on non-Italians.⁴⁶⁹ There are grounds to think that even these five legions were not entirely made up of Roman citizens. Indeed, Caesar makes an interesting comment about the way that Afranius' soldiers were fighting. He claimed that they were fighting like Lusitanians, having grown accustomed to fighting against these people. Caesar's men were first troubled by their opponents' tactics that they had never encountered before.⁴⁷⁰ This could indicate that some of Afranius' men were actually Lusitanians and Celtiberians themselves, locally recruited and incorporated in the legions.

⁴⁶⁷ Caesar *BC* 1.29. The Pompeian officer Varus fled to Africa where he levied two legions among the citizens residing there (Caesar *BC* 1.31). Once he had secured Rome Caesar seized the public treasury to maintain his army (Cicero *Att.* 10.4.8; Plutarch *Caesar* 35.6-11; Appian *BC* 2.41; Cassius Dio 41.17.1-2). Dio pretends that the soldiers themselves looted the state treasury but he is also the only one to say so. Again acting as a state himself, Caesar also ordered all *municipia* to provide him with ships. Caesar *BC* 1.30.1. He then left to attack Massilia. While he was on his way, one of Pompey's legates named Domitius commandeered private ships and used his slaves, freedmen, and farmers as crews. He wanted to make haste for Massilia to prevent the town from opening its gates to Caesar (Caesar *BC* 1.34). On Caesar's side, the necessities of war forced him to recruit sailors and rowers from merchant ships to man his fleet (Caesar *BC* 1.58). On Caesar's and Pompey's armies, see Ottmer 1979, 15-48.

⁴⁶⁸ Caesar *BC* 1.38.; 1.39.

⁴⁶⁹ Livy (25.32.3) reports that Publius Cornelius Scipio and Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio Calvus recruited 20,000 Celtiberians mercenaries but this should be seen as exceptional. For example at Cynoscephalae in 197, less than a quarter of Flamininus' army was made up of auxiliaries, mostly Aitolian allies, cf. Plutarch *Flamininus*, 7; Livy 32.3. Keppie 1984, 121-125.

⁴⁷⁰ Caesar *BC* 1.44.

Moreover Afranius later chose to move his army to Celtiberia precisely because of the possible opportunities for recruiting more soldiers there.⁴⁷¹ As demonstrated by Francisco Pina Polo, these provincial levies should not be seen as the result of extensive networks of *clientelae* between Spanish natives and Pompey. The reasons explaining why each native community chose sides in the war were complex and diverse.⁴⁷² However despite this complexity many locals must have been encouraged to volunteer because of the generous donatives often promised in this period, when they were not simply coerced to enlist.

In Further Spain, Varro, another of Pompey's legates levied two legions and 30 auxiliary cohorts and also ordered ships to be built.⁴⁷³ He collected money as well as all the public and private weapons in Gades (modern day Cadiz).⁴⁷⁴ En route to confront them, Caesar had also recruited large numbers of non-Romans, mostly Gauls, including "the noblest and bravest elements of Gallic towns" among which were 2,000 Aquitanians.⁴⁷⁵ While he was busy fighting in Spain, Caesar received further Gallic reinforcements consisting of Ruthenian archers and cavalry.⁴⁷⁶ The German light infantry recruited during the Gallic campaigns was still with his army as well.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷¹ Caesar *BC* 1.61.4.

⁴⁷² Pina Polo 2014, 443-56; esp. 453 : "Ces comportements suggèrent que les clientèles provinciales ne devaient pas être aussi nombreuses qu'on a voulu le croire et que, en tous les cas, en-dehors du prestige qu'elles conféraient à leurs patrons romains, leur rôle concret dans le domaine politique et militaire fut réduit."; 2008, 41-48.

⁴⁷³ Caesar *BC* 2.18.1.

⁴⁷⁴ Caesar *BC* 2.18: "all weapons, private and public, he bestowed in the house of Gallonius." (*arma omnia priuata ac publica in domum Galloni contulit*). Varro also conducted extraordinary tax levies among the province, requiring 18 million sesterces, cf. 2.18.4. On provincial taxation: France 2007, 169-184 ; Frézouls 1986, 17-28.

⁴⁷⁵ Caesar *BC* 1.39 : (*nominatim ex omnibus ciuitatibus nobilissimo et fortissimo*).

⁴⁷⁶ Caesar *BC* 1.51.1: "There had come thither archers from the Ruteni and horsemen from Gaul with a number of wagons and heavy baggage, after the Gallic custom." (*Uenerant eo sagittarii ex Rutenis, equites ex Gallia cum multis carris magnisque impedimentis, ut fert Gallica consuetudo*).

⁴⁷⁷ Caesar *BC* 1.83.1.

While fighting was going on in Spain, Pompey ordered ships to be built and soon gathered a fleet provided by 'Asia', the Cyclades, Corcyra, Athens, Pontus, Bithynia, Syria, Cilicia, Phoenicia, and Egypt.⁴⁷⁸ Pompey likely promised to pay for these ships once he had secured victory. His defeat made it so that the cities probably had to bear the full cost of the ships they provided.⁴⁷⁹

Pompey's army was as cosmopolitan as Caesar's and reflected the regions he was effectively controlling at the time. Caesar's account of Pompey's army is very precise. He was perhaps able to acquire documents detailing its origin when Pompey's camp was captured after the battle of Pharsalus.⁴⁸⁰ According to Caesar, Pompey had nine legions of Roman citizens; five of these were recruited in Italy, one in Cilicia, one in Crete and Macedon, and two in Asia. He was also expecting two additional legions coming from Syria. To keep all these units at full strength, Pompey had to incorporate large numbers of local inhabitants in them, no doubt because there were not enough Roman citizens living in the provinces he controlled. Therefore Thessalians, Boeotians, Achaeans, Epirotes, Syrians and various other peoples were recruited as legionaries.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁸ Caesar *BC* 3.3. According to Plutarch *Pompey* 64.1 his fleet numbered more than 500 ships. On Pompey's and Caesar's requisitions of cash, see Frank 1933, 336-339, with sources.

⁴⁷⁹ Frank 1933, 335: "Pompey probably commandeered these ships with a promise to pay for them after his victory. Since he was defeated, the loss doubtless fell on the cities and states that had provided them."

⁴⁸⁰ Something similar happened after the battle of Bibracte in 58 when documents were found in the Helvetii's camp detailing their numbers. The figures might be inflated but the existence of such documents is still plausible, cf. Caesar *BG* 1.29: "In the camp of the Helvetii were found, and brought to Caesar, records written out in Greek letters, wherein was drawn up a nominal register showing what number of them had gone out from their homeland, who were able to bear arms, and also separately children, old men and women." (*In castris Helvetiorum tabulae repertae sunt litteris Graecis confectae et ad Caesarem relatae, quibus in tabulis nominatim ratio confecta erat, qui numerus domo exisset eorum qui arma ferre possent, et item separatim, quot pueri, senes mulieresque*).

⁴⁸¹ Caesar *BC* 3.4; Plutarch *Pompey* 64.2; Cassius Dio 41.61 exaggerates and offer another literary *topos* by affirming that Pompey's army was mostly made up of untrained Ἀσιανοί: "ὁ Πομπήσιος ἄτε καὶ Ἀσιανὸν καὶ ἀγύμναστον τὸ πλεῖον τοῦ στρατοῦ ἔχων ἡττήθη". Saddington 1982, 193: "But the Civil Wars that began in 49 BC and lasted until the battle of Actium gave the major impulse to the creation of long-serving professional units. Leading generals were required to maintain large armies for long stretches of time in

Pompey used his eastern contacts to gain auxiliaries and these provided him with Cretan, Lacedaemonian, Pontic, and Syrian archers as well as slingers. He also recruited Galatian, Cappadocian, Thracian, Macedonian, Gallic, and German cavalry, along with additional troops from various other regions, including Cappadocia and Dardania.⁴⁸²

Plutarch mentions that Pompey's cavalry included the "flower of Rome and Italy" (Ρωμαίων καὶ Ἰταλῶν τὸ ἀνθοῦν).⁴⁸³ This is the first instance in several decades where

different areas of the Roman Empire. Major engagements were on such a scale that there were insufficient legionaries (even when liberally interpreted) to satisfy the need for manpower."

⁴⁸² Caesar *BC* 3.4: "He had made up nine legions of Roman citizens; five from Italy, which he had conveyed across the sea; one of veterans from Cilicia, which, being formed out of two legions, he styled the Twin Legion; one from Crete and Macedonia out of veteran troops which, when disbanded by their former commanders, had settled in those provinces; two from Asia, for the levying of which the consul Lentulus had arranged. Besides, he had distributed among the legions by way of supplement a large number of men from Thessaly, Boeotia, Achaia, and Epirus [...] He had archers from Crete and Lacedaemon, from Pontus and Syria and the other states, to the number of three thousand; also two cohorts, six hundred strong, of slingers, and seven thousand horsemen. Of these Deiotarus had brought six hundred Gauls, and Ariobarzanes five hundred from Cappadocia; Cotys had provided the same number from Thrace and had sent his son Sadala; from Macedonia there were two hundred under the command of Rhascypolis, a man of marked valour. The young Pompeius had brought with his fleet five hundred of the Gabinian troops from Alexandria, Gauls and Germans, whom A. Gabinus had left there with King Ptolemaeus on garrison duty. He had collected eight hundred from his own slaves and from his list of herdsmen. Tarcondarius Castor and Domnilius had provided three hundred from Gallo-Graecia; of these the one had come with his men, the other had sent his son. From Syria two hundred had been sent by Antiochus of Commagene, on whom Pompeius bestowed large rewards, and among them many mounted archers. To these Pompeius had added Dardani and Bessi, partly secured by his authority or influence, also Macedonians, Thessalians, and men from other nations and states, and had thus filled up the number stated above." (*Legiones effecerat ciuium Romanorum IX: v ex Italia quas traduxerat; unam ex Cilicia ueteranam, quam factam ex duabus gemellam appellabat; unam ex Creta et Macedonia ex ueteranis militibus, qui dimissi a superioribus imperatoribus in his prouinciis consederant; duas ex Asia, quas Lentulus consul conscribendas curauerat. praeterea magnum numerum ex Thessalia Boeotia Achaia Epiroque supplementi nomine in legiones distribuerat; ... sagittarios Creta, Lacedaemone, ex Ponto atque Syria reliquisque ciuitatibus III milia numero habebat, funditorum cohortes sexcenarias II, equites VII milia. ex quibus DC Gallos Deiotarus adduxerat, D Ariobarzanes ex Cappadocia; ad eundem numerum Cotus ex Thracia dederat et Sadalam filium miserat; ex Macedonia CC erant, quibus Rhascypolis praeerat, excellenti uirtute; D ex Gabinianis Alexandria, Gallos Germanosque, quos ibi A. Gabinus praesidii causa apud regem Ptolomaeum reliquerat, Pompeius filius cum classe adduxerat; DCCC ex servis suis pastorumque suorum numero coegerat CCC Tarcondarius Castor et Domnilius ex Gallograecia dederant—horum alter una uenerat, alter filium miserat—; CC ex Syria a Commageno Antiocho, cui magna Pompeius praemia tribuit, missi erant, in his plerique hippotoxotae. huc Dardanos, Bessos partim mercennarios, partim imperio aut gratia comparatos, item Macedones, Thessalos ac reliquarum gentium et civitatum adiecerat atque eum quem supra demonstravimus numerum expleuerat.); Appian *BC* 2.38; In 2.49 Appian gives Caesar ten legions and Pompey eleven legions of Italian troops. In 2.97 he gives 80,000 men to Caesar, a figure that seems inflated. Further comparison of both armies in 2.70. Yoshimura 1961, 477-479 lists the 33 attested nationalities in Pompey's army; also Millar 1984, 3-24.*

⁴⁸³ Plutarch *Pompey* 64.1.

Roman citizen cavalry is mentioned. Some of the aristocrats who fled Italy with Pompey perhaps exceptionally volunteered to fight against what they thought to be a tyrant and a danger to the *res publica*. These men were obviously rich enough to arm themselves at their own expense and they chose to do so as cavalry, surely to distinguish themselves from what they considered to be foreigners and lowly foot soldiers. However it is quite unlikely that many of these 7,000 men were actually Romans as Caesar also reports the same number of horsemen but breaks them out by detachments according to their origin, no Roman force is mentioned whatsoever.⁴⁸⁴ This is unlikely to have been slander as Caesar also fielded large numbers of *peregrini* himself.

The troops sent by rulers and kings who knew Pompey personally, acted out of loyalty, or perhaps out of fear, but, in any case they would have been responsible for paying their respective contingents. However, many provincial natives incorporated in the Roman legions were probably drawn to service by the prospect of cash bonuses. In some cases they were forced to join and had no choice but to comply to fight a war in a military system with which they were not familiar.

Like Pompey before them, Cassius and Brutus were operating in Greece and Asia Minor. They were thus also forced to recruit non-Romans in their legions since there were not enough Roman citizens to fill the ranks of their 19 legions.⁴⁸⁵ Brutus recruited two legions entirely made up of Macedonians and trained them to fight in the Roman fashion.⁴⁸⁶ There were presumably large numbers of non-Romans recruited in other

⁴⁸⁴ Caesar *BC* 3.4. See note 536 above.

⁴⁸⁵ Brunt 1971, 473; Keppie 1997, 90.

⁴⁸⁶ Appian *BC* 3.79: “and since he approved the valour of the Macedonians he raised two legions amongst them, whom, too, he drilled in the Italian discipline.” (καὶ Μακεδόνας ἐπαινῶν δύο τέλη κατέλεξεν ἐξ αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐς τὸν Ἰταλικὸν τρόπον καὶ τάδε ἐγυμνάζετο).

legions as well to bolster their strength as Pompey had done before. Cassius and Brutus also had 17,000 cavalrymen from many regions of the Mediterranean world including Gauls, Lusitanians, Thracians, Illyrians, Parthians, Thessalians, Spaniards, Arabs, and Medes.⁴⁸⁷

4- The Last Civil Wars and the Breakdown of a Precarious System

The outbreak of the civil wars of the end of the Republic made manifest the shortcomings regarding the system of military funding. As the size of armies dramatically increased, generals competed for recruits, both Roman and non-Roman, by constantly increasing the rewards they promised. This caused military expenditure to skyrocket but this time the magnitude of armies made it so that expedients and *ad hoc* measures were no longer enough to ensure the system worked.

4.1 Donatives

The habit of distributing large amounts of cash to soldiers was originally a political move aimed at displaying one's munificence. It gained more significance during the era of the civil war towards the end of the Republic. In a war fought between Romans, the loyalty of the troops was more susceptible to wavering than in a conflict against an

⁴⁸⁷ Auxiliaries are again attested from nearly everywhere in the Roman world: Gauls, Lusitanians, Thracians, Illyrians, Thessalians, Iberians, Arabians, Medians, and Parthians, cf. Appian *BC* 4.88. Appian later (4.108) gives the figure of 20,000 horsemen. Brunt 1971, "[...] one may suspect that in all the new provincial units non-citizens were readily accepted or conscribed, especially if they had a veneer of Roman culture." Brunt's point about Roman culture seems dubious as it is doubtful whether a Roman general would have enquired about the cultural background of his recruits.

external enemy who was a clearly distinct Barbarian ‘other’. Distributions of cash were a way of ensuring the troops’ loyalty and even to cause defection among enemy soldiers.⁴⁸⁸ However, as generals were constantly trying to outbid their opponents, the result was a staggering increase in both the amount and the frequency of gifts of money to armies. Moreover, the reliance on non-Romans witnessed after the Social War gained even more emphasis as a result of the civil war. As generals were often fighting far away from Rome, they competed with one another for provincial manpower, be it Roman or not. In the case of non-Roman provincials, money was effectively the only incentive to serve, as they would not have felt compelled to fight for a community which was not theirs, hence the growing importance of donatives to attract non-Roman soldiers in a context of civil war.

According to Suetonius, at the beginning of the civil war Caesar gave 2,000 sesterces (125 *denarii*) to each soldier. During his campaign in Spain, Caesar wanted to give another donative to his men, but apparently lacked the funds to do so, or at least could not bring them with him on campaign. He actually borrowed money from the tribunes and the centurions so that he could hand cash to his men.⁴⁸⁹ This emphasizes the crucial importance of handouts at the time.⁴⁹⁰

The soldiers started to feel entitled to receive regular donatives. A part of Caesar's army eventually mutinied in 49 at Placentia for such reasons. The rebels were shouting at their officers that their discharge was overdue and that they had not received the 500 *denarii*

⁴⁸⁸ Rankov 2007, 34: “With their enemies less clear cut than in the past, the troops were more inclined to disobey or even impose their own will on their leaders.”; Mundulbetz 2000, 582 : “Il faut dire, qu’à la décharge des généraux de la fin de la République, qu’ils n’avaient pas la plupart du temps d’autre choix que de se prêter à ce type de relations avec leurs *exercitus*.”; Frank 1933, 333.

⁴⁸⁹ Caesar *BC* 1.39.3.

⁴⁹⁰ De Blois 2011, 86-87. See also McDonnell 1990, 55–66.

that Caesar had promised them as a donative at Brundisium. He did not grant them their request and had the ringleaders executed.⁴⁹¹ A further mutiny occurred in Rome when at least two legions demanded their rewards, as well as to be discharged.⁴⁹² Caesar famously shamed them by addressing them as citizens (*Quirites*) instead of soldiers (*milites*). He nevertheless promised to give them their reward and to provide them with land once victory had been achieved. His soldiers agreed to follow him.⁴⁹³

Finally in 46, for his triumph over Gaul, Pontus, Africa, and Egypt, Caesar gave land and 5,000 *denarii* to each of his men.⁴⁹⁴ This sum amounted to more than 33 years of pay (taking into account Caesar's increase). Such a large cash handout offered possibilities of social mobility unequalled in any period of Roman history. Indeed, soldiers benefitting from this donative actually received the equivalent of a lifetime of service.⁴⁹⁵ It can be said that Caesar kept his soldiers in check through skilled leadership, but he still followed the pattern set by his predecessors by giving very large amounts of money. Considering the magnitude of these rewards, the financial realities of military service had completely changed since the second century. Being a soldier in this period was probably the most lucrative trade one could choose. Although there are no figures recorded for Pompey

⁴⁹¹ Appian *BC* 2.47.

⁴⁹² Suetonius *Caesar* 70; Appian *BC* 2.94; Cicero *Att.* 11.20.2; 21.2; Cassius Dio 42.52-55.

⁴⁹³ Appian *BC* 2.94; Cassius Dio 42.54; Suetonius *Caesar* 70 claims that Caesar actually deprived some of the soldiers from a third of their rewards. There is also the account in Caesar *BC* 1.17.3 of a Pompeian officer named Domitius trapped in Corfinium by Caesar, promised to give 15 *iugera* to each of his soldiers out of his estates and even more for centurions and reenlisted men (*euocati*). The fact he promised land rather than money may indicate these men did not possess farms and volunteered in the hope of obtaining such rewards. The text of the manuscripts actually mentions 40 *iugera* but this seems excessive. I follow the hypothesis of the Belles Lettres edition which proposed that XV would be the number that could most likely explain XL. Such a figure is also given by Livy 35.40.6 for the foundation of a colony. Other editions simply translate it as four acres.

⁴⁹⁴ Appian *BC* 2.102; Cassius Dio 43.21.3; Suetonius *Caesar* 38.1. Suetonius gives the figure of 24,000 sesterces, which matches Appian's figure. Dio mentions 20,000 sesterces.

⁴⁹⁵ Scheidel 2007a, 332: "As mean life expectancy at ages 20 to 30 can be put at about 25 to 30 years, a common soldier who was paid the maximum bonus of 5,000 denars in effect received the equivalent of a lifetime's worth of income in a single lump sum."

during the civil war, it seems very likely that he would have done the same if he wanted to avoid desertions on a grand scale. This is indeed confirmed by what we see in the next round of civil war between Caesar's assassins and partisans.

According to Appian, Octavian did precisely what Pompey had done after Sulla's return in Italy: he recruited an army with his own resources. By handing 500 *denarii* to each volunteer, he managed to attract as many as 10,000 followers. Appian makes it clear that this was not an ordinary levy as the men were not organized into units or properly equipped.⁴⁹⁶ Appian states that most of Octavian's men, opposed to fighting Antony, left him, but soon after remembered the rewards of military service and returned to him. They knew how generous he was with his money and hoped for more in the future.⁴⁹⁷ The comment about the rewards of service is certainly true since donatives were at that time incomparably better than during the second century. It was no longer a question of societal consensus and of plunder but rather almost entirely a matter of donatives.

Octavian, after giving a further sum of 500 *denarii*, promised to give each of his men 5,000 *denarii* in the case of victory, the amount once given by his adoptive father. Gifts of money were granted on such a regular basis that Appian plainly used the word mercenaries (τοὺς μισθοφόρους) to describe Octavian's troops.⁴⁹⁸ This label seems

⁴⁹⁶ Appian *BC* 3.40; *RGDA* 1.1: "Aged nineteen years old I mustered an army at my personal decision and at my personal expense" (*Annos undeviginti natus exercitum priuato consilio et priuata impensa comparavi*). Also: Cicero *Ad Att.* 16.8.9.

⁴⁹⁷ Appian *BC* 3.42.

⁴⁹⁸ Appian *BC* 3.48: "Octavian was delighted with the spectacle and was pleased to make this a pretext for distributing 500 drachmas more to each man, and he promised 5,000 drachmas each if they were victorious. Thus by means of lavish gifts, did Octavian bind these mercenaries to himself." (ἤσθεις οὖν τῇ θέᾳ καὶ τῆς προφάσεως ἐπιβαίνων ἄσμενος, ἐτέρας αὐτῶν ἐκάστῳ πεντακοσίας δραχμὰς ἐπεδίδου καί, εἴ τις πολέμου χρεία γένοιτο, νικήσασιν ἐπηγγέλλετο πεντακισχίλιας. ὧδε μὲν ὁ Καῖσαρ δαψιλεῖα δωρεῶν τοὺς μισθοφόρους ἐκρατύνετο). The term is used again in 3.88: "ἐπὶ τοῖς μισθοφόροις". Cicero repeated the promise of the reward of 5,000 *denarii* made by Octavian to the two legions that had deserted Antony, cf. Appian *BC* 3.74.

accurate as donatives continue to be frequently attested, even after the first phases of the battle of Philippi as it will be seen.

Antony also made use of donatives to attract men to his side. When he promised only 100 *denarii* to his men, they made their anger manifest and denounced what they viewed as an insufficient amount of money, even though this equalled some of the highest donatives attested in the second century. Antony had to execute some soldiers to try to quell resistance and even this was not enough to restore order. He ultimately had to tell his men that the 100 *denarii* were actually not their full donative but only a smaller gift.⁴⁹⁹ Antony again loosened the strings of his coin purse as he sent gifts of 500 *denarii* to each soldier to try to win the men of other legions to his cause.⁵⁰⁰ After they had concluded an agreement and formed the Second Triumvirate with Lepidus, Octavian and Antony, before leading their men against Cassius and Brutus, promised 500 *denarii* to their men.⁵⁰¹ Cassius and Brutus also gave very large donatives on several occasions. In 42, Cassius promised 1,500 *denarii* to each soldier and after he was killed in the first stages of the battle of Philippi, Brutus promised another 2,000 *denarii*.⁵⁰²

Besides donatives, another measure was also implemented to ensure the troops' loyalty and make that of enemy soldiers falter. Caesar is said to have permanently increased military pay.⁵⁰³ As discussed in Chapter One, it is widely acknowledged in modern scholarship that the *stipendium* was derisory. There is no other known instance of an increase of pay before the Imperial Period. Although it is not known when this was done,

⁴⁹⁹ Appian *BC* 3.43-44. Also 5.32.

⁵⁰⁰ Appian *BC* 3.45.

⁵⁰¹ Plutarch *Antony*, 23.

⁵⁰² Appian *BC* 4.100; Plutarch *Brutus*, 44.

⁵⁰³ Suetonius *Caesar* 26 : "He doubled the pay of the legions for all time." (*Caesar legionibus stipendium in perpetuum duplicavit*).

it is reasonable to assume this happened during the civil war and not during Caesar's Gallic campaign. Increasing the *stipendium* after the outbreak of civil war with Pompey would have had the same effect as increasing the odds for donatives. Better pay was an effective way to gain the upper hand in the struggle for recruits, especially for non-Romans for whom money was the main reason to join the army. As the next section will show, recruitment was becoming increasingly local, and non-Romans were regularly included in the legions, so it is plausible to date Caesar's increase of the *stipendium* to the time of the civil war with Pompey. As discussed in Chapter One, before that time, annual legionary pay has been calculated as being worth 120 *denarii*. H. Boren has proposed that Caesar changed both the computation from 10 *asses* to a denarius to 16 *asses* to a denarius while adding a further instalment (another meaning of *stipendium*) of 75 *denarii*. This would have increased pay from 120 to 150 *denarii*.⁵⁰⁴ Clever though it was, the measure significantly increased military expenditure. However Caesar could count on the tax revenues of recently conquered Gaul, on which was imposed a yearly tribute of ten million *denarii*.⁵⁰⁵ Moreover, it is likely that Caesar thought he would be able to further finance the increase from what he would take from his enemies.

⁵⁰⁴ See chapter one, section 2.3 and Boren 1983 446-450; esp. 448: "Here is what we must understand: 1. as we have seen from Pliny, soldiers' pay after the retariffing in the 140's B.C. continued to be calculated on a daily basis in bronze at 31/3 *asses* and paid in silver on the old tariff of 10 *asses* per denarius. 2. This was changed at some point before the time of which Tacitus wrote (14 A. D.). 3. It was Caesar who changed the computation at the same time that he "doubled" the stipendium. Changing the computation meant that the older *stipendium* was reduced to 75 *denarii*- and that is the *stipendium* that Caesar doubled. At the same time, he probably did, as Domaszewski thought, arrange for soldiers to be paid twice per annum instead of only once, so that, under him, there were two *stipendia* (in the sense both of pay-period and a specific sum of 75 *denarii*) each year. It should be conceded that Caesar, no more than modern scholars, would have thought of what he did as actually doubling soldiers' pay. To Suetonius' source, however, accustomed to equating the resulting 75 denarius increment with the term *stipendium*, Caesar indeed *stipendium duplicavit*; that is, changed from one to two *stipendia* per year." Brunt 1950, 51, remarked that "The Latin word "*duplicavit*" does not necessarily denote multiplication by two [...]."

⁵⁰⁵ Suetonius *Caesar*, 21.1.

4.2 Towards the End of the Citizen-Militiaman

The recruitment of non-Romans and provincials in several rapid and enormous mobilizations created huge armies.

It is clear that the model of recruitment and equipment described by Polybius had fallen into disuse by the mid first century. It is totally unconceivable that hundreds of thousands of men would have equipped themselves according to their census rating and come to Rome to be divided into legions by Roman officials. This is what Polybius tells us for the mid second century, but this system of self-arming militiamen better suited for a city-state than a world empire was by now almost completely obsolete.⁵⁰⁶ Moreover, no census was carried on between 70 and 28 BCE so the data relevant to the *dilectus* was at best not up to date for the period of the civil wars.⁵⁰⁷

Appian twice makes a comment similar to that of Sallust in the context of the Marian *dilectus*. Indeed he remarks that the forces fighting at Philippi had not been recruited in the traditional manner (οὐχ ὑπὸ συντάξει πολιτικῇ στρατευσαμένων) but were selected on the basis of their skill and not of their wealth.⁵⁰⁸ Indeed the inclusion of large numbers of

⁵⁰⁶ Crawford 2008, 631-643.

⁵⁰⁷ *RGDA* 8.2: “I performed the ceremony of purification forty-two years after the last one.” (*lustrum post annum alterum et quadragensimum feci*); Nicolet 1991, 119–131.

⁵⁰⁸ Appian *BC* 4.137: “These soldiers were not enlisted from the ordinary conscription but were picked men. They were not new levies, but under long drill and arrayed against each other, not against foreign or barbarous races. Speaking the same language and using the same tactics, being of like discipline and power of endurance, they were for these reasons what we may call mutually invincible.” (οὐχ ὑπὸ συντάξει πολιτικῇ στρατευσαμένων, ἀλλὰ ἀριστίνδην ἐπειλεγμένων οὐδ’ ἀπειροπολέμων ἔτι, ἀλλ’ ἐκ πολλοῦ γεγυμνασμένων ἐπὶ τε σφῶς καὶ οὐκ ἀλλόφυλα ἢ βάρβαρα ἔθνη τρεπομένων ἀλλὰ καὶ γλώσσης μιᾶς ὄντες καὶ τέχνης πολέμων μιᾶς καὶ ἀσκήσεως καὶ καρτερίας ὁμοίας, δυσκαταγώνιστοι παρ’ αὐτὸ ἦσαν ἀλλήλοις). Appian clearly exaggerates when he affirms that everybody spoke the same language for that does not take into account all the foreign auxiliaries and the Macedonian legionaries who would of course not speak Latin. It seems also far-fetched to claim that most were not new levies and were experienced. Indeed the Macedonians conscripted in the legions probably never saw military service before. Appian is however obviously right in reporting that the troops had not been recruited following the traditional manner. The other similar comment is made in 5.17: “the generals, for the most part, as is usually the case

non-Romans in the legions certainly gave the *coup de grâce* to the division of legionary infantry into three categories based on age and experience. It was no longer a people in arms; some legions had been under arms for a decade so it no longer made sense to group the youngsters in the first line as *hastati*, the *principes* in the second, and the veteran *triarii* behind them. Some legions would have been entirely made up of aged veterans while the newly raised units in the provinces were presumably made up of the flower of the youth.⁵⁰⁹

Even before the civil wars, generals had started to pay and levy their own troops away from Rome without much involvement from the Senate, which had lost most of its relevance as far as military funding and recruitment were concerned.⁵¹⁰ For a long time, Rome had relied on its *assidui* and their willingness to pay the *tributum* to finance war. However the armies of the civil wars comprised a large contingent of non-Romans and the *tributum* was not be collected until 43. It was out of the question to expect provincials such as Greeks, Illyrians, Gauls, and Syrians to arm themselves as legionaries, as this would have been financially and practically inconvenient.

Indeed, equipment procedure could certainly not have been carried on according to one's property, as non-Romans were not registered in the census. The unprecedented number of soldiers enlisted before the battle of Philippi in 42 must have necessitated an increase in

in civil wars, were not regularly chosen; that their armies were not drawn from the enrolment according to the custom of the fathers, nor for the benefit of their country.” (οἱ στρατηγοὶ ἀχειροτόνητοι ἦσαν οἱ πλείους ὥς ἐν ἐμφυλίοις καὶ οἱ στρατοὶ αὐτῶν οὐ τοῖς πατρίοις ἔθεσιν ἐκ καταλόγου συνήγοντο οὐδ’ ἐπὶ χρεῖα τῆς πατρίδος). Keppie 2001, 131 ff.

⁵⁰⁹ Rankov 2007, 34.

⁵¹⁰ Polybius 15.4.5 says that this was the Senate's prerogative. Schneider 1977b, 47 : “Der Senat erwies sich als unfähig, durch eine tiefgreifende Reform des Militärdienstes und durch eine Verbesserung der sozialen Situation der römischen Bevölkerung die militärpolitischen Probleme zu lösen, weil eine solche Reform den kurzfristigen materiellen Interessen der Senatoren widersprochen hätte. Die Senatoren bedachten dabei nicht, daß in dem Augenblick, in dem das wichtigste Machtinstrument der Republik, die Armee, funktionsunfähig zu werden drohte, ihre eigene politische und soziale Position gefährdet war.”

weapon production that went far beyond the private ownership of arms.⁵¹¹ These local conscripts could not have been expected to provide their own weapons since local blacksmiths were unlikely to be used to make Roman-style weapons.⁵¹² Indeed, since non-Romans had not before been liable to conscription, there would previously have been no demand for such weapons. For this reason, and also because of the sheer number of troops, Pompey must have taken over weapon production and sent officers to supervise the process and instruct local blacksmiths about Roman types of weapons and armour.⁵¹³

Though not explicitly showing a radical shift from one system to another, the evidence seems to indicate that weapons were obtained by every means available, including both private and public sponsoring.⁵¹⁴ Some soldiers still seemed to have owned their arms. In

⁵¹¹ Aigner 1976, 22: “Die Bürgerkriege mit ihren gewaltigen Truppenmassen –allein die Heere der Triumvirn zählen beispielsweise im Jahr nach Caesars Tod zusammen über 43 Legionen- verlangen eine stetige Intensivierung des Rüstungsbetriebs.” Cadiou 2008, 566-567: “Sensible dans l’évolution des casques simplifiés de type Montefortino au IIe siècle puis Coolus-Mannheim à partir des premières décennies du Ier siècle, elle témoigne du développement incontestable d’une production en série adaptée à une demande massive et à une logique de réduction des coûts de fabrication. Il reste cependant difficile de dire dans quelle proportion ces armes étaient issues d’ateliers privés ou publics.” Appian *BC* 5.6: “Antony spoke thus of providing a donative for twenty-eight legions of infantry, whereas I think that they had forty-three legions when they came to their agreement at Mutina and made these promises, but the war had probably reduced them to this number.” (ὁ μὲν οὕτως ἔπεν, ἐς ὀκτὼ καὶ εἴκοσι τέλη πεζῶν τὴν χάριν περιφέρων, ὅτι, οἶμαι, τρία καὶ τεσσαράκοντα ἦν αὐτοῖς, ὅτε ἐν Μουτίνῃ συνηλλάσσοντο ἀλλήλοις καὶ τὰδε ὑπισχνοῦντο, ὁ δὲ πόλεμος αὐτὰ ἐς τοσοῦτον ὑπενήνοχεν).

⁵¹² Sekunda 2006, argues in his monograph that Hellenistic kingdoms adopted Roman equipment after the 160s. Some units certainly were equipped in the Roman fashion but Sekunda’s argument contradicts Polybius’ account on the phalanx (18.28 ff.). Writing in the 150s Polybius would not have mentioned that many Greeks were still ignorant of why the Roman military system was superior to the phalanx if Hellenistic armies had already completely discarded this way of fighting.

⁵¹³ Caesar did so in Africa, cf. *BA* 20.

⁵¹⁴ Aigner 1976, 23: “Die Waffen der einzelnen Einheiten stammen: a) aus dem Privatbesitz des einrückenden Rekruten, wie es in früheren Jahrhunderten vorwiegend der Brauch war (das gilt besonders für wohlhabendere Bürger, die noch nach dem alten Schema ausgehoben und nicht geworben werden); b) aus dem vom Kommando beschafften und zur Verfügung gestellten Rüstungsmaterial, welches grundsätzlich nach Beendigung des Kriegsdienstes an die ausfolgende Stelle zurückgegeben werden muß. Für diese Waffen ist eine Kautio zu entrichten, die wohl meist vom Sold ratenweise abgezogen wird; sie können während der Dienstzeit durch schönere bzw. bessere Stücke ersetzt werden, die der Soldat durch Kauf zu eigen erwirbt oder vom Anführer - ev. aus der Beute - geschenkt erhält. Auch stillschweigendes Übergehen der Waffenrüstung in das Eigentum ihrer Träger ist in den unruhigen Zeiten der *bella civilia* nicht auszuschließen.” Nuber 1972, 496: “Diese Dokumente lassen neben einer Fülle verwaltungstechnischer Einzelheiten zweierlei deutlich werden: bei bedarf die Versorgung von Staats wegen mit entsprechender Kautionsstellung von seiten des empfangenden Soldaten und zum zweiten, daß

44 some of Octavian's soldiers were opposed to the declaration of war against Antony and asked permission to go home to arm themselves, stating that they could not perform their duty with weapons other than their own.⁵¹⁵ This shows that some of Octavian's men were probably veterans and already possessed weapons they had acquired during previous campaigns. These seem to have become their property since they kept them at home.

Even the meek Cicero is reported to have taken radical measures for weapon production during the civil war. While Octavian and Antony were busy fighting around Mutina, Cicero gathered the weapon smiths of Rome and forced them to work without pay. He also demanded contributions of money from Antony's supporters. Cicero's behaviour became unbearable to one of Antony's friends so that the latter left Rome for one of the colonies founded by Caesar and raised two legions on his own with the intention of marching on Rome to arrest the famous orator from Arpinum.⁵¹⁶

In preparation to confront Octavian and Antony, Brutus was lucky enough to get his hands on stocks of weapons in Greece that Caesar had manufactured in preparation for

Privat- und Staatseigentum nebeneinander Verwendung fand und bei Bestandsaufnahmen in einer gemeinsamen Liste getrennt aufgeführt wurde.”

⁵¹⁵ Appian *BC* 3.42: “Some of them asked to return home in order to arm themselves, saying that they could not perform their duty with other arms than their own.” (καὶ οἱ μὲν αὐτῶν ἐπανελθεῖν ἤτουν εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα ὡς ὀπλιούμενοι: οὐ γὰρ ἄλλων ἢ τῶν ἰδίων ὄπλων ἀνέξεσθαι).

⁵¹⁶ Appian *BC* 3.66: “At Rome, in the absence of the consuls, Cicero took the lead by public speaking. He held frequent assemblies, procured arms by inducing the armourers to work without pay, collected money, and exacted heavy contributions from the Antonians. These paid without complaining in order to avoid calumny, until Publius Ventidius, who had served under Gaius Caesar and who was friend of Antony, unable to endure the exactions of Cicero, betook himself to Caesar's colonies, where he was well known, and brought over two legions to Antony and hastened to Rome to seize Cicero.” (τὰ δ' ἐν Ῥώμῃ τῶν ὑπᾶτων οὐ παρόντων ὁ Κικέρων ἦγεν ὑπὸ δημοκοπίας: καὶ συνεχεῖς ἦσαν ἐκκλησίαι, ὅπλα τε εἰργάζετο συναγαγὼν τοὺς δημιουργοὺς ἀμισθὶ καὶ χρήματα συνέλεγε καὶ βαρυτάτας ἐσφορὰς τοῖς Ἀντωνίου φίλοις ἐπετίθει. οἱ δὲ ἐτοίμως ἐσέφερον ἐκλυόμενοι τὴν διαβολήν, μέχρι Πούπλιος Οὐεντίδιος, ἐστρατευμένος τε Γαῖῳ Καίσαρι καὶ Ἀντωνίῳ φίλος ὢν, οὐκ ἤνεγκε τὴν βαρύτητα τοῦ Κικέρωνος, ἀλλ' ἐς τὰς Καίσαρος ἀποικίας ἐκδραμὼν ὡς γνώριμος δύο ἐς τὸν Ἀντώνιον ἀνεστράτευσε τέλη καὶ ἐς τὴν Ῥώμην συλλαβεῖν Κικέρωνα ἠπειγέτο).

the war he had planned against the Parthians.⁵¹⁷ These could have been loaned or even given out for free to those too poor to bear the full cost of a panoply. The system of weapon provision through loan, alluded to earlier in the context of the War of Spartacus, must have been used extensively to equip the huge mass of men that fought on each side. Inscriptions on different pieces of equipment bearing the name of its current owner and traces of the names of its past users have been found. Papyri also show that soldiers who loaned equipment through the payment of a caution could later receive their payment back on discharge.⁵¹⁸ Although such evidence dates to the imperial period, it is reasonable to suggest that such a system could have existed at the time of the civil wars because of the sheer number of men quickly requiring equipment.

Finally, Plutarch remarks that prior to the battle of Philippi Brutus had equipped his men with weapons richly decorated with gold and silver. He did so because he thought that this would encourage his men to cling to their weapons “as if they were their own property” (ὥσπερ κτημάτων τῶν ὅπλων περιεχομένους).⁵¹⁹ It seems quite improbable

⁵¹⁷ Plutarch *Brutus*, 25.2: “Then sailing to Demetrias, whence great quantities of arms, which the elder Caesar had ordered to be made for his Parthian war, were being conducted to Antony, he took possession of them.” (ἐπιπλεύσας τε τῇ Δημητριάδι, πολλῶν ὅπλων ἐξαγομένων πρὸς Ἀντώνιον, ὃ Καίσαρος τοῦ προτέρου κελεύσαντος ἐπὶ τὸν Παρθικὸν ἐποιήθη πόλεμον, ἐκράτησεν).

⁵¹⁸ Nuber 1972, 497: “Für die gestellte Ausrüstung hatte der Soldat beim Empfang eine bestimmte Summe zu hinterlegen, oder sie wurde von ihm von der Buchführung angelastet, um vom späteren Sold einbehalten zu werden. Im Gegensatz zu den laufenden Abzügen für Nahrung, Unterkunft und Kleidung haftete der Soldat mit dieser einmaligen Kautions, die bei Inanspruchnahme wieder aufgefüllt oder erneut erhoben werden konnte, für Abnutzung, Beschädigung oder Verlust. Sie beinhaltete keinen Eigentumsanspruch; bei Entlassung oder Tod fielen die gestellten Teile wieder an den Staat zurück und der Einsatz wurde ganz oder teilweise wieder ausbezahlt.”; Gilliam 1967, 233-243; MacMullen 1960, 23-40.

⁵¹⁹ Plutarch *Brutus*, 38.5-7: “but in the splendid decoration of its arms it presented a wonderful sight. For most of their armour was covered with gold and silver, with which Brutus had lavishly supplied them, although in other matters he accustomed his officers to adopt a temperate and restricted regimen. But he thought that the wealth which they held in their hands and wore upon their persons gave additional to the more ambitious, and made the covetous even more warlike, since they clung to their armour as so much treasure.” (κόσμῳ δ’ ὅπλων καὶ λαμπρότητι θαυμαστὸν ἐξεφάνη τὸ Βρούτου στράτευμα, χρυσὸς γὰρ ἦν αὐτοῖς τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν ὅπλων καὶ ἄργυρος ἀφειδῶς καταχορηγηθεῖς, καίπερ εἰς ἄλλα τοῦ Βρούτου σῶφρονι διαίτῃ καὶ κεκολασμένη χρῆσθαι τοὺς ἡγεμόνας ἐθίζοντος τὸν δ’ ἐν χερσὶ καὶ περὶ τὸ σῶμα πλοῦτον ὥς τι καὶ φρονήματος παρέχειν τοῖς φιλοτιμοτέροις, τοὺς δὲ φιλοκερδεῖς καὶ μαχιμωτέρους

that Brutus really equipped his entire army with such expensive armour and weapons more suited for parade than for battle. It is more likely that this is Plutarch embellishing his narrative with the description of the wonderful sight of an army clad in gold and silver. However, the passage still seems to indicate that Brutus actually provided the equipment and that the soldiers did not own it as their property.

By relying increasingly on non-Romans for their armies, the generals of the first century BCE were severing the traditional relation between citizenship, property, and military service, prefiguring the recruitment practice of the imperial period. They should therefore be seen as playing a much more important role than Marius in the evolution of the army and the development of a professional pan-Mediterranean force.

This allowed generals of the first century far greater autonomy than their predecessors, as they were not entirely dependent on Rome, not only for money but for manpower as well. When the Roman military system of the Republic was created, it was done so to suit the needs of a city-state, and thus did not take into account that one day tens of thousands of Romans would live far from Rome, or even outside of Italy.

4.3 Breaking the Bank through Desperate Expedients

The war that pitted Caesar's assassins against his heir, Octavian, and his former lieutenant, Antony, was fought with very large forces and financed by extraordinary measures.⁵²⁰ The massive build-up of armies that preceded the battle of Philippi in 42

ποιεῖν, ὥσπερ κτημάτων τῶν ὅπλων περιεχομένους).

⁵²⁰ Frank 1933, 333: "During the long period of civil wars after 50 B. C. the treasury was usually bankrupt.

required the recruitment, arming, and rewarding of legions using expedients and emergency methods. *Ad hoc* measures had for a long time been a feature of Roman war funding but the money needed to pay the gigantic armies deployed at the time of the battle of Philippi added to the huge donatives given to the troops would to break the bank if nothing was done to scale down military expenditure. The way the system had evolved during the first century was leading the state to a financial breakdown.

Generals raised new legions or gathered some already levied so that armies of a size never seen before were assembled.⁵²¹ Indeed for the campaign leading to the battle of Philippi both sides each had some 19 legions at their disposal, plus large numbers of auxiliaries.⁵²² This dwarfs the already large armies raised by Pompey and Caesar for the war they fought against one another.⁵²³ Even the standing Roman imperial army of the first two centuries CE would never field such a number of legions.

The extraordinary financial measures taken by generals of both sides show that they were desperately trying to collect enough money to be able to honour their promises.⁵²⁴ In addition to money the triumvirs promised settlement in 18 Italian towns to their army to strengthen their will to fight. These included major cities such as Capua, Rhegium, Venusia, Beneventum, Nuceria, Ariminum, and Vibo. For the time being, they were also

In fact very little money reached the treasury, for the generals in the various provinces laid hands on all tribute before it left for Rome, and they laid extra requisitions on the regions they controlled.”

⁵²¹ Appian *BC* 3.25; 3.46; 3.47; 3.66; 3.78; 3.79; 3.83; 3.91; 3.97. The forces involved at Thapsus and Munda were large (cf. *BA* 59; 62; *BH* 30) but those at Philippi were even bigger. The last campaigns of Caesar continued to feature large numbers of non-citizens.

⁵²² Appian *BC* 4.108. Brunt 1971, 485 argues that Octavian and Mark Antony had some 40 legions of which about half were committed to the Philippi campaign. See also Brunt’s calculations for the Republicans on 485-7.

⁵²³ Brunt 1971, 475-6, calculated that after Pharsalus, Caesar was in control of some 35 legions.

⁵²⁴ Pay alone must have required huge amounts of cash, cf. Cadiou 2008, 543: “Une légion coûterait entre 550 000 et 600 000 deniers par an pour la solde.”; Frank 1933, 334: “When the armies of the various generals rose to 70 and more legions, the expense involved would have used every penny of income even if the stipend had been the normal one of 120 *denarii*.” Also, 340-342 with sources.

in need of money to finance the war. However, the resources of Italy had been depleted by civil strife and since this was their main base of operations, the triumvirs issued proscription lists, putting to death and confiscating the property of some 300 senators and 2,000 equestrians. Since this was not sufficient for the needs of their enormous forces, they were reduced to reintroduce the *tributum* and to burden the population with additional harsh demands of money and duties on sales and leases.⁵²⁵ Money was taken from temples and contributions of money were even demanded from rich women, something which created an outcry among them.⁵²⁶ Antony and Octavian had once again recourse to confiscation even after they had vanquished Cassius and Brutus. Antony is said to have asked for land in Asia Minor for his men, notably around Ephesus. Plutarch reports that Antony asked for more money even after Asia gave him the fantastic sum of 200,000 talents (one billion, two hundred million *denarii*!) though this is surely an exaggeration to emphasize Antony's lack of self-control but nevertheless illustrates how burdensome the upkeep of the armies of the civil wars were.⁵²⁷ Such requisitions of money were necessary because of the promises made to the soldiers before leaving for the campaign leading to the battle of Philippi. Appian thus reports that after the battle, the tr had no less than 170,000 legionaries to reward, plus very large numbers of auxiliaries.

Before their ultimate demise, Brutus and Cassius could profit from the revenues of the eastern provinces and from the tributes given by client kings to pay and reward their armies. This was, however, not enough, and they proceeded to systematically extort huge amounts of money from the cities of Asia Minor. Cassius imposed a fine of 1,500 talents

⁵²⁵ Cicero *ad Fam.* 12.30; Cassius Dio 46.31.3; 47.14.2; Appian *BC* 4.34.

⁵²⁶ Money taken from temples: Appian *BC* 5.13; 5.22; 5.24; 5.27; Cassius Dio 48.12.4. Appian *BC BC* 4.3; 4.5; 4.32-34.

⁵²⁷ Appian *BC* 5.3; 5.5; 5.6; 5.13; 5.15; 5.22; Plutarch *Ant.* 24.4-5: Asia would have given Antony 200,000 talents. Frank 1933, 341: "Asia was bankrupt for a generation."

(9 million *denarii*) on Tarsus and Laodiceia. The towns were compelled to sell all public property to gather the necessary funds. When they realized that this was not enough, they had to sell citizens into slavery to acquire more money. Brutus gathered some 16,000 talents (96 million *denarii*) from the taxes collected in Asia.⁵²⁸ Brutus and Cassius felt they had to be extremely generous *vis-à-vis* their men, because many had served under Caesar and they feared that their loyalty might waver if they were to witness the presence of his heir.⁵²⁹ To put things in perspective, to honour their promise of 3,500 (1,500 by Cassius, 2,000 by Brutus after Cassius's death) *denarii* to their 19 legions, Cassius and Brutus would have needed more than 330 million *denarii*, and this does not even include pay, equipment, supplies and donatives to the numerous auxiliaries. Base *stipendium* for 19 legions would add a further 11 million *denarii* to the bill.⁵³⁰

As discussed above the *triumviri* had an army of a similar size and had also promised grandiose rewards. The fact that civil war had transformed military service into a mercenary service lavishly rewarded made it so that military expenses were getting out of hand and were about to ruin entire areas of the empire as they were robbed of their money and property to pay for a multitude of soldiers locked in a massive civil war. Considering these expenses it is no wonder that this period of the civil wars saw an unprecedented decentralization for the striking of coins as *imperatores* were frenetically trying to boost the productions of coins to pay their huge armies.⁵³¹

⁵²⁸ Appian *BC* 4.64; 4.73;

⁵²⁹ Appian *BC* 4.89.

⁵³⁰ See the comments of Frank, 1933, 334.

⁵³¹ Hollstein 2000, 130: "Die Jahre des Bürgerkrieges nach der Ermordung Caesars erlebten eine nie dagewesene Streuung von Prägeorten für römische Aurei und Denare über den Mittelmeerraum."; Frier 1981, 285-295.

Conclusions

Roman generals had always enjoyed a certain degree of latitude to recruit and fund their troops. However, after Marius, and especially after the Social War, rather than implement new financial structures, the Senate often came to rely on generals to find expedients to make up for the increased cost of fielding an army after the enfranchisement of the Italians.

Generals thus gradually began to pay and recruit their armies on a more local basis and the practice continued until the Senate effectively lost control of military recruitment and expenditure. With the great increase in the size of armies and the emergence of civil war, what was originally part of aristocratic competition became a necessity to ensure the loyalty of one's troops. Moreover, in the civil wars, generals continued to build on what their predecessors had done before them: they made use of expedients and *ad hoc* measures to recruit and fund their armies. The steady increase in rewards gradually turned military service into a permanently very lucrative trade open to every willing man rather than a civic duty for propertied citizens.⁵³² The traditional partnership between state and citizen for army financing was shattered, as it became a partnership between soldier and general. Rather than purchase his equipment and receive pay from Rome, soldiers were now often receiving both from their general.⁵³³

The recourse to expedients had sufficed in the past when enough lucrative wars were waged to offset campaigns that failed to cover the expanses they generated. The last civil

⁵³² Wolters 2008, 240: "Eine letzte große Zeit beutereicher Kämpfe waren die Bürgerkriege der späten Republik, mit ihren überbordenden Versprechungen für die Soldaten: Sie waren jetzt die Profiteure, nicht das *aerarium*, und trotz manchen Kaschierungen kam die den Krieg ernährende Beute zumeist von inneren Gegner."

⁵³³ De Blois 2000, 11-32; 2007, 164-179; 2011, 80-90; Serrati 2013, 155-169.

wars of the Republic showed this was no longer manageable. The financing of enormous armies could only be sustained through frequent cash requisitions and confiscations of property on a massive scale. Such a system could not endure forever as it made social, political, and economic stability nearly impossible, even for the winner of the civil war.

Octavian actually realized that political stability and an effective defence of the empire could only be achieved by permanently keeping some troops under arms, in other words, by a comprehensive reform of the army. Acknowledging the new political context, he made arrangements for the establishment of a standing Roman army, putting an end to decades of improvisation.

Chapter Six

The Military Reforms of Augustus

Augustus was a skilled politician. He managed to transform the Roman state into a monarchy while constantly stressing that he had merely restored the Republic, after years of civil war, through his achievements.⁵³⁴ While doing everything to maintain the fiction that the old Republic had been reborn from the ashes of civil strife, Augustus actually replaced the improvisation of previous decades by a new and regularized system of military funding. It was he who was the founder of the Roman imperial army that would continue to march and fight in the name of the Senate and People of Rome for the next five centuries.

Tacitus famously commented that by the time of Augustus' death few remained alive who had seen the Republic of old.⁵³⁵ It can also be said that few remained alive who had experienced a traditional *dilectus*, as generals fighting through the previous years of civil wars largely had disregarded this system because it was no longer practical to deal with large-scale wars fought far away from Italy. The system described by Polybius in which citizenship, military service, and property were all linked together was better suited for a city-state than for an empire encompassing all of the Mediterranean, in which only a small proportion of people were citizens, and an even smaller number sufficiently

⁵³⁴ For an overview of Augustus' reign, see Eck 2003.

⁵³⁵ Tacitus *Annales* 1.3: "the younger men had been born after the victory of Actium; most even of the elder generation, during the civil wars; few indeed were left who had seen the Republic." (*iuniores post Actiacam victoriam, etiam senes plerique inter bella civium nati: quotus quisque reliquus qui rem publicam vidisset*).

affluent to pay for their own gear. In that system, war funding essentially rested on the *tributum*, a war-tax that did not have a fixed rate but was adjusted each time it was levied according to the necessities of the projected campaign. The fact that this was not a permanent tax reflects the fact that the Romans also did not understand their military as being a permanent feature, but rather an army that greatly varied in size from year to year, just like the *tributum* that financed it. However, the civil wars had turned the army into a permanent force, something that was not accompanied by the implementation of a new financing system but rather the recourse to many expedients and desperate measures that were not sustainable in the long run.⁵³⁶

1- Context of the Military Reforms

After the final defeat of Antony at the battle of Actium in 31, Augustus found himself in command of some 60 legions, a formidable force that desired rewards for its toil during years of civil strife. This enormous mass of soldiers was not to be trifled with, if another civil war was to be avoided. Paying and rewarding such a huge army required immense quantities of cash. As discussed in the previous chapter, maintaining armies of this size and giving them lavish handouts was bankrupting the state, forcing generals to levy special taxes, confiscating property and money everywhere they brought their armies. Such measures were hardly the kind of advertisement someone who had just imposed a new *régime* wanted to firmly establish his power. Something had to be done on both the strategic and institutional levels to put an end to such improvisation.

⁵³⁶ Keppie 1997, 89: “The need to leave troops in distant provinces for long periods inevitably undermined traditional perceptions. But it was under the strain of civil war that decisive change came about.”

By the time of Augustus' reign, the Roman Empire had reached a size that made its defence and administration simply impractical if Republican military institutions as described by Polybius were to be put back in place. Leaving elected officials free rein for the recruitment and funding of units was too dangerous for the stability of the empire, as the civil wars had showed.⁵³⁷ Augustus was rid of any military rivals, a situation that no Roman general of the civil war era had enjoyed for any prolonged period of time. He had to both maintain his position, and at the same time defend Rome's holdings. What Augustus did was both wise and pragmatic: he chose to establish a permanent army with fixed conditions of service and kept it far away from the city of Rome, leaving only his personal guard as the sole professional military unit stationed near Rome.⁵³⁸

The recurring problem of the generals' freedom of action in terms of funding and recruitment had to be dealt with if Augustus' new *régime* was to endure. The generals of the Late Republic had built over the *laissez-faire* policy of the Senate and this ultimately greatly contributed to the Republic's demise as it allowed said generals to have their own armies.

In order to succeed, Augustus had to centralize funding and recruitment, and tighten Rome's control over generals' authority over the same fields. To be able to this he had to implement new financial structures to fund the army instead of relying on expedients, something that the Senate was always reluctant to do since the suspension of the *tributum* in 167, preferring to rely on generals to find the necessary funds by whatever means were available to them.

⁵³⁷ On legions left as garrisons in the provinces in the Republic see: Brunt 1971, 446-502; Phang 2008, 153 ff; Cadiou 2003, 81-100.

⁵³⁸ On the Praetorian Guard see Bingham 2013; Rankov 1994; Passerini 1939; Durry 1938. The *Vigiles* were more a fire-fighting and police force than a professional military unit.

Regarding the rank and file, Augustus could not simply establish a professional army and hope that enough volunteers would show up each time replacements were needed. As discussed in Chapter One, the *stipendium* was quite low and not attractive. Caesar had increased pay but this can hardly be seen as a sufficient improvement of the terms of service. Indeed, his increase most likely upgraded pay from derisory to very poor.⁵³⁹ Plunder was not enough to attract volunteers as the standing army's main task was to defend the frontiers and only a small percentage of the soldiers would participate in large offensive operations. Attracting recruits with donatives of the scale attested during the civil wars was financially out of the question, as it was unsustainable. Something had to be done to regularize the attractiveness of military service, regardless of donatives and opportunities for plunder.⁵⁴⁰ But even before solving this problem, Augustus first had to deal with the discharge of many of the men under arms in order to ease the burden on the empire's economy.

2- Demobilization and the Establishment of Fixed Conditions of Service

Augustus was facing the challenge of settling and rewarding some 300,000 veterans without sparking civil unrest.⁵⁴¹ This was a very delicate situation as some of these men had fought against him, and most of them had profited from several generous donatives. Augustus had to find a diplomatic way of telling them that the party was over without causing another civil war.

⁵³⁹ See chapter one, section 2.2, and chapter five, section 4.1.

⁵⁴⁰ Cadiou 2008, 502-512; Boren 1983, 450: "The soldiers' service would usually be performed in garrison duty with no chance for praeda. [...] The old concept, however, that the stipendium was a kind of minimum compensation for expenses, to be supplemented by spoils, by now was completely discarded; a higher, regular, stipendium was absolutely necessary."

⁵⁴¹ RG 3.3.

2.1 Discharging Veterans

There was no longer enough public land available in Italy to settle all the veterans Augustus wanted to discharge.⁵⁴² One method of acquiring land was to confiscate the property of rich landowners. This is what Sulla and the members of the second Triumvirate had done, but it was, of course, not the best way to safeguard social order, so Augustus had to find another way to solve the problem.

Between 30 and 3 BCE Augustus spent large amounts of money to buy land in Italy and in the provinces where he could settle his discharged soldiers.⁵⁴³ The practice of giving land on discharge seemed to have been turned into a grant of money later on.⁵⁴⁴ In total Augustus claimed to have paid some 215 million *denarii* for this settlement, a formidable

⁵⁴² Roselaar 2010, 284-8; MacMullen 2000; Keppie 1983.

⁵⁴³ *RG* 3.3: “There have been roughly 500,000 Roman citizens under oath of allegiance to me. Considerably more than 300,000 of these I have settled in colonies or sent back to their towns after they had completed their terms of service, and to all of them I allotted pieces of land or else gave them money as the rewards for their service.” (*millia ciuium Roma[no]rum [sub] sacramento meo fuerunt circiter [quingen]ta ex quibus dedu[xi in coloni]as aut remisi in municipia sua stipend[is emer]itis millia aliquant[o plura qu]am trecenta, et iis omnibus agros a[dsignau]i aut pecuniam pro p[raemis mil]itiae dedi*). See the comments of Brunt 1971, 339 and Cooley 2009, 118. *RG* 15.3: “And as consul for the fifth time I gave to the colonists who had been my soldiers 1,000 sesterces each out of plunder; about 120,000 men in the colonies received this handout to mark my triumphs.” (*et colon[is] militum meorum consul quantum ex manib[us] uiritim uiritim milia nummum singular dedi; acceperunt id triumphale congiarium in colonis hominum circiter centum et uiginti millia*); 16.1-2: “I paid money to municipalities for the lands which in my fourth consulship and later in the consulship of Marcus Crassus and Gnaeus Lentulus Augur I allotted to soldiers; the total amount which I paid was about 600,000,000 sesterces for Italian estates, and about 260,000,000 for land in the provinces. I was the first and only one to have done this of all those who have settled colonies of soldiers in Italy or in the provinces, as far as people living in my era recall. And later, in the consulship of Tiberius Nero and Gnaeus Piso and again in the consulship of Gaius Antistius and Decimus Laelius and in the consulship of Gaius Calvisius and Lucius Pasienus, and in the consulship of Lucius Lentulus and Marcus Messala, and in the consulship of Lucius Caninius and Quintus Fabricius, I paid cash rewards in full to the soldiers whom I settled in their own municipalities once they had completed their terms of service; for this purpose I paid out about 400,000,000 sesterces.” (*pecuniam [pr]o agris quos in consulatu meo quarto et postea consulibus M(arco). Cr[a]sso et Cn(aeo) Lentulo Augure adsignavi militibus solui municipis; ea [s]u[m]ma s[estertium] circiter sexs[ex]iens milli[en]s fuit quam [p]ro Italicis praedis numeraui, et ci[r]citer bis mill[ie]ns et sescentiens quod pro agris prouincialibus solui. Id primus et [s]olus omnium qui deduxerunt colonias militum in Italia aut in prouincis ad memoriam aetatis meae feci. et postea, Ti(berio) Nerone et Cn(aeo) Pisone consulibus, itemque C(aio) Antistio et D(ecimo) Laelio co(n)s(ulibus) et C(aio) Caluisio et L(ucio) Pas<s>ieno consulibus et L(ucio) Le[n]tulo et M(arco) Messala consulibus et L(ucio) Caninio et Q(uinto) Fabricio co(n)s(ulibus), milit[i]bus, quos emeritis stipendis in sua municipia [a] dedux[i], praem[i]a numerato persolui; quam in rem sestertium q[uater m]illiens cir[cite]r impendi*). The consulships listed here reveal that payments were made in 7, 6, 4, 3, and 3 BCE.

⁵⁴⁴ Cassius Dio 55.23.1.

sum but at least the worst has been avoided: a great mass of soldiers had been returned to civilian life for good.

The text detailing the rewards given on discharge, the *Res Gestae Diui Augusti*, only mentions Roman citizens, not auxiliaries and non-Romans serving in the legions. This is striking, given the large numbers of such people that fought in the civil wars. Perhaps Augustus did not feel the need to explain how he dealt with *peregrini*. However, the *Res Gestae* were not only intended for a Roman audience as the document was translated in Greek and displayed outside of Italy. Granted, some of the auxiliary forces were sent by allied kings and states so these must have returned to their former masters after the end of the war. However, other units seemed to have served for years with Roman armies. Gallic, German, Spanish, Illyrian, and other auxiliaries are mentioned in almost every major campaign of the civil wars. These men had become professional mercenaries and could not simply be expected to be discharged quietly without rewards since war had become their trade. According to Tacitus, the number of auxiliaries at the death of Augustus was roughly the same as the number of legionaries.⁵⁴⁵ If auxiliaries formed as much as half of the army at that time it is not unreasonable to assume that many auxiliary units raised during the civil wars were actually kept in service rather than discharged.⁵⁴⁶

As to those natives who served in the legions it is possible that they were granted

⁵⁴⁵ Tacitus *Annales* 4.5: “There were besides, in commanding positions in the provinces, allied fleets, cavalry and light infantry, of but little inferior strength. But any detailed account of them would be misleading, since they moved from place to place as circumstances required, and had their numbers increased and sometimes diminished.” (*at apud idonea provinciarum sociae triremes alaeque et auxilia cohortium, neque multo secus in iis virium: sed persequi incertum fuit, cum ex usu temporis huc illuc mearent, gliscerent numero et aliquando minuerentur*). Also: Josephus *BJ* 2.16.4.365 ff; Cassius Dio 55.23 ff.; Saddington 1991, 3485-555.

⁵⁴⁶ Non-Romans are dealt with in a single sentence of the *Res Gestae* 3.2: “As for foreign peoples, those whom I could safely pardon, I preferred to preserve than to destroy.” (*exte[r]nas gentes, quibus tuto [ignosci pot]ui[t, co]nseruare quam excidere ma[lui]*). This does seem to point at enemy *gentes* rather than auxiliaries. Also Rankov 2007, 51.

citizenship on discharge, as it was the case for the soldiers of the *Alaudae* legion raised among Transalpine Gauls.⁵⁴⁷ They would thus have been included in the program of settlement described in the *Res Gestae*.

2.2 Establishing New Conditions of Service

It has been argued that although tens of thousands of soldiers had been discharged, the remaining legions were not disbanded following the Republican practice, but stayed in service, and whose manpower would from now on rely on volunteers.⁵⁴⁸ As discussed before, an army based on voluntary service had to offer conditions of service that were permanently attractive to ensure that it had enough recruits, regardless of plunder or donatives. Guaranteeing steady rewards after service assured soldiers that they would enjoy a decent living in their old days.

In 13 BCE, Augustus fixed the length of service and the cash reward soldiers would be given.⁵⁴⁹ The terms of this settlement would later prove to be unsatisfactory. In 5 CE the

⁵⁴⁷ Suetonius *Caesar*, 24.2. There were republican precedents for giving citizenship to non-Romans: (Cicero *Balb.* 46; Valerius Maximus 5.2.8; *ILS* 8888.

⁵⁴⁸ Rankov 2007, 36, following Keppie 1984, 132-144.

⁵⁴⁹ Cassius Dio 54.25.5-6: “After this he convened the Senate, and though he made no address himself by reason of hoarseness, he gave his manuscript to the quaestor to read and thus enumerated his achievements and promulgated rules as to the number of years the citizens should serve in the army and as to the amount of money they should receive when discharged from service, in lieu of the land which they were always demanding. His object was that the soldiers, by being enlisted henceforth on certain definite terms, should find no excuse for revolt on this score. The number of years was twelve for the Praetorians and sixteen for the rest; and the money to be distributed was less in some cases and more in others. These measures caused the soldiers neither pleasure nor anger for the time being, because they neither obtained all they desired nor yet failed of all ; but in the rest of the population the measures aroused confident hopes that they would not in future be robbed of their possessions.” (συναγαγὼν δὲ ἐκ τούτου τὸ βουλευτήριον αὐτὸς μὲν οὐδὲν εἶπεν ὑπὸ βράγχου, τὸ δὲ δὴ βιβλίον τῷ ταμίᾳ ² ἀναγνῶναι δοὺς τὰ τε πεπραγμένα οἱ κατηριθμήσατο, καὶ διέταξε τὰ τε ἔτη ὅσα οἱ πολῖται στρατεύουσιντο, καὶ τὰ χρήματα ὅσα παυσάμενοι τῆς στρατείας, ἀντὶ τῆς χώρας ἦν ἀεὶ ποτε ἤτουν, λήψοιντο, ὅπως ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς ἐκεῖθεν ἤδη καταλεγόμενοι μηδὲν τούτων γε ἔνεκα νεωτερίζωσιν ἢν δὲ ὁ τε ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἐτῶν τοῖς μὲν δορυφόροις δώδεκα τοῖς δ’ ἄλλοις ἑκκαίδεκα, καὶ τὸ

soldiers complained about the sums they received; so it was decided to fix their reward at 12,000 sesterces (3,000 *denarii*) after twenty years of service.⁵⁵⁰ Suetonius explicitly mentions that the reason for regularizing the length of service and the importance of rewards on discharge was to avoid political instability.⁵⁵¹

Under such conditions, potential recruits knew exactly what advantages they could expect before enlisting, something their Republican predecessors did not. Previously, the distribution of rewards was left entirely at the general's discretion. Now military service was one of the few jobs in the Roman world in which shelter, food, medical care, and decent pay were guaranteed for much of a man's life.

However, even if more than half of the soldiers Augustus inherited from the civil wars had been discharged, there were still not enough funds for the remaining troops.⁵⁵² After debating what sources of revenues should be sought to provide funds for the army, Augustus finally created the *aerarium militare* in 6 CE and transferred more than 42 million *denarii* into it, a sum he claimed to have taken from his personal funds.⁵⁵³ He also

ἀργύριον τοῖς μὲν ἔλαττον τοῖς δὲ πλεῖον. ταῦτα δὲ ἐκείνοις μὲν οὐθ' ἡδονὴν οὐτ' ὀργὴν ἐν γε τῷ τότε παρόντι ἐνεποίησε διὰ τὸ μήτε πάντων ὧν ἐπεθύμουν τυχεῖν μήτε πάντων διαμαρτεῖν, τοῖς δὲ δὴ ἄλλοις ἀγαθὰς ἐλπίδας τοῦ μηκέτι τῶν κτημάτων ἀφαιρεθῆσεσθαι).

⁵⁵⁰ Cassius Dio 55.23.1. If this sum is divided over an annual basis, it would improve base pay by more than 50%. This is still regarded as meagre by Raaflaub 1987, 278-279: "Der Sold war keineswegs überragend, wurde vor allem zwischen Caesar und Domitian nicht an die Inflation angepaßt und verlor zusätzlich an Attraktivität, je mehr generell Lebensstandard und -erwartungen stiegen. Nach allem, was wir ausmachen können, war auch die Veteranenpension im Vergleich etwa zu den Landkosten überraschend knapp bemessen."; Keppie 1984, 128: "By itself this longer service-requirement in the legions all but forced intending recruits to think of the army as a lifetime's occupation."

⁵⁵¹ Suetonius *Augustus*, 49.2: "Furthermore, he restricted all the soldiery everywhere to a fixed scale of pay and allowances, designating the duration of their service and the rewards on its completion according to each man's rank, in order to keep them from being tempted to revolution after their discharge either by age or poverty." (*quidquid autem ubique militum esset, ad certam stipendiorum praemiorumque formulam adstrinxit definitis pro gradu cuiusque et temporibus militiae et commodis missionum, ne aut aetate aut inopia post missionem sollicitari ad res novas possent*).

⁵⁵² Cassius Dio 55.24.9; Suetonius *Augustus*, 49.2.

⁵⁵³ RG 17.2: "And in the consulship of Marcus Lepidus and Lucius Arruntius, I transferred 170,000,000 sesterces out of my personal assets into the military treasury, which was established on my advice, and

accepted contributions from allied kings, rulers, and cities but rejected offers made by private citizens. This was obviously done with the intention of avoiding a repetition of what happened in the Late Republic. The private investments in the military witnessed in these years had clearly been identified as a threat to the stability of the state. As a new way of creating revenues for the army, Augustus instituted a one percent tax on sales by auction and a new five percent tax on inheritances. Such wide-ranging measures show how determined he was to create a system in which regular sources of income for the army could be acquired without creating too much political and civil unrest.⁵⁵⁴

Moreover, by concentrating the military funds in Rome and refusing to accept private contributions, Augustus established a monopoly on military spending. He was making it clear that warfare was from now on an exclusively public business (i.e. his) and that no individuals could spend large private sums of money on the army, as it had frequently been done in the late Republic. Moreover, Augustus increased base pay. Although there is no explicit testimony in the sources that he did, there are grounds to think that he did. Tacitus states that after the death of Augustus in 14 CE the soldiers were unhappy with their pay of ten *denarii* a day.⁵⁵⁵ It is usually thought that this amounted to 225 *denarii*

from which rewards were given to soldiers who had completed twenty or more years of service.” (*et M(arco) Lepido et L(ucio) Ar[r]unt[i]o co(n)s(ulibus) in aerarium militare, quod ex consilio m[eo] co[ns]titutum est ex [q]uo praemia darentur militibus qui vicena [aut plu]ra stip[endi]a emeruissent, milliensi et septing[e]nti[ens] ex pa[tri]monio [m]eo detuli*); Cosme 1993, 73-4; Corbier 1977, 197-234.

⁵⁵⁴ Cassius Dio 55.25.1-6; Suetonius *Augustus*, 49.2; Richardson 2012, 171-172; Raaflaub 1987, 268-269 : “Als sich Augustus schließlich gezwungen sah, für sein Veteranenversorgungsprogramm andere Finanzquellen zu erschließen, dotierte er nicht nur die neue staatliche Militärkasse mit einem beachtlichen Anfangskapital aus seinem Privatvermögen, sondern sorgte er dafür, daß nur Städte und auswärtige Vasallenfürsten, nicht aber individuelle römische Bürger Beiträge spenden durften.” The five percent tax created some opposition amongst the Senate but Augustus was able to overcome it, cf. Cassius Dio 46.28.4-6.

⁵⁵⁵ Tacitus *Annales* 1.17; Alston 1994, 114. Also: Suetonius *Augustus* 24.1: “He made many changes and innovations in the army, besides reviving some usages of former times.” (*In re militari et commutavit multa et instituit atque etiam ad antiquum morem nonnulla revocavit*).

per year (ten *asses* x 360 days).⁵⁵⁶ This noteworthy improvement certainly did much to make soldiering more attractive trade than the meagre Republican *stipendium*. Augustus also took measures to ensure that donatives would become linked to the person of the emperor so that they would not get out of hand as in the Late Republic. In his testament he left 250 *denarii* each to the Praetorians and 75 *denarii* each to the soldiers.⁵⁵⁷ After Augustus, the donative indeed became associated with the emperor and was no longer granted after victories by generals but by the *princeps* to secure his reign.⁵⁵⁸ Tiberius was cautious to leave in his will the same amount of money given by Augustus to the Praetorians and to the legions.⁵⁵⁹ Succeeding emperors would however increasingly favour the Praetorians over the army for donatives.

Augustus was thus now solely in charge of the army and of its newly created treasury and conditions of service. Any potential usurper would have needed to amass colossal sums of money to rival with what Augustus controlled. In this new context, it was no longer possible for governors to recruit forces as they saw fit, as the case had been in the late Republican period. In fact, governors were explicitly forbidden from levying additional troops and funds without the express authorization of the emperor.⁵⁶⁰ Governors and

⁵⁵⁶ Le Bohec 2009, 39-50; Boren 1983, 449-450; Zehnacker 1983, 95-121; Thomsen 1973, 194-208.

⁵⁵⁷ Tacitus *Annales* 1.8.

⁵⁵⁸ Watson 1969, 108-114.

⁵⁵⁹ Cassius Dio 59.2.2.

⁵⁶⁰ Cassius Dio 53.15.6: "The following regulations were laid down for them all alike: they were not to raise levies of soldiers or to exact money beyond the amount appointed, unless the Senate should so vote or the emperor so order." (ἐκεῖνα δὲ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐνομοθετήθη, μήτε καταλόγους σφᾶς ποιεῖσθαι, μήτ' ἀργύριον ἔξω τοῦ τεταγμένου ἐσπράσσειν, εἰ μὴ ἦτοι ἡ βουλή ψηφίσαιτο ἢ ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ κελεύσειεν), 52.23.1: "Let all these men to whom the commands outside the city are assigned receive salaries, the more important officers more, the less important less, and those between an intermediate amount. For they cannot live in a foreign land upon their own resources, nor should they indulge, as they do now, in unlimited and indefinite expenditure." (Λαμβανέτωσαν δὲ μισθὸν πάντες οὗτοι οἱ τὰς ἔξω τῆς πόλεως ἀρχὰς ἐπιτρεπόμενοι, πλείω μὲν οἱ μείζονες, ἐλάττω δὲ οἱ καταδεέστεροι, μέσον δὲ οἱ μέσοι· οὔτε γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων οἷόν τέ ἐστιν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀλλοτρίᾳ ἀποζῆν, οὐτ' ἀορίστῳ καὶ ἀσταθμῆτι ἀναλώματι ὥσπερ νῦν χρῆσθαι).

legion commanders were now appointed by Augustus so that any rogue governor would have to fear the reaction of neighbouring forces and governors, as legions and auxiliary units were from now on permanently under arms in legionary fortresses that would become more elaborate over the course of the next two centuries.⁵⁶¹

The system created by Augustus was fundamentally different from the Republican one. In the heyday of the latter, a collective body of senators shared military glory that was won and largely financed through the toils of Rome's *assidui*. The required number of soldiers was raised every year, then discharged and sent back to their homes. This worked for a while, and for some time it was even thought that Roman armies could be paid by spoils of defeated enemies. However this proved to be shortsighted as the Social War shattered this possibility by greatly increasing the cost of the army for the Roman state. The Senate had no qualms about letting generals pay for armies out of their own pocket to make up for this. The system gradually evolved in a way that they came to play a bigger role in financing war, so much so that they ultimately became responsible for it but this proved to be unsustainable as it rested on extortions and expedients.

It cannot be overstated that under Augustus, and for the first time in Roman history, the military became a entirely funded entirely by the state; a trade that one could choose, rather than a civic obligation that would interrupt a citizen's life from time to time.⁵⁶² All military funding, recruitment, and achievements were from now on tied to the person of the emperor. In many ways it is striking that the Romans could maintain their empire and army for so long with little more than improvised measures. What Augustus did was to

⁵⁶¹ Gilliver 2007, 187-8.

⁵⁶² Although conscription could still be used in case of emergencies, cf. Brunt 1990, 188-214.

update archaic military structures to bring them up to the challenge of defending the world's biggest empire in a way that was financially sustainable.⁵⁶³

The third century CE historian Cassius Dio records two speeches supposedly made before Augustus by his advisors Maecenas and Agrippa. They discuss, among other things, whether the implementation of a standing army was the right decision to take. The speeches are, of course, Dio's invention, but their content nonetheless reflects the kind of decisions that Augustus had to take as well as the results of such decisions. The logic of the new military created by the Augustan system is quite accurately summarized in the following passage of the speech by Maecenas: "Now in democracies [i.e. in the Republic] those who contribute the money as a general rule also serve in the army, so that in a way they get their money back again; but in monarchies one set of people usually engages in agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, and politics, — and these are the classes from which the state's receipts are chiefly derived, — and a different set is under arms and draws pay." Maecenas continues by advising that soldiers should stay under arms permanently while others would pay for the upkeep of the army and benefit from their protection.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶³ It is relevant to quote Eder 1996, 458: "Of course, that does not allow us to conclude that Augustus had completed the provisional Republican arrangement by "concluding" and taming the archaic remnants, and thus having shaped the principate into the best Republic ever seen. But, perhaps, the view from hindsight may allow the suggestion that those archaic remnants had to be tamed by Augustus to lose their general destructive force, which had been forgotten in the flush of enthusiasm during the "transition of power", and which thus had heavily damaged the constitution of the Roman Republic."

⁵⁶⁴ Cassius Dio 52.6.5: (τὸ δὲ δὴ κέρδος ἕτεροι λαμβάνουσιν. ἐν μὲν γὰρ ταῖς δημοκρατίαις καὶ στρατεύονται ὡς πλήθει οἱ τὰ χρήματα συνεσφέροντες, ὥστε τρόπον τινὰ αὐτοὶ αὐτὰ ἀπολαμβάνουσιν· ἐν δὲ ταῖς μοναρχίαις ἄλλοι μὲν ὡς τὸ πολὺ καὶ γεωργοῦσι καὶ δημιουργοῦσι καὶ ναυτίλλονται καὶ πολιτεύονται, παρ' ὧν περ καὶ αἱ λήψεις μάλιστα γίνονται, ἄλλοι δὲ τὰ ὅπλα ἔχουσι καὶ τὸν μισθὸν φέρουσιν), also 52.27: "A standing army also should be supported, drawn from the citizens, the subject nations, and the allies, its size in the several provinces being greater or less according as the necessities of the case demand; and these troops ought always to be under arms and to engage in the practice of warfare continually." (τοὺς δὲ δὴ στρατιώτας ἀθανάτους, ἕκ τε τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ τῶν ὑπηκόων τῶν τε συμμάχων, τῇ μὲν πλείους τῇ δὲ ἐλάττους, καθ' ἕκαστον ἔθνος, ὅπως ἂν ἡ χρεῖα τῶν πραγμάτων ἀπαιτῇ, τρέφεσθαι

From a political point of view, positioning the legions in frontier areas and splitting command between officers appointed by Augustus made it less likely that one man would have enough manpower at his disposal to challenge the state, i.e. Augustus himself, although this was not completely impossible as the events of the Year of the Four Emperors would show.⁵⁶⁵

3- Military Service and Citizenship after Augustus

The military reforms of Augustus officially marked the end of the old relation between citizenship, wealth, and military duty.⁵⁶⁶ From now on the army would be made up of

προσθήκει, καὶ αὐτοὺς αἰεὶ τε ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις εἶναι καὶ τὴν ἄσκησιν τῶν πολεμικῶν διὰ παντὸς ποιεῖσθαι δεῖ), 52.28; “My proposal, therefore, is that you shall first of all sell the property that belongs to the state,—and I observe that this has become vast on account of the wars,—reserving only a little that is distinctly useful or necessary to you; and that you lend out all the money thus realized at a moderate rate of interest. In this way not only will the land be put under cultivation, being sold to owners who will cultivate it themselves, but also the latter will acquire a capital and become more prosperous, while the treasury will gain a permanent revenue that will suffice for its needs. In the second place, I advise you to make an estimate of the revenues from this source and of all the other revenues which can with certainty be derived from the mines or any other source, and then to make and balance against this a second estimate of all the expenses, not only those of the army, but also of all those which contribute to the well-being of a state, and furthermore of those which will necessarily be incurred for unexpected campaigns and the other needs which are wont to arise in an emergency. The next step is to provide for any deficiency by levying an assessment upon absolutely all property which produces any profit for its possessors, and by establishing a system of taxes among all the peoples we rule. For it is but just and proper that no individual or district be exempt from these taxes, inasmuch as they are to enjoy the benefits derived from the taxation as much as the rest.” οὕτω βουλευώμεθα. φημὶ τοίνυν χρῆναί σε πρῶτον μὲν ἀπάντων τὰ κτήματα τὰ ἐν τῷ δημοσίῳ ὄντα (πολλὰ δὲ ταῦτα ὁρῶ διὰ τοὺς πολέμους γεγονότα) πωλῆσαι, πλὴν ὀλίγων τῶν καὶ πάνυ χρησίμων σοὶ καὶ ἀναγκαίων, καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον τοῦτο πᾶν ἐπὶ μετρίοις τισὶ τόκοις ἐκδανεῖσαι. οὕτω γὰρ ἢ τε γῆ ἐνεργὸς ἔσται, δεσπόταις αὐτουργοῖς δοθεῖσα, καὶ ἐκεῖνοι ἀφορμὴν λαβόντες εὐπορώτεροι γενήσονται, τό τε δημόσιον διαρκὴ καὶ ἀθάνατον πρόσσοδον ἔξει. εἴτα συλλογίσασθαι ταῦτά τε καὶ τᾶλλα ὅσα ἐκ τε μεταλλείας καὶ εἰ δὴ ποθεν ἄλλοθεν βεβαίως δύναται προσιέναι, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἀντιλογίσασθαι μὴ μόνον τὰ στρατιωτικὰ ἀλλὰ καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα δι’ ὧν καλῶς πόλις οἰκεῖται, καὶ προσέτι καὶ ὅσα ἔς τε τὰς αἰφνιδίους στρατείας καὶ ἔς τὰ λοιπὰ ὅσα εἰώθεν ἐπὶ καιροῦ συμβαίνειν, ἀναγκαῖον βέσται δαπανᾶσθαι· καὶ τοῦτου πρὸς πᾶν τὸ λεῖπον φόρον τε ἐπιτάξαι πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς τοῖς ἐπικαρπῖαν τινὰ τῷ κεκτημένῳ αὐτὰ παρέχουσι, καὶ τέλη καταστήσαι παρὰ πᾶσιν ὧν ἄρχομεν (καὶ γὰρ καὶ δίκαιον καὶ προσήκον ἔστι μηδένα αὐτῶν ἀτελεῖ εἶναι, μὴ ιδιώτην, μὴ δῆμον, ἅτε καὶ τῆς ὀφελείας τῆς ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ὁμοίως τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀπολαύσοντας). Millar 1964, 102-118; Manuwald 1979, Espinosa Ruiz, 1982.

⁵⁶⁵ Tacitus *Historiae* 1.4.2: “for the secret of empire was now disclosed, that an emperor could be made elsewhere than at Rome.”(*evulgato imperii arcano posse principem alibi quam Romae fieri*). This famous passage about the *arcanum imperii* should be put in perspective with the period of the civil wars.

⁵⁶⁶ Keppie 1984, 127; 115-120; Raaflaub 1987, 250: “Wichtiger noch als diese Details ist die grundlegende

volunteers, although conscription could still be used in emergency situations. There was now a clear-cut distinction between civilian and military life, and also a permanent distinction between those paying taxes and those paid by those taxes to perform military duty. Whereas in the Republic civilians could become soldiers and then return to civilian life again over a short period of time, from Augustus' reign onwards soldiers and civilians were two different categories of people.

Moreover, the army had officially ceased to be an Italian matter. The trend that started in the course of the first century BCE continued during the imperial period, as recruitment became increasingly provincial. All the inhabitants of the empire could now participate in its defence, rather than only classes of Roman citizens possessing enough property to buy their own gear. The proportion of Italians in the army would steadily decline over the course of the first century as new auxiliary units were raised and citizenship continued to spread over the empire.⁵⁶⁷ This trend would culminate with the *constitutio Antoniniana* of 212 giving citizenship to all free inhabitants of the empire.⁵⁶⁸ Afterwards the distinction between legionaries and auxiliaries was mostly an honorary one based on privileges, not on citizenship.⁵⁶⁹

The increased participation of non-Romans in the army is a development that should not

Bedeutung dieser Reformen. Sie haben die römische Armee als stehendes Heer von Berufssoldaten konstituiert; sie haben die unzureichenden Improvisationen der Republik durch eine permanente Organisation ersetzt, die den Bedürfnissen des Weltreiches besser gerecht zu werden vermochte und deshalb während rund zweier Jahrhunderte fast unverändert in Kraft blieb; sie stellen vor allem eine durchdachte, umfassende und in mancher Hinsicht gültige Antwort auf einige der schwierigsten politischen und sozialen Probleme der späten Republik dar - Probleme, die das senatorische Regime zu lösen außerstande gewesen war und die entscheidend zur Herbeiführung eines Bürgerkriegszeitalters und zum Zusammenbruch der Republik beigetragen hatten."

⁵⁶⁷ Forni 1974, 339-391; Mann 1983; Keppie 1997, 93-4, 95: "It is clear that each army now increasingly thought of the province of service as their homeland to which they had become long accustomed and which they were loath to leave without good reason."; Le Bohec 2002, 82-91.

⁵⁶⁸ Cassius Dio 78.9.

⁵⁶⁹ Le Bohec 2006, 70-75

be surprising, as Rome's empire had by now reached an enormous size. What is perhaps surprising is how long Republican military institutions could continue to work within a framework that did not match the physical reality of a Mediterranean empire and how long it took to rationalize the economic and administrative structures of the army to cope with this reality.⁵⁷⁰

The army was once the entire Roman society in arms, it was an institution deeply rooted in collective identity and memory. It is perhaps no wonder that it could not be comprehensively reformed without profound and violent changes in Rome's social and political order. The civil wars illustrated this, as they were the period in which not only the army, but also Roman society was transformed, often quite ruthlessly.

⁵⁷⁰ Keppie 1997, 101: "The demands of Imperial defence changed military service, from an Italian point of view, from a patriotic defence of hearth, home and family to the policing of inhospitable frontiers far distant from Italy. Legionaries as well as auxiliaries came to be drawn from the provinces. The Empire was too large and too diverse for the population of its centre to police alone."

Conclusion

Army and Society: from Community to Empire

The Roman army was once made up of a hoplite phalanx, much like the armies of the Classical Greek city-states. According to the most popular theory in modern scholarship the Romans changed their military organization somewhere in the fourth century, perhaps after the great disaster suffered at the hands of invading Gallic war bands. The traumatizing defeat suffered at the battle of the Allia in 390 or 386 became a *dies ater*, a black day on which it was considered ill advised to undertake military operations. It is perhaps after this catastrophe that the Romans would have adopted the organization and armament of the manipular system. This represented more than a military innovation; it had financial, social and political implications as well. Indeed, this new army included a greater part of the citizen body, as it now comprised poorer citizens serving as light infantry and heavy infantry armed with cheaper weapons.⁵⁷¹ According to Livy, a few years before the Gallic attack, the Romans had introduced military pay in the context of the siege of Veii. This was the most important innovation in terms of war financing of all the Republican period.⁵⁷² Previously, only the rich served at their own expense. The introduction of the war tax (*tributum*) allowed Rome to offer an indemnity (*stipendium*) to its soldiers.⁵⁷³ This allowed less affluent classes of citizens to join the army as well.

This system worked well as long as war was waged in Italy, relatively close to the Roman

⁵⁷¹ Couissin 1926, 181-213, 240-8; Kromayer and Veith 1928, 288-300; Harmand 1967, 59-68; Kienast 1975, 83-112; Feugère 1993, 92-7; Humm 2005, 284-331; Bishop and Coulston 2006, 50-72.

⁵⁷² See chapter one, section 2.2 for the introduction of the *stipendium* and *tributum*.

⁵⁷³ Nicolet 1976d; Marchetti 1977, 107-133.

heartland. However, as Rome's dominion extended to all of Italy and more powerful foes, such as Carthage, appeared, larger military efforts were necessary. This required money to build ships, pay multiple armies deployed in remote theatres of operations, as well as supplying them. The Republic depended heavily on the willingness of its *assidui* to pay the *tributum*, finance their equipment, and serve for minimal pay. Livy reports that in 215, in the middle of the Second Punic War, expenses were still only met with the *tributum* and this was not nearly enough to cover expenditures.⁵⁷⁴ Rome did manage to fund the war and overcome Carthage by a remarkable combination of improvised measures: levies of cash according to citizens' census rating, requisitions from the allies, loans to the state by private citizens, loans from allies, and war indemnities.⁵⁷⁵

From 201 to 167 a small number of lucrative campaigns made up for many non-profitable ones.⁵⁷⁶ The financial emergency of the Second Punic War seemed to have been forgotten, as the Senate was now profiting from the plunder brought from Macedon as well as from war indemnities, so much so that it felt confident enough to cancel the

⁵⁷⁴ Livy 23.48.8-11: "necessary expenses were met only by the property tax; that the number of those who paid that particular tax had been diminished by such great losses of troops at Lake Trasimene and also at Cannae; that if the few who survived should be burdened by a much greater levy, they would perish by another malady. And so they thought that, unless support should be found in credit, the state would not be sustained by its assets; that Fulvius, the praetor, must go before the assembly, inform the people of the public needs and exhort those who by contracts had increased their property to allow the state, the source of their wealth, time for payment, and to contract for furnishing what was needed for the army in Spain, on the condition that they should be the first to be paid, as soon as there was money in the treasury" (*ipsum tributum conferentium numerum tantis exercituum stragibus et ad Trasumennum lacum et ad Cannas inminutum; qui superessent pauci, si multiplici gravarentur stipendio, alia perituros peste. Itaque nisi fide staretur, rem publicam opibus non staturam. Prodeundum in contionem Fulvio praetori esse, indicandas populo publicas necessitates cohortandosque, qui redempturis auxissent patrimonia, ut rei publicae, ex qua crevissent, tempus commodarent conducerentque ea lege praebenda quae ad exercitum Hispaniensem opus essent, ut, cum pecunia in aerario esset, iis primis solveretur*). Polybius 10.15.1; 18.28.9; 18.32.10-12, stressed that the defeats the Romans suffered at the hands of Hannibal were not because their equipment or military organization were inferior but because the skills of the Carthaginian general outmatched those of his opponents.

⁵⁷⁵ Levies: Livy 24.11.7-9; requisitions: 23.48.4-6; loans from citizens: see note above; loans from allies: 23.21.5-6, 23.38.12; indemnities: Polybius 15.18.7.

Nicolet 1963, 417-436; 1966, 63-66; Ungern-Sternberg 2009, 247-264; Rosenstein (forthcoming).

⁵⁷⁶ Frank 1993, 76-97; Rosenstein (forthcoming); 2011b, 153-8.

collection of the *tributum* indefinitely. It was still thought that wars would ultimately finance themselves without needing permanent additional measures from the state. This might have been the case at that time but nothing guaranteed in the future that potential enemies would be able to cover the costs expended to defeat them.

Over the course of the second century, the Romans continued to successfully expand their dominion until they suffered great defeats at the hands of the Teutones and Cimbri at the end of the century. This study has argued that Gaius Marius did not reform the army in a comprehensive manner in order to turn it into a professional force funded by the state, as a result of these defeats. Neither pay nor conditions of service were changed by Marius. The insufficiency of our sources before and after the time of Marius has made it tempting to attribute wide ranging military reforms established after great defeats to a man who supposedly acted ‘contrary to law and custom’ to use Sallust’s and Plutarch’s phrase.⁵⁷⁷

The Social War proved to be a watershed in the history of Roman military funding. Before that time, Rome could count on large numbers of Italian allies who were not paid by the *aerarium*, but by their own communities. The revolt and then the enfranchisement of the *socii* added a significant burden to Rome’s military expenditure, as this effectively at least doubled the cost of fielding an army. From this time onwards, rather than implementing new financial structures, the Senate was increasingly willing to give more latitude to generals to fund their armies as they saw fit. This time the Senate’s willingness to rely on improvisation ultimately turned against it. For centuries there had been a tension between private and public warfare. Although the Roman state seemed to have

⁵⁷⁷ On Marius see Chapter Three; Potter 2010, 310: “The fact that most of our detailed information for the army between the time of Polybius and that of Caesar is concentrated in the period of Marius’ wars with the Cimbrians and Teutons had perhaps elevated that period to an importance it does not necessarily deserve in the history of the Roman army.”

been able to steer and concentrate most private energies in a state army since the fourth century BCE the story was not over.⁵⁷⁸ Private warfare had not disappeared altogether, and Bruno Bleckmann has brilliantly shown that even during the First Punic War, aristocrats still engaged in private naval expeditions.⁵⁷⁹ One could of course argue that these were exceptions and generally speaking, it seems indeed that the Roman state was by and large mostly successful in monopolizing the use of organized violence from the fourth century onwards and to project it against external enemies. However the pendulum swung violently back in the first century. Indeed, by largely abandoning recruitment and funding to the hands of generals, the Senate also lost its most important means of keeping them in line.⁵⁸⁰ The means at their disposal became so great that they were eventually able to supplant the state.

The period of the civil wars saw the periphery of the empire acquire a growing importance for funding and recruitment. Generals increasingly relied on provincials and money collected on-site to wage war. However, generals themselves were largely relying on expedients for the upkeep of armies of a size never seen before. When Octavian finally emerged victorious from civil war, he was in control of dozens of legions gathered over several years of fratricidal conflict. Since this had been a civil war, he could not simply pass the bill to an external enemy and ask for indemnities, as had been done in the past. He had to look for a permanent and manageable solution.

Augustus' military reforms were in many ways the most crucial innovation of his reign. In the Republic, soldiers were supposed to be content with a meagre *stipendium* and

⁵⁷⁸ Timpe 1990, 368-387; Harris 1990, 494-510.

⁵⁷⁹ Bleckmann, 2002.

⁵⁸⁰ Polybius 6.15.4-5.

whatever plunder (if any) could be spared for them. This system was suitable for a regional power, but Rome became much more than that over the last three centuries BCE. The same modest benefits were still offered to soldiers after Rome had conquered a Mediterranean empire, something that paved the way for generals to increase the odds themselves for rewards, first for their own personal prestige, than to ensure their victory in civil war.

It seems reasonable to argue that the concept of the Republican militiaman and the funding mechanisms attached to it were incompatible with the military tasks required by the existence of a Mediterranean empire.⁵⁸¹ Augustus implemented a much-needed update to an old system that had endured largely because of its flexibility, but had now outlived its usefulness. By centralizing funding, terms of service, regularizing rewards on discharge, and supporting these reforms with sustainable funding measures, Augustus was rationalizing and adapting the Roman army in accordance with the type of state it had to defend: a monarchy spreading over three continents, not a city-state with limited resources and population in which war was a matter literally involving ‘the Senate and the Roman people’.

In the military system described by Polybius one would be able to tell just by looking at a Roman army who were the most prominent members of society. It would be the richly equipped cavalrymen, here both figuratively and literally the highest members of society. The poor infantryman equally poorly protected by a mere square chest-piece would offer a stark contrast with his richer compatriot wearing a coat of mail and elaborate crests and

⁵⁸¹ Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*, chap. 16 : “Ce fut uniquement la grandeur de la république qui fit le mal.”

feathers on his helmet. Finally nobody could possibly think that these nimble and poorly clad young men with only a small shield and a bundle of javelins were going to run for office. Things were quite different in the late first century. At that point, we see soldiers with moustaches, long hair, and trousers, features that were everything but Roman at the time. Yet they fought on the same side. Greeks, Spanish, Illyrians, Syrians, Gauls, Numidians, Batavians, almost every people of the Roman Empire, seemed to be represented. The army had become as cosmopolitan as the empire it defended. The soldiers were no longer all Roman citizens or even Italians. They were not all drafted to defend their homeland or expand its dominion but rather many were choosing soldiering as a career they would pursue for most of their lifetime. The SPQR emblem would still remain on military standards for a long time but the army of the empire had become the army of its combined peoples, not only the army of the inhabitants of Roman Italy or those with the status of Roman citizenship.⁵⁸²

This new army was much more adapted to the realities of a world empire than the army described by Polybius. The latter was reminiscent of the military organization of classical Greek city-states in which citizenship, property, and military service were closely linked. The last remains of the Republican military system still present in the Augustan army were its senatorial leadership. Even this old senatorial monopoly for military commands would erode over the next four centuries, first to the advantage of the *equites*, then to that of common soldiers who rose through the ranks. The gradual professionalization of the officer corps in the third and fourth centuries CE actually ended a trend started in the late

⁵⁸² A late second century CE epitaph records that a certain C. Manlius Valerianus 'faithfully commanded a century in a praetorian cohort, not in a barbarian legion' (*qui cohortis centuriam regit praetoriae fidus non barbaricae legionis*) (CIL V 923). This points to a growing separation between army and society.

Republic. The result of this process was that the Roman army was by then a professional army from common soldiers all the way up to high ranking-officers. Such a degree of professionalization would not be matched again for quite some time in the history of the Western world.

Ironically, it is the army of the Late Empire that has come under fire from modern historians for being disorganized and ineffective, having supposedly lost the fighting spirit and discipline of the 'good old days'. For this topic I think we have to take our distance from Montesquieu and Gibbon. Their fascination for moral decline would have met with approbation from Sallust and Vegetius, but it is one of the tasks of today's historians to go beyond moral judgement.

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