

VIRTUS ET DISCIPLINA:

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF THE ROMAN MARTIAL VALUES OF
COURAGE AND DISCIPLINE

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By

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COURAGE AND DISCIPLINE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	v
I. Roman Martial Values: An Interdisciplinary Approach.....	1
1. Key Terms: Culture, Ideology, Hierarchy, and Military Doctrine	3
2. Idealized Characteristics of Roman Warfare	16
3. Primary Sources.....	18
4. Literature Review.....	24
5. Methodologies	31
6. Conclusion.....	43
II. <i>Virtus</i>	45
1. Introduction	45
2. First Principles	47
3. <i>Virtus</i> in Action.....	61
A. Commanders	61
B. Junior Officers.....	72
C. Enlisted Ranks.....	86
4. Conclusion: <i>Virtus</i> and Manliness	96
III. <i>Disciplina</i>	104
1. Introduction	104
2. First Principles	109

3. Mechanics of <i>Disciplina</i>	121
4. Origins of <i>Disciplina</i> : Experience and Wisdom.....	131
5. The Cycle of <i>Disciplina</i> : Great-Father, Child-Hero	139
6. Comparanda.....	154
7. Conclusion: <i>Disciplina</i> and Conscientiousness	164
IV. Conclusion.....	170
Bibliography.....	175
Vita	194

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses Roman martial values, principally *virtus* and *disciplina*, and their literary characterization. This is an interdisciplinary study that employs data and methodologies from anthropology, evolutionary biology, moral philosophy, military history, and analytical psychology to supplement scholarship from classical studies. My aim is to analyze and interpret, as deeply and profoundly as possible, the values that the Romans regarded as essential to their military success. I argue that Greek and Roman authors depict nuanced but relatively consistent representations of Roman martial values, which both derive from actual Roman military practice and project an important component of Roman cultural identity. *Virtus* was a virtue that primarily denoted martial courage, an ethical quality, while *disciplina* functioned as a means to *virtus*, but it was not necessarily a virtue itself. The premises of my argument are as follows: 1) military doctrine reflects culture, which manifests in the projection of Roman values through military narratives; 2) there is significant agreement among classical authors discussing Roman warfare in the abstract; 3) historiography distorts to some extent but is not deliberately mendacious, which derives from the relatively meritocratic hierarchies cultivated by the Roman army; 4) an appreciation of archetypal imagery has utility in interpreting Roman

values, given that the primary evidence for these qualities derive from stories imbued with moral instruction.

I. Roman Martial Values: An Interdisciplinary Approach

The subjects of this thesis are Roman military values and their literary characterisation. War is a frequent and important theme in classical literature, and the Romans themselves believed that they surpassed all others in its practice. Questions may be raised about both the reality and the representation of Roman warfare: What martial values do classical authors convey that, in their view, contributed to Roman military success? To what degree are these characteristics socially constructed and, by extension, the hierarchies that they generated? How rational and ethical are Roman martial values, that is in comparison with contemporary cultures and as universal principles? Lastly, how much do classical authors distort Roman martial values, or even employ them for political or social commentary? I argue that Greek and Roman authors depict nuanced but relatively consistent representations of Roman martial values, which both derive from actual Roman military practice and project an important component of Roman cultural identity. The first premise is that military doctrine reflects culture, regardless of a state's proclivity toward war-making. Roman military doctrine, in accord with the significance of war in Roman society, is both preserved and formulated by the literary tradition and projects important Roman values. The second premise is that idealized characteristics of Roman warfare, which include but are not limited to those identified in this thesis, reveal the agreement of literary discourse and the capacity for classical authors to discuss Roman warfare in the abstract.¹ While the depictions and terms for Roman martial values are relatively

¹ Andrew M. Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 3. Intersubjectivity is jargon for the agreement that speakers of a common language have on a subjective definition(s) or meaning(s) for something in a discourse. Individuals, however, will have slightly different

consistent, individual authors do provide nuanced representations that are influenced by historical context but, importantly, grounded in reality. The third premise is that the reality of Roman warfare can elucidate the literary representation of Roman warfare, since the values themselves, especially *virtus*, manifest a hierarchy predicated on competence. Classical military narratives are distortions of reality to a degree but they are not false, which would only be the case if they included details that they knew to be untrue, whether literally or metaphorically. It is still possible to distinguish in many instances the embellishment and rhetoric from the bare historical account, which may be facilitated by the use of other evidence outside the classical literary canon.² Furthermore, studies in evolutionary biology and analytical psychology can illustrate the inevitability of hierarchies. The fourth premise is that Roman historiography, which was preoccupied with warfare, was imbued with moral instruction. Historical accounts of the army's campaigns and the character of its commanders was a means of discussing certain Roman values that warfare best illustrated.³ A foreign adversary could act as a foil to the Roman protagonist, since cultures also define themselves by what they believe that they are not. In conclusion, this is a study of the ways that warfare shaped and affirmed a crucial component of Roman identity, which manifested in remarkably consistent, meaningful, and effective symbols.

rules and vocabulary. Although Foucault studied in depth prisons and medical clinics, one of the best examples of his "discourses," which create and sustain institutions of power, is ironically academia. See Paul A. Bové "Discourse," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 57.

² Tim J. Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 13-14. Cornell argues that standard annalistic notices, including war-related events like colonial settlements, diplomatic embassies, military operations, names of magistrates with *imperium*, triumphs, etc., can be distinguished from legendary material and rhetorical embellishments.

³ Cristina Kraus, "Historiography and Biography," in *A Companion to Latin Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing LTD, 2005), 242-243. Kraus notes that history's purpose was primarily to provide inspiration and instruction through historical examples, both good and bad. Furthermore, there is the concept of "embedded narrative," which substitutes ancestral custom for valid argumentation, and is thus taken for granted; Roman historiography resorts to this convention frequently (Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 7).

This introductory chapter is divided into the following sections: key terms, including culture, ideology, hierarchy, and military doctrine; the abstract values of Roman warfare to be discussed, primarily courage and discipline, as well as others for future study; the primary sources and ancient historiography; a literature review of Roman military studies in classical studies and military history, including *Sachskritik*, War and Society, and Face of Battle approaches; lastly, methodologies, including collective memory, thick description, new historicism, and Jungian archetypes, which together constitute my interdisciplinary study. This introductory chapter is intended to be a part of a whole, outlining in detail the assumptions that I make and the methodologies that I employ in chapters two and three, but it can be read as a standalone work. It is my genuine aim to produce and inspire interdisciplinary studies of the Roman army and avoid as much as possible relegating this endeavor to cliché. Accordingly, I have been rather eclectic in this study, picking up useful tools where I found them from fields as disparate as evolutionary biology, literary theory, cultural anthropology, moral philosophy, and analytical psychology. Furthermore, by doing this, I found the case study to be more useful to illustrate my points than the exhaustive stockpiling of footnotes, although the latter of course has its uses. Having said that, there is nothing more useless than a theory that ignores data.

1. Key Terms: Culture, Ideology, Hierarchy, and Military Doctrine

This thesis derives its use of the term culture from the anthropologist Clifford Geertz, who describes it as semiotic concept. To produce meaningful research about “culture,” it is necessary to define the term and apply that definition consistently.

Otherwise, as is often the case, the term becomes meaningless and too broad to be useful. According to Geertz, culture refers to the “webs of significance,” that human beings themselves devise.⁴ In other words, culture constitutes a network of socially constructed symbols that its members use to exchange and develop various things, including ideas and knowledge.⁵ A degree of social construction is undeniable with respect to symbols but, as I argue in further detail below, there are archetypal images that reach beyond the nuances of particular historical and social contexts, as Carl Jung posited. For example, the *paludamentum* (scarlet cloak) of a Roman commander, the *phalerae* (ornaments) of a veteran centurion, and even the orthogonal plans of Roman camps, all have symbolic meaning for members of the Roman army and Roman society. In the case of the cloak, in both the republican and imperial periods, this garment symbolized rank, authority, and wartime itself; after the fall of the republic, the sculptural depictions of the emperor donning the *paludamentum* signified his power and monopolization of military command. In short, virtually everything in a society can be construed as a communicative symbol, which is part of a larger cultural grammar.⁶

Geertz argues that the analysis of a culture, that is understanding the meaning of its symbols, or signs, is primarily an exercise in interpretation rather than an application of the scientific method.⁷ Cultures embed literature, like other forms of art, with symbolic

⁴ Geertz notes that there is not necessarily one good definition of culture, but that eclecticism is ineffective for cogent analysis. Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 5.

⁵ Stephen Greenblatt, “Culture,” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 229; Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 14, 89.

⁶ Peter J. Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), xxi.

⁷ Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 5; Thomas A. Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts* (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 164.

meanings that inspire emotions and communicate ideas and information.⁸ This principle may be observed, for example, when Caesar has one of his centurions directly notice the significance of warfare in signalling *virtus*, a quintessential value to the Romans.⁹ Like most complex abstractions, the term *virtus* does not directly translate into any other language. The term denotes multiple notions such as courage, steadfastness, manliness and, in time, virtue itself, that were shaped by the historical and cultural context of ancient Rome. As Stephen Greenblatt writes, “Art is an important agent then in the transmission of culture. It is one of the ways in which the roles by which men and women are expected to pattern their lives are communicated and passed from generation to generation.”¹⁰ Accordingly, to comprehend texts and the ideas that they contain, we must also comprehend their cultural and historical context.¹¹ Nevertheless, while interpreting a culture may be more art than science, reality is not so malleable as the tools that humans have devised to interpret reality, which includes language and art. Postmodernism rejects the modernist premise of reason, but without reason to formulate logical inferences it is impossible to distinguish the finite number of valid interpretations from the infinite number of invalid interpretations.

Anthropological studies also inform my use of the term ideology, which, put simply, is a system of normative ideas and values conveyed through symbols, which may

⁸ “When the fight was going on most vigorously before the fortifications, Pulvio, one of them, says, ‘Why do you hesitate, Varenus? or what [better] opportunity of signaling your valor do you seek?’” (“*Ex his Pullo, cum acerrime ad munitiones pugnaretur, ‘Quid dubitas,’ inquit, ‘Vorene? aut quem locum tuae probandae virtutis exspectas?’*”) (Caes. *B Gall.*, trans. by Charles F. Smith, 5.44.3).

⁹ Riggsby notes the “constraints of language” which includes terms and phrases, the latter including idiomatic, technical, or otherwise (Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 3).

¹⁰ Greenblatt, “Culture,” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*,” 227-230.

¹¹ Jeffrey Alexander et al., “Introduction: Cultural Sociology Today,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6; Greenblatt, “Culture,” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*,” 227, 230.

be transmitted through various means such as art, institutions, and rituals.¹² As anthropologists such as Geertz have noticed, culture and ideology are interconnected. In a sense, the rhetoric of ideology and a culture's view of the world can be read in all its forms of art. For example, the Romans' nostalgia for old monuments did not extend to the architecture when they were rebuilt or renovated, in contrast to the somewhat unappealing conjectural replica of Paul Revere's house in Boston. The emotional attachment for the Romans had more to do with the spacial antiquity and institutions of the particular site.¹³ Furthermore, in public representations of warfare, the Romans preferred to depict battle scenes drawn from history, or at least non-mythic material. The elites, who ruled in a society that prized military victory above all, wanted to be remembered for their own personal achievements, as Gruen notes: "Sculptured documentation of events, accomplishments, or institutions seems peculiarly Roman, a means whereby to announce individual achievements or expound national values."¹⁴

The ideology of ancient Rome was, generally speaking, collective and conservative, which preferred group and tradition over individual and innovation. While limiting freedom to some extent, the warrior ideology of republican Rome was, however, consistent, long-lasting, and optimal for not only preserving but expanding Roman values. Some ideologies, however, such as marxism, are so pathological in their disconnect from

¹² Denying that one has an ideology may be an example of self-deception, but it may also be an overstatement, as well as not being an argument. See Michael Billig, "Rhetorical Psychology, Ideological Thinking, and Imagining Nationhood," in *Social Movements and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 66; James Kavanagh, "Ideology," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 310, 312; Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual*, xx-xxi.

¹³ Richard Jenkyns, "The Memory of Rome in Rome," in *Memoria Romana: Memory in Rome and Rome in Memory* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014), 17, 20.

¹⁴ Eric S. Gruen, "Art and Ideology," in *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992), 141.

the collective human psyche that they become self-defeating and do not persist for long. Accordingly, I recognize the effect of enculturation in developing individuals' values, which relates to the concept of cultural relativism that is popular among anthropologists.¹⁵ Cultural relativism maintains that a culture's values can only be understood by the people who live by the values of that particular culture, rather than a universal set of values. This is where I part ways from the majority of anthropologists, or "culturalists" to use one scholar's term, and instead follow the "parallelists" or "Jungians," who place more stress on the similarities between cultures.¹⁶ Anthropologist Robert P. Sylvester, for example, describes a hypothetical person who presumes that his values are universal, but who does not provide a valid argument why this so. Said person may be ethnocentrically biased, as Sylvester claims, but this strawman argument does not refute the argument that morality itself is a valid concept or that moral choices do in fact have objectively measurable consequences.¹⁷ A Catholic priest may choose to regard morality as optional when he sexually abuses an innocent boy, but this does not invalidate the victim's trauma or the public outrage from this violation of the non-aggression principle.¹⁸ Likewise, institutionalized pederasty, such as in ancient Greece or modern New Guinea, is a rare phenomenon and therefore not universally preferable, and is unethical precisely because it is inflicted, under the guise of tradition, on adolescent boys rather than being voluntary.¹⁹

¹⁵ Melville J. Herskovits, "Some Further Comments on Cultural Relativism," *American Anthropologist* 60 (1958): 267.

¹⁶ David A. Leeming, *Mythology: The Voyage of the Hero* (Philadelphia: Lippencott, 1973), 1.

¹⁷ Stefan Molyneux, *Universally Preferable Behavior: A Rational Proof of Secular Ethics* (n.p.): CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017), 43.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 53-54.

¹⁹ David M. Halperin, "Why is Diotima a Woman? Platonic Eros and the figuration of gender," in *Before Sexuality: the Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 285-287. Halperin argues that it is a widespread phenomenon for men to desire the procreative powers of women. His meager evidence is not persuasive, and just because a very limited number of cultures

Groupthink is no reliable indicator of voluntary action. With respect to Roman martial values, especially courage, courage remains a universally preferable ethical quality, in contrast to cowardice, but particular historical and social contexts can nuance this quality to a degree, but not fundamentally.

I am also aware but critical of theories regarding ideology by Marxism and postmodernism, especially with respect to the phenomenon of hierarchy. Louis Althusser, a structural Marxist, defines ideology through his concept of ideological state apparatuses, which enable indirect hegemony through social practices and organizations by the ruling class.²⁰ A feature in this concept is that ideology represents the “imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.”²¹ Ideology, therefore, embodies allusions to reality and, since it is not simply an illusion, can be analyzed in order to discover the realities that inform it.²² This approach is a major contribution to the discredited and overly pejorative “false consciousness” of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, which argued that ideology merely functions to blind the proletariat to their exploitation.²³ Nevertheless, it does not follow that values, which estimate worth, are propagated by social hierarchies to serve no purpose other than subtle oppression. Dominance hierarchies, discussed in greater detail below, are ancient and prevalent, especially in mammalian species, and thus are a natural product of our evolutionary past. This is a fact, which is ignored by postmodernists,

imagine that men must enact certain rituals, such as pederasty, for boys to become men that does not prove that that is objectively true.

²⁰ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review P, 2001), 143, 146. He also uses the term “repressive state apparatus” for more direct means that the ruling class exerts its will, for example by means of the armed forces (Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 149-150).

²¹ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 162.

²² *Ibid.*, 162.

²³ Huw Jones, “Theory, history, context,” in *The Routledge Companion to Critical and Cultural Theory* (New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2013), 6.

who argue that virtually everything is socially constructed.²⁴ Hierarchies are present in every human civilization and have indeed produced inequality, sometimes excessively so. Indeed, it may be a permanent feature of human behavior, as another aspect of our evolutionary past, to produce socially constructed ideologies. Nevertheless, as I shall demonstrate, the martial values of Roman ideology had a fundamentally ethical basis, in particular *virtus*, which inspired both admiration and fierce competition within the army, which in turn led to military effectiveness. As many Roman authors in the imperial period noticed, the problem is when a highly efficient army ceases to be governed by values and merely becomes an instrument of tyrannical power, a hierarchy in which there is blind devotion to symbols rather than genuine comprehension of their intrinsic value.

To be more precise regarding hierarchies, the following chapters reference social hierarchies rather than dominance hierarchies, which vary in complexity but are functionally similar and, in any event, are connected in our evolutionary past. A dominance hierarchy, in animal behavior, denotes a ranked social structure in which each member is submissive to those members that outrank it. These groups, common amongst gregarious animals, are relatively stable with few instances of direct conflict, although shifts of power do occur when a member incurs an injury and is downgraded.²⁵ This type of hierarchical structure is, obviously, a natural manifestation of order, and effective precisely because it reduces rather than amplifies stress.²⁶ The point here is that hierarchies are inevitable. The natural world does offer many variations, as do social hierarchies in human societies.

²⁴ Stephen Hicks, *Explaining Postmodernism: Skepticism and Socialism from Rousseau to Foucault* (Ockham's Razor Publishing 2011), 5, 15-18.

²⁵ "Dominance Hierarchy," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

²⁶ Benoît Dubreuil, *Human Evolution and the Origins of Hierarchies: The State of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 53.

Unstable hierarchies do exist, however, but the conflict that they generate inevitably leads to a shift of power.²⁷ Protoypical behavioral patterns, like hierarchies, perpetuate because they directly relate to the capacity of a species to endure competition with other species and reproduce, as Richard Dawkins writes, “Evolution rhymes, patterns recur.”²⁸ Among primates, for example, the alpha is the most dominant figure, which is the highest ranking female for bonobos, but a male for chimpanzees. Among the latter, a stable hierarchy consisting of a competent alpha-male, supported by subordinate and equally competent beta-males, that is in their specific roles, is a powerfully cohesive unit, especially in hunting and defending territory. Jane Goodall famously studied the complexity of chimpanzee social structures at Gombe Stream National Park, Tanzania. There, she made a number of key observations, including noting the toolmaking and violent warfare-life capacities of chimpanzees.²⁹ Chimpanzees and humans diverged from a common ancestor, Concestor 1, approximately four to eight millions years ago. The unique features of the human species, such as consciousness, which still remains mysterious, developed from that period to today.³⁰

Hierarchies, however, constitute a homologous feature of chimpanzees and humans, and must have been shared by Concestor 1, and therefore are quite ancient.³¹

Human social hierarchies manifest more complex normative behaviors than the various

²⁷ Ibid., 52.

²⁸ Anne I. Dagg et al., *Human Evolution and Male Aggression: Debunking the Myth of Man and Ape*. Amherst: Cambria Press, 2012), 14; Richard Dawkins, *The Ancestor's Tale: A Pilgrimage to the Dawn of Evolution* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 1.

²⁹ Jane Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe: Patterns of Behavior* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986). Research has also demonstrated that chimpanzees maintain local customs, for example, one group in the Mahale Mountains, Tanzania, has a particular social custom known as the “grooming hand clasp” (Dawkins, *The Ancestor's Tale: A Pilgrimage to the Dawn of Evolution*, 103).

³⁰ Dawkins, *The Ancestor's Tale: A Pilgrimage to the Dawn of Evolution*, 101; Dubreuil, *Human Evolution and the Origins of Hierarchies: The State of Nature*, 3; “Chimpanzees,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

³¹ Dubreuil, *Human Evolution and the Origins of Hierarchies: The State of Nature*, 51.

visual displays and vocalizations found in the dominance hierarchies of other primates. Nevertheless, those individual males that have competed the most successfully, having reached the top of the dominance or social hierarchy, in both structures have a greater chance to reproduce.³² While the postmodernists are correct that hierarchies do generate stress, particularly for those at the bottom, it does not follow that they have no basis in competence. This relates directly to my discussion in chapter two of *virtus*, a component of an essentially meritocratic hierarchy, and *disciplina*, a means to *virtus* that required submission by lower-ranking members of Roman society to a recognized alpha-male figure, in this case the aristocratic general officer.³³

Roman military art reflects the interplay of ideology and the accurate representation of warfare. The ancient Romans maintained a remarkably consistent ideology in both sculptural and literary depictions of war.³⁴ The sculptural depiction of Roman forces routing their enemy in a set-piece battle was based on the actual stages of ancient battle, such as the turn of battle and rout, which we also see on display in literary texts. The representations, however, are in part subjective due to their selective interpretation of events, ignoring such things as casualties, setbacks, and outright defeats; likewise, literary narratives impose order on the chaos of battle by constructing a chronicle of events that may distort or exaggerate details. In any event, such scenes are imbued with ideology,

³² Ibid., 54.

³³ Dubreuil argues that the prevalence of social hierarchies can be attributed to unique human behavioral and cognitive features (Dubreuil, *Human Evolution and the Origins of Hierarchies: The State of Nature*, 2). This is persuasive, but his notion of egalitarian hunting bands prior to the rise of the state, seems a stretch given the antiquity and prevalence of hierarchies, not just among our ancestors, but almost universally in the natural world.

³⁴ Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual*, xx-xxi. “Eventually, a full cultural analysis will need to push beyond the boundaries of the text, to establish links between the text and values, institutions, and practices elsewhere in the culture” (Greenblatt, “Culture,” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*,” 226).

symbolizing the abstract notion of universal Roman cultural and martial superiority through superior discipline and *virtus*.³⁵ Accordingly, art manifests and communicates the ideology of a community, which may be termed an ideological state apparatus in Althusser's terms. Nevertheless, the simplistic dualism argued by Marxist intellectuals like Althusser, that of the propertied versus the proletariat, ignores the notion of reciprocity in certain state apparatuses, including the armed forces. When classes have different resources their contributions will be different and if multiple classes benefit then such contributions are not unjustly sacrificial, especially if they are voluntary. The state of course can be oppressive, and indeed it is the mechanism for the greatest oppression. Ironically, Marxist intellectuals in academia, like Althusser, constitute one example of that oppression.³⁶ Regarding the Roman military, the anecdotes of foreign volunteers with their service in the Roman army and the award of the franchise are ideological, and convey Roman pride about their cosmopolitan, if not multicultural, society.³⁷ Ideology is about consistency,

³⁵ Justin R. James, "Expressing Triumph: The Turn of Battle in Roman Sculpted Depictions of Set-Piece Battles" (paper presented at 10th Celtic Conference, Montreal, Canada, July 2017).

³⁶ In academic institutions the Professor, whose salary is paid for by the coercion of taxpaying citizens, sets the curriculum and therefore ideology; it is coercion because citizens are born involuntarily into a society ruled by government, taxes are not optional, and non-payment is punished (see Molyneux, *Universally Preferable Behavior: A Rational Proof of Secular Ethics*) for the philosophical concept of Universally Preferable Behavior, which addresses the innate coerciveness of government). The element of coercion is compounded by the limited usefulness of the research by some departments, especially those in the humanities, which have eighty percent of their papers go uncited (Vincent Lariviere et al, "The decline in the concentration of citations, 1900-2007," Cornell University Library, last modified September 30, 2008, accessed May 5, 2018, <https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/0809/0809.5250.pdf>, 4). The Professor also employs, or indeed exploits, inadequately paid teaching assistants whose marginally useful degrees require large funds, and in many cases debt, that ultimately offer little in the market ("Board: Student Assistants Covered by the NLRA," National Labor Relations Board, last modified August 23 2016, accessed May 5 2018, <https://www.nlr.gov/news-outreach/news-story/board-student-assistants-covered-nlra-0>; Nicholas D. Hartlep et al, *The neoliberal agenda and the student debt crisis in U.S. higher education* (New York; Routledge, 2017). The state is repressive, and ironically Marxist intellectuals like Althusser are some of the best examples of that repression.

³⁷ Cornell writes, regarding the ethnocentric aim of Dionysius of Halicarnassus of proving that the Romans were actually Greek: "The Roman foundation legend provides evidence, first and foremost, of how the Romans of later times chose to see themselves, and how they wished to be seen by others. The story carries a strong ideological message. The most revealing sign of this is the way it defines the identity of the Roman people as a mixture of different ethnic groups, and of Roman culture as the product of various foreign

which may also be observed in the legends of Romulus and his asylum in Rome for lower class immigrants:

His next care was to secure an addition to the population that the size of the City might not be a source of weakness. It had been the ancient policy of the founders of cities to get together a multitude of people of obscure and low origin and then to spread the fiction that they were the children of the soil. In accordance with this policy, Romulus opened a place of refuge on the spot where, as you go down from the Capitol, you find an enclosed space between two groves. A promiscuous crowd of freemen and slaves, eager for change, fled thither from the neighbouring states.³⁸

Military doctrine, like ideology, is closely connected to culture. Essentially, military doctrine refers to a military organization's standard precepts and methods of warfare, which provide a basic guide for combat in the field.³⁹ Military doctrines are shaped by the strategic objectives of a state for coercion, as well as by the resources for achieving those objectives.⁴⁰ From an anthropological perspective, doctrine is only one aspect of a community's armed forces. As Johnston writes, "Since armies choose doctrines, and not the other way around, fundamentally doctrine may be more an effect than a cause."⁴¹ Alger argues that doctrine is associated with principles of war, but rightly poses the questions of

influences. There could hardly be a greater contrast with the foundation myths of the Greek cities, which insisted on the purity and continuity of their origins (in some cases, as at Athens, maintaining that the population was 'autochthonous' – that is, sprung from the soil)" (Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 60).

³⁸ "Deinde, ne vana urbis magnitudo esset, adiciendae multitudinis causa vetere consilio condentium urbes, qui obscuram atque humilem conciendo ad se multitudinem natam e terra sibi prolem ementiebantur, locum, qui nunc saeptus descendentibus inter duos lucos est, asylum aperit. eo ex finitimis populis turba omnis sine discrimine, liber an servus esset, avida novarum rerum perfugit, idque primum ad coeptam magnitudinem roboris fuit. cum iam virium haud paeniteret, consilium deinde viribus parat" (Livy, trans. Canon Roberts, 1.8.4-6;).

³⁹ Daniel Moran, "Military Doctrine," in *Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 262-263.

⁴⁰ Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 13.

⁴¹ Paul Johnston, "Doctrine Is Not Enough: The Effect of Doctrine on the Behavior of Armies," Strategic Studies Institute, last modified August 15, 2000, accessed May 5, 2018, <http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/articles/00autumn/johnston.htm>; Walter F. Ulmer et al. *American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, DC: CSIS Press, 2000), xv.

whether such universal truths exist and, if they do, where do they come from.⁴² He cites for example the 1920 British Field Service Regulations, which include concentration and economy of force, mobility and cooperation, surprise, etc.⁴³ Efficiency naturally exerts a role in military doctrine. A principle of war, such as concentration at the point of attack, will naturally be more effective than dissipating manpower to the extent of making one's forces weak everywhere.

Nevertheless, the resources and ways of using resources for armed action are strongly influenced by culture. For example, the kingdom of Prussia fielded the third- or fourth-largest army of Europe (80,000 men) in the mid-eighteenth century but, with only the thirteenth-largest population, the kingdom could not sustain a protracted war on multiple fronts.⁴⁴ This explains the Prussian emphasis on aggressive strategy that seized the initiative and, on the battlefield, innovative tactics that were based on maneuver rather than attrition.⁴⁵ Frederick the Great, in 1757 AD, demonstrated the effectiveness of Prussian military doctrine when his outnumbered forces defeated in detail both the French and the Austrians.⁴⁶ The precepts of Prussian doctrine, for many of the same factors, can be observed in the Wehrmacht's *Blitzkrieg* in the West that conquered France, for example, in only five weeks with the cost of a relatively light 27,000 dead in comparison to the French number of 90,000 dead.⁴⁷ Contrast such results to the slow and sluggish advance of the

⁴² John Alger, *The Quest for Victory: The History of the Principles of War* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), xvii.

⁴³ Alger, *The Quest for Victory: The History of the Principles of War*, xviii.

⁴⁴ Donald S. Kagan et al., *The Western Heritage: Volume 1 to 1715* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hill, 1995), 534.

⁴⁵ Gary Sheffield, "Germany Army," in *Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 355.

⁴⁶ The military term "defeat in detail," refers to the concentration of the majority of one's own forces against smaller portions of the enemy.

⁴⁷ John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 87.

Ango-American forces in the Northwest Campaign (6.6.1944-7.5.1945), despite overwhelming aerial, numerical, and material superiority. Such discrepancies illustrate, at least in part, the reluctance of democracies to sustain massive casualties. The early Roman Republic, to a greater extent than Prussia, was a militarized state pervaded by a strong warrior ethos. The values inherent in the Roman military doctrine were similar in some ways to Prussia, although Rome had far greater resources of manpower.⁴⁸ Roman republican commanders were frequently aggressive and encouraged boldness in the rank-and-file, but there was less professionalism by the standards of standing armies of the contemporary Hellenistic world.⁴⁹

To conclude, this thesis uses as first principles the above remarks on culture, ideology, hierarchy, and military doctrine, which require consistent definitions given their interconnectedness. Culture is semiotic, a network of symbols, to an extent socially constructed, that a community uses to communicate ideas and knowledge. Similarly, I draw upon anthropology for my use of the term ideology, which denotes a system of normative ideas and values that are communicated through symbols. This thesis discusses hierarchies in the context of Roman military and social institutions, which is directly related to the concept of the dominance hierarchy. Human societies, however, manifest more complicated structures that may be simply distinguished as social hierarchies, which are at least predicated on competence. Military doctrine refers to the standard precepts and methods that are employed by a military system in warfare. It is not anachronistic to discuss

⁴⁸ Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: the Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947*, narrated by Shaun Grindell, Audible, 2006, https://www.audible.com/pd/IronKingdom_Audiobook/B01NB013H9.

⁴⁹ Adrian Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 285-286.

the values of the Roman army as doctrine.⁵⁰ While the Roman army had no formal, written code, it still had an unwritten one consisting of values that guided, at least ideally, officers and rank-and-file alike. The idealized characteristics of this relatively consistent code, although unwritten, will be outlined in the following section.

2. Idealized Characteristics of Roman Warfare

My study has a set of consistent abstract characteristics in the literary tradition that distinguish Roman warfare and, in the process, manifest a collective Roman identity that transcends military doctrine. This thesis will not delineate every abstraction of Roman warfare, but the following characteristics constitute a significant component of Roman identity: 1) *virtus*, the quintessential Roman martial value that refers to moral excellence, manliness, and valor in war, especially of an aggressive variety that inspires competitive rivalry; 2) *βία*, a Greek term denoting force or violence, and used by Polybius both to describe the Romans's straightforward and somewhat old-fashioned tactical and strategic application of brute force; 3) *constantia* refers to invariability, persistence, and firmness of character and, in military affairs, the ideal Roman response to extreme adversity, which manifests in the unwillingness to concede or even negotiate after a major defeat; 4) *disciplina* refers to a somewhat mythologized orderly conduct of Roman armies cultivated through training and maintained through systematized rewards and penalties, sometimes

⁵⁰ There is a dichotomy between “sheepskins,” who argue in favor of extensive formal education for officers, and the “goatskins,” who favor instead a less intellectual and more “commonsense” approach to war (Alger, *The Quest for Victory: The History of the Principles of War*, xxi-xxiii). Although numerous military manuals were produced in ancient times, none were formal or official doctrine and no Roman commander required a commission from an academy to command (Brian Campbell, *War and Society in Imperial Rome, 31 BC – AD 284* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 47). Nevertheless, the early republic insisted on at least ten years, or campaigns, of military service before a man could run for an office and, therefore, command an army.

of extreme severity, which worked in tandem with *virtus* to create strongly cohesive units; 5) *μεταλαμβάνειν καὶ ζηλοῦν*, a phrase from Polybius that refers to the familiar trope of the Romans learning tactics and weapons from their enemies and then mastering their teachers.⁵¹ These are significant abstract concepts of the Roman military, and by extension Roman culture, which have yet to be treated as a block and analyzed as a whole with theoretical models. My focus is primarily on the virtue of courage, its conceptualization by the Romans, as well as discipline, which I do not regard as a virtue itself but as a means to virtue.

This particular set of abstract characteristics is my own compilation, although individually they have been noticed and in some cases studied in depth. This thesis offers a study of the above characteristics as an interlocking set of ideals and values. My discussion of both the ideals of discipline and courage, for example, permits a dialectical analysis of a important symbiosis in Roman military doctrine, although this is not really the case with the other qualities. Another important step is taking a serious interdisciplinary approach, which ignores the artificial boundaries of academic disciplines. The use of case studies in the best documented, extensive, and ideology-laden narratives of foreign conflicts helps to limit the scope of the project. I intend to discuss battle pieces in depth, that is from select campaigns; after all, the primary purpose of a military force is to coerce an enemy by armed action. Nevertheless, other episodes illuminating Roman military values can be found in diplomatic embassies, rhetorical speeches, legislation, and military-

⁵¹ My description of *virtus* derives heavily from Harris and Lendon (William V. Harris, “Readings in the Narrative Literature of Roman Courage,” in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 303; Jon E. Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 185). Regarding the tension between *virtus* and *disciplina*, this is Lendon’s thesis in *Soldiers and Ghosts*, in which he describes these qualities as being in a virtually symbiotic relationship (Jon E. Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts*, 177).

related customs and disciplinary procedures in the camp, etc., which may either occur away from combat zones or indeed in the city of Rome during peacetime. Lastly, my aim in each chapter is to address both the representation and the reality of these characteristics, their concentration into a collective identity, and nuanced descriptions by individual authors with appreciation for historical context.

3. Primary Sources

Greek and Latin historians from the middle republic to the high empire are my main sources, but texts from other literary genres as well as war-related sculpture are occasionally employed. The earliest literary source that I draw upon is Polybius and the latest is Vegetius. This provides a literary time frame of approximately 200 BC to AD 400. Theoretically, my primary sources cover the entire scope of Roman military history from the regal period onward. My effective time frame, however, is the middle republic to the late empire. Authors are conditioned, in part, by their culture and historical context. Furthermore, ancient depictions of the Roman army at war are occasionally anachronistic, incomplete, or distorted, which is especially the case for the earliest periods. Much of my data derives from battle narratives in historiography, but other genres and episodes that relate to war may be useful. Presentations of set-piece battles in Roman historiography have narrative patterns that constitute a framework adaptable for specific aims. This approach is similar to the manner in which Homeric type-scenes use narratives with a relatively basic model.⁵² This consistency in depicting Roman warfare reappears in the similarity of themes that are found in Latin comedy, for example in Plautus' comedy

⁵² Matthew Clark, "Formulas, metre and type-scenes," in *The Cambridge Companion to Homer* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 117, 134.

Amphitruo. Amphitryon insists on the unconditional surrender of the enemy, which was historically an important aim of Roman warfare as opposed to the limited gains of Hellenistic warfare.⁵³ Similarly, Roman sculptural depictions of battle pieces correspond in theme and subtext to the literary sources, further illuminating Roman attitudes to war. Given that my main sources are Greek and Roman historians, its necessary to briefly review my positions regarding the problematic nature of ancient historiography.

Because ncient historiography was more art than science, careful scrutiny is necessary when using historical narratives to uncover the realia upon which these texts are based. The “primary sources” of the literary tradition are actually secondary sources, since in many instances the historians wrote long after the events. Second-hand material is interpretative, and therefore open to bias and subjectivity.⁵⁴ We can occasionally corroborate material, for example, Livy primarily used Polybius for his narrative of the Third Macedonian War, and we also have the more independent biography of Aemilius Paullus from Plutarch. For the Gallic War, however, other sources are limited and mostly dependent on Caesar’s commentaries.⁵⁵ The collection of the data used by the historians is also problematic, since the actual primary sources are lost and, therefore, we cannot examine how accurately the original combatants of a battle or campaign recollected events; indeed, primary sources themselves are not exactly free of bias and subjectivity either.⁵⁶

⁵³ Plaut. *Amph.* 193-238, 257-260.

⁵⁴ Michael Whitby, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 17.

⁵⁵ Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 1.

⁵⁶ Michael Whitby, “Reconstructing ancient warfare,” in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 54-55; Wheeler, “Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares,” in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 75-76. Wheeler also discusses the study of *Schlachtenmythen* (battle myths), which refers to the “post-eventum interpretations of battle: the defeat of greater numbers to heroize the victors, stimulation of national feelings through perception of the enemy as outsiders, memory of the slain as a paradigm for later generations, war memorials as a visual means

The ancient historians themselves were trained in rhetoric, which may obfuscate the chronicle and distract the reader. Rhetoric, which is not limited to public speaking, is essentially the art of persuasion and is found in the narratives of historians.⁵⁷ For both oratory and historiography, rhetorical skill has the benefit of enlivening the raw data of the past. The result was the elevation of literary conventions and style on level with chronicling the past accurately.⁵⁸ It is not that ancient historians required no skill at interpreting facts, but rather, as Christopher Pelling notes, the historian conveys major themes through the narrative itself:

Greek historians prefer to allow their big ideas to emerge *through* narrative, to allow readers to infer the leading themes through recurrent patterning, selective emphasis, suggestive juxtaposition, and sometimes through the speeches of characters themselves. ‘Show, not Tell’: that is the historian’s craft.⁵⁹

The most direct evidence of rhetoric are speeches. In military narratives, speeches typically constitute the beginning of a battle piece.⁶⁰ In most cases, they are complete fabrications but are useful to the historians in expounding major themes. Rhetorically powerful speeches include, for instance, those given by the opposing commanders Suetonius Paullinus and Boudicca prior to the decisive engagement of the revolt; the former, on the one hand, speaks to the superior discipline and training of his forces, while the latter, on the other hand, exemplifies the less-disciplined and steady, but still somewhat praiseworthy confidence and valor of the barbarians.⁶¹ More subtle is the rhetorical manipulation of

to aid identification with the battle, and the charisma of the winning general(s)” (Wheeler, “Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares,” in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 76).

⁵⁷ Christopher Pelling, *Literary Texts and the Greek Historian* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1.

⁵⁸ Whitby, “Reconstructing ancient warfare,” in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*, 57.

⁵⁹ Pelling, *Literary Texts and the Greek Historian*, 8.

⁶⁰ As White notes, the bare chronicle is organized into a story, that is the historical narrative, which consists of beginning, middle, and end (Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 5).

⁶¹ Tac. *Ann.* 14.35-36.

structure and vocabulary, for instance, Caesar analyses his victory at the Sambre through moral qualities, while leaving out discussion of tactics and topography.⁶² As Jon Lendon has argued, there is no perfect narrative of a battle or campaign that would appeal to every culture in every time period, for authors of different cultures will naturally want to emphasize different things. The Greeks, for instance, generally, emphasize the physical realm of battle, such things as formations, topography, weapons, etc., while the Romans place more emphasis on psychological elements as the deciding factor.⁶³ Modern discourse on military affairs is still permeated by rhetoric. The use of the term “warrior” by the U.S. military to describe its personnel in advertisements is not only rhetorical but quite disingenuous and exposed, for instance, by the demoralization of draftees in Vietnam, who were not pre-conditioned for combat by a warrior ethos.⁶⁴ Rhetoric, however, is not necessarily deceit. As rhetorical psychology notes, it is a complex appeal to the *sensus communis* (common sense).⁶⁵ This rhetoric can be seen, for example, in Caesar’s appeal to the clemency of the *mos maiorum* to spare the Catilinarian conspirators. Cato counters, however, by also courting “common sense” notions that advocate execution because of

⁶² Jon E. Lendon, “The Rhetoric of Combat: Greek Military Theory and Roman Culture in Julius Caesar’s Battle Descriptions,” *Classical Antiquity* (1999): 320; Sara, E. Phang, “New Approaches to the Roman Army,” in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World* (Claremont: Regina Books, 2011), 119, 126.

⁶³ Lendon, “The Rhetoric of Combat: Greek Military Theory and Roman Culture in Julius Caesar’s Battle Descriptions,” 304, 324.

⁶⁴ The term “warrior” has a long history of being co-opted from warrior cultures by the rhetoric of civilizations for their own armed forces. The flattering term helps to heroize the deeds of combatants, more so than “soldier,” in the mass slaughter of large-scale warfare between states (Gwynne Dyer, *War* (New York: Dorsey Press, 1985), 14). Regarding the U.S. military, most of its vast support personnel will never see combat and those that do are soldiers, not warriors, who have had their individuality stripped away. Furthermore, American society is not a warrior one, especially given the need for the coercion of its taxpaying citizens to fund its bloated military apparatus.

⁶⁵ Billig, “Rhetorical Psychology, Ideological Thinking, and Imagining Nationhood,” in *Social Movements and Culture*, 72-73.

ancestral severity.⁶⁶ Having outlined some of the major issues with my main sources, is it possible to discern both the reality and representation of Roman warfare? What truth can be gleaned from authors like Caesar, writing about a war that he began and one that was so intimately bound to his political fortunes, or Livy, who was writing with no military experience about wars long over?

All historical writing is interpretative, but through careful scrutiny we can often distinguish the rhetorical embellishments in Greek and Roman historiography and, at the very least, discuss the text itself and the ideology it contains as truth of a certain kind. Since “facts do not speak for themselves” as one scholar put it, history itself is not fact but a construct.⁶⁷ Indeed, one must also beware of silences in our sources, as ideology is both reflected in what is represented and also in what is deliberately left out.⁶⁸ Such omissions can indirectly distort reality for the audience.⁶⁹ Hayden White argues that an historical work is “a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that purports to be a model, or icon, of past structures and processes in the interest of explaining what they were by representing them.”⁷⁰ Furthermore, in developing the chronicle into a narrative, the historian arranges events by using motifs to have a clear beginning, middle, and end, and underlying this is a deep poetic structure.⁷¹ This approach is useful for appreciating the

⁶⁶ Sall. *Cat.* 50, 52. Sometimes a proverb in a language can have an alternative, which may seem to contradict its wisdom, for example “absence makes the heart grow fonder” versus “out of sight, out of mind” (Billig, “Rhetorical Psychology, Ideological Thinking, and Imagining Nationhood,” in *Social Movements and Culture*, 73).

⁶⁷ Paul Wake, “Narrative and narratology,” in *The Routledge Companion to Critical and Cultural Theory* (New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2013), 33-34; White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 6.

⁶⁸ Billig, “Rhetorical Psychology, Ideological Thinking, and Imagining Nationhood,” in *Social Movements and Culture*, 80.

⁶⁹ In his discussion of his problem, Pelling notes that regarding the mutilation of the herms Thucydides provides a valid political interpretation, that is the role of Alcibiades’s jealous rivals, but gives no account of the religious dimension (Pelling, *Literary Texts and the Greek Historian*, 22-23).

⁷⁰ White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, ix, 5-6.

artistic elements in historiography, but is misleading when applied to modern professional historians, who cannot be put in the category of fictional authors. While Roman history and commemorative art were in part social constructs, it is inaccurate to suggest that they invented “facts” or, in other words, consciously aiming to deceive. Accordingly, there is a significant difference between falsehood and inaccuracy, that is speaking what one believes to be true but inaccurately or precisely. The aim should be, at the very least, to not speak what one knows to be false.⁷²

Ancient historiography permitted various rhetorical exercises, including formulaic battle pieces, reconstruction of emotions, and fabricated speeches, but the narrative superstructure can be distinguished from, as Tim Cornell’s terms it, the structural data.⁷³ The latter consists of routine notices, especially by the annalists such as Livy, which include diplomatic treaties, alliances, colonial foundations, military results, list of magistrates, extensions of the Roman franchise, etc.⁷⁴ Such structural data would have come from a variety of sources including documentary archives like the *Annales Maximi*, kept by the *pontifex maximus* until the late republic, and described by Cicero as a chronicle

⁷² Ibid., 6-7.; cf. Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual*, xxii, 10. Jordan Peterson, a clinical psychologist, discusses the optimality of not lying, even with respect to white lies. This is tangentially related to my discussion of Livy, but it is worth looking at the moral difference of deliberately distorting the facts and merely enlivening those facts by well-established and understood literary conventions. Peterson relates an episode at a clinic where a schizophrenic patient politely requested to join him and his colleagues: “I told the patient as simply and directly as I could that we were new students, training to be psychologists, and that she couldn’t join us for that reason. The answer highlighted the distinction between her situation and ours, making the gap between us greater and more evident. The answer was harsher than a wellcrafted white lie. But I already had an inkling that untruth, however well-meant, can produce unintended consequences. She looked crestfallen, and hurt, but only for a moment. Then she understood, and it was all right. That was just how it was” (Jordan B. Peterson et al., *12 Rules for Life: an Antidote to Chaos* (New York: Random House Canada, 2018), 208).

⁷³ Campbell, *War and Society in Imperial Rome, 31 BC – AD 284*, 47-48; Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 17-18.

⁷⁴ Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 6, 13.

of the year's major events for public perusal.⁷⁵ Accordingly, utilizing the structural data of Roman military operations allows for a fuller appreciation of Greek and Roman authors' artistic representations.⁷⁶ Lastly, as already noted, rhetoric is not necessarily deceit, although it can obscure the truth. The production of a historical account was an event itself.⁷⁷ The ideology in Greek and Roman military narratives can still reveal many useful truths, such as ancient assumptions about warfare; the characteristics Romans wanted to believe their military manifested that, by extension, ideally represented Roman culture; and the historical contexts in which the authors themselves wrote.

4. Literature Review

Before discussing the influence on the present thesis of “War and Society” and “Face of Battle” approaches, it is necessary to consider the influence of Hans Delbrück and *Sachkritik*. Delbrück was one of the earliest scientific military historians and, coupled with his practical military experience from service in the Franco-Prussian War, he introduced into military studies Leopold von Ranke's quest for objectivity and critical examination of

⁷⁵ Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 13, 14. Cicero writes “For history began as a mere compilation of annals, on which account, and in order to preserve the general traditions, from the earliest period of the City down to the pontificate of Publius Mucius, each High Priest used to commit to writing all the events of his year of office, and record them on a white surface, and post up the tablet at his house, that all men might have liberty to acquaint themselves therewith, and to this day those records are known as the Pontifical Chronicles.” (“*Erat enim historia nihil aliud nisi annalium confectio, cuius rei, memoriaeque publicae retinendae causa ab initio rerum Romanarum usque ad P. Mucium pontificem maximum res omnis singulorum annorum mandabat litteris pontifex maximus referebatque in album et proponebat tabulam domi, potestas ut esset populo cognoscendi, eique etiam nunc annales maximi nominantur.*”) (Cic. *De or.* 2.52).

⁷⁶ Pelling cautions that the methodology of induction can produce a valid reconstruction but, regarding complex problems, may not be the only valid reconstruction; he refers to these conundrums as “Poirots” (Pelling, *Literary Texts and the Greek Historian*, 34-35). For example, Caesar describes the tribes that lack wine, which is a symbol of classical civilization, as evidence of their backwardness. While tribes could have prohibited importing wine to avoid corruption, as Caesar argues, another reason may have been an attempt by old nobles to curtail the rise of new elites using wine as a new symbol of power (Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 16-18).

⁷⁷ Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 1, 15.

primary sources, termed *Sachkritik*.⁷⁸ The German general staff, which insisted on studying battles without cultural and historical context, became irritated with Delbrück's argument that those contexts have to be appreciated to provide effective analysis.⁷⁹ Furthermore, Delbrück argued for the significance of military history in studying the complete history of a civilization, that is universal history, in addition to the histories of art, literature, religion, etc.⁸⁰ His critical research produced some useful results, for example his critique of Herodotus's logistical improbabilities for the huge size of the Persian army.⁸¹ Another important facet of Delbrück's research, and that of his contemporaries, was a sound philological basis for research, given the difficulties of contextualizing classical narratives, including establishing tactical terms, reconstructing battlefields, and collating essential passages.⁸² The "War and Society" approach is discussed in the following paragraph but, as Wheeler cautions, it is important to recognize that "new" methodologies are rarely entirely unprecedented: "Interesting, however, is the cultural turn and looking at war within the totality of a civilization—a new version of what Delbrück was trying to do a century ago."⁸³

The "War and Society" approach, also known as "New Military History," is less interested in warfare itself than its economic, political, and social background.⁸⁴ The shift

⁷⁸ Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 32; Hans Delbrück, *Warfare in Antiquity* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 8.

⁷⁹ Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 187.

⁸⁰ Delbrück, *Warfare in Antiquity*, 11; Everett L. Wheeler, "Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares," in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World* (Claremont: Regina Books, 2011), 58.

⁸¹ Delbrück, *Warfare in Antiquity*, 20; Peter Paret, *Makers of modern strategy: from Machiavelli to the nuclear age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2010), 333.

⁸² Victor D. Hanson, "The modern historiography of ancient warfare," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2007), 7; Wheeler, "Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares," in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 58.

⁸³ Wheeler, "Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares," in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World* (Claremont: Regina Books, 2011), 64.

⁸⁴ Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 6; Wheeler, "Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares," in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 6.

of attention to such aspects has some connection to the fact that traditional military history tended to ignore such aspects.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, this approach fit into the broader trend of specialization and greater interest in social history following the Second World War.⁸⁶ The emphasis on cultural and historical context is important because universally valued military principles or technological progress fail alone to explain differences in military practice. For example, the predominance of cavalry in the medieval period in part must be explained by dearth of disciplined infantry, which was more attributable to social changes than tactical or technological innovations.⁸⁷ The reemergence of well-trained infantry, such as the English longbowmen and Swiss pike-wielding phalanxes, with tactics and technology that were by no means revolutionary, dispelled the notion of the invincibility of medieval heavy cavalry and played a role alongside non-military related factors in the demise of the knight. Indeed, some military practices are paradoxical if one only considers the practical aspects of warfare, such as the ritualized nature of hoplite warfare outlined by Victor Hanson, which entailed:

the ravaging of cropland, but the accomplishment of little lasting agricultural damage; the decisive hoplite clash without extensive battle fatalities; the choice of level battlefields rather than the garrisoning of defensible, mountainous passes; the adoption of heavy, bronze armor under the summer, Mediterranean sun; the exclusion not merely of the very poor, but of the very rich as well – must not be seen at all as true incongruities.⁸⁸

Traditional military historians, like Delbrück, did not exclude economic, political, or social factors in favor of a technical-only analysis of military affairs. Accordingly, it is questionable how “new” the War and Society model was when it was taken up from French

⁸⁵ Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 8.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸⁸ Victor D. Hanson, “The Ideology of Hoplite Battle, Ancient and Modern,” in *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 6.

intellectual trends.⁸⁹ Furthermore, this school revealed an aloofness from studies of combat, which in the end is what a military force is primarily intended for. This gap was filled by the “Face of Battle” approach.

The Face of Battle approach reemphasizes the importance of studying combat but, in contrast to traditional military historians, it takes a “bottom up” analysis of the mechanics and experiences of battle. John Keegan pioneered this methodology in *Face of Battle*, but it ultimately derives from the work of French military officer and theorist Ardant du Picq’s *Etudes sur le combat* (Battle Studies). Du Picq served in the Franco-Prussian War, like Delbrück, although his work was incomplete before his death in the war. Du Picq acquired empirical data on combat experience through a questionnaire circulated among his fellow officers, and his conclusion was that morale was the most important element in an armed force.⁹⁰ For example, he observed that despite the rhetoric of battle narratives, which described armies clashing together, the data actually revealed a practical and understandable desire for soldiers to survive. Accordingly, one force might withdraw or yield at the decisive moment of contact, or the force on offense might become much diluted through casualties or demoralization.⁹¹ Nevertheless, du Picq’s interest in morale was not wholly scholarly, for he aimed to reform the French army along the lines of the Prussian model.⁹²

Although he did not approach the topic with a military background, Keegan likewise had an interest in the actual experiences of soldiers in battle. This led to his critique

⁸⁹ Wheeler, “Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares,” in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 59

⁹⁰ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Penguin, 1976), 69; Wheeler, “Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares,” in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 69.

⁹¹ Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Penguin, 1976), 69.

⁹² Wheeler, “Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares,” in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 69.

of the “battle piece,” that is the rhetorical oversimplification of combat in narratives.⁹³ He cites, for instance, embellished expressions from a narrative of the Peninsular War by Sir William Napier, such as the description of the French musket volley as “vomiting forth a storm of fire,” and the reaction as “struck by the iron tempest, [the British infantry] reeled and staggered like sinking ships.”⁹⁴ Keegan’s bottom-up analysis strongly emphasizes the behavior and personal accounts of soldiers, in addition to the dynamics of small-units. Accordingly, the *Face of Battle* reflects broader trends in history after the Second World War, with its shift to non-elite perspectives. The *Face of Battle* reached the military history of the ancient world through the influential studies of Hanson’s *The Western Way of War* and later Adrian Goldsworthy’s *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*. While the *Face of Battle* approach has been useful for elevating the study of combat at least on level with the economic, political, and social contexts of warfare, the methodology has major flaws.

The *Face of Battle* presumes that the experience of battle is timeless, which permits generalizations across cultures and periods about such things as morale and small-unit dynamics. Civilization is a recent development in the evolutionary time-scale, which enables some generalizations about the human condition. Nevertheless, the pace of evolution has not paralleled philosophical and technological change, and so evolving normative values must be appreciated when discussing warfare.⁹⁵ A young male of the early Roman Republic, for instance, was physically and psychologically pre-conditioned for campaigning in a number of ways, including the warlike ethos that pervaded Roman society and the rigor of subsistence-level manual labor. This was not the case, however,

⁹³ Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Penguin, 1976), 35-38.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

⁹⁵ Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 9-10.

for many conscripts in the modern Western armies of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the psychological experience of Roman soldiers in set-piece battles, which were relatively rare in ancient history, was likely different from the experiences of soldiers in some of the more sustained warfare of the twentieth century.⁹⁶ For example, the U.S. and its South Korean and U.N. allies suffered 256,631 total war-deaths in the span of three years to achieve a draw in the Korean War (1950-1953).⁹⁷ By contrast, the Romans and their allies in the Hannibalic War, suffered a comparable total of 300,000 war-related deaths, in seventeen years of the most intense warfare sustainable in ancient times. In the case of Goldsworthy specifically, the anachronism of comparing Roman warfare to the Second World War was compounded by his use of faulty and widely discredited studies by S. L. A. Marshall.⁹⁸ The latter claimed that less than twenty-five percent of American infantrymen fired their weapons, from which Goldsworthy argued that the vast majority of Roman soldiers had little interest in risking injury to wound the enemy.⁹⁹ Both suppositions are stretching the data. Lastly, both Keegan and Goldsworthy reveal a preference for an ideal type of military narrative. Keegan, for instance, incorrectly judges Caesar's narratives inferior to Thucydides's on the dubious grounds that only the latter treats his soldiers as individuals and writes "general history."¹⁰⁰ Goldsworthy writes, with reference to the conventions of traditional military history:

⁹⁶ Phang, "New Approaches to the Roman Army," in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, 107-109.

⁹⁷ "Korean War: Battle Casualties," *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

⁹⁸ Marshall's methodology consisted of post-battle interviews with soldiers, which lacked statistic data and rather minimal field notes that cannot be used to argue for a universal phenomena (John W. Chambers, "S. L. A. Marshall's Men Against Fire: New Evidence Regarding Fire Ratios," *Parameters* (2003): 113, 119; Robert Engen, "S. L. A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire History, Interpretation, and the Canadian Experience," *Canadian Military History* (2012): 42, 47).

⁹⁹ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 187, 264.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

He [Keegan] concentrated on the behavior of individual soldiers, how bodies of such men interacted with and fought each other, basing his analysis as far as possible on the personal accounts of participants. The result was far more satisfying than the traditional battle pieces. Armies ceased to be impersonal masses, the neat blocks on a tactical map, and became instead collections of individuals facing the stress of the chaos and violence of battle, their behaviour influenced by the ideas of their society.¹⁰¹

Aside from the obvious objection, testimony from the enlisted ranks is missing, the description and analysis of something as complex as a set-piece battle requires some abstraction to grasp the big picture. Ancient historiography was elitist in its focus on the commander, which was in part because history in this period had a specific audience in mind. It does not follow, however, that such elitist narratives have nothing useful or accurate to say about those lower in the hierarchy. The rhetoric of a battle narrative can point to what an author believes, or wants to believe, about warfare and the values of the contesting armies. The texts, and the characterisations that they contain, are facts of a kind and sometimes the only facts given the difficulties of reconstructing the chaos of battle, which is especially the case for the relatively poorly documented battles of ancient history.

This thesis is interdisciplinary and the following works by scholars of various fields have strongly influenced the project. Despite my reservations about the Face of Battle, Goldsworthy's works *The Roman Army at War* and *Roman Warfare* did provide a different perspective on Roman tactical doctrine and, despite Goldsworthy's own reservations about abstractions, did provide interesting analysis of Roman martial values like aggressiveness and perseverance. Furthermore, the Face of Battle challenged the myth of the Roman army as consisting of automatons. Harris's milestone study, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome* (1979), provides a deeper study of the Roman attitude towards war, especially its

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 6.

ferocity, than any traditional military historian. This work also provided a much needed critique of the theory of defensive imperialism. Nevertheless, Harris extends his argument too far, since Roman militarism did not develop in a vacuum. Eckstein's *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (2006) balances the picture of Roman militarism. With a multidisciplinary approach that uses modern international relations theory borrowed from political science, Eckstein argues that the ancient Mediterranean was a multipolar anarchy of aggressive states, including but not limited to Rome.¹⁰² His argument, however, seems to downplay cultural differences between ancient states. Both of these works spurred me to find a middle ground. Mary Beard's *The Roman Triumph* (2008) and Lendon's *Soldiers and Ghosts* (2005) both discuss the idealization of ancient Rome's military tradition, which closely aligns with the aims of the present project. While classicists are underrepresented in studying combat, Andrew Riggsby's *Caesar in Gaul and Rome: War in Words* (2006) discusses discourses and genres, and argues that Caesar and his Roman readership shared a common language and way of thinking about particular themes, such as war and courage.

5. Methodologies

The critical assumptions and methodologies that most inform the present thesis are collective memory, thick description, new historicism, and Jungian archetypes, which are described in detail below and together constitute my interdisciplinary study. For the sake of clarity and conciseness, unlike many literary theorists, in particular the trickster Jacques Derrida, I shall avoid as far as possible the use of "word salads" of incomprehensible jargon

¹⁰² Arthur M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

to disguise the argument or lack thereof, as well as longwinded theoretical digressions that lack grounding in the available data.

Collective memory, pioneered by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, argues that the memory of a group is socially constructed, which is a useful concept for understanding why and how the Romans idealized certain characteristics as particularly important components of their cultural and military institutions. The heritage of a group of people, whether small- or large-scale, is essentially what the group views as its rightful past, which may take the form of customs, objects, history, and even ideals both real and imagined.¹⁰³ A group's collective memory is the agent that constructs the group's rightful past, which it is not completely an objective record produced by automatons but, rather, a social construct produced and maintained by a coherent body of individuals.¹⁰⁴ As Karl Galinsky writes with Cicero as a reference, "Latin authors...viewed history (*historia*) as the preservation of memory (*memoria*), and such preservation could take on the shape of poetry as well as prosaic historiography."¹⁰⁵ There are as many collective memories as there are groups in a society, including the society itself, since the selectivity of memory results in different modes of behavior.¹⁰⁶ Accordingly, Halbwachs noted that the present circumstances of all groups affect the memories that, in turn, reconstruct their pasts.¹⁰⁷ The memories of both the individual and the group, after all, can never be an exact recreation

¹⁰³ Yudhishtir R. Isar, Dacia Viejo-Rose, and Helmut K. Anheier, "Introduction," in *The Cultures and Globalization Series (4): Heritage, Memory & Identity* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2011), 1-2.

¹⁰⁴ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 22; Richard Terdiman, R. "Historicizing Memory," in *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1993), 7.

¹⁰⁵ Karl Galinsky, "Introduction" in *Memoria Romana: Memory in Rome and Rome in Memory* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014), 1.

¹⁰⁶ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 22, 38; Isar, Viejo-Rose, and Anheier, "Introduction," in *The Cultures And Globalization Series (4): Heritage, Memory & Identity*, 5.

¹⁰⁷ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 33-34.

of its forebears in the past, that is in reference to the exact circumstances, emotions, and intentions of past actors.¹⁰⁸ Halbwachs cites the popularizing of the siege of Masada, a pertinent episode for the present thesis, as an example of the process of collective memory. During the Jewish revolt (66-73 AD), Masada was held by a marginal and isolated sect known as the Sicarii, who participated in none of the major battles but murdered and plundered the property of pro-Roman Jews.¹⁰⁹ When Masada fell to the Romans, it was not treated as a major event by the rest of the Jewish population. Now, however, after the rise of Zionism and the foundation of Israel, the siege has become a symbol of the Jewish people and a “state-sponsored cult of the heroic resistance fighters.”¹¹⁰ History is interpretative, as already noted in this introduction, which Pierre Nora succinctly points out, “History proposes but the present disposes.”¹¹¹ Lastly, Alberto Melucci in *Nomads of the Present* (1989), introduces a useful definition for collective identity that can supplement Halbwachs’ concept of collective memory. According to Melucci, collective identity refers to “an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals (or groups at a more complex level) and concerned with the orientations of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the action takes place.”¹¹² In addition, his definition of identity notes the key element of permanence and emphasizes that identity itself contains

¹⁰⁸ Pierre Nora, “The Era of Commemoration,” in *Realms of Memory: The construction of the French Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 612.

¹⁰⁹ Joseph. *BJ*, 7.8.1; David Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution: 6-74 C.E.* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 174.

¹¹⁰ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 33-34. As Nora notes, the process of collective memory affects every society that views itself as historical. He provides the example of the the “Capetian Millenium,” which derived from historians who projected the origins of the French monarchy and indeed the French nation back to the accession of Hugh Capet (Nora, “The Era of Commemoration,” in *Realms of Memory: The construction of the French Past*, 610, 619).

¹¹¹ Nora, “The Era of Commemoration,” in *Realms of Memory: The construction of the French Past*, 618.

¹¹² Alberto Melucci, “The Process of Collective Identity,” in *Social Movements and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 44.

three basic features: 1) the subject's continuity over time, with some adaptation to changing circumstances; 2) establishing parameters for the subject; and 3) facility of recognition, which was especially important for such a visual culture as ancient Rome's.¹¹³ The interactiveness of identity, as observed in a discourse community, enables Roman authors to nuance idealized characteristics of the Roman army for their own purposes. To conclude, individuals, as concrete subjects perform the act of recollection, but they all do so within the context of the abstract groups from which they derive their heritage.¹¹⁴

We can observe the process of collective memory in ancient Rome in respect to military operations through commemoration, which includes historiography, customs, rituals, and monuments. Defining victory and the transmission of military victory to the public is a necessary art and skill for any regime utilizing war as an instrument of policy, since not everyone is going to be present on the battlefield to witness it.¹¹⁵ The Romans were especially adept on all accounts, as they commemorated successful wars vigorously and in a multitude of modes. Commemoration both secures and shapes individual and collective memory, as well as communicating values.¹¹⁶ War was preeminent in Roman culture, and its varied acts of commemoration indicate that Romans in general viewed war as a positive thing for the community.¹¹⁷ The multitude of monumental public works of art

¹¹³ Melucci, "The Process of Collective Identity," in *Social Movements and Culture*, 45.

¹¹⁴ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 22.

¹¹⁵ Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 14, 17; Tonio Hölscher, "The Transformation of Victory into Power: From Event to Structure," in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 27.

¹¹⁶ Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual*, xix; Hölscher, "The Transformation of Victory into Power: From Event to Structure," in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome*, 43.

¹¹⁷ Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual*, 15. cf. Hornblower's unconvincing argument that war was neither common, especially ritualized "male" contests, nor glorified in Roman culture (Simon Hornblower, "War in Ancient Literature: the paradox of war," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 22, 25). While set-piece battles were relatively rare, given their scale and cost, ancient Rome waged war quite frequently and war was glorified because it benefitted a wide portion of the population, with respect to prestige, wealth, and slaves for aristocrats, opportunities for rapine, booty, and land for commoners, and glory for both classes. Soldiers

in the early republic were tied to military success, as the Romans commemorated victories through arches, altars, statues, and temples.¹¹⁸ While literature was reserved for a select group, the city of Rome itself was a like a giant respository recollecting the past, especially combined with Roman culture's staunch traditionalism in preserving social customs and institutions.¹¹⁹ Nora, utilizing Halbwach's concepts, in particular has emphasized how memorials represent the collective memory of a society.¹²⁰

Although Roman society became gradually demilitarized, the principate still advertised its military victories through public monuments, which either depicted war directly or indirectly and were typically financed by war. Roman sculptural depictions of battle always depicted complete Roman superiority. Rituals likewise commemorated military success and more immediately after the event than monuments, which is evident above all with the Roman triumph. Objects, too, have a close association with memory.¹²¹ Participants in Roman campaigns could recall their *virtus* through military decorations, which were donned with pride at festivals.¹²² Halbwachs distinguished historical and autobiographical memory, with only the former indirectly accessed by such mediums as oral tradition, literature, speeches, and festivals.¹²³ Historical writing presumes that a community is distinguishing the present from the past, and thus memory was fading and

decorated for martial glory were glorified by comrades in the army, by family at home, and by community in religious festivals, in which only veterans decorated for bravery by the consul could don decorations (Polyb. 6.39.9).

¹¹⁸ William V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 20.

¹¹⁹ Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 25.

¹²⁰ Isar, Viejo-Rose, and Anheier, "Introduction," in *The Cultures and Globalization Series (4): Heritage, Memory & Identity*, 6.

¹²¹ Terdiman, "Historicizing Memory," in *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis*, 13.

¹²² Polyb. 6.39.9.

¹²³ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 23-24.

needed to be secured.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, there is always the sense of partial continuity and, in the case of Roman historiography, the present was routinely evaluated through the lens of the past, itself enshrined by reverence for the *mos maiorum*.¹²⁵ To conclude, regarding collective memory, the multivariied and vigorous promotion and commemoration of military success in ancient Rome, combined with veneration of ancestral ways and tradition, can help explain the monolithic qualities of Roman warfare that speak to an common identity across so many authors and works.

Although Geertz's ideas have already been briefly discussed above, the methodology of "thick description" that he employs deserves greater attention. To reiterate, Geertz argued that cultural analysis requires an interpretative model, rather than experimental one, which involves searching for the meaning of the network of symbols that constitute culture.¹²⁶ To interpret the meaning of human behavior, Geertz employed Gilbert Ryle's "thick description," noting the following about the methodology: "sorting out the structures of signification—what Ryle called established codes, a somewhat misleading expression, for it makes the enterprise sound too much like that of the cipher clerk when it is much more like that of the literary critic—and determining their social ground and import."¹²⁷ In other words, in order to understand human behavior we must also grasp the conceptual world in which the behavior takes place. For example, the severely harsh punitive action of *decimatio* consisted of executing ten percent of a unit by using their own comrades, who, afterwards, had to pitch their tents outside the main camp and had to subsist on barley instead of wheat. To fully understand the symbolism of this

¹²⁴ Ibid., 25; Terdiman, "Historicizing Memory," in *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis*, 32.

¹²⁵ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 26.

¹²⁶ Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 5, 6.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 9.

action by the Roman commander, in both the real world and its representation in literature, one must contextualize it. First, it is necessary to appreciate the institution of the military as a hierarchy of groups within a larger group that depended on each for their survival, and so an individual Roman soldier who shamed himself and endangered his unit by cowardice was punished individually, but an entire unit that had committed the same offense, only on a larger-scale, was punished accordingly. Indeed, given the significance of *virtus* in defining a man in Roman society, cowardice was that much more a grave offense. Furthermore, the Roman commander and his officers were directly responsible for observing the conduct of the enlisted ranks, as ancient Rome was at home and abroad a visual culture, in order not only to punish but also to reward behavior. Regarding the last point, the Roman commander had considerable discretion in punishment and this latitude illustrated his superior authority, prestige, and the power of his office and social class. Resorting to severe penalties, such as *decimatio*, had the effect of characterizing the commander as old-fashioned, which was normally a worthy attribute in Roman eyes. This brief case study illustrates how foreign and decontextualized ancient behavior and customs can be to modern audiences. Ultimately, anthropological and literary studies are matters of guesswork, but the margin for error is significantly reduced when we attempt to understand the conceptual framework.¹²⁸ Lastly, Geertz's refusal to get bogged down in theorizing is refreshing and was followed by Stephen Greenblatt with his methodology of New Historicism.¹²⁹

New Historicism, an important guide for my work, contains assumptions and tenets that are essential to my understanding of ancient literary texts and their information about

¹²⁸ Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 20.

¹²⁹ Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts*, 164.

the Roman army. Historicism is pervasive in the social sciences and humanities, so much so that it is often taken for granted. The concept of historicism is relativistic, that is to interpret an artifact or text from societies, which are all limited by both space and time, it is necessary to appreciate the cultural context, including customs, institutions, and languages.¹³⁰ Historicism, therefore, posits that meaning is not natural or universal. The value of historicism is its hermeneutical methodology, since beliefs and values, especially irrational ones, are not universal. Nevertheless, relativism can be taken to extreme lengths, since the human condition, governed by the laws of physics, does not change so radically from culture to culture that it becomes unrecognizable. Otherwise, it would be difficult to account for the widespread archetypal figures and themes, as Carl Jung noted, that occur in art, myths, and religion in cultures that had no contact.¹³¹ What then is the difference between “Old” and “New” historicism? New Historicism has taken into account the challenges posed by deconstruction and postmodernism, which argue that reality cannot be grasped easily and is problematic.¹³² While the school of deconstruction emphasizes that texts cannot be contextualized, new historicism on the other hand maintains the opposite position.¹³³ According to Greenblatt, who coined the methodology’s title and is its leading founder, New Historicism is not a doctrine.¹³⁴ He writes, “the work of art is the product of a negotiation between a creator or class of creators, equipped with a complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions, and the institutions and practices of society.”¹³⁵ By

¹³⁰ Simon Malpas, “Historicism,” in *The Routledge Companion to Critical and Cultural Theory* (York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2013), 62.

¹³¹ Carl Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 1990).

¹³² David M. Schaps, *Handbook for Classical Research* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 162.

¹³³ Schaps, *Handbook for Classical Research*, 159, 160.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Stephen Greenblatt, “Towards a poetics of culture,” *Southern Review* (1987): 13.

appreciating the cultural context, as anthropologists do, new historicism has also expanded non-canon works and even ordinary objects for interpretation, which contain symbolic meaning as well.¹³⁶

While New Historicism avoids excessive theoretical abstraction, it has a number of tenets about texts that inform this thesis: 1) a text is dependent on its cultural and historical setting and therefore must be contextualized; 2) historical reality is not easily extracted from literature; 3) literary texts must not be privileged above other texts or evidence; and 4) a literary text is a part of a synchronic dialogue.¹³⁷ New Historicism supports my aim of noticing patterns in the way ancient authors, especially Roman, describe military operations. This is also the case for the literary aims of individual authors. For example, why does Tacitus describe the Roman army of his day as almost continuously a threat to order and generally inferior to its republican forebears? Despite the fact that it actually was a threat, Tacitus was a senator who advanced his career under the principate. The princeps monopolized military power, which deprived the senatorial class of the authority, prestige, and power that was traditionally wielded through military leadership. Tacitus's sentiments about the principate are not unique for a Roman senator, and conform in general to the views of other Roman authors writing in the imperial period, especially Livy. Aside from occasional inaccuracies and mistranslations, Livy must likewise be scrutinized when he idealizes the legions of the early republic as loyal, patriotic, and generally superior to the imperial army, which may be observed in the speech that he crafts for Spurius Ligustinus, an archetypal citizen-soldier from the lower classes. Not that Livy's assessment is

¹³⁶ Catherine Gallagher et al., *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 9, 27.

¹³⁷ Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts*, 160-165.

incorrect, but it is also intertwined with Augustan propaganda.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, New Historicism alone is an insufficient methodology for understanding the Roman army. While it reasserts that meaning is contextual, the theory does not sufficiently challenge postmodernism's notion that truth is subjective, which illogically is itself a truthclaim.¹³⁹ Regarding literature the postmodernists are partly correct, as there are numerous, sometimes vast, ways to interpret the meaning of a text. Nevertheless, the number of interpretations that are actually valid is much more limited.¹⁴⁰

The notion of collective memory is useful in explaining the particular contents of Rome's stories in their art and literature, but it is insufficient to explain the common figures and motifs that appear as well, and frequently across cultures. Accordingly, I turned to Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud and Swiss analytical psychologist Carl Jung to extrapolate meaning from the Roman army's symbols and the narratives of its campaigns and chief protagonists. Freud, usually only remembered and unjustly so for the Oedipal Complex, remains in fact highly influential for his concept of the unconscious, the hidden or repressed elements of the human psyche, which was utilized by his protégé Carl Jung.¹⁴¹ Freud placed great emphasis on sex as the main energy behind the unconscious, which is unsurprising, in hindsight, given the number of his patients with repressed incestual

¹³⁸ Livy's descriptions of sieges progressively include more machinery and advanced techniques (Jonathan P. Roth, "Siege Narrative in Livy: Representation and Reality," in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Accordingly, truth exists in his narrative but it requires scrutiny, for it is true that Roman siege warfare advanced over time and it is true that Livy recognizes this. Nevertheless, it does not follow that he got the details right or that his accounts are not anachronistic.

¹³⁹ Hicks, *Explaining Postmodernism: Skepticism and Socialism from Rousseau to Foucault*, 184.

¹⁴⁰ Jordan Peterson, *Postmodernism: definition and critique (with a few comments on its relationship with Marxism)*, accessed October 3, 2018, <https://jordanbpeterson.com/philosophy/postmodernism-definition-and-critique-with-a-few-comments-on-its-relationship-with-marxism/>.

¹⁴¹ Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 3; Peter Watson, *The German Genius: Europe's Third Renaissance, the Second Scientific Revolution, and the Twentieth Century* (New York: HarperCollins, 2011), 396-397.

experiences.¹⁴² Jung, on the other hand, who placed less emphasis solely on sex, described the “collective unconscious” rather as a deep level of thought common to everyone, which he explored in his extensive studies of dreams, philosophy, and myth.¹⁴³ According to Jung, the collective unconscious contains inherited primordial images, or perhaps ideas, that are universal to the human psyche, a notion that he himself may have developed from the early thoughts of German ethnologist Adolf Bastian.¹⁴⁴ In any event, an archetype, or archetypal image, terms that are often used interchangeably, denotes an expression of one of these ancestral forms, be it a universal character, image, or motif.¹⁴⁵ It is important to note that the term archetypal image refers to the content, which is conscious, culturally specific, and obviously not inheritable, rather than the virtually indefinite primordial form itself, which is instead known as the archetype-as-such.¹⁴⁶ Although it is fruitless to provide a full list of archetypes, there are fairly common ones, such as the figures of the Great Father, the Hero, the Old Wise Man, etc., and certain circumstances and motifs such as the Creation, the Flood, the Birth, the Resurrection, etc., many of which I shall revisit in chapters two and three, as well as somewhat more complicated ideas, including Jung’s Animus-Anima dichotomy and the Shadow. A specific example of a cross-cultural archetype is the trifold representation of Great Father-Great Mother-Child Hero (also termed Divine Son), which we can observe in the Christian symbols of Virgin Mary-God-Jesus Christ, the Egyptian

¹⁴² Watson, *The German Genius: Europe’s Third Renaissance, the Second Scientific Revolution, and the Twentieth Century*, 554.

¹⁴³ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Mumbai: Yogi Impressions, 2017), 4; Watson, *The German Genius: Europe’s Third Renaissance, the Second Scientific Revolution, and the Twentieth Century*, 555.

¹⁴⁴ Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 43; “Collective Unconscious,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*; “Bastian, Adolf,” *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2013).

¹⁴⁵ Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 21.

¹⁴⁶ Charles R. Card, *Section E: The Psychoid Archetype*, accessed March 7, 2019, http://www.jgsparks.net/guides/aurora/Section_E.pdf.

symbols of Isis-Osiris-Horus, and the Roman symbols of Rhea Silvia-Mars-Romulus.¹⁴⁷

Clinical psychologist Jordan Peterson, in his work *Maps of Meaning*, describes this relationship and its bearing on meaning in the objective world:

The world as forum of action is composed, essentially, of three constituent elements, which tend to manifest themselves in typical patterns of metaphoric representation. First is unexplored territory-the Great Mother, nature, creative and destructive, source and final resting place of all determinate things. Second is explored territory-the Great Father, culture, protective and tyrannical, cumulative ancestral wisdom. Third is the process that mediates between unexplored and explored territory-the Divine Son, the archetypal individual, creative exploratory Word and vengeful adversary. We are adapted to this world of divine characters, much as to the objective world. The fact of this adaptation implies that the environment is in “reality” a forum of action, as well as a place of things.¹⁴⁸

Legends and myths are not allegorical accounts, especially in the case of the latter, of objective events, so what use do Jungian archetypes and their various expressions offer for analyzing accounts of the Roman army?¹⁴⁹ Roman historiography consists of narratives, essentially stories, that are relevant precisely because they contain meaning to the reader, as Peterson noted above, since we do live in a real world that requires mediation as a “forum of action.”¹⁵⁰ Peterson further notes that Jung’s use of the term inherited memory has “blinded psychologists and others to the remarkable fact that narratives do appear patterned, across diverse cultures.”¹⁵¹ Put simply, the archetypal images in stories reflect both the desire and the need in humans for *exempla*, that is exemplary modes of behavior, which is why historical analogies to the archetypes offer a profound means to understand

¹⁴⁷ Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 219; Jordan Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief* (London: Routledge, 2002), xxi.

¹⁴⁸ Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief*, xxi.

¹⁴⁹ David A. Leeming, *Mythology: A Voyage of the Hero* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4; Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 5-6. For the same reason, John R. R. Tolkien objected to allegorical interpretations of his mythological universe in the *Silmarillion*, the *Lord of the Rings*, and related works, but did not object to the term analogy (John R. R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion* (New York: Del Rey, 1999), xv-xvi).

¹⁵⁰ Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief*, xxi.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 92.

a culture. It is no coincidence that modern representations of archetypes seem timeless, “striking a chord” so to speak, even if the observer cannot exactly explain why. Joseph Campbell, in *A Hero with a Thousand Faces*, outlines the “monomyth” of the hero, which essentially constitutes a series of rites, eight basic events, which can be further condensed into the tripartite Separation-Initiation-Return.¹⁵²

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.¹⁵³

We can observe the resonance of the monomyth with the remarkably long-lasting cross-generational popularity of the *Star Wars* trilogy, the *Lord of the Rings*, Frank Herbert’s *Dune Chronicles*, and Disney’s various representations of archetypes, such as *Pinocchio* or *The Lion King*. With regard to the annals of Roman warfare, the figure of Romulus is legendary, M. Furius Camillus is semi-legendary, while C. Julius Caesar is historical, yet what all have in common, aside from being flawed and dangerous beings, is the demonstration of courage, *virtus* in Roman context, in the call to adventure to revivify the civilization of Rome.¹⁵⁴

6. Conclusion

The Roman army, and war in general, are frequent themes in the classical literary tradition. It is important, therefore, to understand the rhetoric that authors use to express Roman warfare and, on a more profound level, the symbols of the Roman army that reflect

¹⁵² Leeming, *Mythology: A Voyage of the Hero*, 5-6; Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 28.

¹⁵³ Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 28.

¹⁵⁴ Again, I borrow terminology from Campbell’s masterpiece, in this case the “call to adventure,” which references the summons to the hero to undertake one’s destiny, which is fraught with many obstacles (Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 53).

archetypal images. My primary purpose, using an interdisciplinary analysis, is to illustrate how the Roman army served as a metaphor for martial characteristics that to a large degree defined Roman identity and the meaningfulness of this identity's values in an objective world. There is yet a comprehensive analysis of such characteristics, and their role in the idealization of Roman military tradition. Although there have been useful studies of *virtus* in battle narratives, this quality is not the only one that the Romans believed to distinguish their army. Discussing such values requires both an understanding of Roman military doctrine and an understanding of the artistic embellishments in our sources. In other words, to reiterate, despite the nuanced representations by individual authors, the idealized values that characterize the Roman army represent metaphorically an extremely effective military system and the world in which it operated. The idealized values of the Roman army were meaningful by objective standards and inspired soldiers, if not always successfully, to behavior that translated to military success. Further benefits of my study include the following: discussing how ancient authors use the army to treat contemporary cultural, social, and political conditions; comparing the representation and the reality of Roman warfare, which may provide a guide for both classicists and military historians studying the Roman army; and lastly, elucidating why the Roman art of war was so extraordinarily successful. The quality of the questions posed by postmodernism are not matched by their answers. Truth, if not the absolute truth, can be discovered from the available sources with great scrutiny and consistent methodology.

II. *Virtus*

1. Introduction

The first and most important Roman martial quality to discuss is *virtus*, which denoted courage, manliness, and steadfastness.¹⁵⁵ Myles McDonnell has produced the most recent and elaborate treatment of this quality. McDonnell contends, in contrast to Donald Earl and Werner Eisenhut that the predominant meaning of the term was martial courage and that, therefore, *virtus* was not the moral equivalent of ἀρετή, at least until the term came under Greek influence in the late republic.¹⁵⁶ While he concedes that *virtus* had multiple meanings in every author he discusses, McDonnell still maintains that the concept originally had no ethical connotations.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, the Romans showed little interest in abstract rationality and ethics until the works of Cicero and Lucretius, who both did much to introduce Romans to Greek philosophy. Nevertheless, I argue below that because *virtus* was a personal virtue that was predominantly manifested in martial displays of physical courage, which entailed a mastery of fear in service of the community, it had a fundamentally ethical basis regardless of the actor's intent or personal character. *Virtus* eventually encompassed the quality of moral excellence, as it does, for example in Cicero's argument that it corresponded to the four cardinal virtues outlined by Plato, including wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice.¹⁵⁸ After all, the Romans had multiple terms for courage and boldness, including *animus*, *audacia*, and *fortitudo*. This thesis, however, is

¹⁵⁵ *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "uirtūs" (Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 2010), 2073.

¹⁵⁶ Myles McDonnell, *Roman Manliness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 4, 369.

¹⁵⁷ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 4, 9, 59, 110, 141; Craig Williams, "Reviewed Work(s): Roman Manliness. Virtus and the Roman Republic by M. McDonnell," *The Journal Roman Studies* (2008): 205.

¹⁵⁸ Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 2.159; *Pl. Resp.* 4.427e, 4.435b.

focused on how the value is described in war and as an ideal of the Roman military tradition. The premises of my argument, that *virtus* is a virtue with its connotations of courage, manliness, and steadfastness, are as follows:

1. Courage is a virtue. The term virtue denotes a value that is both admirable and ethical. Courage, especially in a Roman martial context, entails the mastery of fear while risking one's wellbeing for the sake of others, which can include one's comrades-in-arms and, in the case of defensive wars, the broader community. *Virtus* in action, as McDonnell correctly argues in part, was predominantly the martial application of courage. There is no culture, as far as I know, that views cowardice, the opposite of courage, as a virtue. Courage, therefore, constitutes universally preferable behavior.¹⁵⁹ Regardless of intent, for which we do not have the evidence, the effect of *virtus* perceived in action garnered praise from others because it was not a fundamentally self-interested act.
2. *Virtus* was courage in service of the community, the *res publica*, which inspired competition for glory. Ancient Rome had a conservative collectivist ideology. While it was possible to evince courage in one's private life, courage only became *virtus* in the context of public service performed and in view of others. Accordingly, for *virtus* to be a public virtue the state had by then monopolized the legitimate use of violence.
3. Any male citizen capable of bearing arms, regardless of class or ethnicity, had the opportunity to evince *virtus* on the battlefield. The Romans admired their infantry

¹⁵⁹ "Ethics as a discipline can be defined as any theory regarding preferable human behaviour that is universal, objective, consistent – and binding" (Stefan Molyneux, *Universally Preferable Behavior: A Rational Proof of Secular Ethics* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform), 30).

and expanded its manpower by converting former enemies into future comrades-in-arms. The competitive ethos that *virtus* inspired created a hierarchy, and one that was not entirely unjust. Some males in Roman society, such as slaves and the proletariat, were prohibited from acquiring military glory and, as a consequence, prohibited from rising in the hierarchy and acquiring power.

4. *Virtus* encompasses the quality of steadfastness, a passive form of courage. While not equivalent to moral courage, steadfastness in war can encompass perseverance in the face of adversity, discomfort, or pain.
5. *Virtus* denotes the Roman ideal of manliness. It represents a hierarchy of competence that both conveys male superiority to females, at least in war, as well as the acceptance that not all Roman soldiers are heroes but that they should aspire to be. In other words, *virtus* was not a rite to manhood, but manhood was indeed required in order to participate in the competition for military glory.

2. First Principles

My argument is primarily focused on the ethics of *virtus* in the martial context, which does not exclude other definitions of the term, such as the moral excellence of one's character. Craig Williams notes that McDonnell's argument of aggressive martial courage being both the "predominant" and "primary" meaning of *virtus* is confusing, since those descriptions mean different things.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, the shift only in the late republic to moral qualities is problematic. The martial denotation, without virtue ethics, unsurprisingly is the predominant meaning in martial texts like Ennius's *Annales* and Caesar's

¹⁶⁰ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 59, 141; Williams, "Reviewed Work(s): Roman Manliness. Virtus and the Roman Republic by M. McDonnell," 205.

commentarii.¹⁶¹ At the same time, it is unfounded that *virtus* was initially equivalent to the Greek term ἀρετή, which denoted excellence at virtually any human endeavor.¹⁶² The comic playwright Plautus, whose works are the earliest extant Latin works to be preserved, provides a valuable resource to the term's meaning. Furthermore, he wrote for the militarized public of the Punic Wars, which was better acquainted with the horrors and the tragedies of the battlefield abyss than any other Roman audience. Examples of *virtus* as aggressive martial courage occur in *Amphitruo*, *Casina*, and *Cistellaria*, but they are not devoid of reference to just war, at least the ideal of just war. The epic poet Ennius, whose works do not survive intact, wrote for the same audience and was regarded by later authors as the father of Roman poetry.¹⁶³ Ennius, interestingly, who served as a centurion during the Hannibalic War, was not born a Roman is one example among many of the Romans' unusual generosity with their franchise; at least to the worthy that is, an estimation of value that included displays of *virtus* among other things. In the *Annales*, after the Romans have rejected peace, Pyrrhus says to Fabricius: "Whether you or me the mistress may prefer to rule, or whatever Fortune may bring, let us prove by *virtus*."¹⁶⁴ Cicero, writing later, still conveys the point of physical courage: "Therefore *virtus* is called courage, in which there is a greatness of spirit, and great contempt of death and pain."¹⁶⁵ The denotation of physical

¹⁶¹ Rebecca Langlands, "Reviewed Work(s): Roman Manliness. *Virtus* and the Roman Republic by M. McDonnell," *Phoenix* 63 (2009): 198.

¹⁶² Peter J. Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 3).

¹⁶³ Cic. *Sen.* 5; Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.50.

¹⁶⁴ "vosne velit an me regnare era, quidve ferat Fors, virtute experiamur" (Enn. *Ann.* 189-190).

¹⁶⁵ "quare *virtus* fortitudo vocatur, in qua est magnitudo animi, mortis dolorisque magna contemptio" (Cic. *Rep.* 5.9).

courage in war also applies to epigraphy, such as the tomb of Scipio Barbatus (cos. 298 BC).¹⁶⁶

Virtus denotes primarily physical courage, but only in a public context. Donald Earl, an author with whom McDonnell is in dialogue, argues that “Outside the service of the *res publica* there can be no *magistratus* and therefore, strictly speaking, no *gloria*, no *nobilitas*, no *virtus*.”¹⁶⁷ This is a significant point, that there are acts of courage, moral perhaps, and then there are acts of courage in service of the community, on the battlefield, which could result in an agonizing and bloody death. Hence, there is a connection between *virtus* and *gloria*, that is praise by the people for a public display of courage. As noted above, in my first premise, courage constitutes universally preferable behavior. If the Roman army, to employ a thought experiment, neither treated courage as a virtue nor punished its opposite, cowardice, then there would have been no compulsion for legionaries to persevere in adversity. This could have resulted in the death of comrades-in-arms, their own death given the catastrophic risks of rout and turning one’s back in ancient warfare, and may also have exposed communities under Roman hegemony to depredations. After all, there was no enemy of the Roman Empire that did not also view conquest as a profitable enterprise, certainly not the Celts and Etruscans who initiated the use of force against Rome in the early republic, or the various Oscan tribes that conquered Greek and Etruscan city-states in central and southern Italy prior to Roman hegemony. So, *virtus*, as physical courage in service of the community, was fundamentally ethical even if the term initially did not encompass the moral character of the actor.

¹⁶⁶ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 35; Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 359-360.

¹⁶⁷ Donald Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1966), 27.

Ancient Rome had a conservative collectivist ideology, which explains the highest praise for public service, but this was a gradual development. The Roman commonwealth, by the time of the Punic wars, included many city-states besides Rome itself. As Cicero notes, the Roman citizen had “two fatherlands,” a place of birth and a place of citizenship, since the Romans had enfranchised multiple communities outside the boundary of Rome; this was a revolutionary concept that allowed Rome to maintain the institutions of a city-state while increasing its military manpower.¹⁶⁸ Accordingly, *virtus* eventually was distended beyond a clearly defined spacial territory, such as a modern nation-state, to the *res publica* and its sophisticated network of citizen, colonial, and allied communities. *Roma* was, however, the undisputed center and capital of this hegemonic empire, a growing empire that proved quite durable in the bitterly contested wars against the Celts, Samnites, and Carthaginians. Nicola Terrenato has noted, interestingly, that the founding of Rome, and by extension all city-states, was not at all intuitive. After all, it meant that the powerful heads of clans, the *gentes*, had to voluntarily limit their power for the sake of creating a state and having a government, which meant having a king over them. He argues persuasively that these powerful men, who would form the ruling elite in the regal period, benefited from uniting the clans because it enabled both a bigger, and safer, political arena as well as powerful commercial networks with other elites in central Italy.¹⁶⁹ He also notes the following with regard to the factionalism of the late republic: “Factions in late republican Rome almost always follow lines that separate clan networks rather than political or ethnic groups, and the same guile, treachery and backstabbing that

¹⁶⁸ Cic. *Leg.* 2.2.

¹⁶⁹ Nicola Terrenato, “The Versatile Clans: The Nature of Power in Archaic Rome,” in *State formation in Italy and Greece: questioning the neoevolutionist paradigm* (Oakville: Oxbow Books, 2011).

characterized clan interactions all along still dominates the scene.”¹⁷⁰ Indeed, the bloodiest conflicts in Roman history were civil wars between Roman factions, which reserved little mercy for the losers, rather than those against the “subaltern native” of postcolonial theory. Given the origins of the *res publica*, the concept of *virtus* becomes all that much more remarkable.

Virtus is a manifestation of the *res publica*, since it represents martial courage for the state and the monopolization of legitimate force by the state. Neither of the latter points, however, would have seemed self-evident in Latium from the eighth to fifth centuries BC. An organized and disciplined band of men, that is an army, is a far more effective force for coercion than warbands of primitive societies. In turn, when one community fielded such a powerful force, then their neighbors needed to respond in kind.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, states with hostile intent in the days of the Roman kingdom and early republic were within a day’s march, for example Veii was only around sixteen kilometers from Rome.¹⁷² Accordingly, in some cases an army may not have been the most effective means of defense in the short-term, since such a force took significant time to mobilize, equip, and train. Livy, notes that there were times of “neither peace nor war” with nearby hill peoples, which points to low-intensity guerrilla warfare.¹⁷³ The *res publica* implies the existence of a *res privata* and, indeed, the family was the chief social unit in ancient Roman society.¹⁷⁴ The monopolization of force by the state, therefore, was a gradual process. This phenomenon

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 193.

¹⁷¹ Paul Erdkamp, “War and State Formation in the Roman Republic,” in *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007) 99.

¹⁷² Fred K. Drogula, *Commanders and Command in the Republic and Early Empire* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2016), 20.

¹⁷³ Livy 2.48.

¹⁷⁴ Sunny Y. Auyang, *The Dragon and the Eagle: The Rise and Fall of the Chinese and Roman Empires* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2014), 37.

may explain, for example, the legendary duel between the Horatii and Curiatii, the immigration of both Attus Clausus as well as his sizeable force of *clientela*, and the private feud between the Fabii and the city of Veii.¹⁷⁵ It is unnecessary to detail the monopolization of force by the state, but the simple logic of it should be appreciated: to limit violence between the *gentes* and to export it to foreign enemies, which secured borders and brought rewards of booty, land, and glory.

It is worth asking why the concept of martial courage exists in the first place, that is how much of it was socially constructed. No doubt part of the Roman warrior ethos was socially constructed. For example, the collective memory of ancestral deeds of *virtus* was communicated and preserved in part through literature, which is a technology that humans have not had for most of our existence. Furthermore, military glory is a value that people have created, which is enhanced and more deeply ingrained with each successful war. Was Roman militarism a product of the ruling class, and was it perpetuated for the sole benefit of those at the top of the hierarchy? War is not a product of civilization or social construction, it is rather an ancient activity in our evolutionary past. In 1973, Jane Goodall discovered this while observing the behavior of rival chimpanzee troops in Gombe National Park. Chimpanzee troops waged a kind of war against each other, with neighboring rivals patrolling their borders and ferociously attacking intruders.¹⁷⁶ The consequences for getting ambushed by superior numbers were severe, since chimpanzee males are approximately twice as strong as their human counterparts. Goodall was reluctant to publish the findings originally, since she was operating under Jean-Jacques

¹⁷⁵ Fred K. Drogula, *Commanders and Command in the Republic and Early Empire*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2016), 22.

¹⁷⁶ Gwynne Dyer, *War* (New York: Dorsey Press, 1985), 69-71.

Rousseau's concept of the "noble savage" and believed that human interaction had altered chimpanzee behavior.¹⁷⁷ Chimpanzees and humans share ninety-eight percent of their genetic material, and separated from a common ancestor around four to eight million years ago.¹⁷⁸ The highly aggressive behavior of chimpanzees is reflected in human societies that are likewise close to nature, which dispels the myth of the noble savage.¹⁷⁹ We can see territoriality in central Italy, that is defense of territory and competition over scarce resources. For example, regarding the Samnite Wars, the Romans and the Samnites were competing for control of the Liri Valley and, like wars between agriculturalists and pastoralists throughout the world, they were unable and unwilling to share the land. Prior to the Samnite Wars, the Romans with their Latin allies fought almost annual wars against Oscan hill peoples. Accordingly, it was practical for agrarian communities to "scale-up" the size of their state and military to defend themselves from destructive raids by nomadic pastoralists.¹⁸⁰ Scaling up, however, necessitated democratising martial virtues, such as *virtus*, and sharing its praise with non-aristocrats, who in a city-state formed most of the military manpower. *Virtus*, therefore, not only contributed to military effectiveness and *esprit de corps* but also to social cohesion.¹⁸¹ Having said that, human beings are more sophisticated than chimpanzees and the warfare endemic to central Italy was not without accompanying ways of mitigating and mediating conflict.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ Jordan Peterson, *2017 Maps of Meaning 2: Marionettes & Individuals (Part 1)*, accessed November 15, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EN2lyN7rM4E&t=7192s>.

¹⁷⁸ "Chimpanzees," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2013).

¹⁷⁹ Dyer, *War*, 74-80.

¹⁸⁰ Peter Turchin, "A Theory for Formation of Large Empires," *Journal of Global History* 4 (2009): 191, 196.

¹⁸¹ Jon E. Lendon, "War and Society," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 514.

¹⁸² Simon Hornblower, "War in Ancient Literature: the paradox of war," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 24-26.

Before discussing the qualities of *virtus* and its examples, it is necessary to examine the broader ethics, or lack thereof, of Roman warfare and imperialism. For instance, can courage be ethical in an unethical war? *Virtus*, as I argue, is an act that can be observed and praised independent of emotion and intent. Polybius studied the problem of why the Romans were able to expand so quickly and successfully:

Nor does any man of sense go to war with his neighbours for the mere purpose of mastering his opponents; nor go to sea for the mere sake of the voyage; nor engage in professions and trades for the sole purpose of learning them. In all these cases the objects are invariably the pleasure, honour, or profit which are the results of the several employments.¹⁸³

The theory of “defensive imperialism” argues that the Roman empire expanded in response to external threats, and with each new border there was a new enemy that had to be defeated.¹⁸⁴ William Harris challenges this notion by arguing that the foreign policy of Rome was consistently and exceptionally aggressive, and pursued consciously by the ruling class for economic motives and prestige.¹⁸⁵ In response to criticism that the argument is overstated, Harris wrote “I do not even deny that the Romans sometimes fought defensive wars; indeed it seems quite natural that a state with a determined grip on power over many peoples other than its own should sometimes have had to defend that power.”¹⁸⁶ Harris’s claim about Rome’s hyper-aggressiveness remains overstated and, while useful in balancing the one-sided theory of defensive imperialism, his thesis becomes a sweeping indictment of Rome’s entire foreign policy.

¹⁸³ Polyb., trans. by Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, 3.4.10-11.

¹⁸⁴ William V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 4.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 4.

¹⁸⁶ Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC*, iii.

Arthur Eckstein approaches the problem of Roman imperialism with the use of modern international relations theory, which provides a balanced view between the theories outlined above. Employing the Realist school of thought, he argues that the ancient Mediterranean was a multipolar anarchy of aggressive and militaristic states, including but not limited to Rome. There is plenty of evidence for this and it is significant because in an anarchic world, more precisely a chaotic one without rules, a state has to “scale-up,” to use Peter Turchin’s term, in the presence of threats.¹⁸⁷ If we accept that an unethical war is the initiation of force by one community against another, then there was practically no peaceful or ethical state, no matter how big or small, in the ancient world. In 509 BC, Lars Porsenna of Clusium invaded Latium and in one tradition succeeded in occupying Rome.¹⁸⁸ The ancient Celtic tribes were ruled by warrior elites, who warred frequently and preyed upon their neighbors for resources and glory.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, the tribe of the Senones sacked Rome during their invasion of Latium in 387-386 BC.¹⁹⁰ This was the beginning of Rome’s longstanding terror of a barbarian invasion of peninsular Italy, and the special emergency known as the *tumultus Gallicus*, in which business was suspended and all able-bodied citizens were required to take the military oath.¹⁹¹ The chaos of a hostile interstate environment enforced militarization, as in ancient Greece.¹⁹² Central Italy was similar but may have been worse due to its multicultural landscape; after all, it is easier to kill, and

¹⁸⁷ Turchin’s argument for the formation of pre-modern empires was the scaling up, i.e. increase in military preparedness, between settled and nomadic communities; the term is practical for confrontations between the Romans and Samnites as well (Turchin, “A Theory for Formation of Large Empires,” 197).

¹⁸⁸ According to Livy, the Etruscan king was dissuaded from attacking Rome by displays of *virtus* (Livy 2.9-13). Tacitus, on the other hand, records that Rome was occupied (Tac. *Hist.* 3.72).

¹⁸⁹ Gary Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome: from Prehistory to the First Punic War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 251.

¹⁹⁰ Peter B. Ellis, *The Celtic Empire* (London: Constable, 2001), 19.

¹⁹¹ Livy 7.9.6.

¹⁹² Arthur M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 45.

even hate, those trying to do the same to you when they look, act, and talk differently. This is tribalism, which has both cultural and ethnic components.

Rome was frequently at war. Harris points out that Rome was usually at war every year except for unusual circumstances, which was symbolized by closing the doors of Janus to signify peace.¹⁹³ Augustus was able to perform the ceremony three times, which surpasses by one the number for the several centuries that preceded the principate.¹⁹⁴ This is clear evidence of belligerent foreign policy but, similarly, there were only five years of peace from 323-160 BC in the contemporary Hellenistic world.¹⁹⁵ Athens was an intellectual powerhouse and, alongside Rome, was one of the most politically sophisticated states, yet its culture glorified war as well.¹⁹⁶ What really distinguished the Romans from other ancient civilizations was twofold, the high degree of military success over such a long period and Rome's ability to incorporate former enemies. This relates to the practice of mass slavery in Roman civilization, which was a product of successful conquest.¹⁹⁷ As Karl von Clausewitz famously stated, "War is a mere continuation of policy by other means."¹⁹⁸ Accordingly, with such a powerful instrument as the Roman army it is not surprising that the Romans resorted to force so often. In turn, it is important to remember that not a single society in ancient times did not practice slavery. The collective memory of ancient Rome developed in a multipolar anarchic world, with frequent warfare and its commemoration. We can see this memory surviving in the archetypal Roman emperor depicted in public art

¹⁹³ Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC*, 10.

¹⁹⁴ Augustus *Res Gestae* 13.

¹⁹⁵ Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome*, 83.

¹⁹⁶ Jason Crowley, *The Psychology of the Athenian Hoplite: the culture of combat in classical Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 91.

¹⁹⁷ Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 102.

¹⁹⁸ Karl von Clausewitz, *On War* (London: N. Trübner, 1873), accessed November 15, 2018, <https://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/TOC.htm>, 1.24.

as a conquering hero. Some emperors, such as Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, were depicted as military men even though they were some of the most un-military men during their reigns.¹⁹⁹

Virtus, then, is an act of physical courage with the ethical component of sacrifice, whether the actor or context is ethical or not, such as an aggressive war of conquest. Having said that, superior courage in effect defends both family and *res publica* and there are references to support the idea that *virtus* corresponds to justice. In *Amphitruo*, Alcumena's speech describes *virtus* as denoting self-defense and justice: "*Virtus* truly comes before all things: freedom, safety, life, property and parents, fatherland and children are defended, are preserved."²⁰⁰ No doubt this was true regarding the interstate conflicts of central Italy in the fifth and fourth centuries, when Rome's enemies were within close marching distance. McDonnell argues that *Amph.* 191 denotes courage in an aggressive context with no ethical component. This is true in part, but the full passage notes that Amphitryon's campaign against the Teleboans was just, given their injustices against the Thebans: "The town that has presented many bitter funerals to the Theban people, it has been conquered and subdued by the might and *virtus* of the soldiers and especially by the power and the auspices of my own master Amphitryon."²⁰¹ Sallust describes the early Romans' defense of fatherland in the following terms: "But the Romans at home and on campaign eagerly hastened, prepared, urged one another, against the wrath of the enemy, and by arms defended freedom, fatherland, and parents. Afterwards, when the Romans had driven away

¹⁹⁹ B. Ashmole et al., *Library of Art History Art of the Ancient World* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1967), 315.

²⁰⁰ "*Virtus omnibus rebus anteit profecto: libertas salus vita res et parentes, patria et prognati tutantur, servantur*" (Plaut. *Amph.* 649-651).

²⁰¹ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 17; "*quod multa Thebano populo acerba obiecit funera, id vi et virtute militum victum atque expugnatum oppidum est imperio atque auspicio eri mei Amphitruonis maxime*" (Plaut. *Amph.* 190-192).

the dangers by *virtus*, and carried aid to allies and friends and prepared friendships by giving great services rather than receiving them.”²⁰² Nevertheless, a purely defensive and just war was not required to display *virtus*, as Ennius notes, “justice is better than *virtus*, for bad men often acquired *virtus*: justice and fairness take themselves far away from bad men.”²⁰³ Indeed, to return to Plautus, the prologues that address the audience describe *virtus* as a quality that implies successful conquest and, if not mentioned specifically, wish for success in war.²⁰⁴ The reference in *Amphitryon*, however, admonishes Romans to secure new allies and auxiliaries with just laws. The implication is that success in battle through *virtus* does not by itself translate to success in peace, but that is a topic for later.

Virtus is a virtue because it denotes courage, which requires mastering the fear of one’s own mortality for the sake of the community. That was *virtus* in action, regardless of the particular emotions or intentions of the actor. After all, the Jungian archetypal hero is flawed but still courageous despite being aware of his own mortality, which we can see in characterizations of Gilgamesh, Beowulf, Achilles, Romulus, etc.²⁰⁵ In spite of his mortality, the hero sacrifices himself for the journey.²⁰⁶ It is uncertain who would have found self-sacrifice easier, the early republican soldiers, who were conscripted but nonetheless conditioned by a societal warlike ethos, or the later imperial soldiers, who were volunteers but not necessarily so preconditioned for war. There was a notion among Romans that the citizen-soldier was superior, not in terms of tactical sophistication but

²⁰² “*At Romani domi militiaeque intenti festinare, parare, alius alium hortari, hostibus obviam ire, libertatem, patriam, parentisque armis tegere. Post, ubi pericula virtute propulerant, sociis atque amicis auxilia portabant magisque dandis quam accipiendis beneficiis amicitias parabant*” (Sall. *Cat.* 6.5-6).

²⁰³ Cited in McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 6.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

²⁰⁵ “Hero,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2013).

²⁰⁶ Philippe L. De Coster, *The Collective Unconscious and Its Archetypes*, accessed October 14, 2018, https://archive.org/details/TheCollectiveUnconsciousAndItsArchetypes_100/page/n0, 10.

because he was a property owner and, therefore, had a vested interest in preserving the *res publica*.²⁰⁷ In this respect, Harris makes the astute point that obedience from tough discipline does not produce courage: “The soldier who is more frightened of his own officers than of the enemy may be effective, but is he necessarily courageous? We may even suspect that the army that needs very brutal discipline (and practices such as decimation) is precisely the army that cannot rely on the courage of its ordinary soldiers.”²⁰⁸ Harris again overstates and his sarcasm is unwarranted, given that decimation was an extremely rare practice and there is a plethora of examples of Roman courage. Nevertheless, he rightly points to Pericles’ funeral oration as elucidating: “But the palm of courage will surely be adjudged most justly to those, who best know the difference between hardship and pleasure and yet are never tempted to shrink from danger.”²⁰⁹ This was the estimation of the Spartans regarding Aristodemus, one of two surviving Spartiates from the Battle of Thermopylae. He fought bravely and died at Plataea (479 BC), but he was not judged the bravest. After all, his ferocity was due in part to his previous dishonor, whereas another soldier, Posidonius, performed the same deeds while having no wish to die.²¹⁰

Martial courage was admired because it required self-control to challenge the source of fear rather than run away. Fear, however, is a rational emotion, especially in battle when confronted by enemies that are at least your equal and possibly your superior. If a soldier irrationally charged the enemy without abandon in a set-piece engagement, he would likely have lost his life without much to show for it. Furthermore, given the

²⁰⁷ Claude Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1988, 92.

²⁰⁸ William V. Harris, “Readings in the Narrative Literature of Roman Courage,” in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 302.

²⁰⁹ Thuc., trans. by Charles F. Smith, 2.40.3.

²¹⁰ Hdt. 9.71-73.

importance of units in ancient warfare, he would have put both himself and his comrades-in-arms in jeopardy, the latter by exposing a gap in the formation for a potential breakthrough by the enemy.²¹¹ Casualties were lop-sided in ancient warfare for the losers, given the proximity of armies and the dangers of exposing one's back in a rout.²¹² This was the case whether it was induced by cowardice or simply exhaustion from a hard-fought effort. It may be that the Roman soldier's comrades-in-arms created fear as well. The fear of mortality derives from the enemy, which corresponds to the monster in the archetypal myth, but the shame, perhaps even ostracism, from one's own community for cowardice would have constituted mortality of a different kind. Indeed, psychoanalytic studies in modern times have shown the severely damaging effects of involuntary social isolation, also known as loneliness, which increases health risk.²¹³ In all premodern set-piece battles, human frailty was brutally exposed in view of everyone. When it occurred, the shame constituted the nakedness of character, perhaps equivalent to the theme conveyed in the myth of Adam and Eve in *Genesis*. I shall discuss the Romans' unforgiving and high standards of discipline in the next chapter; suffice to say that cowardice was harshly punished both in the military sphere, by the commander via the *imperium* that he wielded, and also in the domestic sphere by the normative regulating of the community. This was the case in Athens, whose system of levy was according to deme, a local political subdivision. Athenian hoplites were already affiliated with one another, forming cohesive units on campaign that added impetus to not let comrades-in-arms down, as they would

²¹¹ Philip Sabin, "The Face of Roman Battle," *Journal of Roman Studies* 90 (2000): 10.

²¹² In hoplite battles casualties on average were 5% for the winners and 14% for the losers (Krentz 18). In Roman battles casualties for the loser could reach as high as 50% (Sabin, "The Face of Roman Battle," 5).

²¹³ "Loneliness and Isolation: Modern Health Risks," in *The Pfizer Journal* 4 (2000), accessed October 14, 2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20060128104835/http://www.thepfizerjournal.com/default.sp?a=article&j=tpj15&t=Loneliness%20and%20Isolation%3A%20Modern%20Health%0Risks>.

have been family, friends, and associates.²¹⁴ The Roman levy operated differently, with tribunes taking turns selecting suitable citizens who may or may not have been related. The Athenian system seems ideal for a compact formation like the phalanx, but the Roman system put greater emphasis on individual initiative. The legionary was primarily a swordsman who belonged to a unit but fought independently.²¹⁵

3. Virtus in Action

A. Commanders

Having detailed the concept of *virtus* and the virtue of courage, I shall now describe examples of *virtus* from commanders, centurions, and the enlisted ranks. The commander's primary role, at least with respect to morale, was to attentively observe his soldiers and to encourage them to acts of *virtus*.²¹⁶ For aristocratic youths, displaying *virtus* on the battlefield was the foundation of a successful political career, which entailed a military command.²¹⁷ Except for the very poor, that is citizenry rated below four hundred *asses*, every Roman male citizen in the early to middle republic had to serve either ten campaigns in the cavalry or twenty in the infantry, and at least ten years of military service were required for political candidacy.²¹⁸ *Virtus* was essentially the basis of a competitive

²¹⁴ Jason Crowley, *The Psychology of the Athenian Hoplite: the culture of combat in classical Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 68-69.

²¹⁵ Lendon may overstate this point when he argues that the Roman soldier "did not primarily think of himself as part of a team, and he was not treated such by his officers. Rather, he regarded his comrades as his competitors in aggressive bravery" (Jon F. Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 185).

²¹⁶ Adrian K. Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 157-161.

²¹⁷ E. J. Kenney and Wendell Clausen, *Cambridge History of Classical Literature: Early Principate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 147; Nathan Rosenstein, "Military Command, Political Power, and the Republican Elite," in *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 133.

²¹⁸ Polyb. 6.19.

hierarchy, one among several in Roman society, which distinguished those fit for command. Although Nathan Rosenstein underestimates the role of Roman commanders in battle, as they in fact had many important roles, he is correct in noting that they were not harshly judged unless they behaved in a cowardly manner.²¹⁹ *Virtus* was not necessarily required of a commander because his election to office already implied this, although it behooved the electorate to examine his credentials because they might very well be serving under him. Nevertheless, the commander's responsibilities were still quite bound up with the concept of *virtus*.²²⁰ Jon Lendon notes that Greek authors tended to show far less interest in the morale and psychology of soldiers than tactics, equipment, and stratagems to explain the outcomes of battles.²²¹ In contrast, Caesar, Livy, and Sallust, as Lendon demonstrates, tend to ascribe victory to bravery rather than other factors.²²² Commanders are invariably the chief protagonists in Latin narratives, and were primarily responsible for maintaining morale. This responsibility manifests both negatively and positively: the former by punishing cowardice, the latter by encouraging *virtus*.²²³ Christina Kraus describes the frequent depiction of courage as “simultaneously interested in commemoration and in exemplarity – that is, in preserving and celebrating Roman actions,

²¹⁹ Nathan Rosenstein, “War, Failure, and Aristocratic Competition,” *Classical Philology* 85 (1990): 264 they made it absolutely clear that in no way was pitched battle to be risked, in turn to engage as earnestly as possible in skirmishing, and continuously for sake of training and preparing the young men for a complete battles, since it seemed that the mishaps that occurred before were not the least due to the use of recently conscripted and entirely unpracticed forces” (“τοῖς δὲ περὶ τὸν Γνάϊον διεσάφησαν ὀλοσχερῆ μὲν κίνδυνον κατὰ μηδένα τρόπον συνίστασθαι, τοὺς δὲ κατὰ μέρος ἀκροβολισκμοὺς ὡς ἐνεργωτάτους, ποιεῖσθαι καὶ συνεχεστάτους χάριν τοῦ γυνάζειν καὶ παρασκευάζειν εὐθαρσεῖς τοὺς νέους πρὸς τοὺς ὀλοσχερεῖς ἀγῶνας, τῷ καὶ τὰ πρότερον αὐτοῖς συμπτώματα δοκεῖν οὐχ ἥκιστα γεγενῆσθαι διὰ τὸ νεοσυλλόγοις καὶ τελέως ἀνασκήτοις κεχηρησθαι τοῖς στρατοπέδοις”) (Polyb. 3.106).

²²⁰ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 70.

²²¹ Jon E. Lendon, “The Rhetoric of Combat: Greek Military Theory and Roman Culture in Julius Caesar's Battle Descriptions,” *Classical Antiquity* 18 (1999): 322.

²²² *Ibid.*, 295, 309.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 310, 313.

while providing models for future behavior, both within the text and without.”²²⁴ In other words, the commemorative function of Latin literature corresponds to collective memory, intended both to instruct and to inform. The following case studies of noteworthy commanders illustrates the important role of maintaining morale.

The ideal behavior of a Roman commander was not to participate directly in combat, but to observe and encourage *virtus*. It was common for Hellenistic monarchs to personally lead charges, for which Alexander the Great is famous but the tradition was continued, probably deliberately, by his successors. For example, Antiochus III the Great, who waged war in every year of his reign, led the decisive charge at the Battle of Arius (208 BC) losing several teeth in the process: “It seemed that in this battle Antiochus fought the most remarkably among those with him.”²²⁵ It is peculiar that monarchs lead such audacious charges, given that their loss had far greater repercussions than the death of an elected magistrate. Indeed, Alexander himself was nearly killed leading a charge in his first major battle with the Persians.²²⁶ In any event, ancient commanders were more socially distant from their soldiers than their counterparts in modern societies, although they were much closer physically on the battlefield. There is a detail about Aemilius Paullus that, in my view, both heightens his role as commander and highlights the courage of his soldiers. Although absent in Livy, it is reported by the Greek authors Plutarch and Polybius. At Pydna (168 BC), unacquainted with the fearsome and seemingly impenetrable mass of a Macedonian phalanx, Aemilius confessed trepidation at its sight, but still retained his

²²⁴ Kraus, “Historiography and Biography,” in *A Companion to Latin Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing LTD, 2005), 246.

²²⁵ “δοκεῖ δὲ κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν κίνδυνον Ἀντίοχος ἀγωνίσασθαι διαπρεπέστατα τῶν μεθ’ αὐτοῦ” (Polyb. 10.49.9.).

²²⁶ Arr. *Anab.* 4.8.6; Curt. 8.1.30-34.

presence of mind and fortified the courage of his soldiers by riding past them with an optimistic countenance and without armor.²²⁷ Scipio Africanus, similar to Augustus, felt obliged at least once to display *virtus*. At Ticinus River (218 BC), Scipio demonstrated courage when he rescued his father in the midst of enemies, and Polybius adds that afterwards he exposed himself to every sort of personal danger.²²⁸ The latter point is contradicted by Polybius himself, who records how at the siege of New Carthage (209 BC) Scipio, now a commander, was accompanied by three shield-bearers that protected him from all sides. He was close to the action though, and inspired his soldiers by being near and visible.²²⁹ Polybius seems somewhat protective of Scipio, which may be explained by his relationship to the commander's adopted grandson, Scipio Aemilianus.²³⁰ Polybius may be correct, however, when he notes that a dead commander is useless to his army and that his sacrifice negates a victory.²³¹ Augustus's moment of *virtus* occurred at the siege of Metulus, a mountain town, during the conquest of Illyria (35-33 BC). The Metulians, with a relentlessness born of desperation, raised a new wall each time the Romans battered one down with their siege engines. The Romans built bridges across the walls, but the defenders undermined three. This caused a panic and no soldier was willing to cross the fourth until Augustus encouraged them, which he did by taking a shield and leaping upon the bridge himself. The Romans were overcome by shame, unfortunately all at once, and the bridge collapsed under the weight and many were injured, including Augustus.²³²

²²⁷Plut. *Vit. Aem.* 19; Polyb. 29.17. The rescuer was Cleitus, whom he later murdered because he rated Philip's conquests greater.

²²⁸ Polyb. 10.3.13.

²²⁹ Polyb. 10.13.

²³⁰ William V. Harris, "Readings in the Narrative Literature of Roman Courage," in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 309.

²³¹ Polyb. 10.33.

²³² App. *Ill.* 19-20.

Julius Caesar, perhaps, represents the keenest motivator of soldiers; he is, of course, portraying himself in his commentaries, which may not constitute the most objective records.²³³ Similar to Alexander's role in Hellenistic military history, Julius Caesar's achievement was to realize the full potential of the Roman art of war, the product of the *mos maiorum*. Caesar's works represent a memorial of sorts in the collective memory of Roman *virtus*, which he himself plays an important role in developing and maintaining.²³⁴ The fraternal relationship that Caesar developed with his soldiers was not necessarily unique, but it was exceptionally strong. It is unfortunate that we have no accounts from the enlisted ranks, but there is no question about the validity of the theme of loyalty in Caesar's works. A false narrative would require the author to recount something that he knew to be false, and that would be difficult to do given the fact that Caesar's officers presumably were also in communication with Rome. Andrew Riggsby argues that Caesar's representation of his army's morale is different because it is linked to his will, which would preempt blaming defeats on the soldiers as other commanders may have done.²³⁵ This is untenable given that Roman authors do blame commanders for defeats, as do other actors in their narratives. The performance of the infantry rested on their preparedness, which was the responsibility of the commander. In any event, with the examples above and those in Caesar's account, the theme of the commander's presence and supervision is consistent. At the Sabis River (57 BC), the Romans were ambushed in marching order by the Belgae.

²³³ Adrian K. Goldsworthy, *In the Name of Rome: the Men Who Won the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 264-266.

²³⁴ Gian B. Conte et al., *Latin Literature: a History* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 229.

²³⁵ Andrew M. Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 104.

Caesar went directly to encourage the soldiers, and spoke the following words to the elite tenth legion:

Having urged the soldiers with a brief speech, to retain the memory of their former *virtus*, to not be thrown into confusion, and to bravely sustain the enemy's advance, since the enemy was not further away than the distance for which it was possible to hurl a javelin, he gave the signal for commencing battle.²³⁶

Throughout the commentaries, as Riggsby correctly notes, there is a theme for legionaries to recall their *virtus*, which implies that practical experience is the primary source of *virtus*.²³⁷ Indeed, Caesar notes that it was experience that prevented disaster in this particular engagement.²³⁸ In the naval battle with the Veneti (56 BC), Caesar provides a detailed description of hooks designed to disable the enemy's halyards, but he notes that Roman victory did not rely on superior technology:

The rest of the battle rested on *virtus*, by which our soldiers easily surpassed—and indeed the more so, because the affair was conducted in the sight of Caesar and the whole army, so that no deed a little more brave escaped one's notice.²³⁹

The role of the commander in observation is repeated even when Caesar was not physically present. Titus Labienus, Caesar's most competent subordinate, admonished his soldiers to recall their *virtus* prior to engaging with the Parisii, and to pretend that Caesar was present.²⁴⁰ The estimation of *virtus* in part rested upon the quality of the adversary, and Caesar praises the *virtus* of the Gauls several times, especially and ironically those furthest

²³⁶ “*Milites non longiore oratione cohortatus, quam uti suae pristinae virtutis memoriam retinerent neu perturbarentur animo hostiumque impetum fortiter sustinerent, quod non longius hostes aberant quam quo telum adici posset, proeli committendi signum dedit*” (Caes. *BGall.* 2.20.2-3).

²³⁷ Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 91.

²³⁸ Caes. *BGall.* 2.20

²³⁹ “*Reliquum erat certamen positum in virtute, qua nostri milites facile superabant, atque eo magis, quod in conspectu Caesaris atque omnis exercitus res gerebatur, ut nullum paulo fortius factum latere posset*” (Caes. *BGall.* 3.14.8).

²⁴⁰ Caes. *BGall.* 7.62.

away from the corrupting influences of Roman civilization.²⁴¹ At Alesia (53 BC), the decisive battle of the Gallic War, Caesar records the following: “As the affair carried on in the sight of everyone and no deed, of virtue or disgrace, was able to be concealed, both desire for praise and the fear of dishonor roused both sides to *virtus*.”²⁴² The bond that Caesar had with his soldiers held even during the subsequent civil war, and the responsibility of maintaining the *virtus* of the soldiers became even more critical. Caesar critiques the leadership of Pompey for failing to do this at Pharsalus by offensive action, which underlaid the traditionally aggressive Roman military doctrine:

There is a certain incitement of spirit and ardor naturally innate for all of us, which is kindled by the zeal for battle; the commander ought not to suppress this, but to nourish it; not without reason was it established long ago, that the signals were sounded harmoniously everywhere and everyone raise a shout; by doing so they estimated that the enemy was terrified and their own men were encouraged.²⁴³

Ancient Rome was, to use Harriet Flower’s term, a “culture of spectacle.”²⁴⁴ Accordingly, a person’s identity was fully formulated in a public rather than private context. This visual aspect of Rome’s culture manifests in Caesar’s repeated references to the legionaries recalling their *virtus* in view of their officers. Riggsby argues that value was determined by the community, hence the almost theatrical spectatorship of battles.²⁴⁵

A prime example of theatricality was the ritual of single combat, also known as

²⁴¹ Robert D. Brown, “Two Caesarian Battle-Descriptions: A Study in Contrast,” *Classical Journal* 94, (1999): 335, 355; Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 59. *Virtus*, in this instance, is a convenient term to describe the courage of the Celts. We do not have their own testimony, and the term is unlikely exactly equivalent to their own conceptualization of courage.

²⁴² “*Quod in conspectu omnium res gerebatur neque recte ac turpiter factum celari poterat, utrosque et laudis cupiditas et timor ignominiae ad virtutem excitabant*” (Caes. *BGall.* 7.80.5).

²⁴³ “*Quod nobis quidem nulla ratione factum a Pompeio videtur, propterea quod est quaedam animi incitatio atque alacritas naturaliter innata omnibus, quae studio pugnae incenditur; hanc non reprimere, sed augere imperatores debent; neque frustra antiquitus institutum est, ut signa undique concinerent clamoremque universi tollerent; quibus rebus et hostes terreri et suos incitari existimaverunt*” (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.92).

²⁴⁴ Harriet I. Flower, “Spectacle and Political Culture in the Roman Republic,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 322.

²⁴⁵ Flower, “Spectacle and Political Culture in the Roman Republic,” 322; Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome: War in Words*, 91.

monomachy. Successful monomachists were preserved by the collective memory of Roman military tradition. All of these duelists were officers, and therefore elites, but not necessarily commanders. Nevertheless, given the fact that the monomachists preserved by the literary tradition are aristocratic, this may perhaps indicate why the citizen-soldiers of the lower ranks tolerated aristocratic officers: put simply, they were superior warriors, who could manifestly demonstrate this on the battlefield. After all, the leisure permitted to the aristocracy for both literary and military excellence was not permitted for the enlisted ranks, who were not professional warriors since the majority of their time was spent farming. Monomachy took place between two contestants from rival armies, prior to the main engagement, and was a means for aristocrats to display *virtus*. There was a long tradition of single combat in ancient Rome. Stephen Oakley has studied this phenomenon in detail, and he argues that the custom continued from remote times down to around 45 BC.²⁴⁶ This practice among the aristocracy, along with service in the cavalry, eventually became an anachronism.²⁴⁷ One scholar writes, with reference to the tradition among the Celts:

the Celts preferred to settle warfare by means of single handed combat between chieftains or champions of the opposing armies rather than a set-piece battle between opposing forces....settling the outcome of a military conflict by this means was a little more civilized than the Roman method of total warfare and devastation by large armies.”²⁴⁸

While it is correct that the Romans did not decide wars by single combat, neither did the Celts in historical times when they raised armies of conquest.²⁴⁹ Quitting the field was

²⁴⁶ Stephen P. Oakley, “Single Combat in the Roman Republic,” *The Classical Quarterly* 35 (1985): 392.

²⁴⁷ Jeremiah B. McCall, *The Cavalry of the Roman Republic: Cavalry Combat and Elite Reputations in the Middle and Late Republic* (London: Routledge, 2011), 12; Oakley, “Single Combat in the Roman Republic,” 410.

²⁴⁸ Ellis, *The Celtic Empire*, 19.

²⁴⁹ Oakley, “Single Combat in the Roman Republic,” 398.

simply impractical for both sides in major wars by the third century BC, when the stakes had become much higher. Polybius argues that funeral processions contributed to Roman courage, that is by inspiring emulation with one's ancestors, and he also notes that many Romans had, in fact, volunteered to decide battles by single combat.²⁵⁰ He cites as an exemplar of Roman courage Horatius Cocles, who singlehandedly checked besieging Etruscans by sheer audacity.²⁵¹ The act, while not technically a monomachy, was a defensive and therefore purely ethical, defensive act of *virtus*, which may be why Polybius chose this episode as exemplary.²⁵² Although McDonnell argues that *virtus* denotes an aggressive display of courage, ethically speaking this is irrelevant in a war of self-defense.²⁵³ In 361 BC, T. Manlius Torquatus slew a fearsome Gaul, who was larger in stature than himself, under the auspices of his commander: "Advance with *virtus*, and with reverence for father and fatherland, Titus Manlius, go forth. Pursue with vigor and attain with the aid of the gods the invincibility of the Roman name."²⁵⁴ Ironically, it was the same T. Manlius that forbade single combat during the Latin War and punished his own son for doing so.²⁵⁵ In 349 BC, M. Valerius Corvus likewise triumphed over a Gaul in monomachy, with the assistance of a raven that perched on his helmet. The raven is an interesting addition to the Latin version of this story, since the raven features prominently in Celtic mythology as an archetypal symbol for death; for instance, in the epic *Táin Bó Cúailgne*, a raven perches on the shoulder of the hero Cú Chulainn when he is near death.²⁵⁶ In a

²⁵⁰ Polyb. 6.54.

²⁵¹ Polyb. 6.55. Polybius's term is τόλμᾶ, which correspond more to the Latin term *audacia* than *virtus*, which denotations of boldness in the positive sense, and recklessness in the negative sense.

²⁵² In Livy's account, Horatius reaches safety (Livy 2.10).

²⁵³ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 64.

²⁵⁴ "tum dictator 'macte virtute' inquit 'ac pietate in patrem patriamque, T. Manli, esto. perge et nomen Romanum invictum iuvantibus dis praesta" (Livy 7.10.4).

²⁵⁵ Livy 8.5.10

²⁵⁶ Ellis, *The Celtic Empire*, 31.

similarly dramatic account by Plutarch, the consul M. Claudius Marcellus won the rare of honor of dedicating *spolia opima*, which he won for slaying the Celtic king and opposing commander Viridomarus at Clastidium (222 BC).²⁵⁷ The most renowned monomachist, however, was M. Servilius Geminus Pulex who claimed twenty-three victories in single combat.²⁵⁸ Although all the monomachists preserved by the literary tradition are victors, it is unlikely that the Romans won every challenge by single combat. Nevertheless, they are always shown in complete triumph, and this distortion is also seen in Roman sculptural depictions of set-piece battles in which cavalry, traditionally aristocratic, figure prominently in the victory despite the predominance of the infantry.

Such unambiguous triumph belies the fear that had to be overcome by individuals to display *virtus*, which may be elucidated by analogy with the archetypal hero in mythology. On his exploratory journey, the hero voluntarily confronts the unknown of chaos while encountering great risks to himself.²⁵⁹ Accordingly, if the hero is successful then the danger that chaos represented to the community is suppressed, and in turn he can return in triumph to a community that becomes, as Peterson puts it, “much enriched—or even utterly transformed—by his fortune.”²⁶⁰ The ritual of single combat actualizes this mythic pattern that derives from our collective unconscious, which may explain how widespread the ritual was in ancient warfare. In any event, mythological monsters are symbolic for threats to order, and as adversaries sometimes destroy the hero, for example the dragon that morally wounds Beowulf. A similar fate was likely for the lone Chinese citizen who confronted the armored column on Tiananmen Square, whose tanks may be

²⁵⁷ Plut. *Vit. Marc.* 7.1-3.

²⁵⁸ Oakley, “Single Combat in the Roman Republic,” 394.

²⁵⁹ Jordan Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief* (London: Routledge, 2002), 20, 179, 181.

²⁶⁰ *ibid.* 183.

symbolic for when the known order has “degenerated into tyranny.”²⁶¹ There is an important connection, as Peterson notes, between the hero’s journey and value:

Over the course of centuries, the actions of ancestral heroes, imitated directly and then represented in myth, become transformed, simplified, streamlined and quickened—reduced as it were ever more precisely to their “Platonic” forms. Culture is therefore the sum of surviving historically determined hierarchically arranged behaviors and second- and third-order abstract representations, and more: it is the integration of these, in the course of endless social and intrapsychic contact, into a single pattern of behavior—a single system of morality, simultaneously governing personal conduct, interpersonal interaction and imagistic/semantic description of such. This pattern is the “corporeal ideal” of the culture, its mode of transforming the unbearable present into the desired future, its guiding force, its central personality.²⁶²

Roman *virtus* is a viable case study for Peterson’s model. The archetypal hero is most visible in the ritual of single combat but, nonetheless, applies in principle to other displays of individual initiative in the Roman army. The collective memory of Roman military tradition monumentalized the elite victors who participated in monomachy. Livy, for instance, has no doubt embellished some of these episodes with his artistic talent, but his representation of *virtus* is grounded in the reality of Rome’s social hierarchy. This actualization of the heroic journey involved a lone champion, probably always an aristocrat, who risked physical and psychological trauma for the sake of the community.²⁶³

It is worth noting that heroes in Greek and Roman myth are nobles, and those at the top of the hierarchies in Greek and Roman societies were also nobles. Like the hero myth, the actor in monomachist duels was an individual acting voluntarily and, again to borrow

²⁶¹ Ibid., 180.

²⁶² Ibid., 192.

²⁶³ The Greeks and Romans diagnosed mental illnesses and no doubt the symptoms of post-traumatic stress order were familiar to them (“Psychiatry,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2013). How prevalent was PTSD in the early Republic for instance? In contrast to modern western societies, a far greater proportion of males served in the military and witnessed and/or participated directly in combat. Nevertheless, the Roman citizen, at least in that period, would have been far better conditioned for warfare by the collective, that is by the competitive warrior ethos cultivated at home and abroad.

Peterson's words, reveals that:

the nature of human experience can be (should be) improved by voluntary alteration in individual human attitude and action. This statement—the historical hypothesis—is an expression of faith in human possibility itself and constitutes the truly revolutionary idea of historical man.”²⁶⁴

This is echoed, in more direct language, in the aphorism from the maverick Roman statesman Appius Claudius Caecus: “Each man is the blacksmith of his own fortune.”²⁶⁵

This is a significant point for the present study, as *virtus* was not awarded collectively to units. All armies invariably contain many soldiers who fight because they are compelled by orders, which is entirely rational and by no means cowardice. Nevertheless, that was not the path for Romans that wished to rise to the top of the hierarchy, which placed value on courage and rewarded such displays with glory and power. The pinnacle of a Roman aristocrat's career was military success as a commander, and his election or appointment, depending on the period, was greatly furthered by reputation acquired through past service, including that garnered by family tradition. In turn, having attained power through competence, the Roman commander encourages the ideal patterns of behavior generated by the hierarchical structure. The Roman army itself, rigidly hierarchical, reflects Roman culture in which military glory was a value that was highly prized by Romans regardless of class.

B. Junior Officers

The junior officers of the Roman army, notably the centurions and the standard-bearers, represented a meritocratic hierarchy of courage as well, since their qualifications

²⁶⁴ Jordan Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief* (London: Routledge, 2002), 180.

²⁶⁵ Cited in L. R. Lind, “Concept, Action, and Character: The Reasons for Rome's Greatness,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 103 (1972): 237.

for leadership were predicated on such displays of courage in view of their peers. Roman authors show rather than tell the inner dynamics of the Roman army, since they assumed the audience was already familiar with such technical details. Essentially, in comparison to modern ranks, Roman centurions had the competence of sergeants but, as commissioned officers, had the status and function of captains. Polybius reports the following with respect to centurions in his day:

Each of the aforementioned age-groups [the three orders of line infantry, the *hastati*, *principes*, and *triarii*] except for the youngest [the skirmishers, also known as *velites*] select ten leaders according to merit, and after those they select a second set of ten... The leaders themselves in turn select their own rearguard officers. Next, in conjunction with the leaders, they divide the age-groups, each to the measure of ten units, except the skirmishers; and to each of the units they assign two leaders and two rearguard officers; of the skirmishers, they are apportioned equally to those units. The units are referred to variously as divisions or maniples or standards, and the commanders of the units as either centurions or leaders [Polybius omits the further subdivision of the maniple into two centuries]... Reasonably, they have two centurions for every maniple; since it is unclear what the centurion might do or experience, and the needs of war not allowing excuses, they aim that a unit is never without a leader and guardian... They desire that the centurions be not necessarily bold and adventurous as capable of command, both steadfast and composed rather than spirited, and not unreservedly eager to fall into or initiate battle, but being outnumbered and overwhelmed they remain firm and die in their proper place.²⁶⁶

This passage conveys the component of steadfastness in the Romans' conceptualization of

²⁶⁶ Ἐξ ἐκάστου δὲ τῶν προειρημένων γενῶν πλὴν τῶν νεωτάτων ἐξέλεξαν ταξιάρχους ἀριστίνδην δέκα. μετὰ δὲ τούτους ἕτεραν ἐκλογὴν ἄλλων δέκα ποιοῦνται. καὶ τούτους μὲν ἅπαντας προσηγόρευσαν ταξιάρχους, ὧν ὁ πρῶτος αἰρεθεὶς καὶ συνεδρίου κοινωνεῖ· προσεκλέγονται δ' οὗτοι πάλιν αὐτοὶ τοὺς ἴσους οὐραγούς. ἐξῆς δὲ τούτοις μετὰ τῶν ταξιάρχων διεῖλον τὰς ἡλικίας, ἐκάστην εἰς δέκα μέρη, πλὴν τῶν γροσφομάχων· καὶ προσένεμαν ἐκάστῳ μέρει τῶν ἐκλεχθέντων ἀνδρῶν δύο ἡγεμόνας καὶ δύο οὐραγούς. τῶν δὲ γροσφομάχων τοὺς ἐπιβάλλοντας κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος ἴσους ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ μέρη διένειμαν. καὶ τὸ μὲν μέρος ἕκαστον ἐκάλεσαν καὶ τάγμα καὶ σπεῖραν καὶ σημαίαν, τοὺς δ' ἡγεμόνας κεντυρίωνας καὶ ταξιάρχους. οὗτοι δὲ καθ' ἐκάστην σπεῖραν ἐκ τῶν καταλειπομένων ἐξέλεξαν αὐτοὶ δύο τοὺς ἀκμαιοτάτους καὶ γενναιοτάτους ἄνδρας σημαιοφόρους. δύο δὲ καθ' ἕκαστον τάγμα ποιοῦσιν ἡγεμόνας εἰκότως· ἀδήλου γὰρ ὄντος καὶ τοῦ ποιῆσαι καὶ τοῦ παθεῖν τι τὸν ἡγεμόνα, τῆς πολεμικῆς χρείας οὐκ ἐπιδεχομένης πρόφασιν, οὐδέποτε βούλονται τὴν σπεῖραν χωρὶς ἡγεμόνος εἶναι καὶ προστάτου. παρόντων μὲν οὖν ἀμφοτέρων ὁ μὲν πρῶτος αἰρεθεὶς ἡγεῖται τοῦ δεξιοῦ μέρους τῆς σπείρας, ὁ δὲ δεύτερος τῶν εὐωνύμων ἀνδρῶν τῆς σημαίας ἔχει τὴν ἡγεμονίαν· μὴ παρόντων δ' ὁ καταλειπόμενος ἡγεῖται πάντων. βούλονται δ' εἶναι τοὺς ταξιάρχους οὐχ οὕτως θρασεῖς καὶ φιλοκινδύνους ὡς ἡγεμονικοὺς καὶ στασίμους καὶ βαθεῖς μᾶλλον ταῖς ψυχαῖς, οὐδ' ἐξ ἀκεραίου προσπίπτειν ἢ κατάρχεσθαι τῆς μάχης, ἐπικρατούμενους δὲ καὶ πιεζομένους ὑπομένειν καὶ ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπὲρ τῆς χώρας (Polyb. 6.24.1-9).

virtus. A hundred years later, Roman tactics had hardly changed, and the same qualifications are found in Caesar. Displays of *virtus* could be rewarded by promotion to a different legion that had posts available, “The centurions, some of whom were promoted for their *virtus* from lower ranks of other legions to higher ranks of this legion, fell fighting bravely not to lose the praise accrued from previous military exploits.”²⁶⁷ Each army reflects the culture that produces it. The centurions were commissioned officers but, unlike the U.S. military for instance, were generally promoted from the rank and file.²⁶⁸ By contrast, in the Vietnam War, the unfortunate combination of reluctant draftees with inexperienced officers who had six-month rotations, produced not only distrust but sometimes outright hostility, especially in the case of the “lifers” who occasionally foisted their duties on subordinates.²⁶⁹ This antagonism sometimes even manifested in the assassination of officers, also known as fragging, and while murder is unethical it does have a logic when such leaders are so incompetent that their inexperience could kill you.²⁷⁰ Nevertheless, at least ideally every military system has a hierarchy predicated on competence. There are examples of the legionaries themselves electing their own centurions in the imperial period, but it was rare.²⁷¹ Tacitus reports that during the Year of the Four Emperors, the Flavian commander Antonius Primus permitted this for his own

²⁶⁷ “*Centuriones, quorum nonnulli ex inferioribus ordinibus reliquarum legionum virtutis causa in superiores erant ordines huius legionis traducti, ne ante partam rei militaris laudem amitterent, fortissime pugnantes conciderunt*” (Caes. *B Gall.* 6.40.7).

²⁶⁸ George R. Watson, *The Roman Soldier* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 87.

²⁶⁹ Andrew Wiest, *The Vietnam War 1956-1975* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2014), 68-69.

²⁷⁰ The Vietnam War was not unique in assault on officers but, according to Hamilton Gregory, “it was far more frequent during the last years of the Vietnam War...The availability of hard drugs was clearly a contributing cause. Another factor was a noticeable decline in the quality of recruits inducted from 1966 to 1973” (Gregory, Hamilton. “Murder in Vietnam,” *Military History Magazine*, accessed November 18, 2018, <http://www.historynet.com/murder-in-vietnam.htm>). This is missing the point that the U.S. government and its armed forces was already acting unethically, which included both conscription of its own citizens and the invasion of Vietnam without justification.

²⁷¹ Watson, *The Roman Soldier*, 88.

benefit, and the result was that the most violent and restless men were selected.²⁷² Hierarchies are not necessarily unstable or unjust, although they can and do lead to some inequity. Nevertheless, hierarchies could not function effectively if they were only unstable or unjust. Above, Tacitus is hinting at the ideal hierarchy in the Roman military tradition, that is centurions are promoted by merit under the commander's auspices; the latter has his own self-interest at least on balance with the state's interests. The chaos of the civil war was the product of the unethical pursuit of power by men like Primus, which had quite destructive consequences on discipline and morale.²⁷³ In any event, in the absence of civil war, the centurions were respected leaders who earned that respect by leading from the front, continuously in fact in a set-piece battle, which explains their disproportionate casualties.²⁷⁴ The closest modern equivalent to Roman centurions would be German officers and NCOs from the Napoleonic wars up to modern times, especially the Second World War, who likewise led from the front and had the competence to do so. This derived from the concept of *Auftragstaktik*, a flexible, goal-oriented doctrine that emphasized initiative and freedom of action to adopt whatever tactics necessary to accomplish the mission, rather than simply waiting for orders and surrendering the initiative to the enemy.²⁷⁵ To reiterate, discipline does not produce courage, and stereotypes of Roman soldiers as automatons are incorrect.

²⁷² Tac. *Hist.* 3.49.

²⁷³ Ash writes, "Whereas Plutarch's notion of spontaneous collective madness partly absolves society of blame for such self-destructive behaviour, Tacitus presents us with a much more rational picture of a civil war which gradually gains momentum, but which could have potentially ended much earlier if the right leader had intervened. In AD 98 that role was played by Trajan, but Tacitus has crafted the narratives of the *Historiae* and the *Annales* as a pair which, particularly when considered together. Tructuri forces generated by the disastrous combination of flawed emperors and frustrated armies" (Rhiannon Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 169).

²⁷⁴ Sabin, "The Face of Roman Battle," 11.

²⁷⁵ Robin Havers, *The Second World War: Europe, 1939-1943* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2014), 40

Caesar's commentaries provide the most specific examples of *virtus* evinced by centurions, which results in a collective characterization of these officers. The extreme loyalty, even to the point of death, of these soldiers, was of vital importance to Caesar, and reinforced his claims to a Roman audience.²⁷⁶ It is worth noting that Appian and Dio Cassius, who write long after the events of the civil war, show little interest in the roles of junior officers.²⁷⁷ The first example in Caesar's works of a centurion's courage occurs at the Sabis River (57 BC), referred to above, which in the narrative at least seems to have saved the Roman army. With many of the twelfth legion's centurions wounded or slain, the *primus pilus* P. Sextius Baculus advanced to the front under his own initiative to give orders, address centurions by name, and encourage the rank and file, which restored morale.²⁷⁸ The same centurion appears again later, disabled by the severity of his wounds, when the Seduni and Veragri attack the camp of Servius Galba. Together with an experienced tribune, he convinces Galba that "they place all their hope of safety in *virtus*," which takes the form of a sally from the camp.²⁷⁹ In both episodes, Baculus's role has less to do with aggressive displays of courage than steadfastness in adversity.

The opposite is the case with the rivalry between the centurions T. Pullo and L. Vorenus, who contended for promotion with a consistent animosity. This came to a head during an Gallic attack on their camp, during which Pullo challenges Vorenus: "'Why do you hesitate Vorneus,' said Pullo, 'or what place do you await for proving your *virtus*.'"²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories*, 8.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁷⁸ Caes. *BGall.* 2.25.

²⁷⁹ "*Itaque convocatis centurionibus celeriter milites certiores facit, paulisper intermitterent proelium ac tantum modo tela missa exciperent seque ex labore reficerent, post dato signo ex castris erumperent, atque omnem spem salutis in virtute ponerent*" (Caes. *BGall.* 3.5.3).

²⁸⁰ "*Ex his Pullo, cum acerrime ad munitiones pugnaretur, 'Quid dubitas,' inquit, 'Vorene? aut quem locum tuae probandae virtutis exspectas?'*" (Caes. *BGall.* 5.44.3).

Caesar provides a Homeric-like narrative of the subsequent contest for *virtus*, during which both centurions save each other's lives. Adrian Goldsworthy argues that this sortie by Pullo and Vorenus went beyond self-interest to encourage the morale of recent recruits, given that the siege occurred shortly after the Nervii had destroyed the Roman forces under Cotta and Sabinus.²⁸¹ If this is correct, then this episode had similar value as propaganda as the heroic defense of the mission station Rorke's Drift (1879 AD) during the Anglo-Zulu War. This action resulted in the most Victoria crosses awarded for one battle in British military history, despite the rather small number of soldiers who took part in it.²⁸² According to Robert Brown, in his case studies of the Sabis River and Pharsalus, Caesar depicts the former as a triumph of superior Roman discipline against a foreign enemy, while the latter a triumph of moral worthiness.²⁸³ The theme of moral superiority is reflected in various subtle ways in Caesar's account of the civil war, which includes the characterization of centurions.

Caesar's account of the civil war is illustrative of Sigmund Freud's concept of the "narcissism of small differences."²⁸⁴ This refers to disagreements between parties that are most alike, in this case with respect to social class and culture, which leads to conflict as such parties in their own self-interest need to distinguish themselves. Caesar must justify his own cause at the expense of the Pompeians, and indeed reserves more praise for his former Gallic foes, who at least are not morally corrupt in his view.²⁸⁵ Caesar records the death of a high ranking centurion among his losses at Dyracchium, a certain Q. Fulginius,

²⁸¹ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 279.

²⁸² While the British defenders no doubt deserved the decorations, it is hard to ignore the fact that the battle was immediately preceded by Britain's worst colonial defeat, which occurred at Isandlwana.

²⁸³ Brown, "Two Caesarian Battle-Descriptions: A Study in Contrast," 329, 332.

²⁸⁴ Sigmund Freud et al., *Civilization and its Discontents* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2016).

²⁸⁵ Brown, "Two Caesarian Battle-Descriptions: A Study in Contrast," 355.

who “on account of distinguished *virtus* had reached his post from the lower ranks.”²⁸⁶ He records the casualties of the Pompeians, on the other hand, with no praise for valor. The siege was a rare defeat for Caesar, which was primarily due to his over-ambitious plan to encircle the larger army of Pompey. The Caesarians, however, were not out-fought in this battle. This is conveyed in the aftermath by Caesar’s centurions, who point out to him the thirty thousand arrows loosed at the redoubt, the four centurions who lost their sight, and the shield of Scaeva, whose owner pointed out the one-hundred and twenty holes in it from arrows.²⁸⁷ The fraternal bond between Caesar and his loyal soldiers is illustrated by the direct discourse of the centurion Crastinus at Pharsalus:

There was a veteran in Caesar’s army, Gaius Crastinus, who in the previous year had led under him as first centurion in the tenth legion, a man of extraordinary *virtus*. With signal having been given, ‘Follow me,’ he said, ‘you who have been my comrades, and for your commander render your accustomed service. This one battle remains; when the battle is concluded and he will recover his dignity and we our freedom.’ At the same time looking at Caesar, he says ‘Today, commander, I shall act so that you will give me thanks whether I live or die.’ When he had said this, he ran forward first from the right wing, and around one hundred twenty select volunteers of the same cohort followed him.²⁸⁸

Crastinus died bravely in the front lines, and Caesar particularizes his death, like Homer does for his heroes, and therefore memorializes the centurion’s *virtus*.²⁸⁹ The Pompeians, on the other hand, do not acquit themselves well in Caesar’s account, and are characterized

²⁸⁶ “*Nostris in primo congressu circiter LXX ceciderunt, in his Q. Fulginius ex primo hastato legionis XIII, qui propter eximiam virtutem ex inferioribus ordinibus in eum locum pervenerat*” (Caes. *BCiv.* 1.46.4); Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus’ Histories*, 8.

²⁸⁷ Caes. *BCiv.* 3.53.

²⁸⁸ Brown, “Two Caesarian Battle-Descriptions: A Study in Contrast,” 345; “*Erat C. Crastinus evocatus in exercitu Caesaris, qui superiore anno apud eum primum pilum in legione X duxerat, vir singulari virtute. Hic signo dato, “sequimini me,” inquit, “manipulares mei qui fuistis, et vestro imperatori quam constituistis operam date. Unum hoc proelium superest; quo confecto et ille suam dignitatem et nos nostram libertatem recuperabimus.*” Simul respiciens Caesarem, “faciam,” inquit, “hodie, imperator, ut aut vivo mihi aut mortuo gratias agas.” Haec cum dixisset, primus ex dextro cornu procucurrit, atque eum electi milites circiter CXX voluntarii eiusdem cohortis sunt prosecute) (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.91).

²⁸⁹ Caes. *BCiv.* 3.99

collectively as passive and weak-willed. The problem seems to rest with the top leadership, as Pompey despairs and withdraws quickly from the battlefield after his cavalry is repulsed; indeed, Pompey's only interaction with his centurions occurs in the aftermath, when he instructs them to guard the camp while he retires to his tent.²⁹⁰ Appian is more distant from the civil war than Caesar, historically and objectively, which we can observe from his portrayal of mutual regret at Pharsalus from both factions.²⁹¹

Latin authors characterize centurions collectively as brave and dutiful. Livy provides a peculiarly detailed portrait of a centurion, Spurius Ligustinus, whose brief autobiography is densely packed with meaning. Livy rarely discusses his sources. This is no exception, but the detailed account of the service of Ligustinus, albeit idealized, almost certainly derives from a real person.²⁹² Richard Alston argues that the character is a "throw back to a mythic past. The future and, in fact, Ligustinus' present lay with those centurions who thought more of their honor and status than selfless devotion to the community."²⁹³ Self-interest is a poor explanation for acts of *virtus*, since courage can be deadly if things go wrong. This is true even for the period in which Livy himself wrote, when most of Rome's soldiers probably never saw Rome. Nevertheless, it is true, as Ligustinus himself indicates, that in his time Rome's soldiers were serving abroad in wars that could not be justified by self-defense. Nevertheless, such considerations had little to no effect on military effectiveness. The context of Ligustinus's speech is the levy of 168 BC during the Third Macedonian War. The war had been going slowly, sometimes quite badly, and the

²⁹⁰ Caes. *BCiv.* 3.94.

²⁹¹ Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories*, 14-15.

²⁹² Dexter Hoyos, "The Late Republican Army (146-30 BC)," in *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 64.

²⁹³ Richard Alston, "Arms and the Man: Soldiers, masculinity and power in Republican and Imperial Rome," in *When Men Were Men: Masculinity, power and identity in classical antiquity* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 210.

consuls sought out as many veteran centurions as possible. Some centurions who had achieved the high status of the *primi ordines*, that is the centurions of the first cohort, objected to a loss of status by serving as lower ranking centurions.²⁹⁴ New Historicist critics like to extract meaning from peculiar stories or non-canon literary works. Ligustinus's speech in a way seems to qualify, so it is quoted in full:

Quirites, I am Spurius Ligustinus, a Sabine by birth, a member of the Crustumian tribe. My father left me a jugerum of land and a small cottage in which I was born and bred, and I am living there today. As soon as I came of age my father gave me to wife his brother's daughter. She brought nothing with her but her personal freedom and her modesty, and together with these a fruitfulness which would have been enough even in a wealthy house. We have six sons and two daughters. Four of our sons wear the toga virilis, two the praetexta, and both the daughters are married. I became a soldier in the consulship of P. Sulpicius and C. Aurelius. For two years I was a common soldier in the army, fighting against Philip in Macedonia; in the third year T. Quinctius Flaminius gave me in consideration of my *virtus* the command of the tenth company of the hastati. After Philip and the Macedonians were vanquished and we were brought back to Italy and disbanded, I at once volunteered to go with the consul M. Porcius to Spain. Men who during a long service have had experience of him and of other generals know that of all living commanders not one has shown himself a keener observer or more accurate judge of *virtus*. It was this commander who thought me worthy of being appointed first centurion in the hastati. Again I served, for the third time, as a volunteer in the army which was sent against Antiochus and the Aetolians. I was made first centurion of the principes by Manius Acilius. After Antiochus was expelled and the Aetolians subjugated we were brought back to Italy. After that I twice took service for a year at home. Then I served in Spain, once under Q. Fulvius Flaccus and again under Ti. Sempronius Gracchus. I was brought home by Flaccus amongst those whom, as a reward for their *virtus*, he was bringing home to grace his triumph. I joined Tiberius Gracchus at his request. Four times, within a few years, have I been first centurion in the triarii; four-and-thirty times have I been rewarded for my *virtus* by my commanders; I have received six civic crowns. I have served for twenty-two years in the army and I am more than fifty years old. But even if I had not served my full time and my age did not give me exemption, still, P. Licinius, as I was able to give you four soldiers for one, namely, myself, it would have been a right and proper thing that I should be discharged. But I want you to take what I have said simply as a statement of my case. So far as anyone who is raising troops judges me to be an efficient soldier, I am not going to plead excuses. What rank the military tribunes think that I deserve is for them to decide; I will take care that no man shall surpass me in *virtus*; that I always have done so, my commanders and fellow-campaigners bear witness. And as for you, my comrades, though you are only exercising your

²⁹⁴ Livy 42.32-33.

right of appeal, it is but just and proper that as in your early days you never did anything against the authority of the magistrates and the senate, so now, too, you should place yourselves at the disposal of the senate and the consuls and count any position in which you are to defend your country as an honourable one.²⁹⁵

This autobiography of a centurion illustrates several of my premises. First, the virtue of courage to the Romans was not limited to the aristocratic ruling class nor to “true” Romans, whose ethnicity had already become blurred by enfranchising other ethnic groups, such as the Sabines. Ligustinus is the ideal citizen-soldier, a concept that traces back to the formation of the city-state itself. When the state depended on such men for both its defense and expansion, the ruling class could no longer monopolize military glory. Nevertheless, *virtus* was not something a man received automatically, meaning it was not a rite of passage to manhood in Roman society. He notes that he has four sons who donned the *toga virilis* and two others who wore the *toga praetexta*; the former was worn by freeborn adult Roman males, while the latter was worn by boys. *Virtus*, on the other hand, represented a meritocracy that was observed and validated by other Roman men. It was meritocratic because officers needed to be competent, which illustrates how social construction is insufficient alone to explain why hierarchies exist. For gregarious, socializing animals, such as primates, brute force alone is insufficient to remain at the top of the hierarchy without instability. Hierarchies are quite ancient, and not merely a side effect of civilization. Indeed, Ligustinus reached the top of the hierarchy of centurions, the *primus pilus*, through his *virtus* and twenty-two campaigns. The consul T. Quinctius Flaminius first noticed his *virtus* and rewarded him with a post as centurion in the *hastati*, the youngest of the three lines of heavy infantry; in time, Ligustinus served four times as the chief centurion of the veteran third line, the *triarii*. The commander was responsible for

²⁹⁵ Livy, trans. by Roberts, 42.34.

promoting soldiers to higher ranks, either directly through his own observation or indirectly through his staff. The speech here records thirty-four decorations for Ligustinus. Perhaps more significant, for my premise that *virtus* is an ethical act, are the six civic crowns that he was awarded. The *corona civica* was awarded for saving the life of another Roman citizen in battle by slaying an enemy. There was no additional reward if the citizen was higher in social class or indeed if it was the commander himself: the only stipulation was that the man saved was a citizen.²⁹⁶ *Virtus* was a public virtue and while it does not require the actor to be ethical in his private life, the virtue does require considerable risk and potential sacrifice for the community. The “shadow” of this chapter, so to speak in Jungian terms, is the following chapter in which I relate abuses in the hierarchy and violent reaction to centurions.²⁹⁷ Nevertheless, the characterization of centurions by Latin authors tends to show them as brave officers, as exemplars of *virtus*.

Livy illustrates the *virtus* of centurions in his account of M. Centenius Paenula, a rare example of a centurion being promoted to a commander. Livy notes that Paenula was a *primus pilus* who was known for his stature and his spirit.²⁹⁸ In 212 BC, he appealed to the senate for an independent command against Hannibal, arguing that he was acquainted with the enemy and the country in which he was operating, Campania. The centurion raised a raw and inexperienced hodgepodge of an army to confront Hannibal, and the resulting battle was a clear mismatch. Livy notes that the centurion had been reckless in confronting

²⁹⁶ Plin. *HN*. 16.5.

²⁹⁷ Carl Jung defines the shadow as “a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge (Carl Jung, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self* (London: Routledge, 1991), 14).

²⁹⁸ “*M. Centenius fuit cognomine Paenula, insignis inter primi pili centuriones et magnitudine corporis et animo*” (Livy 25.19.10).

Hannibal with such an army, but at least he was not a coward. Not wishing to survive a disaster that he had wrought, Paenula rushed into the midst of the Carthaginians and was slain. This was not the case with consul Cn. Fulvius Flaccus, who in the same year fought a disastrous engagement in the same territory. Livy censures the consul for compounding recklessness with cowardice: “The commander, equal to Centenius with respect to fatuity and recklessness, was not all comparable with respect to his spirit, seeing that the line was giving way and his own men were alarmed, having laid hold of a horse he fled with around two hundred horsemen.”²⁹⁹ During his trial, the consul attempted to blame the soldiers for his defeat at Capua, but this failed and he was exiled.³⁰⁰

The standards, or *signa*, of the Roman army served important tactical functions as well as symbolic roles, including a focal point for *virtus*. Polybius has less to say about the *signiferi*, the standard-bearers, but he notes that they were two of the most noble men in their maniple and in the prime of life. Nobility of character, whether such officers were indeed aristocratic, was ideal given the sacred nature of the standards.³⁰¹ The standards were tactically useful, serving as rallying points and to keep the battle lines straight.³⁰² Peter Watson describes the standards without too much exaggeration as a “cult,” since they had religious significance and symbolized the unit.³⁰³ This is especially the case for

²⁹⁹ Livy 25.21.9.

³⁰⁰ “*dux, stultitia et temeritate Centenio par, animo haudquaquam comparandus, ubi rem inclinatum ac trepidantis suos videt, equo arrepto cum ducentis ferme equitibus effugit; cetera a fronte pulsa, inde a tergo atque alis circumventa acies eo usque est caesa ut ex duodeviginti milibus hominum duo milia haud amplius evaserint. castris hostes potiti sunt*” (Livy 26.1.3, 26.3.12).

³⁰¹ “οὔτοι δὲ καθ’ ἐκάστην σπεῖραν ἐκ τῶν καταλειπομένων ἐξέλεξαν αὐτοὶ δύο τοὺς ἀκμαιοτάτους καὶ γενναιοτάτους ἄνδρας σημαιοφόρους” (Polyb. 6.24.6).

³⁰² Nicholas V. Sekunda et al., *Caesar’s Legions: the Roman Soldier 753 BC to 117 AD* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2000), 68; Louis Rawlings, “Army and Battle During the Conquest of Italy,” in *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 59.

³⁰³ Watson, *The Roman Soldier*, 127-128; Pierre Cagniard, “The Late Republican Army (146-30 BC),” in *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 87.

legion's *aquila* (eagle standard), which by the late republic had eclipsed the other four standards of totem animals carried previously.³⁰⁴ Pliny the Elder also notes that the eagle is a bird of prey and often does battle with the dragon. The latter is a serpent-like archetypal monster that appears in myths throughout the world, and may reflect some instinctual fear of serpents that derives from our evolutionary past.³⁰⁵ Accordingly, it may not be a coincidence that the eagle, a noble but fierce creature, serves as the focal point for corporate unity and *virtus* in the Roman legion.

The following examples show the symbolic significance that the standards could exert on a battlefield; the standard-bearers are less important than the standards themselves, for any officer can employ the standards as rallying points. In 212 BC, consul Q. Fulvius Flaccus attempted an assault on Hanno's encampment near Beneventum, but due to heavy casualties prepared to withdraw. Vibius Accaus, a prefect of an allied Paelignian cohort, threw a standard from his unit across the rampart and invoked a curse on himself and his soldiers if the standard was lost. A Roman tribune chided his legionaries that they were being outshone, which in turn inspired a centurion, T. Pedanius, to repeat what the Paelignians had done. Livy ascribes this victory to *virtus* and, like many Latin narratives, it focuses on the moral element rather than superior tactics.³⁰⁶ In 211 BC, Hannibal launched an attack on the Roman walls encircling Capua, and briefly managed to break through. At a critical moment the centurion Q. Navius, along with other *primi ordines*, took a standard and threatened to throw it into the midst of the enemy if his soldiers did not

³⁰⁴ Plin. *HN*. 10.5.

³⁰⁵ Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief*, 118, 150; David E. Jones, *An Instinct for Dragons* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 32-40.

³⁰⁶ Livy 25.14.1-14.

advance with him.³⁰⁷ In 209 BC, the Romans fought two battles against Hannibal, losing the first engagement but winning the second. In the latter, Claudius Marcellus commanded the center of the line to observe the conduct of his soldiers, having severely upbraided them for their prior performance. During the battle a tribune snatched a standard and led a maniple to successfully check Hannibal's elephants.³⁰⁸ In this case, as in the others above, Livy specifies which maniple and which of the three lines conducted the attack, which particularizes the event and memorializes the participants. In 168 BC, at the battle of Pydna, the commander of the Paeligni reenacted the same tactic employed almost half a century earlier at Beneventum:

The Romans, when they made a stand against the phalanx, were unable to break through, and Salvius, the commander of the Paelignians, having snatched a standard from his men hurled it among the enemy. The Paelignians, for it was unlawful and not permitted by divine law for Italians to leave behind a standard, ran to the same place and rushing into battle terrible deeds and sufferings were met by both sides.³⁰⁹

Plutarch does not suggest that there was any desire to emulate or surpass their ancestors, but it may not be a coincidence that it was the same ethnic unit that repeated this tactic. By the late republic, the *aquila* had become the legion's main standard and its loss in battle was considered the greatest ignominy. In 55 BC, Julius Caesar launched his first expedition to Britain. When the legionaries were hesitant to disembark with the shore occupied by Britons, the *aquilifer* of one legion leaped from a ship and dared his comrades-in-arms to permit the eagle to fall in enemy hands.³¹⁰ Later, in 54 BC during the Belgic uprising, a certain L. Petrosidius hurled the eagle-standard into the Roman camp to prevent its capture

³⁰⁷ Livy 26.5.13-17.

³⁰⁸ Livy 27.14.8-10.

³⁰⁹ “τῶν δὲ Ῥωμαίων, ὡς ἀντέστησαν τῇ φάλαγγι, μὴ δυναμένων βιάζεσθαι, Σάλουιος ὁ τῶν Πελιγνῶν ἡγούμενος ἀρπάσας τὸ σημεῖον τῶν ὑφ’ αὐτὸν εἰς τοὺς πολεμίους ἔρριψε. τῶν δὲ Πελιγνῶν οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν Ἴταλοῖς θεμιτὸν οὐδ’ ὅσιον ἐγκαταλιπεῖν σημεῖον ἐπιδραμόντων πρὸς ἐκεῖνον τὸν τόπον ἔργα δεινὰ καὶ πάθη παρ’ ἀμφοτέρων ἀπῆντα συμπεσόντων” (Plut. *Vit. Aem.* 20.1).

³¹⁰ Caes. *BGall.* 4.25.

by the Eburones, and he was soon overpowered and slain fighting.³¹¹ Much later, during the civil war, Tacitus relates how the seventh legion's eagle was only saved after bloody fighting during the second battle of Bedriacum (69 AD): "Six centurions of the first ranks were slain, some standards were seized: centurion Atilius, a *primus pilus*, had saved the eagle and with a slaughter of the enemy finally fell."³¹² By the imperial period, a ferocious *esprit de corps*, especially with the legions, continued to foster the competitiveness inherent in the Roman army's hierarchy of competence. Patriotism and camaraderie seem far less important in the Roman army than other military systems, and obviously in the case of civil wars such pretexts were ambiguous. This was no doubt a terrifying thing to fellow Romans but especially to foreign adversaries, for if the Romans will compete that aggressively among themselves then they will certainly be capable of being that much more ferocious against non-Romans.

C. Enlisted Ranks

Having discussed acts of *virtus* evinced by the officers, in this section I examine *virtus* and the rank and file, which was a difficult task for classical historians because of their own collective characterization of said ranks. Ash notes the difference between describing the emotions of individuals and groups:

It was less simple, perhaps even less necessary, to reconstruct the motives and desires of a group than to do the same for an individual. Even if the result of collective action was clear, the dynamics within a group which brought about this particular outcome could prove elusive for a historian."³¹³

³¹¹ Caes. *BGall.* 5.37.

³¹² "occisi sex primorum ordinum centuriones, abrepta quaedam signa: ipsam aquilam Atilius Verus primi pili centurio multa cum hostium strage et ad extremum moriens servaverat" (Tac. *Hist.* 3.22).

³¹³ Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories*, 1.

Ash makes a valid argument, which is illustrated with numerous examples from the works of Caesar and Tacitus. For example, Caesar's soldiers act unanimously, whether it involves incidents of panic or courage. Tacitus portrays them similarly, but he does not gloss over differences in motivation and temperament between the officers and the enlisted ranks.³¹⁴ Roman authors portray the pathos of the common soldiers as unanimous displays and do not memorialize individual legionaries, which in part is a technique of simplification. Furthermore, for the historians, the record of individual acts of *virtus* by ordinary legionaries may simply have been unavailable. Tacitus provides a rare description in his account of the second battle of Bedriacum, when two Flavian soldiers sacrificed their lives to disable a siege engine that was wreaking terrible damage:

two soldiers dared a remarkable deed, having disguised themselves with shields snatched up from the slaughter, they cut the cords and weights of the engine. They were at once struck down and because of that their names were lost: but the deed is not in doubt.³¹⁵

Tacitus clearly laments the loss of their names to posterity. Nevertheless, the most nuanced individuals in classical military narratives were the commanders. Roman historians carefully characterized the commander because he provided moral *exempla* for the upper classes, who comprised the readership.³¹⁶ Even the Roman army's junior officers, such as the centurions, do not differ much in temperament. Does this constitute elitism, that is does

³¹⁴ *ibid.* 26, 54. Indeed, in spite of the inept and corrupt leadership of their officers, the Othonian and Vitellian armies develop collective identities (Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories*, 168).

³¹⁵ “*duo milites praeclarum facinus ausi, arreptis e strage scutis ignorati, vincla ac libramenta tormentorum abscedissent. statim confossi sunt eoque intercidere nomina: de facto haud ambigitur*” (Tac. *Hist.* 3.23).

³¹⁶ Dudley writes “He [Tacitus] is concerned, above all, with moral purpose, he believes that human character shapes events, rather than events human character” (Donald R. Dudley, *The World of Tacitus* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1968), 10-11). Kraus notes that history's purpose was primarily to provide inspiration and instruction through historical examples, both good and bad (Kraus, “Historiography and Biography,” in *A Companion to Latin Literature*, 242-243). See Martin on the Greco-Roman view of character, which consisted more of a collection of recognized characteristics than constituting an individual (Ronald H. Martin, “Tacitus and his Predecessors,” in *Studies in Latin Literature Tacitus* (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1969), 125).

the lack of individual personalities in the enlisted ranks denote a lower status in the military social hierarchy? It does, but it does not follow that the elites had no interest in the *virtus*, and by extension morale, of the enlisted ranks. The interest is manifested differently, which is unsurprising given that the commander is the ideal focal point for Roman values. Harris argues that Velleius Paterculus shows little interest in the morale in the enlisted ranks, which is valid, but then he speculates that Paterculus' work manifests a broader lack of interest by the upper classes in the characteristics of the enlisted ranks.³¹⁷ If classical authors, whose works have survived intact, had provided more details of combat from the perspective of the common soldiers in the Roman army, then certainly we would have fewer gaps in our knowledge of small-unit dynamics and tactics. Such authors, however, were not writing for the elucidation of a decontextualized future audience; although if they included no details, which they did not, then it would be pointless to discuss Roman tactics at all. How would an author like Livy, who had no military experience and may or may not have had the pertinent data, discuss the rank-and-file as individuals for a battle like Philippi (42 BC), which had upwards of 200,000 soldiers present?³¹⁸ If we adopt the simplistic dualism of Marxism, that is opposition between the ruling class and the proletariat, then it is hard to explain how Roman commanders, especially ones prone to inept decisions, could have survived the discontent of thousands of armed and highly trained killers in close proximity.

Hierarchies that have no basis in competence are unstable. Once again, it may be helpful to examine the problem via the natural world. Although civilization may be a

³¹⁷ Harris, "Readings in the Narrative Literature of Roman Courage," 314.

³¹⁸ Si Sheppard et al., *Philippi 42 BC: the Death of the Roman Republic* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2009), 53.

relatively new concept on the evolutionary time scale, the primates that build hierarchies are not. A certain alpha male chimpanzee, Foudouko, who also acquired the nickname “Saddam,” was brutally killed and partly cannibalized by younger males after a failed attempt to return to power. Professor Julia Pruett, director of the Fongoli Savanna Chimpanzee Project, described him as “somewhat of a tyrant,” which may be an unfair characterization given the behavior of his rivals. His fatal mistake, however, seems to have been his staunch loyalty to Mamadou, his beta-male subordinate and second-in-command. In any event, the duo was clearly not wanted back, hence their ostracism.³¹⁹ Similarly, the failure of Caligula to interact competently with the aristocracy, the uppermost beta-males of Roman society in the principate, led to instability and his assassination by the Praetorian guard. The killing did not stop with the emperor, as Caligula’s wife was hunted down and his daughter, Julia Drusilla, had her head smashed against a wall.³²⁰ Internal strife and particularly unusual violence indicate that those wielding power in the hierarchy are incompetent, but not necessarily that all hierarchies are such; the Praetorians who fought bravely in Germania to avenge Varus’s lost legions, hopefully, would have viewed their unit’s participation in child murder with a degree of mortification. Roman commanders, who represented the top of the social hierarchy, were in fact quite interested in the *virtus* of the enlisted ranks. This in part explains the fraternal bond that courageous and resolute commanders developed with their soldiers and, as noted above, their close observation of ordinary soldiers during battle.³²¹

³¹⁹ Michael Greshko, “In Rare Killing, Chimpanzees Cannibalize Former Leader,” in *National Geographic*, accessed October 29, 2018, <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/01/chimpanzees-murdercannibalismsenegal/?user.testname=none>.

³²⁰ Suet. *Calig.* 59.

³²¹ Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus’ Histories*, 168.

In the Roman army, individuals of the enlisted ranks could play a vital role in initiating the cataclysm of the enemy's rout, that is by courageous soldiers leading attacks directly into the enemy's formation to disrupt its cohesion. Although the top-down narratives that we have rarely go into such details, the logic of encouraging the rank and file to *virtus* can be gleaned from studies of Roman military doctrine. The Roman army had a unique deployment scheme that consisted of three separate lines, the *triplex acies*, with intervals between tactical units of approximately one hundred men. The Roman army resembled a checkerboard, an arrangement that we today, although not the Roman themselves, refer to as the *quincunx*. The multiple lines could rotate, which enabled a continuous pressure of fresh reserves against the enemy's front line, which eventually would become too exhausted to continue fighting. The Roman system was highly effective against a wide-range of opposing tactical systems, hence the relatively few changes made to it over the course of a half a millennium.³²² Manipular tactics is a term applied to the system as a whole, which developed in the early republic when the chief tactical unit was the maniple (120 soldiers); Roman armies in the late republic and empire further enhanced the flexibility of the legion, although it is unclear if they deployed via cohorts (480 soldiers) or centuries (80 soldiers) or, more likely, either unit depending on the situation. To my knowledge, no Roman attributed their civilization's remarkable degree of military success exclusively to superior tactics. The reason likely is that without men of courage, material advantages were insufficient to make raw conscripts superior to veteran opponents, whether they were Celtic warriors or Macedonian pikemen. Naturally, however, Latin authors call greater attention to *virtus* than Rome's more sophisticated tactics for their

³²² Sabin, "The Face of Roman Battle," 7.

military success, which is a case of exceptionalism that is common to all ethnic groups. Accordingly, as the case studies below illustrate, the Romans did not ascribe *virtus* to entire units or armies in their narratives of set-piece battles. Rather, it was the competitive ethos inherent in the hierarchy of competence that contributed to Roman victory, along with other factors, less frequently mentioned by the sources, such as material and numerical superiority. Nevertheless, the unjust omission of ordinary legionaries from the collective memory, aside from rare anecdotes, is no doubt a reflection of their lower station in the hierarchy.

Given that Roman soldiers belonged to units but fought as individuals, it is difficult to conceive of such a system, as described above, as working without a competitive ethos of courage. Lendon argues that the *triplex acies* was designed to foster competition for *virtus*, rather than a superior tactical rationality.³²³ He cites Polybius's description of the middle republican legions that were deployed according to age, with the oldest legionaries in the third line, younger generations in the following two lines, and the very youngest as skirmishers.³²⁴ The argument is persuasive, although it ignores Livy's digression on manipular tactics, which may be a less reliable source but still contains useful kernels. First, Polybius notes that the skirmishers, also known as *velites*, sometimes donned wolfskins for additional protection so that "to their officers they are clearly visible bravely or not bravely bearing the brunt of battle."³²⁵ Conversely, in Livy's account, the *triarii* are referred to as men of "observed *virtus*," meaning that some have already demonstrated *virtus* and that all

³²³ Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts*, 230.

³²⁴ Polyb. 6.21.

³²⁵ "προσεπικοσμεῖται δὲ καὶ λιτῶ περικεφαλαίῳ· ποτὲ δὲ λυκεῖαν ἢ τι τῶν τοιούτων ἐπιτίθεται, σκέπης ἅμα καὶ σημείου χάριν, ἵνα τοῖς κατὰ μέρος ἡγεμόσι προκινδυνεύοντες ἐρρωμένως καὶ μὴ διάδηλοι γίνωνται" (Polyb. 6.22.3).

have had the opportunity to do so.³²⁶ Goldsworthy, employing John Keegan’s Face of Battle model, has offered an argument to explain the dynamics of courage at the unit level. Goldsworthy argues that an army’s rout in ancient warfare resulted from moral collapse and, in the Roman army, courageous soldiers could precipitate this by leading attacks that penetrated the enemy’s formation.³²⁷ Polybius provides essential evidence for this model in his discussion of rewards:

They [the Romans] have a noble method to induce young men to brave risks in battle; whenever an action has taken place and some of them have acted bravely, the consul having gathered an assembly of the army, and having presented those considered to have excelled in some way, he first gives praise to each man for his courage, and in addition any other distinction in his life he may have earned worth recalling pertaining to courage; afterwards he presents a javelin to a soldier who has wounded an enemy, to the one who killed and stripped an enemy of his armor, for an infantryman a cup, and for a cavalryman horse trappings, initially though only a javelin. This does not occur if he wounds or despoils an enemy in a set-piece battle or during the capture of a city, but if it occurs in a skirmish or some similar situation, in which those men give themselves to the task both voluntarily and deliberately, when there is no compulsion for the man to imperil himself. To those first to ascent the wall during the capture of a city they give a gold crown. Similarly, the commander distinguishes with gifts those who have covered and saved citizens or allies; the tribunes having chosen compel those preserved, whether they are willing or not, to present their savior with a crown.³²⁸

³²⁶ “*earum primam quamque [primum] pilum vocabant; tribus ex vexillis constabat; [vexillum] centum octoginta sex homines erant; primum vexillum triarios ducebat, veteranum militem spectatae virtutis, secundum rorarios, minus roboris aetate factisque, tertium accensos, minimae fiduciae manum; eo et in postremam aciem reiciebantur*” (Livy 8.8.8).

³²⁷ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 280.

³²⁸ “Καλῶς δὲ καὶ τοὺς νέους ἐκκαλοῦνται πρὸς τὸ κινδυνεύειν. ἐπειδὴν γὰρ γένηται τις χρεία καὶ τινες αὐτῶν ἀνδραγαθήσωσι, συναγαγὼν ὁ στρατηγὸς ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ στρατοπέδου, καὶ παραστησάμενος τοὺς δόξαντάς τι πεπραχέναι διαφέρον, πρῶτον μὲν ἐγκώμιον ὑπὲρ ἐκάστου λέγει περὶ τῆς ἀνδραγαθίας, κἄν τι κατὰ τὸν βίον αὐτοῖς ἄλλο συνυπάρχη τῆς ἐπ’ ἀγαθῷ μνήμης ἄξιον, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τῷ μὲν τρώσαντι πολέμιον γαῖσον δωρεῖται, τῷ δὲ καταβαλόντι καὶ σκυλεύσαντι, τῷ μὲν πεζῷ φιάλην, τῷ δ’ ἵππεϊ φάλαρ’, ἐξ ἀρχῆς δὲ γαῖσον μόνον. τυγχάνει δὲ τούτων οὐκ ἔαν ἐν παρατάξει τις ἢ πόλεως καταλήψει τρώση τινὰς ἢ σκυλεύση τῶν πολεμίων, ἀλλ’ ἔαν ἐν ἀκροβολισμοῖς ἢ τισιν ἄλλοις τοιοῦτοις καιροῖς, ἐν οἷς μηδεμίαν ἀνάγκης οὔσης κατ’ ἀνδρα κινδυνεύειν αὐτοὶ τινες ἐκουσίως καὶ κατὰ προαίρεσιν αὐτοὺς εἰς τοῦτο διδάσῃ. τοῖς δὲ πόλεως καταλαμβανομένης πρώτοις ἐπὶ τὸ τεῖχος ἀναβάσει χρυσοῦν δίδωσι στέφανον. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τοὺς ὑπερασπίσαντας καὶ σώσαντάς τινας τῶν πολιτῶν ἢ συμμάχων ὃ τε στρατηγὸς ἐπισημαίνεται δώροισ, οἳ τε χιλίαρχοι τοὺς σωθέντας, ἔαν μὲν ἐκόντες ποιήσωσιν, εἰ δὲ μή, κρίναντες συναναγκάζουσι τὸν σώσαντα στεφανοῦν” (Polyb. 6.39.1-6).

Polybius describes this system as primarily designed for young men, which further supports the peculiar arrangement by age in the early and middle republican legions. Later, the Marian reforms removed all age and class distinctions, which granted greater flexibility on the battlefield. Nevertheless, the equipment and tactics of the Roman legions hardly changed over the course of the following centuries. Polybius notes that decorations were only rewarded for actions that involved bravery without compulsion. He notes that set-piece engagements and sieges were not events that received glory, and yet immediately points out that the first man over the enemy's wall in a siege received a gold crown. While the wording is confusing in places, Polybius's description would include acts of individual initiative in a set-piece battle, such as voluntary charges into the enemy's ranks, single combat challenges, saving comrades-in-arms from danger, etc. It is clear that not every legionary who participated in an advance, that is under compulsion, received the praise of *virtus*. The most likely candidate would be a centurion, presumably one of proven *virtus*, but if he was incapacitated then another would take his place; as noted above, centurions were promoted for the most part by merit. Most soldiers are not cowards and in the Roman army those that were cowards received severe punishment. Most soldiers are, however, primarily concerned with not dying. This is entirely rational but, while it is not unethical, it does not constitute *virtus*.

Having detailed the mechanics of combat at the ordinary soldier's level, let us examine case studies of collective characterization in set-piece battles. Having already examined the engagement at the Sabis River, we can instead turn to Caesar's first major battle, which occurred at Bibracte against the Helvetii (58 BC). He describes his legionaries

as hurling their javelins from elevated ground, which broke the enemy's formation.³²⁹ Caesar then relates technical details about the Roman *pilum* and how effective it was at disabling enemy shields, since after penetration the javelins bent and could not be withdrawn without difficulty; Roman authors, fortunately for us, will occasionally digress on the mundane. Exhausted by wounds but not defeated, the Helvetii back-stepped, remarkably, nearly a mile to the closest mountain. To parse this series of events, Caesar has portrayed the rival armies as virtually singular entities, aside from the third-person plurals. The armies can be imaginatively viewed as two male grizzlies locked in combat with one gradually giving ground but, in such close quarters, neither exposing itself to vulnerability by turning its back. Furthermore, the volley of *pila* is described as breaking up the Helvetian formation, which implies the unlikely absence of subdivisions for an entire army. Lendon argues that Caesar's account of Pharsalus is likewise a distortion, whether deliberately or not, because of the author's emphasis on *virtus* contraposed to superior tactics as the reason for victory.³³⁰ At Bibracte, a critical crisis was averted when Caesar peeled off the third line of the *triplex acies* to meet enemy reinforcements. In the end, however, Caesar's narratives cannot be tendentious just because he does not spell out obvious facts, that military success required both courage and sound tactics. For Bibracte, there is no mention of superior courage as the reason for victory. In Livy's account of the Hannibalic War, the two most decisive Roman victories, the Metaurus River (207 BC) and Zama (202 BC), are not ascribed solely to courage. Livy's account of this period follows Polybius closely, but the same point can be made for earlier battles in his history, such as

³²⁹ Caes. *BGall.* 1.25.

³³⁰ Lendon, "The Rhetoric of Combat: Greek Military Theory and Roman Culture in Julius Caesar's Battle Descriptions," 280-281.

the Battle of Sentinum (295 BC), arguably the most significant set-piece battle in Roman history and, likely, one of the first for which authentic details were preserved.³³¹ The double-consular army of P. Decius Mus and Q. Fabius Maximus Rullianus faced a coalition of Rome's greatest enemies, the Celts and the Samnites, for control of central Italy. Livy collectively characterizes the fighting under the consuls, as he focalizes the age and experience of Fabius through his defensive delaying tactics designed to exhaust the Samnites; this strategy echoes that employed by his famous descendant against Hannibal. Livy portrays Fabius at Sentinum as follows:

Their commander knew that it was the habitual practice of both the Gauls and the Samnites to make a furious attack to begin with, and if that were successfully resisted, it was enough; the courage of the Samnites gradually sank as the battle went on, whilst the Gauls, utterly unable to stand heat or exertion, found their physical strength melting away; in their first efforts they were more than men, in the end they were weaker than women.³³²

This is a case of ethnocentric essentialism, but it is not necessarily false. Roman armies, in general, did have greater staying power due to numerous factors, which derived in part from rigorous training and a consistent, if sometimes harsh, code of discipline. Nevertheless, the feminizing of the Other in this case, no doubt speaks to the Romans' conceptualization of *virtus*, which bounded together physical courage and perseverance with the notion of manliness. On the left wing, Livy focalizes the vigor and dash of the younger Decius through an ambitious cavalry charge that backfires. When the Celts counterattacked with chariots, the Roman rank and file unanimously became demoralized

³³¹ Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 361.

³³² “*quia ita persuasum erat duci, et Samnites et Gallos primo impetu feroces esse, quos sustineri satis sit; longiore certamine sensim residere Samnitium animos, Gallorum quidem etiam corpora intolerantissima laboris atque aestus fluere primaque eorum proelia plus quam virorum, postrema minus quam feminarum esse*” (Livy 10.28.3-4).

and began to rout. Decius, however, like his father before him during the Latin War, resorted to a ritual known as *devotio* to restore his battle line. He proceeded to dedicate both himself and the enemy to the infernal gods and charged alone into the enemy ranks, and there he was cut down. Once it was announced that the Romans were saved, the battle line stabilized and terror spread through the enemy ranks.³³³ Despite the rhetorical embellishment and collectivization of each army's pathos, what Livy describes was the net effect of Decius's *virtus*. With the crisis averted and with the Samnites routing, Fabius deploys reserves to assist the left wing, made possible by the tactical scheme outlined above. Although Goldsworthy focuses on the period from 200 BC-AD 100, when our sources are more plentiful and reliable, the battle on the left wing is won, in a fashion, with the model that he lays out. The Romans employed combined arms tactics, with cavalry and infantry, to open gaps in the Celtic line and then penetrate with infantry.³³⁴ This account in Livy is more focused on morale than his accounts of Metaurus River and Zama, which may relate to his reliance on Polybius, but they nonetheless illustrate that Latin authors did not have a myopic view of their military success, that is courage, equipment, and tactics all played a role. Nevertheless, the result is that we do not see acts of *virtus* from individuals of the enlisted ranks, and their actions are instead portrayed almost like a singular entity.

4. Conclusion: *Virtus* and Manliness

Virtus denotes martial courage and by default, given the context of ancient Roman society and warfare, is inseparable from manliness. Multiple hierarchies operated at the same time in ancient Rome, as in most non-tyrannical societies, which include but are not

³³³ Livy 10.29.2-4.

³³⁴ Livy 10.29.13.

limited to the following for Roman males: 1) martial courage, evidenced by the rise of the commoner Spurius Ligustinus, with his numerous awards and high-ranking posts in the centurionate; 2) rhetorical talent, evidenced by the rise of the *novus homo* Cicero, with his political influence and election to the consulship, which he achieved without an illustrious military career; and 3) literary excellence, evidenced by the rise of the multilingual poet Quintus Ennius, who was brought to Rome by Cato the Elder, where he obtained Roman citizenship and composed the highly influential epic the *Annales*, among other works in various genres. In the late Republic, Julius Caesar reached the top of the hierarchy, but primarily through brute force. His dictatorship sabotaged the competitive ethic of the game and he was assassinated for being a tyrant, despite his often practical reforms. The individuals who rose in the hierarchies above, whether through competence or brute force, were all men. Accordingly it is worth asking if ancient Rome was a tyrannical patriarchy. Roman politics, for instance, did reward higher status and more privileges to those men at the top of social hierarchies but not to women, who performed neither military nor political service.

The literary theory of deconstruction, which has had much influence in the humanities, developed by French philosopher Jacques Derrida, maintains that in a text there are binary oppositions. Deconstruction also argues that there is a hierarchy in which one concept governs the other, for example writing versus speech. Another one of these “violent hierarchies” is male versus female.³³⁵ Deconstruction exerted a role consequently on feminism, both as a political movement and literary model, with its notion of constructivism, that is the differences between the sexes are predominantly produced by

³³⁵ Thomas A. Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts* (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 115.

social construction. In turn, this is opposed to the idea of intrinsic biological differences between the genders, known as essentialism. Furthermore, feminism critiques patriarchal societies and the trait of aggressiveness in a male dominated world.³³⁶ We can see feminism's influence, for example, in Richard Alston's discussion of masculinity and the Roman army:

In many Western Societies, the male is seen as powerful, sometimes all-powerful, and is defined by his ability to wield power. In many cases, the power that is wielded is violent. Violence has been seen as a particularly male attribute and the usually legitimated violence offered by the soldier has often meant that soldiers have been represented as ideals of manhood. In modern western society the role of the soldier has been somewhat marginalized, but violence has remained important in asserting masculinity in both public and private spheres, and a linkage between the male capacity for violence and capability of exercising other forms of social power is common. Women's access to social power, either violent or non-violent, has often been systematically restricted and women who have come to exercise any kind of social power have been seen as masculinized.³³⁷

"Have been seen as" is not an argument and modern Western societies are the least effective examples of patriarchy, which Alston is describing in all but name here, since they are in fact the least tyrannical societies regarding women. Such ingratitude is easily rectified by examining societies that actually are oppressive, such as Saudia Arabia with its puritanical doctrine of Wahhabism, which prohibits women from driving, limits their employment opportunities, requires them to be fully veiled in public, maintains segregated institutions, and strictly limits female participation in politics.³³⁸ For ancient Rome, the

³³⁶ Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts*, 178.

³³⁷ Richard Alston, "Arms and the Man: Soldiers, masculinity and power in Republican and Imperial Rome," 205.

³³⁸ "Saudi Arabia," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2013). For example, the countries of Scandinavia have gone the furthest to enact the principle of equal of opportunity, which failed to induce more women to enter the STEM fields; in fact, surprisingly, the gulf between the genders in those fields widened (Gijbert Stoet et al., "The Gender-Equality Paradox in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education," *Association of Psychological Science*, accessed December 10, 2018, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0956797617741719>, 581).

idea of oppressive patriarchy is too low-resolution to present an accurate picture of the multiple hierarchies of competence that operated.

Using *virtus* and exploring its place in Latin narratives as a case study, I shall conclude this chapter by showing how the feminist notion of constructivism is not only patently false and ignorant of biological fact, but also constitutes an unjust and sweeping castigation of masculine virtue, including the Roman value of *virtus*. Firstly, Rome's warrior ethos excluded female participation, which in due course prevented women from rising in the social hierarchy. Not all Roman males, however, were given the opportunity to acquire *virtus*. Certain males in Roman society, including those who were slaves, without property, disabled, or too old, did not perform military service. There were extraordinary circumstances, however, such as Hannibal's invasion of Italy in which slaves were conscripted and in exchange given their freedom.³³⁹ By the imperial period, the Roman army comprised a tiny portion of a thoroughly de-militarized society and, while the Roman military tradition was still idealized, most able-bodied males did not serve. Secondly, *virtus* represented metaphorically the act of martial competition. Accordingly, those that did not evince courage in its proper context did not rise to the apex of the hierarchy. Cicero, for example, attempted to elevate his role in suppressing the Catilinarian conspiracy to *virtus* on the battlefield, and was roundly scorned as a result.³⁴⁰ Roman men, like Roman women, were not a unified group, as the two premises above illustrate. In the case of the latter, for instance, Roman matrons did in fact wield violence to drive out a slave woman from the festival of Mater Matuta.³⁴¹ Thirdly, aggressiveness is

³³⁹ Livy records the slave soldiers of Ti. Sempronius Gracchus who fought with distinction in southern Italy, who acquired their freedom because of their service (Livy 24.14.2).

³⁴⁰ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 354.

³⁴¹ "Women," in *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford Classical Dictionary, 2012).

predominantly a masculine trait and in part a component of *virtus*, but it does not represent alone the ideal Roman soldier. I discuss discipline in the next chapter, but suffice to say that the quality of *virtus* was not conflated in the sources with wanton aggressiveness. The stereotypical barbarian in Latin military narratives was an aggressive brute, while his civilized counterpart, at least ideally, tempered his ferocity with self-control. The tyrannical exercise of power by males, especially unearned power, was subject to in-group correction. Indeed, the mitigation of local violence was one of the advantages of founding a city-state in the first place.³⁴² Fourthly, Roman society was arguably the most oppressive towards young Roman male citizens, especially in the republican period when Rome was practically at war every year. Conscription involves the act of coercion by the state against able-bodied men, although the process is made much easier by cultivating a warrior ethos. Young men rather than young women were considered expendable, given the latter's fertility, and while young women did experience high mortality rates in childbirth, this remains an imposition of biology not society. This is manifested in the *triplex acies* described by Polybius, in which the youngest males were the first into action, since they were expected to display *virtus* or, at least, compete for the glory of *virtus*. In *Medea*, Euripides crafted a powerful, yet ironic, speech for the child-murdering Medea, which was read at the first women's rights convention in 1848, here is an excerpt: "They say that we spend all our time at home, and live safe lives, while they go out to battle. What fools they are! I'd rather stand three times behind a shield than bear a child once."³⁴³ This is a fallacy of intuition because the fictional character of "Medea," like all ancient women, did not perform military service. Shakespeare also offers a powerful commentary on war, and one

³⁴² Terrenato, "The Versatile Clans: The Nature of Power in Archaic Rome," 197.

³⁴³ Eur. *Med.* 248-251.

absent of rhetorical fallacies: “I am afeard there are few die well that die in a battle.”³⁴⁴ Fifthly, regarding constructivism, the generally superior height, upper-body strength, and testosterone-induced bone density and muscle mass of males are facts, and why females have had little role in warfare until well into the twentieth century. In ancient Rome, the transition to manhood was also a transition from private to public life, so masculinity was in part socially constructed.³⁴⁵ Environment always plays a role in shaping human beings, but not independent of biological reality. Sixthly, citizenship was not a right but a privilege, which was acquired by those that performed military service, which was true for virtually all classical city-states. For example, in Athens the penalty of cowardice was the loss of citizenship, a penalty whose shame was designed to be worse than death.³⁴⁶ The *res publica* was founded and defended by men, citizen-soldiers to be precise, and therefore it was not designed or even intuitive for the system to be egalitarian, that is to accord the privileges of citizenship to women, slaves, or males without a stake in the system.³⁴⁷ Indeed, there was a “discrimination against the rich,” as Claude Nicolet terms it, because it was held that property owners made better soldiers because they had a vested interest in preserving the state.³⁴⁸ The *res publica*, in other words, did not foster power without responsibility.³⁴⁹

Seventhly, and lastly, hierarchies produce inequality but it does not follow that hierarchies, the notion of order itself, is entirely oppressive independent of competence or merit. A more specific inquiry is how much oppression existed, which requires a more

³⁴⁴ Shakespeare *Henry V* 4.1.148.

³⁴⁵ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 177-178.

³⁴⁶ Arthur M. Eckstein, “Bellicosity and Anarchy: Soldiers, Warriors, and Combat in Antiquity,” *The International History Review* 27 (2005): 483-484.

³⁴⁷ This is still true for able-bodied male slaves, given the fact that they themselves or their ancestors were defeated in battle. Logically, such men would not make ideal recruits, especially when combined with resentment at losing their warriorhood, and by extension manhood, via defeat in battle and enslavement.

³⁴⁸ Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*, 92.

³⁴⁹ Yvon Garlan, *War in the Ancient World: A Social History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), 90.

precise answer. Rome's expansionism, from an evolutionary biological perspective, effectively defended the Romans' territory and institutions while also propagating their gene-pool at the expense of other populations. The absence of structure is chaos, and the Mediterranean world prior to its unification under Roman hegemony was a place of frequent warfare or, in other words, chaos. For the conquered, one consequence of defeat in war was the probable rape of its womenfolk. Physical courage, a traditionally masculine trait, was a necessity in ancient warfare and it was a trait that received sophisticated conceptualization in the customs and traditions of the Roman army. The concept of *virtus*, honed through practical experience and developed alongside rigorous discipline, contributed to Rome's military successes. The outcome of Roman expansion, ultimately, was the order of the *Pax Romana*. Jordan Peterson provides the following description of the abstract notion of "order:"

Order is where the people around you act according to well-understood social norms, and remain predictable and cooperative. It's the world of social structure, explored territory, and familiarity. The state of Order is typically portrayed, symbolically—imaginatively—as masculine. It's the Wise King and the Tyrant, forever bound together, as society is simultaneously structure and oppression.³⁵⁰

Complementary to order is chaos, which finds expression in the Daoist symbol of the yin and yang, a famous archetypal image that I shall return to in the next chapter. The Romans' elimination of their competition, or more accurately their incorporation, dramatically reduced the suffering of both men and women in war. Ethically, aggressive expansionism cannot be justified in the absence of self-defense. Nevertheless, one of the results of the frequent, and sometimes catastrophic, chaos of Roman warfare was the *Pax Romana* and its significant reduction, obviously not elimination, of violence in the Mediterranean world.

³⁵⁰ Jordan B. Peterson, Norman Doidge *12 Rules for Life: an Antidote to Chaos* (New York: Random House Canada, 2018), xxviii.

III. *Disciplina*

1. Introduction

The second Roman martial quality to discuss is *disciplina*, which denoted training, method, and orderly conduct.³⁵¹ Jon Lendon argues that a dichotomy emerges in the Roman literary tradition between *virtus*, which he describes as the impatient aggressiveness of the enlisted ranks, and the commander's "cerebral generalship," which was only feasible by disciplining the former.³⁵² The portrait of the Roman soldier as unwaveringly obedient ultimately derives from the idealized descriptions of the Roman army by the foreign observers, Josephus and Polybius, and the military theorist Vegetius, which became a portrait that was resurrected by Niccolò Machiavelli in his attempt to revive ancient Roman military values.³⁵³ Vegetius (fl. fourth century AD) idealized Roman military traditions to inspire reform in the Roman army of his day, which is not to say that the ideals lacked utility, simply that Roman armies did not always quite match his portrait:³⁵⁴

Victory in war does not depend entirely upon numbers or mere courage; only skill and discipline will insure it. We find that the Romans owed the conquest of the world to no other cause than continual military training, exact observance of discipline in their camps and unwearied cultivation of the other arts of war. Without these, what chance would the inconsiderable numbers of the Roman armies have had against the multitudes of the Gauls? Or with what success would their small size have been opposed to the prodigious stature of the Germans? The Spaniards surpassed us not only in numbers, but in physical strength. We were always inferior to the Africans in wealth and unequal to them in deception and stratagem. And the Greeks, indisputably, were far superior to us in skill in arts and all kinds of knowledge.³⁵⁵

³⁵¹ *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "disciplina," 550.

³⁵² Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts*, 177, 208, 211.

³⁵³ See Goldsworthy on the ironic contradictions in Josephus, which belie the notion of a perfectly drilled war machine (Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 281-282).

³⁵⁴ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 8.

³⁵⁵ Vegetius, *On Roman Military Matters* (St. Petersburg: Red and Black Publishers, 2008), trans. John Clarke, 7.

Nearly a millennium after it was written, Vegetius's *Epitoma rei Militaris* remained an influential treatise on military training and organization and inspired Machiavelli, who similarly sought to encourage military reform by hearkening back to the golden age of the Roman army.³⁵⁶ Machiavelli may be termed a military philosopher, rather than a military theorist, since he was studying the ancient Roman army to uncover universal themes of warfare.³⁵⁷ Indeed, firm and regularly implemented discipline is a quality manifested by every successful military system, including forces mislabeled as "barbarian" such as the Mongols, who were extremely well-disciplined and organized.³⁵⁸ Writing in the sixteenth century, Machiavelli argued, with some justification, that the Swiss were exemplars of the early Romans because they were governed by a representative form of government and made war, not with mercenaries, but with well-disciplined citizen infantry.³⁵⁹ Recent scholarship has critiqued the idealized portrait of the Roman army's discipline, although William Messer already noticed, nearly a hundred years ago, that Roman soldiers had a peculiar tendency to protest and speak their mind with an astonishing vociferousness. He argued that this tendency was a secondary result of the Roman army's emphasis on "the ability of the private soldier to think and act for himself, and that a considerable amount of mutiny may not be inconsistent with the highest degree of efficiency."³⁶⁰ It is elitist to suggest, however, that the Roman soldier had some intrinsic animalistic ferocity that needed to be restrained, for his own good, by his more cerebral social superiors. Although it must be said that the ruling elites, at least from the early-to-middle republican period, did

³⁵⁶ John I. Alger, *The Quest for Victory: The History of the Principles of War* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 5-6.

³⁵⁷ Ibid. 4-6.

³⁵⁸ Stephen Turnbull, *Genghis Khan & the Mongol Conquests 1190-1400* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2014), 17.

³⁵⁹ Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, 1.37, 6.188, 7.227; *The Prince*, 12.303-304.

³⁶⁰ William S. Messer, "Mutiny in the Roman Army. The Republic," *Classical Philology* 15 (1920): 160.

form a smaller and more cohesive class that was inculcated with military values as a basis for leadership. This constituted discipline as well, and indeed the Roman ruling class defined itself as distinct from foreigners as well as other Romans.³⁶¹ In this paper, I define discipline as the method of developing obedient soldiers by formal training, once conscripted into units, by a balanced system of punishment and reward, as well as informal enculturation and training through custom and tradition. It is not possible to implement severe discipline without social customs and a political ideology to facilitate strict order. A military doctrine whose aim is not only defeating but also subjugating a wide-range of enemies through conquest must, in part, be practically constructed to objectively interpret and to effectively mediate the world as a medium of action and expression. Accordingly, barbarian armies, such as those of Celts, Germani, Thracians, etc., had some measure of discipline, if not to the same degree or form as the Romans. With no discipline, it is not possible for any military system to mobilize and maneuver a large mass of young males to endure extended discomfort and perhaps even death. Nevertheless, as I argue, *disciplina* produced obedient Roman soldiers and encouraged these men to *virtus*, but being obedient is not synonymous with being virtuous.

Obedience is not a fundamentally ethical notion because obedient people may be coerced into unethical modes of behavior, and indeed the Romans did not regard this quality as such to be a virtue. Nevertheless, *virtus* was not the only martial virtue idealized by the Roman military tradition, for example the term *temperantia* denoted the act of self-restraint from fear, panic, or recklessness.³⁶² Unlike *virtus*, the abstraction of *disciplina* is not so difficult to decode from the Latin. Robert Brown, in a case study of *virtus* in Caesar's

³⁶¹ Holliday, *Origins of Roman Historical Commemoration in the Visual Arts*, 2.

³⁶² Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome; War in Words*, 88.

commentaries, argues that in Caesar *virtus* and *consilium*, that is sound judgment, are necessary and complementary for military victory.³⁶³ Nevertheless, it is no revelation that *virtus* benefits from a commander's sound judgment, as opposed to unsound judgment and, moreover, the ideal of *virtus* is neither lacking itself in *consilium* or operating at cross-purposes to *consilium*. After all, *virtus* did not encompass courage or boldness that contradicted orders, wisdom, or self-restraint, which to the Romans rather constituted recklessness that was expressed with different terms, such as *audacia*.³⁶⁴ Scholarship has yet to analyze, as deeply and profoundly as possible, the traditions of the Roman army under the scope of the collective unconscious and universal themes that run through all military systems. I argue that *disciplina* was not a virtue in the Roman army but, rather, was a means to virtues that included but were not limited to *virtus*. The Romans fostered a high degree of efficiency due to a systematized, if not officially codified, balance between the elements of chaos and order. Accordingly, in this chapter I focus on the foundations of *disciplina* and its conceptualization through customs and traditions. The mundane mechanics of training and penalties that constituted Roman discipline in action have been studied. Roman military studies would not be well served by another dry account already in abundance from military historians, that is lacking in deep, profound theoretical analysis.

The premises of my argument are as follows:

1. Roman infantry doctrine was effective, in part, against so many other systems because it found a relatively harmonious and integrated, although not perfect, conceptual framework to mediate the elements of chaos and order. The Roman

³⁶³ Robert Brown, "Virtus consili expers": An Interpretation of the Centurions' Contest in Caesar, *De bello Gallico* 5, 44" *Hermes* 132 (2004): 295.

³⁶⁴ McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 59

legion, in short, rested conceptually between the less rigid but more chaotic individualism of the Celts, for instance, and the more rigid but less chaotic phalanx of Hellenistic armies. The Celts and Greeks fought, frequently in internecine conflicts, under rules that made rational sense to their respective societies. The Roman game, so to speak, had far different aims and owed some of its success to lessons learned from fighting against a range of diverse military systems in central Italy.³⁶⁵

2. Roman discipline did not encourage blind, unthinking obedience. Rather, through marching camps, rigorous training, and systematized penalties and rewards, the Romans encouraged a high-level efficiency that did not come at the expense of individual displays of courage and initiative. Arbitrary or excessively severe discipline can hamper military efficiency, which is why method alone, in the absence of rational goals, cannot itself be a virtue.
3. The Great Father-like symbols of Roman discipline constitute, fundamentally, expressions of an archetype-as-such, perhaps a primordial notion of order, the mediation of an objective world. It has been taken for granted that all armies, more or less, consist of young males under the auspices of an elder or, at least, father-like male leader. Indeed, the nuclear family long predates organized armies, and it makes sense that the former was a model in very remote times for the latter. The Great Father archetypal image pervades Roman art, literature, and tradition, and entails a sort of reverence that was in part developed through *disciplina*.

³⁶⁵ “Game Theory,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

4. The Roman marching camp was unique for its systematic layout and defenses. Although time consuming and seemingly neurotic, the Roman camp was unique and served as another instrument of *disciplina*. The camp served several purposes, including mitigating the chaos of war through exacting routine, orientating conscripts of disparate cities, ethnicities, and classes to a common purpose, and facilitating deployment into the Romans' sophisticated infantry formations. Although the Roman legionary was by no means an automaton, fighting as an individual swordsman, it is important to remember that he still belonged to a unit.
5. Similar to *virtus*, the ideal of *disciplina* had universal applicability to Roman soldiers, regardless of class or ethnicity. The underlying premise of *disciplina* was the Roman acceptance of their own flaws, and that training was necessary to reach one's full potential as a *vir*, that is by acquiring glory through *virtus*. This powerful notion is why other soldiers from different ethnic backgrounds thrived in the Roman army.

2. First Principles

The purpose of discipline is obedience, at the very least, which translates to effective command and control.³⁶⁶ Although severe punishment may be commonly associated with discipline, especially in the case of the Roman army, discipline is far more complicated and may be described technically as “the training, indoctrination, and encouragement through reward and example of certain practices consistent with the

³⁶⁶ Andrew Houghton, et al, “Discipline,” in *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 261.

purposes for which a soldier may be employed.”³⁶⁷ There were few differences in military technology between ancient armies, unlike the United States and other Western states, for instance, and virtually all of their opponents in wars following the Second World War. Put simply, vastly inferior numbers normally risked defeat in ancient warfare, even for Roman armies, to such an extent that set-piece engagements were avoided as far as possible under those circumstances.³⁶⁸ Delbrück wrote, regarding the real reason for Rome’s success: “It was the Roman civilization which conquered barbarism, for imparting the capability of movement to a large mass is a work of art that only a higher civilization can achieve.”³⁶⁹ Merely noting that this statement sounds ethnocentric does not constitute a rebuttal. Indeed, the vast logistical framework of the Roman army was a product of enculturated conscientiousness and a rigorous code of discipline, if not exactly formal by the standards of modern professional armies.

Accordingly, the purpose of discipline was not to turn cowardly men into courageous men but, rather, to prevent the former from exposing the latter by a premature rout. The same principle of self-restraint, however, applied to those who had impatient or reckless tendencies. Harris, like Messer, argues that the most disciplined soldiers do not necessarily equate with the most courageous.³⁷⁰ Roman soldiers were generally courageous but they were also occasionally rebellious, especially when they felt unjustly or unduly exploited. To reiterate, from the previous chapter, courage is the mastery, not the abolition, of fear. The latter is possible but rare and, in any event, does not constitute virtue. For

³⁶⁷ Ibid. 261.

³⁶⁸ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 102.

³⁶⁹ Hans Delbrück, *Warfare in Antiquity* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 510.

³⁷⁰ Harris, “Readings in the Narrative Literature of Roman Courage,” in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome*, 302.

example, the Old Norse *berserkr* was a frenzied and purposely undisciplined warrior, who fought with unbridled rage and fearlessness.³⁷¹ Perhaps for this reason they are often characterized as villains rather than heroes, since the latter are overcoming fear through courage. In turn, courage may take passive or active forms. Everett Wheeler argues that the actual tension in the Roman army was between willing and compulsory obedience, not discipline and courage.³⁷² Standing firm at one's station during a battle may be an example of passive courage, but it is difficult to distinguish that form of courage from fear of disciplinary penalties or shame. Without reliable testimony, the least effective evidence in any case, it is impossible to be certain and, fortunately, the Romans did not attempt to make the distinction. For them, deeds were what counted.

The Romans believed that a person's character, or *ingenium*, was innate and unchangeable, hence the need for discipline as men are not born equal in ability.³⁷³ The Romans did not allow soldiers, or citizenry in general, to blame personal failings on their circumstances. We can observe this harsh but consistent stance with respect to the fate of the survivors of Cannae, relegated as they were to Sicily, and the refusal to ransom the prisoners captured by Hannibal.³⁷⁴ The subordination of the individual to the community in republican Rome, while unethical in that requires the initiation of the use of force, nonetheless resulted in a ferociously determined collective consciousness that dismayed and defied some of the finest military minds of the ancient world.³⁷⁵ The Roman reaction

³⁷¹ From Old Norse *bjorn* (bear) and *serkr* (shirt), which implies they wore bearskins ("berserker," in *Encarta* (Microsoft Corporation, 1998-2004).

³⁷² Wheeler, "Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares," 70.

³⁷³ Herbert W. Benario, *An Introduction to Tacitus* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1975), 67; Lendon, "War and Society," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 509-510.

³⁷⁴ Lendon, "War and Society," 510.

³⁷⁵ Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*, 90-91.

following Cannae was exemplary of this collective heroic perseverance in the face of seemingly impossible odds. In the literary tradition, Roman protagonists assume the attributes of their forefathers, and T. Manlius Torquatus reflects the severity of his famous ancestor Imperiosus, discussed in more detail later, in his speech regarding the prisoners from Cannae:

Then Titus Manlius Torquatus, a man of an old-fashioned and, as it seemed to many, a too harsh austerity, was called upon for his opinion and spoke as follows: If, in pleading the cause of those who are in the hands of our enemies, their representatives had been content to ask that they be ransomed, I should have said my say in a few words, without reflecting upon any of them; for what else need I have done than warn you to hold fast to the tradition of our fathers and teach a lesson necessary for military discipline? But as it is, since they have almost boasted of having surrendered to the enemy, and have held that they are to be preferred not only to those who were captured by the enemy in battle, but also to those who made their way to Venusia and Canusium, and even to the consul, Gaius Terentius himself, I will not permit you to be ignorant, Conscript Fathers, of any part of their conduct there.³⁷⁶

The terrifying collective punishment of *decimatio* was both harsh and unethical, in that it punished groups of soldiers that may not have exclusively contained guilty individuals, but it does serve as another example of the Romans' consistency in extreme crises. Nevertheless, the Roman military hierarchy did not punish soldiers provided they performed their duty in accordance with orders. For a thought experiment, a prisoner in a concentration camp who is coerced into doing something unethical deserves no blame for the deed, since presumably he is rationally avoiding punishment for refusal. Similarly, even in wars closer to home the literary tradition does not judge as cowards the Roman soldiers who were less than eager to be courageous, which would have been a logical fallacy in any case. Provided the Roman soldier did not contradict orders and stood his ground in battle,

³⁷⁶ Liv. 22.60.5–7.

he received no punishment for not voluntarily initiating acts of *virtus* but, in turn, mere compulsory obedience in set-piece battles received no accommodation.

To explore the interaction of *disciplina* and *virtus* a little deeper, there is an assumption that the individual soldier's interests be subordinate to the corporate interest, but not be abolished altogether.³⁷⁷ If this were not the case, then it would be difficult to explain the Romans' stubbornness in defeat, since mere automatons would have had difficulties functioning with the dissolution of the overriding structure. Understandably, not every culture viewed rigorous discipline as an optimal solution for mediating the elements of chaos and order. For example, the societies of the Celts and the Germani, even through the lens of Greek and Roman authors, generally seem to have entertained greater individual freedom, which is described as untamed fickleness or ferocity.³⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the consequences of defeat in warfare against the Romans was much higher than intertribal warfare, which compelled scaling-up military discipline, organization, and preparedness. The Romans are famous for severity, but compare the drastic measures that were employed by the Celts and Samnites, albeit too late to be effective, in large-scale, sustained warfare against the Romans. In 293 BC, the Samnites levied the so-called "Linen Legion" at a desperate time during the decisive Third Samnite War (298-290 BC). The levy of this unique unit took the form of a nation-wide levy throughout Samnium, and any man liable

³⁷⁷ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 251.

³⁷⁸ For examples of Greek and Roman characterizations of Celtic warfare, see Polyb. 2.35, 3.70, 3.79; Caes. *BGall.* 1.1, 2.15, 2.27; Livy 21.20, 21.28. According to J. B. Rives, in his study of Tacitus's *Germania*, that the Romans admired the personal liberty, but likewise stressed discipline to temper freedom to prevent it from becoming sloth: "Their [Germani] lack of discipline and dislike of labour shows up also in the fact that their warriors prefer raiding to farming (14. 30, and give themselves up to sloth when not in battle (Tac. *Ann.* 15. 1); they thus stand in sharp contrast to the Roman ideal of the soldier-farmer, who dominates both his land and his enemies through determination and hard work" (J. B. Rives, *Tacitus: Germania* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 63).

for service who ignored the summons or left without permission was executed.³⁷⁹ In the Gallic War (58-50 BC), Vercingetorix rapidly formed a formidable coalition to oppose the Romans, and asserted his authority against vacillators by various forms of torture.³⁸⁰ Nevertheless, Caesar notes that it was the Gallic custom, seemingly prior to his invasion, that able-bodied youth were to assemble in arms and that the last man to arrive was to be tortured in the sight of the whole assembly.³⁸¹ Returning to the Romans, Polybius describes them as likewise being the most the severe in desperate moments and crises:³⁸²

this is a peculiarity of the Romans, which they have inherited from their ancestors, and are continually displaying,—to show themselves most peremptory and imperious in the presence of defeat, and most moderate when successful: a very noble peculiarity.”³⁸³

This is partly hyperbole if assumed as a trait of individual Romans, but perhaps not when understood as the “Roman system.” The most important point is the assumption that this heightened perseverance, itself a manifestation of discipline, derived from the ancestors and relates to the concept of *virtus*. Another example describes some of the Roman infantry at Trasimene finding themselves stuck because they were habituated to hold their ground, even though others in terror attempted to swim to safety across the lake.³⁸⁴ Rosenstein and McDonnell disagree in how *virtus* related to standing firm, but agree that *virtus* could be displayed in a losing situation.³⁸⁵ Essentially, the ideal is delayed gratification, a principle of Roman discipline and training that went beyond basic training and set-piece

³⁷⁹ Livy 10.38.1-5.

³⁸⁰ Caes. *B Gall.* 7.4.9-10.

³⁸¹ Caes. *B Gall.* 5.56.2.

³⁸² Cited in McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 66.

³⁸³ Polyb. 27.8.8.

³⁸⁴ Polyb. 3.84

³⁸⁵ Rosenstein argues that Roman courage was steadfastness in nature, rather than aggressive, while McDonnell maintains that conceptualization is too myopic (McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 64, 67; Rosenstein, “War, Failure, and Aristocratic Competition,” 263.

engagements. Polybius describes a standardized procedure for capturing a city once the walls were breached, in which the Romans were instructed to kill literally everything, animals included, and to refrain from plunder until ordered.³⁸⁶ Delayed gratification, or discounting, is associated with IQ and therefore, despite the brutality, the custom was effective at preventing the defenders from rallying.³⁸⁷ Having outlined my use of the term *disciplina* and how it related to *virtus*, I shall now discuss the archetypal conceptualization of both of these qualities.

Returning to the trifold archetypal imagery of Great Father-Great Mother-Divine Son, the Roman army and its soldiers, the “avatars of Romulus” as I view them, mediate the forum of action by finding an integrated mode of being between Great Father (Order) and Great Mother (Chaos).³⁸⁸ The Roman army developed a sophisticated military tradition that integrated both chaos and order into a highly effective and harmonious balance. The archetypal images of the collective unconscious assist in placing the Roman military tradition into the context of the human condition. First, this trifold representation is universal. I detailed various metaphorical examples in chapter one, but there is another representation of the archetypes-as-such in the non-anthropomorphized Daoist diagram, the Yin and the Yang. The former represents the feminine “shady side” of a hill, while the latter represents the masculine “sunny side” of a hill. Both are intrinsically opposite phases but in fact complementary in the cosmos, while the dots in each hemisphere indicate the

³⁸⁶ Polyb. 10.15.

³⁸⁷ Shamosh, Noah A., Colin G. Deyoung, Adam E. Green, Deidre L. Reis, Matthew R. Johnson, Andrew R. A. Conway, Randall W. Engle, Todd S. Braver, Jeremy R. Gray. “Individual Differences in Delay Discounting: Relation to Intelligence, Working Memory, and Anterior Prefrontal Cortex,” abstract, *Psychological Science* 19 (2008): 904-911.

³⁸⁸ Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: The Architecture of Belief*, xxi.

possibility of chaos arising out of order, and vice versa.³⁸⁹ This is a concept not unfamiliar to the Greeks, as Heraclitus writes, “The unlike is joined together, and from differences results the most beautiful harmony, and all things take place by strife.”³⁹⁰ And, in Ennius’s *Annales*, the creative and destructive aspects of feminine chaos are metaphorically represented by child-birth imagery, conjoined with martial exploits: “It is not proper for good men to grumble, they who have given birth to deeds in the labor of the battlefield.”³⁹¹ With respect to the instructive and tyrannical aspects of masculine order, Ennius also writes, “It is the duty of men of action to maintain control over their men.”³⁹² *Huai Nan Tzu*, an anthology of ancient Chinese texts that discusses the Yin and Yang as well as military philosophy, argues for a ruler to integrate both discipline and courage to achieve success.³⁹³ For example, the following passage describes the necessity of organization when mobilizing manpower:

If a myriad soldiers went out to fight one by one the result would be feebler than if they went out in squads of hundreds. Tigers and leopards are nimble of body: different kinds of bears are of great strength: nevertheless, people eat the flesh of these and spread their skins on their beds. And the reason is that these beasts of nimble foot and ferocious strength are not able to use understanding to unify their strength.³⁹⁴

Nevertheless, rigid discipline alone is insufficient to secure victory:

Now suppose that two men were engaged in a battle of swords: they are equal in skill and in the want of it. Thus being equally matched, what is the reason that the bolder of the two contestants is sure to win? The simple reason is that he is without certainty. He acts with boldness.³⁹⁵

³⁸⁹ “Daoism,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica*; Evan S. Morgan, *Tao, The Great Luminant: Essays from the Huai Nan Tzu* (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh Ltd., 1933), 19-21.

³⁹⁰ Cited in Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 41.

³⁹¹ Cited and translated in Lind, “Concept, Action, and Character: The Reasons for Rome’s Greatness,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 103 (1972): 239.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, 239.

³⁹³ Morgan, *Tao, The Great Luminant: Essays from the Huai Nan Tzu*, 190-191.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 203.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 205-206.

Every military system contains the seeds of both chaos and order, although emphasis may be placed on one element over the other. On the one hand, excessive order invites stagnation and, in turn, chaos from which a new order arises but, on the other hand, excessive chaos invites capriciousness and, in turn, the imposition of order to suppress it. Jung argued that the human psyche is innately integrated, but individuals can lose their sense of harmony, which requires “individuation” to reintegrate the conscious with the unconscious.³⁹⁶ No effective military system emphatically denies the multifaceted nature of being, since such a system would be quite unstable. Nevertheless, some cultures have produced military doctrines that more effectively integrate the elements of chaos and order, for example the Roman military system with its sophisticated conceptualization of both courage and discipline. Oakley has argued that there was a tension between the structural dualism of discipline and the desire for glory through initiative, which he developed from earlier French theories about tension between *furor* (evinced by younger soldiers) and *disciplina* (evinced by older soldiers).³⁹⁷ Nevertheless, the Roman ideal was disciplined courage through initiative, that which does not contradict orders. There was no actual tension, as Goldsworthy argues, between discipline and courage since they were complementary factors in facilitating command and control.³⁹⁸ It is an overstatement that Roman soldiers were never allowed to think for themselves, since clearly some initiative was encouraged.³⁹⁹

Lastly, on the topic of complementary factors, Riggsby has argued that there is a hint of effeminacy in the passivity of enduring discomfort rather than acting upon it, which

³⁹⁶ Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 40.

³⁹⁷ Oakley, “Single Combat in the Roman Republic,” 404, 406.

³⁹⁸ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War: 100 BC—AD 200*, 280-281.

³⁹⁹ Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus’ Histories*, 52.

extends to the submission to hierarchy.⁴⁰⁰ Accordingly, were Roman soldiers effeminate in submitting to another man in the military hierarchy, thus restraining their capacity to act? Riggsby further argues that Caesar, in the Gallic commentaries, has exploited this tension to extend the concepts of self-restraint and submission to authority beyond his legions into the civilian world, which perhaps hints at Caesar's later political ambitions.⁴⁰¹ This argument derives from the discourse analysis of Michel Foucault, one of the most famous critics of modernity alongside Derrida, whom I referenced in the previous chapter. Foucault argued, to put it simply, that power shapes language and this manifestation is, using his term, a "discourse."⁴⁰² Therefore, when one takes into account historical context, language is an imperfect tool for objectively interpreting reality and that we cannot, in the existence of social and political coercion, regard language as a tool unaffected by power. For example, in his discussion of mental illness and psychiatry in *Madness & Civilization*, Foucault writes:

That the essence of madness can be ultimately defined in the simple structure of a discourse does not reduce it to a purely psychological nature, but gives it a hold over the totality of the soul and body; such discourse is both the silent language by which the mind speaks itself in the truth proper to it, and the visible articulation in the movement of the body.⁴⁰³

And, in the *History of Sexuality*:

Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries to gradually uncover. It is the name that can be given to a historical construct.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰⁰ Riggsby, *Caesar In Gaul and Rome War in Words*, 89-90, 105.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid. 105.

⁴⁰² Bové, "Discourse," 57; Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts*, 142.

⁴⁰³ Michel Foucault, *Madness & Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1965), 100.

⁴⁰⁴ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 105. Cited in Christina Hendricks, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, accessed March 13, 2019, https://artsone-open.arts.ubc.ca/files/2014/02/hendricks_foucault2.pdf.

The merit of these investigations reveals that an integrated civilization contains both defenders of order, to avoid chaos, and those who draw attention to order's coercive aspects. This does not prove, however, that social hierarchies themselves lack utility. Reducing all meaning to power, as postmodernism does, is "intellectually simplistic," to borrow Peterson's words, who notes that Foucault's revelation that psychiatry was influenced by socio-political factors was not, in fact, a revelation to practitioners of psychiatry, who were well aware that the field was an applied science.⁴⁰⁵ The Romans did not regard obedience on the battlefield, whether involuntary or voluntary, as effeminate. Females did not perform military service in ancient warfare due to their high value in child-birth and -rearing and low value in physical combat, both biologically imposed, and, frankly, it does not make sense to draw a parallel between sexual passivity and military discipline. After formal training, much of discipline becomes "self-discipline," designed not solely to serve an unequal power relationship but to improve efficiency. For example, there was a rare case of insubordination, at least for the early-to-middle republican era, when a false rumor of Scipio Africanus's death caused the Roman garrison at Sucro to mutiny (206 BC). Nevertheless, remarkably, or perhaps not given the rigor of Roman discipline, the mutineers maintained some semblance of order, in that the soldiers still permitted the tribunes to hear cases involving discipline, they received the camp watchword from them, and they still performed picket and sentry duties.⁴⁰⁶ In a later example, in the midst of battle, the Nervii staged a well-timed ambush of Caesar's forces

⁴⁰⁵ Peterson, "2014 Personality Lecture 09: Sigmund Freud II (Depth Psychology)," accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16WF1jLLyik>.

⁴⁰⁶ Livy 28.24.9.

at the river Sambre (57 BC), but the commander's inability to prepare the army thoroughly was in part mitigated by the self-discipline of the legionaries:

Under these difficulties two things proved of advantage; [first] the skill and experience of the soldiers, because, having been trained by former engagements, they could suggest to themselves what ought to be done, as conveniently as receive information from others; and [secondly] that Caesar had forbidden his several lieutenants to depart from the works and their respective legions, before the camp was fortified.⁴⁰⁷

Similarly, during the Great Illyrian Revolt (6-9 AD), there was an ambush that left the Roman infantry in an exposed position bereft of senior leadership but, nonetheless, their discipline preserved both themselves and the victory.⁴⁰⁸ Furthermore, at least in the republican period, the Roman soldier was not a mercenary, that is a male, prostitute-like figure who sells his sword for coin, but a member of a body politic that had some say over those who would lead him on campaign. Indeed, Polybius makes the following claim about the advantage of Rome's citizen-soldiers:

They [Carthaginians] have their hopes of freedom ever resting on the courage of mercenary troops: the Romans on the valour of their own citizens and the aid of their allies. The result is that even if the Romans have suffered a defeat at first, they renew the war with undiminished forces, which the Carthaginians cannot do.⁴⁰⁹

Foucault had no fondness for labels, including the category of homosexual, which is merely a polite distinction without a difference.⁴¹⁰ Sexuality is socially constructed to a degree, for instance, neither Latin nor Greek reserved terms for bisexuality or homosexuality.⁴¹¹ Nevertheless, returning to Riggsby's argument, as far as first principles are concerned, it fails to take note that sodomy in the Roman army was a capital offense, which would have

⁴⁰⁷ Caes. *BGall.* 2.20.3-4.

⁴⁰⁸ Vell. Pat. 2.112.6; cited in Brian Campbell, *War and Society in Imperial Rome, 31 BC – AD 284* (London: Routledge, 2002), 71.

⁴⁰⁹ Polyb. 6.52.7.

⁴¹⁰ "Foucault, Michel," *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

⁴¹¹ "Homosexuality," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 720.

necessitated at least one male to be passive.⁴¹² The suppression of sodomy in the Roman army was socially constructed, in part, but it was also a practical and sound recourse to protecting morale. Plutarch relates that Gaius Marius, in his command against the Cimbri and Teutones, was initially feared by his soldiers but became respected primarily due to his judiciousness. Marius had a nephew in his army, Lusius, who attempted to seduce and then inflict some sort of violence upon a soldier, Trebonius, who was under his command. To Trebonius's credit, Lusius was slain when he resisted his superior's seduction and unethical initiation of force. Marius's response to the affair was to give Trebonius an accommodation for valor.⁴¹³ The primary purpose of the Roman army was to fight, not gratify immediate sexual impulses. This constitutes another example of deferral of gratification, although the inhabitants of captured enemy city, on the other hand, were susceptible to sexual abuse by Roman soldiers provided it was not contrary to orders. To Foucault's credit, he did not subscribe to the intellectually stultifying identity politics of recent times, which attach identity to limited or superficial categories, such as ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. In contrast, the Roman identity, defined by such values as *virtus* and *disciplina*, spoke to archetypal images that were and remain universally meaningful precisely because they were not restricted to a select number of categories.

3. Mechanics of *Disciplina*

Ancient authors, especially Roman, rarely discuss the mundane organizational details of the Roman army. Such details, understandably, make for poor storytelling and

⁴¹² Pat Southern, *The Roman Army: A Social & Institutional History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 146.

⁴¹³ Plut. *Mar.* 14.1-5.

likely were already familiar to the Roman reader.⁴¹⁴ Nevertheless, for modern readers such rare digressions are invaluable, especially that of Polybius, who provides a quite technical and lengthy digression on the Roman camp. Roman historians rather prefer to focalize the narrative through the Roman commander, who was essential, in reality, but who also functions as the main protagonist and source of moral *exempla* in the literary tradition.⁴¹⁵ Cn. Domitius Corbulo's retraining program was probably necessary, and the Syrian army was not unique with its decline in combat readiness, but Roman authors do not always mention such programs.⁴¹⁶ When they do, however, for example, in the descriptions of the retraining programs of Scipio Africanus, Corbulo, and Metellus Numidicus, the primary purpose is to highlight the commander's moral character, which in turn is reflected back through the conduct of his army. The trope of the restorative commander reveals another fact about the Roman army, that it maintained consistently high but not completely uniform standards of discipline and efficiency, and under certain conditions these could lapse.⁴¹⁷ After all, only modern professional armies have formal military academies and manuals, so the degree of uniformity that the Romans achieved through reverence for the *mos*

⁴¹⁴ Saddington notes that such a description was more useful for an outsider like Josephus and his audience (D. B. Saddington, "Tacitus and the Roman Army," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang Der Römischen Welt*, vol. 2.33.5, in edited by Wolfgang Haase and Humberto Temporini (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), 3485, 3504).

⁴¹⁵ Dudley writes "He [Tacitus] is concerned, above all, with moral purpose, he believes that human character shapes events, rather than events human character" (Dudley, *The World of Tacitus*, 10-11). Kraus notes that history's purpose was primarily to provide inspiration and instruction through historical examples, both good and bad (Kraus, "Historiography and Biography," in *A Companion to Latin Literature*, 242-243). See Martin on the Greco-Roman view of character, which consisted more of a collection of recognized characteristics than constituting an individual (Ronald H. Martin, "Tacitus and his Predecessors," in *Studies in Latin Literature: Tacitus* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1969), 125).

⁴¹⁶ Adrian K. Goldsworthy, *In the Name of Rome: the Men Who Won the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 311.

⁴¹⁷ Indeed, some commander's made their distinguishing mark by restoring *disciplina*, instead of brilliant generalship (Campbell, *War and Society in Imperial Rome, 31 BC – AD 284*, 55, 71; Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 87).

maiorum still remains remarkable.⁴¹⁸ In any event, to avoid ambiguity on precisely how *disciplina* manifested in the Roman army, the following section details briefly some essential elements, including marching camps, severe penalties, and rewards for valor.

The descriptions of the Roman army by Josephus and Polybius present an ideal, albeit somewhat hyperbolic and idealized view, that nonetheless is derived from an exacting and rigorous code. Josephus described Roman training in the following terms: “Indeed, it would not be wrong to describe their drills as bloodless battles and their battles as bloody drills.”⁴¹⁹ Corbulo is Tacitus’s quintessential practitioner of *severitas*, old-fashioned severity, who evinces this characteristic in both his Germanic and eastern commands.⁴²⁰ He “restores to the ancient custom” lethargic soldiers for the war against Gannascus, and although some of the details may be exaggerated, Tacitus notes that “the origin however derives from the severity of the commander; you may know him as strict, and inexorable to great misdeeds, for whom such fierceness toward trifles was believed.”⁴²¹ Even if the details may not be true, Tacitus includes them because they fit this larger-than-life commander. What is peculiar is that the *disciplina* of the professional imperial army, which was witnessed in person by Josephus, was not demonstrably stricter or more rigorous than the conscript armies of the Republic. For example, Polybius, another foreign witness to the Roman army, outlines the training program of P. Cornelius Scipio, later Africanus,

⁴¹⁸ Campbell, *War and Society in Imperial Rome, 31 BC – AD 284*, 47; Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*, 106; Sage, *The Republican Roman Army A Sourcebook*, 229.

⁴¹⁹ “Καί οὐκ ἂν ἀμάρτοι τις εἰπὼν τὰς μὲν μελέτας αὐτῶν χωρὶς αἵματος παρατάξεις, τὰς παρατάξεις δὲ μεθ’ αἵματος μελέτας” (Joseph. *BJ.* 3.75-76).

⁴²⁰ Benario regards him as “the one closest to the *imperatores* of Rome’s expansionist past” (Benario, *An Introduction to Tacitus*, 116.). Indeed, this would provide an apt context for Corbulo’s complaint in Germania (see Tac. *Ann.* 11.20.1).

⁴²¹ Old-fashioned discipline, “*veterem ad morem reduxit*” (Tac. *Ann.* 11.18.2). Corbulo’s strictness “*originem tamen e severitate ducis traxere; intentumque et magnis delictis inexorabilem scias, cui tantum asperitatis etiam adversus levia credebatur*” (Ibid., 11.18.3).

at Cartagena (209 BC): first day, route march approximately 3.5 miles in length, in full panoply, and at a run; second day, hygiene and thorough maintenance of equipment; third day, rest and relaxation; fourth day, mock battle with wooden swords and javelins with tips covered by buttons; fifth day, program restarts with the route march of the first day.⁴²² The hastily conscripted army of Cannae was not drilled to this degree, nor was it feasible given its size. Furthermore, as Polybius reminds us, Hannibal's army was an anomaly as most Carthaginian armies were even less uniformly disciplined than Roman conscripts.⁴²³ Accordingly, Roman armies of all periods cultivated a high level of discipline but some units, as in all armies, were more disciplined and cohesive than others, due to the variability of experience and leadership.

Roman training was reinforced through both punishment and reward, which belies the notion of the Roman code as unduly rigid or oppressive. For a *polis*-type state, however, the Roman citizenry tolerated rather severe penalties for disciplinary infractions, which encompassed cowardice, desertion, discarding arms in the midst of battle, insubordination, and dereliction of camp duties, such as picket duty and passing along the watchword; capital offences for citizens under arms, but not in the *domi*, included bearing false witness, sodomy, and theft.⁴²⁴ In some cases, the punishment was summary execution, for instance, abandoning one's post in battle, as Livy notes: "To leave one's post was among the Romans a capital offence, and fathers had punished that crime with the death even of their own sons."⁴²⁵ Livy's conceptualization of severity as paternal reflects the tyrannical tendencies inherent in the Great-Father archetype, discussed in greater detail

⁴²² Polyb. 10.20.

⁴²³ Polyb. 3.35, 3.70, 3.89.

⁴²⁴ Polyb. 6.37; Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*, 106.

⁴²⁵ Livy 24.37.9.

below, which was nonetheless essential in protecting culture. Leaving one's comrades-in-arms in the lurch was unsurprisingly punished with severity, but Polybius reveals astonishment that neither enlisted man nor officer was spared from being cudged to death for negligence in the camp: "The result of the severity and inevitableness of this punishment is that in the Roman army the night watches are faultlessly kept."⁴²⁶ Generally speaking, the Greek *poleis* were averse to such severity, which may explain Polybius's detailed discussion of Roman discipline.⁴²⁷ The Romans also used collective punishment for entire units that committed grave offenses, again to Polybius's justifiable horror.⁴²⁸ *Decimatio* involved the execution of one tenth of the offending unit, by the hands of their own comrades. According to Charles Goldberg, the reviving of decimation by M. Licinius Crassus in the late republic was attributable to the decline in citizen rights after Sulla's dictatorship.⁴²⁹ This seems likely, given the proletarianization of the army after Marius's reforms. In any event, the brutal custom, despite its quaintness, was employed by the imperial army in rare instances. During the long suppression of Tacfarinas's revolt in north Africa (17-24 AD), a veteran officer, Decrius, boldly led a sortie against the besieging Numidians but died fighting after his own men deserted him.⁴³⁰ This outraged the new commander in Africa, L. Apronius, who resorted to *decimatio*: "disturbed by the dishonor of his own men rather than the glory of the enemy, with an action rare in this time and from ancient history, every tenth man of the disgraced cohort selected by lot he put to death by

⁴²⁶ Polyb. 6.35-37.

⁴²⁷ Hornblower, "War in Ancient Literature: the paradox of war," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*, 35-36

⁴²⁸ Polyb. 6.38.

⁴²⁹ Charles Goldberg, "Decimation in the Roman Republic," in *The Classical Journal* 111 (2015): 141

⁴³⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 3.20.

bastinado.”⁴³¹ It was successful, as a mere five hundred Roman soldiers avenged the loss by repulsing the Numidians at Thala. Another incident, in Rome, references *decimatio* and its underlining principle of community over individual. The city prefect, Pedanius, was murdered by one of his slaves and according to custom the entire household of slaves had to be summarily executed. There is much protest, but a senator speaks in deference of ancestral custom: “‘Yet some innocents will perish.’ Certainly also, when every tenth man is slain by bastinado from a routed army, vigorous men also are drawn by lot. Every great example has some unfair element, which, contrary for individuals, is compensated by advantage for the community.”⁴³² We cannot be certain of Tacitus’s views on this, as he may have been as troubled as the spectators, but he at least provides one view of the Roman attitude toward severity in the imperial period.

A strict code of discipline horrifies cowards but does little to encourage initiative. This is not to suggest, however, that fleeing a losing battle against a superior enemy is not irrational, especially in a war that threatens neither country nor family. After all, there was no dishonor when Hector fled in fear from Achilles, who was nigh invincible: “As a falcon in the mountains, swiftest of winged things, swoopeth lightly after a trembling dove: she fleeth before him, and he had at hand darteth ever at her with shrill cries, and his heart biddeth him seize her.”⁴³³ Not to flee in that instance would be foolhardy. Nevertheless, in the case of the Roman army, distant battlefields had little discernible effect on Roman soldiers’ courage and obedience, which is explained by an integrated training program of

⁴³¹ “*raro ea tempestate et e vetere memoria facinore decumum quemque ignominiosae cohortis sorte ductos fusti necat*” (Tac. Ann. 3.21.1).

⁴³² Source of protest “*nimiam severitatem*” (Tac. Ann. 14.42.2). The senator’s reply, “*At quidam insontes peribunt. nam et ex fuso exercitu cum decimus quisque fusti feritur, etiam strenui sortiuntur. habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum, quod contra singulos utilitate publica rependitur*” (Tac. Ann. 14.44.4).

⁴³³ Hom. *Il.*, trans. by A. T. Murray, 22.139-142.

negative and positive reinforcement. Polybius notes that following an engagement, whether successful or not, the Roman commander summons an assembly of soldiers and rewards men for conspicuous courage with both encomium and gifts, listed as follows: 1) a spear for wounding an enemy; 2) a cup for an infantryman who has both slain and stripped an enemy of his armor; 3) horse ornaments if the same deed was performed by a cavalryman; 4) a gold crown for the soldier who is first to climb over the enemy's wall; 5) the same reward for any soldier who has saved the life of a citizen or non-citizen ally in battle.⁴³⁴ Pliny the Elder elaborates on the varieties of crowns that the Roman army awarded for courage: 1) the mural crown, gold and decorated with turrets, awarded for being the first to climb over the city wall during a siege; 2) the vallar crown, gold and decorated with a rampart, awarded for being the first to climb over the enemy's camp wall during an assault; 3) the triumphal crown, golden and reserved for commanders parading in the *triumphus*; 4) the rostrate crown, gold and decorated with prows, awarded for a naval victory; 5) the crown of oak leaves, awarded for rescuing a comrade-in-arms, which in Pliny's description it is specifically a citizen, not an ally.⁴³⁵ Some of the above awards were not feasible for the commoner to aspire to, nonetheless, as I have argued, this is no indication of a corrupt or unduly repressive hierarchy. Pliny also details the illustrious careers of several highly decorated men of *virtus*, including the *primus pilus* and plebeian tribune L. Siccus Dentatus, who acquired thirty-four spoils, eighteen ceremonial spears, twenty-five discs, eighty-three torques, one hundred and sixty bracelets, twenty-six crowns of various types, and other rewards.⁴³⁶ It is worth asking why someone would be motivated to risk death for

⁴³⁴ Polyb. 6.39.

⁴³⁵ Plin. *HN.*, trans. by John Bostock et al., 16.3, 16.5.

⁴³⁶ Plin. *HN.* 7.29.

such objects. One explanation must be biological, for there are naturally produced antidepressants in the body that activate with the expectation and reception of reward, for instance dopamine and serotonin. At least for those eager to advance in the Roman army's hierarchy, the rewards described above were taken quite seriously, for example the legionaries and marines of Scipio Africanus's army who nearly came to blows over the mural crown after the capture of Cartagena.⁴³⁷ Strict discipline and rewards for valor generated a powerful *esprit de corps* in Roman units, provided they were given sufficient time under competent leadership to coalesce as a unit.⁴³⁸

Roman authors emphasize proper marching order and camps as essential components in cultivating discipline, and in turn morale. The marching camp seems to have developed contemporaneously with manipular tactics, as Pyrrhus of Epirus, prior to the battle of Heraclea (280 BC), expressed his awareness for the first time that he was not facing barbarians after he observed the rigor and organization of the Roman camp.⁴³⁹ We can observe the significance of a proper camp as the fountainhead of discipline, in its daily, systematized routine. This appears in Corbulo's retraining program in the eastern provinces, which recalls Metellus's during the Jugurthine War. In these narratives, the commanders are active while their soldiers are passive, or better put, obedient. This was how the Roman army was expected to function, with the boldness and aggressiveness of the soldiers directed against the enemy instead of their own commander. Sallust, writing around a hundred and fifty years before Tacitus's histories, already describes the commander's activities as old-fashioned:

⁴³⁷ Livy 26.48.6-8.

⁴³⁸ Polyb 6.39; Goldsworthy, *The Roman Art at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 280; Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*, 106; Southern, *The Roman Army: A Social & Institutional History*, 149.

⁴³⁹ Plut. *Pyrrh.* 16.4-5.

Although the delay of the elections had diminished the campaigning season and the minds of the citizens were eager with expectation of success, Metellus nevertheless decided not to touch the war before he had compelled the soldiers to exert themselves with the discipline of the ancients.⁴⁴⁰

This was necessary after the lethargy of Albinus, Metellus's predecessor, whose character is reflected in his substandard camps and, by extension, his ill-disciplined soldiers who go as they please and plunder the countryside; specifically, his camps were moved only when hygiene made it necessary and they were not fortified, and the night-watches lacked routine implementation.⁴⁴¹ Metellus responded by having the army build a new camp daily with fosse, rampart, and sentry-posts at short intervals, which was the usual Roman custom; he also went the rounds himself with his staff, which was uncustomary.⁴⁴² On the march, Metellus monitored the soldiers closely, preventing the weak from falling out and keeping all close to the *signa*. Corbulo exercised similar care in Germania, from which he derived his reputation, and reputedly executed two soldiers for being improperly armed while building the camp's rampart.⁴⁴³ As proconsul in the east, Corbulo took command of soldiers who were especially unaccustomed to the rigors of proper Roman fieldcraft; ironically, given that this is the supposedly "professional" imperial army. There may be some truth in Tacitus's account, but it seems slightly exaggerated. In any event, Corbulo once again comes across as a larger-than-life figure capable of bending an army to his will. Tacitus describes the veterans of Corbulo's eastern command, prior to his rigorous retraining, as follows:

For the legions transferred from Syria, sluggish from a long peace, bore

⁴⁴⁰ "*statuit tamen Metellus, quamquam et aestivorum tempus comitorum mora imminuerat et expectatione eventus civium animos intentos putabat, non prius bellum attingere quam maiorum disciplina milites laborare coegisset*" (Sall. *Iug.* 44).

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 44. According to Polybius, a cavalryman went the rounds but it was probably the same for the late republic; Metellus's actions further reveal the initiative of the commander (Polyb. 6.36).

⁴⁴³ Tac. *Ann.* 11.18.

quite grievously the duties of Roman camps. It is fairly well known there were veterans in this army, who had undertaken neither picket nor night-watch, and viewed the rampart and fosse as new and strange.⁴⁴⁴

Corbulo's alacrity recalls that of Metellus, although the latter's soldiers were not so ill-acquainted with traditional Roman fieldcraft. Corbulo kept the soldiers in their tents throughout the harsh winter, during which the frozen earth had to be dug up for tents and unsurprisingly, given the army's prior condition, some died from exposure. Indeed Tacitus reports the fantastic tale that one soldier's hands became frozen while clinging to the firewood he was carrying but, rather than complain in the service of Rome, he continued until his hands fell off at the stumps.⁴⁴⁵ Regarding marching order, Corbulo enforced in Germania the "old custom, not to leave the marching column nor enter battle unless ordered."⁴⁴⁶ Corbulo's program was successful, although one last example was necessary. He punished some soldiers by encamping them outside the rampart; this was another ancient punishment, a degrading experience described by Polybius for the republican army in the second century BC.⁴⁴⁷ Later however, as Kristine Gilmartin argues, Tacitus's account

⁴⁴⁴ *"quippe Syria transmotae legiones, pace longa segnes, munia castrorum Romanorum aegerrime tolerabant. satis constitit fuisse in eo exercitu veteranos, qui non stationem, non vigiliis inissent, vallum fossamque quasi nova et mira viserent"* (Tac. Ann. 13.35.1).

⁴⁴⁵ Tac. Ann. 13.35.1. According to Wellesley, this vignette is akin "journalistic anecdotes" (Kenneth Wellesley, "Tacitus as a Military Historian," in *Tacitus* (London: Routledge, 1969), 68). As Kraus notes, Roman historians occasionally include "novelistic" details that would be left out of modern histories, which are entertaining and help to develop the character (Kraus, "Historiography and Biography," in *A Companion to Latin Literature*, 241). Regarding this specific vignette, and indeed the entire state of deterioration in Corbulo's and Metellus's armies, it is impossible to confirm. Nevertheless, disregarding the value of representation would be missing the point. As Goodyear notes, discussing Tacitus's portrayal of Vitellius's last hours: "Tacitus, when he will, is a master at highlighting tiny details, but here his imagination is caught by the whole, not the parts, by the dramatic possibilities of the scene, its historical significance, and the opportunities it offers for comment and epigram" (Francis R. D. Goodyear, *Tacitus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 28).

⁴⁴⁶ *"veterem ad morem reduxit, ne quis agmine decederet nec pugnam nisi iussus iniret"* (Tac. Ann. 11.18.2).

⁴⁴⁷ Tac. Ann. 13.36. See Polybius's description (Polyb. 6.38). Later, there is a decurion who attacks without orders on the march to Artaxarta and is killed, another case of a Roman soldier transgressing customary displays of boldness. Nevertheless, the success of Corbulo's reforms is apparent when the rest of the army remained obedient (Tac. Ann. 13.40).

of the capture of Volandam emphasizes the soldiers' success not Corbulo's.⁴⁴⁸ Vocula, another old-fashioned commander, received reinforcements at Novaesium while suppressing Civilis's rebellion and, tellingly, Tacitus emphasizes drill in battle formation and building fortifications.⁴⁴⁹

4. Origins of *Disciplina*: Experience and Wisdom

The *mos maiorum* denotes the cumulative wisdom of the ancestors, both feminine and masculine, and was the fountainhead of Roman discipline. The Roman army was governed by no official, uniform set of regulations and, even if that were the case, that still leaves unanswered what discipline precisely is and from what source it derives. The following section examines these matters, as this thesis is not intended merely to detail discipline in action or recount what we already know about *imperium*, which was merely the legal justification to enforce discipline. Discipline refers to training and its methods for adapting behavior and, therefore, it is essentially wisdom. This knowledge was transmitted through stories, among other forms, in which we can detect the various mythic archetypes outlined by Jung. Legendary and mythic heroes reinforce the culture while also transcending it and range, for example, from the mythic Heracles, the legendary Romulus, the semi-legendary M. Furius Camillus, the historical Ap. Claudius Caecus, and the historical and larger-than-life figures of Alexander the Great and Trajan, who were both mythologized in art and literature as revivifying heroes, as evidenced by the following epithet centuries after the Five Good Emperors, "Luckier than Augustus, Better than

⁴⁴⁸ Kristine Gilmartin, "Corbulo's Campaigns in the East: An Analysis of Tacitus' Account," in *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 22 (1973): 596-597.

⁴⁴⁹ Tac. *Hist.* 4.26.

Trajan.”⁴⁵⁰ These figures blended within the Roman psyche both literal and metaphorical representations of values, who reinforced the *mos maiorum* by both defending and adapting it, since their deeds in most cases were restoring what was “right” rather than redefining what was “right” for the *populus Romanus*. In Vergil’s *Aeneid*, Anchises relates to his son Aeneas, on the latter’s *katabasis* to the underworld, the profoundness of his divine mission to Italy, after a parade of heroes. He also provides to his son his “terrible purpose,” to borrow Frank Herbert’s description of Paul Atreides’ destiny, that is answering the call to adventure and minimizing the inevitable tragedy of the hero’s quest:⁴⁵¹

Others, I doubt not, shall beat out the breathing bronze with softer lines; shall from marble draw forth the features of life; shall plead their causes better; with the rod shall trace the paths of heaven and tell the rising of the stars: remember thou, O Roman, to rule the nations with thy sway—these shall be thine arts—to crown Peace with Law, to spare the humbled, and to tame in war the proud!⁴⁵²

The poet Ennius writes, “On manners and on men of good old time stands firm the Roman state.”⁴⁵³ With respect to discipline, and order itself, does ancestral custom produce blind devotion to principles? Even if the principles are sound and ethical, they are not immune from being hijacked by unscrupulous actors. Lendon argues that Roman officers, being educated, sought not only to be inspired by the ancestors but to surpass them: “going forward by looking backward.”⁴⁵⁴ Just as a son is molded by the wisdom, or at least experience, of his father, all Roman men-at-arms could look to their collective forefathers for wisdom. After all, we must not take for granted that Roman commanders could in fact impose severe penalties on tens of thousands of armed and highly trained killers who were

⁴⁵⁰ Fritz M. Heichelheim et al., *A History of the Roman People* (Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), 337.

⁴⁵¹ Frank Herbert, *Dune Messiah* (New York: Ace Books, 1987), 47.

⁴⁵² Verg. *Aen.* 6.847-853.

⁴⁵³ Enn. *Ann.*, trans. Eric H. Warmington, fr. 467.

⁴⁵⁴ Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts*, 11, 282.

in the immediate presence. This was a task that required both a degree of tact as well as firmness of purpose, bolstered by the weightiness of ancestral tradition.

The kings of Macedon, Alexander the Great for instance, promoted a “cult of heroic personality,” and he serves as a pertinent case study.⁴⁵⁵ The prince’s main tutor, Aristotle, reinforced the warrior ethos in which supreme glory was victory in battle.⁴⁵⁶ Alexander received the training to meet the expectations of martial courage befitting a king, and was inured to physical hardship to allow him to lead by example. Indeed, whether citizen legionary or foreign auxiliary, the Roman soldier was disciplined by culture prior to the formal discipline of the Roman army. Alexander’s compulsion, later megalomaniacal obsession, to emulate and surpass his ancestors may be described as πόθος, ancient Greek for desire or longing to do something.⁴⁵⁷ Alexander claimed descent from Achilles, whom he emulated by studying the *Iliad* as a guide to ἀρετή, the closest Greek equivalent to *virtus*.⁴⁵⁸ Alexander entered Trojan territory in 334 BC and sacrificed at Achilles’s tomb, and at the Temple of Athena he replaced his shield with Achilles’s shield. During the Indian campaign in 326 BC, he sulked in his tent just as Achilles did after Agamemnon seized Briseis. Alexander’s rivalry with another proclaimed ancestor, Hercules, resulted in two famous sieges, the Rock of Aornus, and the massively expensive siege of Tyre.⁴⁵⁹ Indeed,

⁴⁵⁵ Ernest A. Fredericksmeyer, “Alexander and Philip: Emulation and Resentment,” *Classical Journal* 85 (1990): 304.

⁴⁵⁶ Ernest A. Fredericksmeyer, “Alexander’s Religion and Divinity,” in *Brill’s Companion to Alexander the Great* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 255-256.

⁴⁵⁷ If Alexander wanted to conquer the western Mediterranean, as the sources report, then his lust for power and glory were insatiable (Arr. *Anab.* 4.7.5, 7.1.4; Curt. 10.1.17-19). Arrian gives his opinion, “...I can assert myself, that none of Alexander’s plans were small and petty and that, no matter what he had already conquered, he would not have stopped there quietly, not even if he had added Europe to Asia and the Britannic Islands to Europe, but that he would always have searched far beyond for something unknown, in competition with himself in default of any other rival” (Arr. *Anab.* 7.1.4).

⁴⁵⁸ “He regarded the *Iliad* as a guide-book to military excellence, and called it such; and, according to Onesicritus’ history, he took with him Aristotle’s revised version – the so-called “casket copy” – which always lay under his pillow along with his dagger” (Plut. *Alex.* 8.2).

⁴⁵⁹ For Aornus, see Arr. *Anab.* 4.30.4; Curt. 8.11.2. For Tyre, see Arr. *Anab.* 2.15.27.

the invasion of India was inspired by Alexander's desire to surpass Hercules and Dionysus, but there was no practical justification.⁴⁶⁰ In turn, Roman magnates and emperors later sought to emulate Alexander, who became in art and literature the archetypal Hero. In one anecdote, Julius Caesar wept in envy of the king's achievements at so young an age: "'Do you not think,' said he, 'it is matter for sorrow that while Alexander, at my age, was already king of so many peoples, I have as yet achieved no brilliant success?'"⁴⁶¹ More secure evidence is revealed by the sculptural portraiture of Roman elites: Pompey, who made his military reputation in the east, mimicked with his anastole Alexander's distinctive hairstyle; Caracalla of the Severan dynasty idolized Alexander and sought to emulate his conquests, and his portraits' upturned gaze is reminiscent of Alexander; Trajan's partially successful campaign in Mesopotamia also recalled the Persian war, and the equestrian pose inspired by Alexander, a rather popular motif in Roman sculpture, is represented by the figure of Trajan in the Great Traianic Frieze.⁴⁶² For what it is worth, one of the most un-military of emperors, Nero, recruited an old-fashioned unit that he named the "phalanx of Alexander the Great."⁴⁶³ Roman emperors were seen to embody, heroically, the collective values of the Roman people, and those who dallied in non-traditional pursuits instead of military leadership were scorned.⁴⁶⁴ Alexander the Great became a myth and Roman emperors craved his aura, as they did in fact govern a huge swathe territory that included the Hellenistic East. The king, however, merely reflected an archetypal image that the Romans were already well-acquainted with through their own long line of ancestral heroes.

⁴⁶⁰ Fredericksmeier, "Alexander's Religion and Divinity," 264; Abodh K. Narain, "Alexander and India," in *Alexander the Great A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003), 161-162.

⁴⁶¹ Plut., trans. by Bernadotte Perrin, *Caes.* 11.3.

⁴⁶² Diana E. Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 42, 47, 127, 318, 390-391.

⁴⁶³ Suet. *Ner.* 10, 12, 20; Tac. *Hist.* 1.4, *Ann.* 13.25, 14.20.

⁴⁶⁴ Lind, "Concept, Action, and Character: The Reasons for Rome's Greatness," 235.

The *mos maiorum* is a manifestation of social hierarchy derived from the primordial dominance hierarchy, as no youth in the Roman army drilled his elders in the art of war. Accordingly, the ultimate source of discipline was experience, passed down from the forefathers. The *mos maiorum* was malleable to an extent, however, for example in some commanders' preference for severity rather than moderation. We can also observe how Julius Caesar and Cato the Younger both appealed to ancestral wisdom to make entirely different points regarding the fate of the Catilinarian conspirators.⁴⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the suggestion that it was subject to constant change is misleading, as not every interpretation of ancestral wisdom would have been considered valid.⁴⁶⁶ Furthermore, such wisdom was cumulative experience, both good and bad. The above list of legendary, mythic, and historical figures are all nobles, who were imperfect but still lauded as great warriors. Throughout the ancient and medieval periods, the nobles constituted the warrior classes of their societies. As noted in the previous chapter, the Roman aristocrat trained for bouts of single combat, that is until the late republic when the practice declined.⁴⁶⁷ Polybius reports that in the annual levy of four legions, fourteen military tribunes required experience of five campaigns and the remainder ten. Furthermore, in the period in which he wrote, all Roman citizens had to serve either twenty campaigns in the infantry or ten in the cavalry; the latter was the arm of the ruling class, since citizens furnished their own accouterments in the early-to-middle republic. In addition, before a citizen was liable for political candidacy, a minimum of ten campaigns was necessary, which parallels the number of

⁴⁶⁵ Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 225-229.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 227.

⁴⁶⁷ Oakley, "Single Combat in the Roman Republic," 397-398.

campaigns for service in the cavalry.⁴⁶⁸ Lastly, Jeremiah McCall has demonstrated that modern scholarship has severely underrated the efficiency and motivation of the aristocratic-dominated cavalry, that is until it was finally disbanded around the time of the Social War.⁴⁶⁹

Roman discipline was not “Roman” in the sense that no other ethnicity could aspire to its high standards but, rather, it was wisdom that manifested itself remarkably consistently in the absence of formal military academies and manuals. According to Riggsby, Caesar characterizes the Germani as courageous warriors, who derived their martial virtue from the “hard-won discipline arising from the *confrontation*, with nature and with other tribes.”⁴⁷⁰ Roman *virtus*, he argues further, derives from similar external sources of “experience and exercise,” with the difference being that the Romans honed their courage in units rather than as individuals.⁴⁷¹ Indeed, we do not observe any sort of ethnocentric notions of internal *Roman-ness* in Livy either, who likewise portrays his Roman protagonists as courageous and self-controlled through discipline, honed and perfected through experience. For example, as Haley notes, Scipio Africanus deliberately cultivated his virtue of self-restraint, and he served as a model for Masinissa, his Numidian subordinate in the African campaign.⁴⁷² The deliberate lack of theorizing in the Roman practice of war is illustrated by the following passage, which also illustrates a proclivity to make war for the sake of it:

The senate heard them with much attention and were highly indignant at the stubbornness and rudeness of the Dalmatians; but their chief motive for action was

⁴⁶⁸ Polyb. 6.18.

⁴⁶⁹ Jeremiah B. McCall, *The Cavalry of the Roman Republic: Cavalry combat and elite reputations in the middle and late Republic* (London: Routledge, 2011), 11-12.

⁴⁷⁰ Riggsby, *Caesar In Gaul and Rome War in Words*, 85.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.* 86-87.

⁴⁷² S. P. Haley, “Livy, Passion, and Cultural Stereotypes,” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 39 (1990): 376.

that for several reasons they thought the time a suitable one for making war on the Dalmatians. For to begin with they had never once set foot in those parts of Illyria which face the Adriatic since they expelled Demetrius of Pharos, and next they did not at all wish the Italians to become effeminate owing to the long peace, it being now twelve years since the war with Perseus and their campaigns in Macedonia. They, therefore, resolved by undertaking a war against the Dalmatians both to recreate, as it were, the spirit and zeal of their own troops, and by striking terror into the Illyrians to compel them to obey their behests.⁴⁷³

Polybius had privileged access to sources that are lost to us. He records that the Romans' pretext for war was to avenge the insulted ambassadors, but the real cause was to renew martial vigor, as it were, and to chastise the Dalmatae for their depredations against their neighbors.⁴⁷⁴ The Senate's concerns were legitimate, for we can observe the massive decline in experience and efficiency in Roman armies in the latter part of the second century BC, once the hard-earned wisdom of the veterans of the Hannibalic War had been lost and replaced by a less cautious yet more confident generation.⁴⁷⁵

The Roman army was a peculiar institution in Polybius's day, since it was not a professional standing army but it could appear so at times, that is when its citizen-farmer recruits had sufficient experience, training, and discipline. The Romans maintained strong martial customs and traditions that were at least semi-professional, long before the standing units of the imperial army, despite being disbanded at the end of each year or symbolically reconstituted if the war was ongoing. One advantage of the annually recruited *legiones*, literally levies, of the early-to-middle republic was to prevent power-hungry and unscrupulous actors wielding military force against the *res publica* itself. Nevertheless, once the legions were disbanded and the allied contingents of Italians and Latins returned to their respective homes, the cohesion of that force was lost. The individual wisdom,

⁴⁷³ Polyb. 32.13.4-8.

⁴⁷⁴ Howard H. Scullard, *A History of the Roman World: 753 to 146 BC* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 296.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 105.

however, was not lost, since the individuals would recall that experience when levied for other campaigns. This is especially the case for Roman citizens, since they formed approximately half of the annual levy even though the *ager Romanus* only formed one-fifth of the territory and perhaps around two-sevenths of the population of the Roman hegemonic empire, or Commonwealth as Toynbee terms it, that is on the eve of the First Punic War (c. 264 BC).⁴⁷⁶

The Romans, a rather conscientious people in legal matters, did not levy more than the stipulated maximum that was set by treaty.⁴⁷⁷ The underlying principle of the Roman hegemony was *fides*, the trust that Rome would receive soldiers and in turn protect the elites that provided them, or punish them if they failed. Rome was similar to the Persian Empire in maintaining some element of reciprocity in its imperial ideology, which contrasted with the long line of parasitic predecessors in southwest Asia, especially the Assyrians.⁴⁷⁸ Athens was rather parasitic, as far as *poleis* are concerned, in extracting tribute from its subjects without offering any hope of advancement.⁴⁷⁹ The Roman levy system worked effectively despite the amateurish nature of its part-time soldiers, as the Romans devised the battle-winning formula of the *triplex acies* and *quincunx*, the highest quality of military accouterments borrowed and adapted from other peoples, and conjoined

⁴⁷⁶ The official register of Roman and allied military manpower was kept by the register of the *Formula Togatorum*, the List of Toga-Wearers, which was fixed by treaty (Arnold J. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy: The Hannibalic War's Effects on Roman Life*, vol. 1, *Rome and Her Neighbours Before Hannibal's Entry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 425, 479).

⁴⁷⁷ Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy: The Hannibalic War's Effects on Roman Life*, vol. 1, *Rome and Her Neighbours Before Hannibal's Entry*, 429. The bilateral treaty was the chief mechanism that linked Rome to its Latin and Italian satellites of the commonwealth of city-states (Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome: from Prehistory to the First Punic War*, 290).

⁴⁷⁸ Josef Wiesehöfer, "The Achaemenid Empire," in *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires State Power from Assyria to Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 94.

⁴⁷⁹ Jack A. Goldstone et al., "Ancient States, Empires, and Exploitation: Problems and Perspectives," in *Dynamics of Ancient Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9.

with these technical features were inspirational values like *virtus*. Nevertheless, the cohesion and trust developed between the officers and rank-in-file by the end of the campaigning season, derived from discipline, had to be relearned each time the legions were disbanded.⁴⁸⁰ Accordingly, although both Hannibal and Pyrrhus were able to win initial victories, crushing and decisive in the former's case, these two brilliant commanders could not compete with Rome's superior manpower, which in time surpassed their own resources and contributed to their defeats. Furthermore, these two opponents were anomalies, military geniuses, and the Roman levy system proved quite sufficient during the conquest of central Italy, and against less powerful states in northern Italy, Hispania, and the Adriatic. Furthermore, we should not overlook the variability of late republican and imperial armies. Some commanders took greater care than others in cultivating discipline, even granting the hyperbole that surfaces with these stern disciplinarians, which include semi-legendary figures like Manlius Torquatus Imperiosus as well as the better documented Corbulo.

5. The Cycle of *Disciplina*: Great-Father, Child-Hero

The archetypal Child-Hero is normally talented but temperamental, as well as potentially dangerous to his own community. This archetype metamorphically represents youthful males, the next generation of warriors, who are indispensable to a civilization's defense and perpetuation once habituated to discipline. This archetypal image appears in Roman myth, as well as stories in contemporary Greek and Germanic societies that also

⁴⁸⁰ Adrian K. Goldsworthy, *Roman Warfare* (New York: Smithsonian Books/Collins, 2005), 54-55.

idealized martial values.⁴⁸¹ Accordingly, a comparative study of Heracles, Romulus, and Siegfried, with Campbell's monomyth, illustrates the role of discipline, essentially wisdom, in refining youthful martial vigor into a more restrained and practical application for defending and revivifying culture. The graph below is a simplified and composite adaptation from archetypal heroic patterns detailed by Lord Raglan and Campbell, which reveal narrative commonalities between these figures.⁴⁸²

These warrior-heroes are capable of impulsive and temperamental acts, much like Rome's soldiery regardless of social class, but can be "an antidote to the deadly forces of chaos, and to the tyranny of order."⁴⁸³ We can observe this in the various monstrous adversaries that they must face on their "road of trials," as Campbell terms it.⁴⁸⁴ Accordingly, Romulus must defeat the rigid tyrannical order imposed by King Amulius to found the city of Rome. While Aeneas as progenitor of the Roman people personifies the abstraction of *pietas*, it is Romulus who personifies *virtus*, which aids him in fulfilling his quest.⁴⁸⁵ By the end of his reign, Romulus is idolized by Rome's soldiery, as we can see in the following passage:

These were the principal events at home and in the field that marked the reign of Romulus. Throughout-whether we consider the courage he showed in recovering his ancestral throne, or the wisdom he displayed in founding the City and adding to its strength through war and peace alike-we find nothing incompatible with the belief in his divine origin and his admission to divine immortality after death...He

⁴⁸¹ The figures of Heracles and Siegfried arose not from a single polity, like Romulus, but to a cultural sphere that included many independent city-states and tribes respectively. Accordingly, there is less variability regarding the details of Romulus. Nevertheless, the Germanic hero Siegfried, or Sigurd in the Norse tradition, unlike Heracles did receive a continuous biographical account in both the medieval German epic *Nibelungenlied*, and the medieval Icelandic *Völsunga saga* (Barry B. Powell, *Classical Myth* (Boston: Pearson Education, Inc., 2007), 369-370; Michael Witzel, *The Origins of the World's Mythologies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 78, 149).

⁴⁸² FitzRoy R. S. Raglan, *The Hero: The Study in Tradition, Myth and Drama* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2003), 174-175.

⁴⁸³ Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief*, 91.

⁴⁸⁴ Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 89.

⁴⁸⁵ Liv. 1.9.3-4; cited in Lind, "Concept, Action, and Character: The Reasons for Rome's Greatness," 248.

was, however, more acceptable to the populace than to the patricians but most of all was he the idol of his soldiers.⁴⁸⁶

	Heracles	Romulus	Siegfried
Regal Parentage	Mother is Alcmena, Queen of Thebes	Mother is Rhea Silvia, Princess of Alba Longa	1) Mother is Siglinde and Father is Sigmund of Xanten ⁴⁸⁷
Divine Parentage	Father is Zeus, King of the Gods	Father is Mars, God of War	N/A
Extraordinary Conception	Mother is impregnated twice, by husband Amphitryon and Zeus (disguised as Amphitryon)	Mother is impregnated by Mars, despite membership to the college of Vestal Virgins	Parents are siblings; Siglinde disguised herself as another woman
Miraculous Escape	Heracles, as an infant, kills the twin snakes sent by Hera	Amulius attempted to murder Romulus and Remus; they escape, set adrift down the Tiber River	Sigmund attempted to murder Siegfried; they escape, set adrift down a river in a glass vessel
Prophecy of Terrible Purpose	Prophecy of Tiresias	Rescued and suckled by a she-wolf	1) Rescued and suckled by a doe, and 2) Dream of Kriemhild, falcon slain by two eagles
Foster-Parents	Theban King Amphitryon is Foster-Father	Shepherd Faustulus fosters the boys	Smith Mimer fosters the boy
Impulsive Misdeed	1) Murders Linus, his music tutor, 2) Murders his children in fit of madness induced by Hera, 3) Murders prince Iphitus	1) Initial misdeed is castle rustling, and 2) Romulus murders his brother, who leapt over his walls	Slays Mimer for rousing a dragon against him

⁴⁸⁶ Liv. 1.15.6-8.

⁴⁸⁷ There are variant traditions regarding Siegfried's origins, in one tradition he was a prince born from the aforementioned royal parents, while another tradition maintains that he was a wandering warrior who chanced upon a treasure (David A. Leeming, *Mythology: A Voyage of the Hero* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 22; Raglan, *The Hero: The Study in Tradition, Myth and Drama*, 78, 182, 271).

Redemptive Quest	1) Twelve Labors, 2) Servitude to Queen Omphale	1) King Amulius is overthrown, and 2) Military campaigns that secure Rome, a sanctuary for refugees	Slays a dragon
Regal Marriage	1) Megara, 2) Omphale, 3) Iole, 3) Deianira	Seisure of the Sabine women, marriage to Hersilia	Burgundian princess Kriemhild
Hierarchical Seniority	Heracles is nearly invincible with superhuman strength, bolstered by magical accouterments	Diarchy with Titus Tatius, the Sabine King	1) Siegfried is nearly invincible with horn-like skin, and other magical accouterments, and 2) Noble status in Worms
Unnatural Death	Poisoned tunic unwittingly administrated by Deinaira	Mysterious disappearance during a sacred rite near a river (possibly murdered)	Assassinated at a spring; Kriemhild is an unwitting participant
Apotheosis	Elevated to Olympus	Body is unfound (venerated as immortal) ⁴⁸⁸	N/A

Similar to Romulus, Siegfried at the end of his heroic journey has become a more well-rounded figure with wisdom who, having been admonished by his parents for the murder of Mimer the smith, vows to exercise self-restraint and to listen to the wisdom of the elders.⁴⁸⁹ After all, discipline either imposed informally through close proximity to nature, as in Caesar's description of the Germani, or formal training through ancient customs and traditions, as in the case of the Romans, constitutes wisdom acquired through experience and adaptation to external environmental factors. Accordingly, the significance of apotheosis is that the experience of the mortal hero transcends himself to the community

⁴⁸⁸ For Romulus's mysterious death and Plutarch's guarded treatment of Romulus's apotheosis (Philip Matyszak, *Chronicle of the Roman Republic: the Rulers of Ancient Rome from Romulus to Augustus* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2008), 20; Liv. 1.15.6-8, 1.16.1-8; Plut. *Rom.* 27.7-8).

⁴⁸⁹ Leeming, *Mythology: A Voyage of the Hero*, 66.

and he is immortalized. For Romulus, whether he truly existed or not, served as a symbol to the Romans for abstract notions that they believed defined their culture. As Campbell notes, “Only birth can conquer death—the birth, not of the old thing again, but of something new.”⁴⁹⁰ The concept of apotheosis was not so unnerving to the Romans as to us, given that their heroes were already semi-divine.⁴⁹¹ Indeed, we see a form of metamorphosis when successful Roman commanders assumed garb during the ceremony of the *triumphus* that made them resemble Jupiter, with which they made sacrifice on the Capitoline as Romulus is reputed to have done.⁴⁹² Indeed, Roman tradition maintained that Romulus was one of only three figures to dedicate the *spolia opima*, among the most prestigious decorations, which consisted of despoiled arms of the opposing commander slain by his Roman counterpart. While the Romans did not worship living men as gods, as both Caesar and Augustus were cautious to avoid, the institution of apotheosis carried over into the imperial period and manifested in the imperial cult, which is significant given the fact that the emperor was both the supreme commander and the embodiment of Roman martial values.⁴⁹³ To conclude this section, the source and authority of *disciplina* was the experience of the ancestors, and next we shall observe how patriarchal features pervaded Roman military traditions and gave the wielders of *imperium* an aura to impose *disciplina* and, when the occasion warranted, severe penalties.

The heroes of Roman myth metamorphically represented martial values that were disseminated to the Roman people as *exempla*, and the process of molding, enculturating,

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁹¹ Powell, *Classical Myth*, 654-656.

⁴⁹² Mary Boatwright et al., *Romans: From Village to Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 350; Livy 1.10.5-6.

⁴⁹³ Boatwright et al., *Romans: From Village to Empire*, 350; Powell, *Classical Myth*, 350.

and disciplining the next generation of soldiers can be observed in Roman customs and traditions that idealize the figure of Great-Father as the fountainhead of discipline. It is important to appreciate who wielded the power of disciplining and why. The Roman aristocracy at various times was compelled to rejuvenate itself, albeit reluctantly, by co-opting new members that were deemed worthy. For example, Tim Cornell argues that the *leges Licinia-Sextiae* (367 BC), a milestone in the Struggle of the Orders, created rather than caused the dualistic division of the entire *populus* into plebeians and patricians, since powerful non-patricians finally obtained the access to the coveted consulship but ultimately left the poor in the lurch, who in fact created the plebeian movement as a revolutionary organization in 494 BC.⁴⁹⁴ As Fred Drogula has argued, the period from 449-367 BC represented a gradual monopolization of military authority by the state.⁴⁹⁵ The lawful use of this authority to train, discipline, and command citizens in war, was invested in the *imperium* of elected commanders, the consuls, the praetors, etc. This power was restricted, however, to an assigned area of command, that is *provincia*, which in only very rare cases was within the sacred boundaries of Rome itself.⁴⁹⁶ As Jack Goldstone and John Haldon remark, the concept of statehood only becomes applicable with the polities of Mesopotamia that emerged in the third millennium BC, with the concentration of military, religious, and political authority into the figure of a sacred king and supporting “intellectual-religious elite.”⁴⁹⁷ Ruling an empire or state of any size is impossible without an elite class, and in the delegation of authority the seed is planted for future political revolution. Nevertheless,

⁴⁹⁴ Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 256, 339-340.

⁴⁹⁵ Drogula, *Commanders and Command in the Republic and Early Empire*, 13, 39.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁴⁹⁷ Jack A. Goldstone et al., “Ancient States, Empires, and Exploitation: Problems and Perspectives,” in *Dynamics of Ancient Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium*, 3-4.

the wielders of *imperium* in the Roman republic, especially the consuls, are reminiscent of the “bivalent Great Father,” as Peterson terms it: “wise king and the tyrant, cultural protection from the terrible forces of nature, security for the weak, and wisdom for the foolish.”⁴⁹⁸ The consuls were a scaled-down incarnation of the bivalent Great Father, which we see in the formerly regal powers of office, including but not limited to military command, such as framing legislation, summoning assemblies, and judicial powers, as well as regal accouterments, including the purple hem on their toga, the throne-like *sella curulis*, and the *fasces*, which symbolized their power to inflict capital punishment.⁴⁹⁹ The religious powers of the kings, however, were devolved to the patrician office of the *rex sacrorum*. The consuls’ election by the *comitia centuriata* also reveals antecedents of regal military and political authority, since the assembly consisted of the entire electorate organized into quasi-military units.⁵⁰⁰ The centuriate assembly was traditionally founded by King Servius Tullius (r. 575-535 BC) and its foundation reflected another milestone in the state’s monopolization of force, as the assembly was a cross-section of the Roman community that divided citizens principally upon wealth rather than the aristocratically controlled *gentes*.⁵⁰¹ The Greek historian Polybius attributed Rome’s success to its unusual “mixed constitution,” whose relative stability was achieved by the balance and mixture of three

⁴⁹⁸ Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief*, 90-91.

⁴⁹⁹ Fritz M. Heichelheim et al., *A History of the Roman People*, 62-63. The consuls, nonetheless, nonetheless the consuls, under the principle of collegiality exchanged the fasces every day to avoid the appearance of regal power (Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 226).

⁵⁰⁰ Christopher Smith, “Citizenship and Community: Inventing the Roman Republic,” in *Current Issues in State Formation in the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), 182; Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 194. The Maccabees, interpreting Roman institutions from their own experiences, seems to have mistaken the office of consul or some other magistracy in king-like terms (Clifford Ando, “Was Rome a Polis?” *Classical Antiquity* 18 (1999): 17-18).

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 194-195.

elements: aristocracy, democracy, and monarchy.⁵⁰² He describes the consuls as the monarchical element that is, however, balanced by the senate and the assemblies.⁵⁰³ Accordingly, Roman commanders exercised ancient but restricted powers of *imperium*, which the community had conferred, albeit ceremoniously by the imperial period.

The Great Father archetype frequently appears in Roman myth, literature, and institutions. The Roman aristocracy, whether the original patricians or the newly formed patricio-plebeian nobility, traced their lineage back to forefathers who in some fashion reached the top of the social hierarchy. The renown of the father in republican Rome, his military *gloria*, passed onto his son and indeed name recognition, as it is the case today, was a factor in political success.⁵⁰⁴ As Roman legend maintained, it was Romulus who founded the senate: “they were called the ‘*Patres*’ in virtue of their rank, and their descendants were called ‘*Patricians*.’”⁵⁰⁵ Going further back in the tradition, it was Tiberinus, also known as “Father Tiber,” who facilitated the she-wolf’s rescue of Romulus and Remus.⁵⁰⁶ The epithet of *pater patriae*, “Father of the Fatherland,” honored statesmen who defended Roman culture while also transcending it, that is in raising the expectations of future generations. This is related conceptually to the *paterfamilias*, the ascendant male in the Roman family structure, who had powers of life and death over his descendants.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰² Polyb. 6.18.

⁵⁰³ Polyb. 6.11, 18. The U.S. constitution rests stands on the shoulders of giants and Foundating Fathers, classically trained, were mindful of. The French philosopher Montesquieu discussed the principle of “checks and balances,” as it is known colloquially, which echoes the Greek concept of the “mixed constitution,” which Polybius argued the Roman constitution represented (Gilbert Chinard, “Polybius and the American Constitution” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 1 (1940): 42; Arnaldo Momigliano, *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1977), 77).

⁵⁰⁴ Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC*, 19.

⁵⁰⁵ Livy 1.8.7.

⁵⁰⁶ Lesley Adkins et al., *Dictionary of Roman Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 223; Vergil 8.66. As noted before, there are similarities in the narratives of Romulus and the Egyptian equivalent of Horus. The Nile river, likewise, is personified as a masculine deity and plays a role in facilitating the overthrow of a tyrant (Hes. *Theog.* 337-338).

⁵⁰⁷ *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. “*patria potestas*,” 1122.

Indeed, a Roman male was not legally a *vir* until his father was dead. In due course, he acquired independent marriage rights and property ownership, having been liberated from the *patria potestas*.⁵⁰⁸ One exception to paternal monopoly of property, to a degree, was the *peculium castrense*, the property acquired by a son through military service. Augustus extended the property rights of sons over *peculium castrense*, in part, to boost recruitment, as by that point the Roman army had become a volunteer force.⁵⁰⁹

The Great Father correlates the *paterfamilias* and the military commander, including the capacity for tyranny. Nevertheless, while the concept of enculturating is coercive in principle it is not necessarily tyrannical, which merely describes an unstable hierarchy rather than one based on competence. Furthermore, while the notion of patriarchy is inaccurate for the modern West, a matriarchy would be no guarantee for unmitigated and consistent peaceful parenting and enculturation either, as evidenced by the 54.1% of child abuse cases in the United States (2017) that were perpetrated by women.⁵¹⁰ Men have greater capacity for violence, but arbitrary and oppressive use of said capacity does not define masculine virtue in any culture. For example, Roman funeral processions were grand displays that simultaneously praised the achievements of a prominent *paterfamilias*,

⁵⁰⁸ *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. “patria” 1122; Alston, “Arms and the Man: Soldiers, masculinity and power in Republican and Imperial Rome,” in *When Men Were Men: Masculinity, power and identity in classical antiquity*, 206-207; Andrew Borkowski et al., *Textbook on Roman Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 116-117.

⁵⁰⁹ Borkowski, *Textbook on Roman Law*, 116-117. In the event of the soldier’s death, the *castrense peculium* is inherited, so to speak by the father, not as his estate but as peculium; it also became legal to designate another soldier as heir instead of the father (*The Same, On the Edict, Book LXVII*, Ulpianus, *On Sabinus Book VI*, cited in Samuel P. Scott, *The Civil Law: Including the Twelve Tables, The Institutes of Gaius, The Rules of Ulpian, The Opinions of Paulus, The Enactments of Justinian, and The Constitutions of Leo*, trans. Samuel P. Scott, accessed March 24, 2019, <http://www.constitution.org/sps/sps11.htm>).

⁵¹⁰ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children’s Bureau. *Children Maltreatment 2017*, accessed March 24, 2019, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2017.pdf> child maltreatment 2017.

while also inspiring, perhaps coercing indirectly, the sons to emulate such deeds.⁵¹¹ Indeed, as competition is inherent in hierarchy, which disappoints those who fail to reach their full potential, Roman public funerals constituted competitive displays of their “symbolic capital,” as Flower terms it.⁵¹² The *triumphus* is another such display, but Flower has oversimplified the matter by describing this martial procession as a “Roman “self” conquering a foreign “other.”⁵¹³ This is merely tribalism, as any ethnic, religious, or political group evinces. The “Other” in ancient times was more similar than different, as the Romans did not celebrate triumphs over unarmed enemies but rather warrior societies governed by a similar warlike ethos as their own. In any event, the conceptualization of martial virtues in the Roman army was sophisticated and certainly owes something to worthy adversaries as well as primordial Great-Father archetypes, further evidenced by the custom of Roman soldiers venerating comrades-in-arms, as fathers, who saved their lives during battle.⁵¹⁴

Exemplary of the Great-Father archetype, as well as the potential severity, or *severitas*, of its tyrannical tendencies, is T. Manlius Torquatus Imperiosus. *Severitas* was considered a facet of the *mos maiorum*, which had connotations in both civilian and military life. The Romans were conscious traditionalists who harkened to ancient customs and heroes for moral guidance in place of holy texts or philosophy.⁵¹⁵ This was especially

⁵¹¹ Kurt A. Raaflaub, “Born to Be Wolves? Origins of Roman Imperialism,” in *Transitions to Empire: essay in Greco-Roman History, 360-146 B.C. in honor of E. Badian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 291.

⁵¹² Flower, “Spectacle and Political Culture in the Roman Republic,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*, 335.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*, 340.

⁵¹⁴ Polyb. 6.37-38.

⁵¹⁵ Syme notes, “The cult of the old ways and the ancestral virtue had long been established form among the Romans. Anything that could be labelled ‘priscus’ was irresistible in appeal,” and elsewhere that Romans had a distaste for abstract thought (Ronald Syme, *Ten Studies in Tacitus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 119, 129-130).

true for Roman senators, whose order was adept at inculcating members in its history and values.⁵¹⁶ Manlius Torquatus was referenced in the previous chapter for his single combat duel with a Celtic warrior, but he is more famous, or infamous, for his command against the Latins in 340 BC. In brief, his son engaged in single combat, successfully but without permission, and Manlius executed him. This deed gave rise to the phrase “Manlian Orders,” which denoted the harshest of discipline.⁵¹⁷ Below is the pivotal moment of his career, as preserved in Livy:

The soldiers mustered in large numbers and the consul began: ‘Since you, T. Manlius, have shown no regard for either the authority of a consul or the obedience due to a father, and in defiance of our edict have left your post to fight against the enemy, and have done your best to destroy the military discipline through which the Roman State has stood till now unshaken, and have forced upon me the necessity of forgetting either my duty to the republic or my duty to myself and my children, it is better that we should suffer the consequences of our offence ourselves than that the State should expiate our crime by inflicting great injury upon itself. We shall be a melancholy example, but one that will be profitable to the young men of the future. My natural love of my children and that proof of courage which from a false sense of honour you have given, move me to take your part, but since either the consuls’ authority must be vindicated by your death or forever abrogated by letting you go unpunished, I would believe that even you yourself, if there is a drop of my blood in your veins, will not shrink from restoring by your punishment the military discipline which has been weakened by your misconduct. Go, lictor, bind him to the stake.’ All were paralysed by such a ruthless order; they felt as if the axe was directed against each of them; fear rather than discipline kept them motionless. For some moments they stood transfixed in silence, then suddenly, when they saw the blood pouring from his severed neck, their voices rose in unrestrained and angry complaint; they spared neither laments nor curses. The body of the youth covered with his spoils was cremated on a pyre erected outside the rampart, with all the funeral honours that the soldiers’ devotion could pay. ‘Manlian orders’ were not only regarded with horror for the time, but were looked upon as setting a frightful precedent for the future.⁵¹⁸

First, we must put aside the question of whether the Roman army at Mons Vesuvius employed a phalanx or the manipular tactics of the classic legion. The evidence is

⁵¹⁶ Dudley, *The World of Tacitus*, 25-26.

⁵¹⁷ Livy 4.29.5-6, 8.7.22.

⁵¹⁸ Livy, trans. by Roberts, 8.7.14–22.

insufficient, and it is merely a distraction from more important issues, since the Roman army was always evolving, albeit gradually. The Roman military tradition is exemplary of a harmonious balance between chaos and order, for the son of the consul was permitted to win personal glory through individual initiative, but not when it was contrary to orders.⁵¹⁹ Second, the story above may present a picture of unthinking obedience but, that is not the case since young men were encouraged to evince in its proper context. The Roman army was both a microcosm of Roman society as well as something of a walking museum piece, and in Polybius's digression on Roman tactics it was the eldest battle-line, the *triarii*, that alone retained the phalanx by the second century BC.⁵²⁰ Third, before the summary execution of the brave, but over-zealous, son of Manlius, the consul chastises him, uncoincidentally, for disobeying the *auctoritas* of both commander as well as the father. The Great-Father archetype is exemplified in this story, for Manlius's terrible purpose is to defend, by the harshest coercion, Roman culture and imperial ambitions in Latium. Fourth, as Livy himself expresses above, the act was horrifying but, nonetheless, the soldiers became more disciplined in their camp, picket, and sentry duties, and their resolve was fortified for the engagement with the Latins, who were not so different from the Romans in military tactics. Such diligence may reflect, perhaps somewhat anachronistically, the rigorous discipline of the legion in classic form, as described in the accounts of eyewitness Polybius, who we know was an important source of Livy.⁵²¹ Fifth, and lastly, *disciplina* was applied universally in the Roman army regardless of class, which is reflected by the sacrifice of the son by the father, member of the ruling class, for the

⁵¹⁹ Oakley, "Single Combat in the Roman Republic," 406.

⁵²⁰ Polyb. 6.21.

⁵²¹ H. Tränkle, "Livy and Polybius," in *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Livy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 476-477.

good of the *res publica*.

To conclude this section on the cyclical nature of the Great-Father and the Child-Hero, and how *disciplina* manifests this principle, I shall correlate the story of Manlius Torquatus with other examples, in particular the story of Aemilius Paullus, an example of the Wise Old Man. The story of Manlius Torquatus and his son obviously predates the literary characterization of Jesus Christ, but it nonetheless contains similar narrative patterns and heroic implications that, once again, illustrate timeless manifestations from our collective unconscious. Furthermore, it is worth noting, Manlius's plebeian consular colleague, P. Decius Mus, sacrifices himself through the ritual of *devotio* in the formal battle with the Latins, a tradition undertaken by his son; although not his grandson, however, for Pyrrhus was forewarned about this particular *gens'* proclivities for displays of *virtus*.⁵²² The Wise Old Man archetype is an elderly father figure, such as a king, mentor, philosopher, or sage, who acts as a repository of wisdom that he imparts upon the youthful warrior.⁵²³ L. Aemilius Paullus is not an archetypal hero in Livy's account but, rather, recalls the figure of the Wise Old Man. Acting as a wise mentor, Paullus chides the frequent and unsolicited advice from his soldiers during the Macedonian campaign. The Roman citizen had the right of virtually unrestricted freedom of speech, which was also the case for the Athenians, and in some cases this seemed to impinge on the commander's authority to maintain discipline.⁵²⁴ Nevertheless, in Paullus's case, order was safeguarded with both tact and authority:

⁵²² Cass. Dio 10.5.

⁵²³ Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 35, 37, 41, 270, 374.

⁵²⁴ Stefan G. Chrissanthos, "Freedom of Speech and the Roman Republican Army," in *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 341, 344; Crowley, *The Psychology of the Athenian Hoplite: the culture of combat in classical Athens*, 107; Eckstein, "Bellicosity and Anarchy: Soldiers, Warriors, and Combat in Antiquity," 483.

There should be a single general in an army who foresees and plans what should be done, sometimes by himself, sometimes with the advisers he calls into council. Those who are not called into council should not air their own views publicly or privately. A soldier should concern himself with the following: his body, to keep it as strong and as nimble as possible; the good condition of his weapons; and the readiness of his food-supply for unexpected orders. For the rest, he should realize that the immortal gods and his general are taking care of him. In an army in which the soldiers deliberate and the general is led about by the gossip of the rank and file, conditions are utterly unsound. For my part, I shall do the duty of a general—that is, see to it that you have an opportunity for successful action. You ought not to ask what is going to happen, but when the signal is given, then do your duty as soldiers. After these instructions, he dismissed the assembly, while throughout the army even the veterans admitted that they, like raw recruits, had for the first time learned how military matters should be handled. Not only did they show by such remarks with how much approval they had heard the words of the consul, but there was also an immediate response in action.⁵²⁵

All archetypes have positive and negative incarnations.⁵²⁶ In the Old Testament, as Jung suggests, the characterization of Lucifer corresponds to the Wise Old man archetype.⁵²⁷ Indeed, Aemilius Paullus likewise reveals a manipulative and in some cases sinister side to his character, as he always appears one-step-ahead of his competition, whether this takes the form of his own subordinates or his main adversary, King Perseus. For example, after a lengthy march Paullus's soldiers, officers and rank-in-file alike, eagerly sought battle with the Macedonians against their better judgment. In a stroke of tactical genius, as sage-commander, Paullus deceptively encouraged the army's notion that the day was set for battle, while simultaneously utilizing the midsummer sun to gradually deflate their enthusiasm.⁵²⁸ Later, with permission from the consul, the military tribune C. Sulpicius Gallus defused any superstitious consternation deriving from the lunar eclipse by lecturing the army on the moon's natural rotations. In due course, the eclipse occurred, and the

⁵²⁵ Livy 44.34.2–6.

⁵²⁶ Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 37.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁵²⁸ Livy 44.36.1-4; Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts*, 199.

Romans viewed the tribune's wisdom as "almost divine," while the Macedonians were in an uproar viewing the event as foretelling the demise of the kingdom.⁵²⁹ To maintain discipline in Roman armies, Roman commanders required a degree of tact and sophistication, not simply a harsh maintenance of order.

With respect to the sinister element in the Wise Old Man archetype, we can turn to the conclusion of Paullus's campaign in Epirus. The Senate instructed him to permit his army to plunder Epirus.⁵³⁰ The Molossians, of central Epirus, had in fact allied with Perseus, but Paullus liberally interpreted the senate's mandate.⁵³¹ Through a brilliant, systematic, and yet grossly unethical subterfuge, Paullus's army managed to enslave 150,000 Epirotes and sack seventy communities on a single day. This constitutes another symbolic example of the rigor of Roman *disciplina*, with its orderliness and sometimes exacting terribleness. Afterwards, Paullus was nearly denied a triumph, due to the protests of his army that he had hoarded too much of the loot for himself and had been unduly severe in discipline.⁵³² The Great-Father, as evidenced by the famous stories of Manlius Torquatus and Aemilius Paullus, reveal a protective yet coercive figure. Indeed, Campbell discusses the great antiquity of this archetype through his study of the Great Father Snake

⁵²⁹ Livy 44.37.8-9. Roman soldiers could also occasionally succumb to their superstitions, when their resolve failed, as Tacitus writes "as often fickle minds are once driven to irrational fears" ("*ut sunt mobiles ad superstitionem percussae semel mentes*" (Tac. *Ann.* 1.28.2). The context of this comment was an eclipse that startled the mutineers in the Pannonian legions, which the more enlightened Drusus uses to quell the mutiny (Dudley, *The World of Tacitus*, 138-139).

⁵³⁰ Plut. *Aem.* 29.

⁵³¹ R. M. Errington, *The Dawn of Empire: Rome's Rise to World Power* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 225-226.; Plut. *Aem.* 30.1.

⁵³² Christopher S. Mackay, *Ancient Rome: A Military and Political History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 86; Plut. *Aem.* 29.3-30.2. Chrissanthos argues that their bitterness may have resulted from Paullus's attempt to suppress their freedom of speech (Chrissanthos, "Freedom of Speech and the Roman Republican Army," in *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity*, 366).

of the Australian Murngin. This tribe maintains two violent symbolic rites to manhood, at least as this tribe defines it, which includes circumcision and subincision:

The call of the Great Father Snake was alarming to the child: the mother was protection. But the father came. He was the guide and initiator into the mysteries of the unknown. As the original intruder into the paradise of the infant with its mother.”⁵³³

Lastly, Caesar reports that the Celts do not permit children to publicly approach their fathers until they have reached military age, and indeed “they consider it a disgrace if a son of boyish age takes appears in public in the sight of his father.”⁵³⁴ Caesar may be correct that the Celts are peculiar with respect to this custom, but the Great-Father archetypal imagery is not unexpected.

6. Comparanda

The Roman legion’s genesis was the conquest of central Italy in the fourth century BC, a melting pot of ethnicities, polities, and military systems that generated intensified competition and innovation.⁵³⁵ The following section will compare the Roman army’s conceptualization of *disciplina* with the similar, and roughly contemporary, Ch’in dynasty (c. 475-221 BC). The significance of the early republic, with respect to discipline, is that the instruments of instilling discipline in the Roman army, post hoplite-era, evolved during this period. These mechanisms included the marching camp, rigorous drill, and an integrated system of penalties and rewards, which all seem to have originated to train a

⁵³³ Campbell, *War and Society in Imperial Rome, 31 BC – AD 284*, 126-127, 142-143.

⁵³⁴ “*In reliquis vitae institutis hoc fere ab reliquis differunt, quod suos liberos, nisi cum adoleverunt, ut munus militiae sustinere possint, palam ad se adire non patiuntur filiumque puerili aetate in publico in conspectu patris adsistere turpe ducunt*” (Caes. *BGall.* 6.18.3).

⁵³⁵ Michael T. Burns, “The Homogenisation of Military Equipment under the Roman Republic,” *Digressus Supplement* 1 (2003): 62-63.

more flexible and less rigid army, far larger in size and operational capacity, and dramatically more cosmopolitan. The Romans contended in Latium and southern Etruria with armies rather like their own, with phalanxes of conscripted citizen-farmers. Nevertheless, even as early as the fifth century BC, the Romans as members of the Latin League fought frequently with Oscan neighbors, such as the Aequi, the Sabines, and the Volsci. The scale and intensity of Roman warfare dramatically increased in the fourth century BC. The Romans expanded deeper into Etruria, after the capture of Veii, and desperately battled enemies that utilized less rigid styles of warfare than the phalanx, such as the Celts and the Samnites. Livy's prologue to the Samnites Wars reflects the higher stakes of warfare in the fourth century BC:

The history will now be occupied with wars greater than any previously recorded; greater whether we consider the forces engaged in them or the length of time they lasted, or the extent of country over which they were waged. For it was in this year [343 BC] that hostilities commenced with the Samnites, a people strong in material resources and military power. Our war with the Samnites, with its varying fortunes, was followed by the war with Pyrrhus, and that again by the war with Carthage. What a chapter of great events! How often had we to pass through the very extremity of danger in order that our dominion might be exalted to its present greatness, a greatness which is with difficulty maintained!⁵³⁶

The Romans defeated the Latins without too much difficulty, the decisive battle occurred at Mons Vesuvius discussed above, but the Romans soon required a more efficient military organization for levying and tactical flexibility, given the increasing diversity of regions and enemies. The war with the Latins may have resulted from the Romans overreaching their hegemonic control without a more systematic political framework.⁵³⁷ Peter Turchin's model of imperiogenesis is applicable to this period of Roman history, although he does

⁵³⁶ Livy, trans. by Roberts, 7.29.1-3.

⁵³⁷ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy: The Hannibalic War's Effects on Roman Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 127.

not specifically mention the Roman Empire since his study centers on the Eurasian steppe. Nonetheless, he notes that pastoralists, specifically steppe nomads but this would include the Samnites, tend to be highly skilled warriors whose expertise compels the agriculturalists to unite in a “meta-community” to compete successfully.⁵³⁸ Empires mobilize resources more effectively than leagues, and sometimes agrarian peoples “scale-up” in this manner, at least when one of their states can coerce the others.⁵³⁹ The Romans appear to have implemented a new order of *disciplina*, militarily, politically, and socially, in order to continue expansion in central Italy and compete effectively.

With the Latin League defunct, which had bound the states of Latium multilaterally, it was necessary for Rome to scale-up in order to defeat more powerful enemies, such as the Etruscan League, the Celtic tribes, and the Samnite Confederacy.⁵⁴⁰ In short, the Romans organized via bilateral treaties the defeated communities of the Latin War into the two legal, not ethnic, categories of citizen *municipium* and non-citizen *socium*. By 338 BC, the *municipium* was not an innovative concept, but the scale of its application by Rome was unprecedented.⁵⁴¹ The Romans created the first *municipium* in 381 BC when Tusculum was enfranchised with Roman citizenship. This was probably not motivated by altruism, as the Tusculans joined the rebels when war broke out in 340 BC. Nevertheless, it reveals a more flexible attitude than other city-states, especially Greek, which jealously guarded the privileges of citizenship. In any event, the Latin communities of Aricia, Lanuvium, Nomentum, and Pedum became *municipia*.⁵⁴² Also, the Volscian communities of Antium

⁵³⁸ Peter Turchin, “A Theory for Formation of Large Empires,” *Journal of Global History* 4 (2009): 196.

⁵³⁹ Turchin, “A Theory for Formation of Large Empires,” 196-197.

⁵⁴⁰ Louis Rawlings, “Army and Battle During the Conquest of Italy,” in *A Companion to the Roman Army* 2007, 45.

⁵⁴¹ Toynbee, *Hannibal’s Legacy: The Hannibalic War’s Effects on Roman Life*, 138.

⁵⁴² Livy, trans. by Roberts, 8.14.

and Velitrae, as Cornell notes, “It is only modern scholarship, not Roman policy, that has discriminated between communities on the grounds of race and language.”⁵⁴³ They were now Roman citizens, and the censors mixed them into old tribes or created entirely new ones for them. Nevertheless, they were self-governing and retained local autonomy with their own senate, assemblies, and magistrates. This concept of dual-citizenship was revolutionary, as Toynbee writes, “This enabled a citizen to divide his allegiance, without any conflict of loyalties, between a local city-state that was no longer sovereign and a sovereign world-state, Rome.”⁵⁴⁴ David Potter argues that, with the Roman settlement of the Latin War, the Romans affected both a military and political revolution that streamlined mobilization, improved military equipment and tactics, and developed an ideology of aggressive expansionism that benefited the community.⁵⁴⁵ A major advantage for Rome from this settlement was superior manpower, since the main obligation of all states under the Roman hegemony, whether citizen or non-citizen, was to supply soldiers.⁵⁴⁶ After the defeated communities of the Latin War had been organized into the new categories, the Romans shortly thereafter doubled the size of the annual levy, from two to four legions, supplemented by an equivalent number of allied contingents; this is evidenced by Livy’s notice in 311 BC that sixteen tribunes would now be elected by the people for four

⁵⁴³ Livy, trans. by Roberts, 8.17; Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 349; cf. Paul Erdkamp, “War and State Formation in the Roman Republic,” in *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 100; Edward T. Salmon, *The Making of Roman Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 46-47.

⁵⁴⁴ Toynbee, *Hannibal’s Legacy: The Hannibalic War’s Effects on Roman Life*, 140.

⁵⁴⁵ David Potter, “The Roman Army and Navy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 66-67. The act of pre-emptive war is unethical but keeping the war in enemy territory was a major strategic goal in ancient times, given the potentially catastrophic damage that could be wrought on societies relying on subsistence level agriculture (Rawlings, “Army and Battle During the Conquest of Italy,” 46).

⁵⁴⁶ Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome: from Prehistory to the First Punic War*, 365.

legions.⁵⁴⁷ By the period of the Punic Wars, according to Polybius, the Roman Commonwealth had access to around 770,000 men.⁵⁴⁸ This was a virtually inexhaustible source of manpower, and indeed it proved insurmountable for even the finest commanders and armies to overcome. Nevertheless, it safe to presume that a more rigorous order of *disciplina* was needed to align and orient this vast reserve, once mobilized, to a common goal.

By early third century BC, the Romans had adopted the more flexible and aggressive tactical doctrine of manipular tactics, which would have necessitated a new order of *disciplina*. Lawrence Keppie is correct in arguing that the allied contingents must have been disciplined more or less similarly to their Roman counterparts, as the rather complicated Roman tactical doctrine would have been difficult to implement otherwise.⁵⁴⁹ Michael Burns, in rebuttal, provides an interdisciplinary study utilizing archaeological and literary data that argues several essential items of the Roman panoply and tactical doctrine were, in fact, already in use for centuries by other Italic peoples. Nevertheless, the Roman military system in peak form, with its systematized large-scale mobilization, unique tactical doctrine of reserves via multiple lines and staggered units, combined arms and shock tactics with javelins and short swords, and, last but not least, sophisticated conceptualization of courage and discipline, remains the product of the collective Roman military genius and it is by no means “Romano-centric” to note this.⁵⁵⁰ This war-winning structure was obviously influenced by Rome’s enemies and the multicultural, and by extension violent,

⁵⁴⁷ Livy 9.30.

⁵⁴⁸ Polyb. 2.24.

⁵⁴⁹ Lawrence Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army: from Republic to Empire* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group), 22.

⁵⁵⁰ Burns, “The Homogenisation of Military Equipment under the Roman Republic,” 60.

environment of central Italy. There is, however, no firm evidence that any other peoples utilized manipular tactics in the large-scale and systematic form as employed by the Romans. The Romans were skilled at adopting tactics and equipment from their enemies but, as Toynbee deflatingly reminds us, this is not really that extraordinary: “States have often reformed their military organization after they have suffered disastrous defeats.”⁵⁵¹ What is more extraordinary, perhaps, is how the Romans turned their eclectic tendencies into a proud ideology, that is besting the mentor at his own game by improving whatever is borrowed:

We did not have the traditional Samnite scutum nor did we have the pilum. But we fought with round shields and spears; nor were we strong in cavalry either but all or the greater part of the Roman army was infantry. But when we became involved in a war with the Samnites we were equipped with the scutum and the pilum and had forced ourselves to fight as cavalry so with foreign weapons and copied tactics we enslaved those who had developed a conceited pride in themselves.⁵⁵²

Sunny Auyang describes the Ch’in dynasty and the ancient Romans as “marcher powers,” which are defined as vigorous and innovative states that are not restrained by indoctrination or special interests. Such powers in this category tend to be located on the periphery, which was the case for Rome with respect to the earliest centers of civilization in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Greece. Utilizing this geopolitical position, the marcher power can balance the “vitality” of barbarism with the “knowledge” of high civilization.⁵⁵³ These two

⁵⁵¹ Raaflaub, “Born to Be Wolves? Origins of Roman Imperialism,” in *Transitions to Empire: essay in Greco-Roman History, 360-146 B.C. in honor of E. Badian*, 297; *Hannibal’s Legacy: The Hannibalic War’s Effects on Roman Life*, 518. Polybius writes, in the context of adopting Greek cavalry equipment, “no people are more willing to adopt new customs and to emulate what they see is better done by others” (Polybius, trans. by William R. Paton, 6.25.11.)

⁵⁵² H. Von Arnim, *Ineditum Vaticanum*, *Hermes* 27 (1892): 118 (cited in Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 170). See also Ath. 6.106; Sall. *Cat.* 51.38.

⁵⁵³ Sunny Y. Auyang, *The Dragon and the Eagle: The Rise and Fall of the Chinese and Roman Empires* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2014), 77-78.

ancient empires do seem to share a willingness to adopt and incorporate foreign ideas and peoples. Paradoxically, in the case of the Romans, the traditionalism inherent in the concept of *mos maiorum* may have facilitated change and innovation. In Roman ideology, there was no vague notion of change simply for the sake of it, and in any event, change based on utility never disrupted the Romans' integrated sense of Self grounded in relatively consistent values like *virtus*, *pietas*, *disciplina*, etc.⁵⁵⁴ Furthermore, openness is an optimal solution for strengthening existing, evolving, yet conservative institutions, as Philip V noticed in the Roman practice of manumission:

For that it is the fairest thing of all for the city to grow strong, with as many as possible having a part in the state, and for the land to be worked not badly, as is now the case, I believe that not one of you would disagree, and it is also possible to look at the others who make use of similar enrolments of citizens, among whom are the Romans, who receive into the state even slaves, when they have freed them, giving them a share in the magistracies, and in such a way not only have they augmented their own fatherland, but they have also sent out colonies to almost seventy places.⁵⁵⁵

The willingness to adapt is an essential “cultural gene,” which Auyang describes as reflecting the worldview of its imperial elite.⁵⁵⁶ The following synopsis of the Ch'in dynasty and the influence of the philosophy of Legalism will demonstrate how military reforms are intertwined with socio-political changes, and the insistence on rigorous discipline in both the Ch'in and Roman military systems share many commonalities in their historical contexts.

⁵⁵⁴ Jung defines the process of integration as individuation: “the individual becomes what he always was. Because man has consciousness, a development of this kind does not run very smoothly; often it is varied and disturbed, because consciousness deviates again and again from its archetypal, instinctual foundation and finds itself in opposition to it. There then arises the need for a synthesis of the two positions” (Jung, *Collected Works of C. G. Jung. Vol. 9, Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 40).

⁵⁵⁵ “Philip V’s Letter to Larisa 216 BC,” *Syll.* 543, accessed April 31, 2019, <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/classics/bagnall/3995/readings/b-d2-1d.htm>.

⁵⁵⁶ Auyang, *The Dragon and the Eagle: The Rise and Fall of the Chinese and Roman Empires*, xix.

The Ch'in existed somewhat outside of the mainstream Chinese tradition, having commerce with neighboring barbarian peoples, such as the Jong and Ti, who were semi-nomadic pastoralists.⁵⁵⁷ This set them apart culturally and perhaps ethnically.⁵⁵⁸ Indeed, the other feudal states regarded the Ch'in as inferior and barbaric from its contact with these peoples.⁵⁵⁹ Accordingly, the Ch'in were not adverse to hiring foreign talent. The Warring States Period witnessed the development of numerous intellectual schools, including Confucianism and Legalism. These new philosophies were easily borne across China by wandering intellectuals, who were accepted by princes eager for any edge over their rivals. Legalism was not a formal school like Confucianism, but it still exerted tremendous influence on Chinese politics, especially with the Ch'in.⁵⁶⁰ The tenets of Legalism stressed the concentration of power into a single ruler, the importance of agriculture and war, and the rule of law in order to create an orderly society. The essential technique in achieving those things was a powerful minister. The most important works from the Legalist tradition include *The Book of Lord Shang* by Shang Yang, a minor official who was eventually appointed Ch'in prime minister by Duke Hsiao, and the *Han Feizi* by Han Fei, a former student of Confucius who provided the major synthesis of the Legalist ideals.⁵⁶¹ The former wrote the following, with respect to his duties: "to shape the laws and to see to it that an intelligent ruler reigns are the tasks of a minister."⁵⁶² The overall aim of Legalism was to create a powerful and efficiently run state, capable of overpowering its

⁵⁵⁷ Turchin, "A Theory for Formation of Large Empires," 199.

⁵⁵⁸ Derk Bodde, "The state and empire of Ch'in," in *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 31-32.

⁵⁵⁹ Ssuma Ch'ien, trans. by Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, 86.

⁵⁶⁰ Theodore De Bary et al., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 190.

⁵⁶¹ Charles O. Hucker, *China to 1850: A Short History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978), 47

⁵⁶² Theodore De Bary et al., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 193.

neighbors. Legalism was likely influenced by the endemic violence of the Warring States Period, which created a need to strengthen the government's power to protect it from external enemies.

Ch'in military superiority contributed to their success against the other feudal states of China, which had more to do with organization and expertise than technological superiority. The rival states in this period were roughly comparable in military technology, with most having adopted cavalry, crossbows, and bronze and iron weapons. In contrast to Confucianism, the adherents of Legalism viewed war as beneficial and promoted it vigorously. Shang Yang wrote, "the means whereby a country is made prosperous are agriculture and war."⁵⁶³ Accordingly, the Legalists sought to develop armies fit for large-scale conquest, not the ritualized, aristocratic warfare of early Chou times. A major step in that direction was the creation of a merit system that promoted soldiers on the basis of ability not birth, and so it was not simply a transition from chariots to trained cavalry and infantry.⁵⁶⁴ This is another example of a meritocratic hierarchy, which in principle is similar to what we have observed in the Roman army. The Ch'in ranking system consisted of a twenty-point scale. Men with higher ranks received more land and servants from the State. Shang Yang even forbade members of the ruling class to be treated as nobility if they had not proven themselves on the battlefield.⁵⁶⁵ The minister also enhanced state control over the populace through strict laws and group responsibility, which facilitated recruitment.⁵⁶⁶ It is uncertain how many Chi'in subjects were under arms at a given time,

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 194.

⁵⁶⁴ A. Hulsewe, *Remnants of Ch'in Law: an annotated translation of the Ch'in legal and administrative rules of the 3rd century B.C., discovered in Yün-meng Prefecture, Hu-pei Provinces, in 1975* (Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1985), 82.

⁵⁶⁵ Ssuma Ch'ien, trans. by Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, 93.

⁵⁶⁶ Edgar Kiser et al., "War and Bureaucratization in Qin China: Exploring an Anomalous Case," *American Sociological Review* 68 (2003): 528.

but the number seems relatively high compared to contemporary states.⁵⁶⁷ According to Edgar Kiser, the origins of Ch'in's civil bureaucratization lie with the expansion of its military. To manage the new armies of unprecedented size, it was necessary to at least partially bureaucratize them. This in turn provided a model for a civic bureaucracy, as the new armies promoted men of ability through merit and rewarded them through incentives.⁵⁶⁸ With the Ch'in, especially, the practical philosophy of Legalism added further encouragement to reorganize military and civic life. According to Ssuma Ch'ien, the people were grouped by Shang Yang into "units of five and ten households, exercising mutual surveillance and mutually responsible before the law."⁵⁶⁹ The duties of these five-man units involved enforcing the law and maintaining the battle performance of their respective unit.⁵⁷⁰ This system, in addition to the military honor-ranks described above, systematically intertwined military and civic life. Furthermore, to return to Shang Yang's agrarian reforms, he "opened up" the prevailing method of cultivating the land, which is normally taken to mean that he replaced the well-field system with a grid pattern of farming blocs that consisted of a single peasant family.⁵⁷¹ This system provided the most effective use of the land and maximized the number of potential military recruits and taxpayers.⁵⁷²

There are numerous similarities to the rise of Rome in the republican period, including meritocratic military hierarchies, systematic mobilization, integration of penalties and rewards, and expanding military manpower through citizen-farmers. Indeed, after the *leges Liciniae-Sextiae*, it is likely that the abolition of debt-bondage (*lex Poetelia*

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., 520-522.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 2003, 521.

⁵⁶⁹ Ssuma Ch'ien, trans. by Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, 92.

⁵⁷⁰ Mark. E. Lewis *The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 32.

⁵⁷¹ Ssuma Ch'ien, trans. by Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, 94.

⁵⁷² Lewis, *The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han*, 33.

326 BC), and the large-scale use of slaves by Roman elites, permitted the founding of numerous colonies that in turn increased Roman manpower.⁵⁷³ The main point of this comparison is that similar environments produce similar means of mediating them, and we can observe the utility of the Ch'in and early Roman military meritocracies in the success that they achieved against their rivals,

7. Conclusion: *Disciplina* and Conscientiousness

To borrow from analytical psychology, the trait of conscientiousness from the Five Factor Model is a commonality that is implied in the Ch'in and early Romans' social cohesion, which laid the foundations for a relatively stable social hierarchy and rigorous code of military discipline. The Five Factor Model of personality includes the traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism, and openness, which reflect relatively consistent behavioral patterns in a subject's life.⁵⁷⁴ Raymond Cattell defines conscientiousness in the following passage:

Conscientiousness is that disposition governing persevering, unselfish behavior and impelling the individual to duty as conceived by his [or her] culture." A conscientious person is "honest; know what is right and generally does it, even if no one is watching him [or her]; does not tell lies or attempt to deceive others; respects other's property. An unconscientious person is "somewhat unscrupulous; not too careful about standards of right and wrong where personal desires are concerned; tells lies and is given to little deceits; does not respect others' property."⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷³ Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 393.

⁵⁷⁴James W. Grice, "Five-factor model of personality," accessed April 1, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/science/five-factor-model-of-personality>.

⁵⁷⁵ Raymond B. Cattell, *The Scientific Analysis of Personality* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1965), 63 (cited in Jordan B. Peterson, "2014 Personality Lecture 14: Psychometrics (Biology and Traits)," accessed April 1, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Om0YPE8c66Y>).

This trait is linked to behavioral patterns of ethical leadership, including accepting responsibility, permitting input from subordinates, and the clarification of roles.⁵⁷⁶ Foucault argued that all truth was reducible to power, since institutional apparatuses like prisons, schools, and militaries normalized individuals to a particular set of values.⁵⁷⁷ He writes, “Discipline “makes” individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise.”⁵⁷⁸ This assessment provides an incomplete and therefore inaccurate assessment of power. Hierarchies are ancient in our evolutionary development and have utility, at least stable ones do, because they have mechanisms to mitigate tyranny, are to an extent meritocratic, and encourage ethical leadership. Rigid hierarchies that do not have said features contain the seeds of their own destruction, which manifested in Rome with the rise of powerful magnates who gradually, not wholesale, sought power less and less through established institutions. This complementary interplay of chaos and order is expressed diagrammatically in the complementary dots in both hemispheres of the Yin and the Yang. The power of *imperium* gave Roman commanders the legal authorization to inflict disciplinary punishment, but this was not the only component of *disciplina*. Behind the sacred boundary of the *pomerium*, violated in due course by the sociopath Cornelius Sulla, the Roman citizen had the best recourse through the tribunes of the people of the right of appeal, *provocatio*, against arbitrary punishment.⁵⁷⁹ Roman magistrates were still legally restricted in inflicting summary justice outside of the *pomerium*, but the further away from the *domi* it was

⁵⁷⁶ Karianne Kalshoven, et al., “Ethical Leader Behavior and Big Five Factors of Personality,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 100 (2011): 356.

⁵⁷⁷ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 15, 205.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 170.

⁵⁷⁹ “provocatio,” *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 1267-1268; Drogula, *Commanders and Command in the Republic and Early Empire*, 48-51.

obviously less difficult for unscrupulous officials to wield coercive powers.⁵⁸⁰ By the imperial period, long after the Latin settlement of 338 BC, the category of “Roman” had remained in one sense legal. For example, Paul of Tarsus (c. 5-c. 67 AD) was brought before a Roman magistrate on criminal charges but, having declared his Roman citizenship, he remained free pending a trial.⁵⁸¹ The chief priests of Jerusalem complained, but the Roman procurator asserted Paul’s legal prerogative: “It is not the Roman custom to hand over any man before he has faced his accusers and has had an opportunity to defend himself against their charges.”⁵⁸² Until the *leges Porciae* (c. second century BC), however, which prohibited the flogging of citizens and extended the right of appeal to the *militiae*, the area of military operations, the Roman soldier had to trust that the elected commander would not abuse his *imperium*.⁵⁸³ There was no means to guarantee against such abuse, but the citizenry could take care to elect competent leaders and to prosecute those who were criminally arbitrary or negligent, at least after their term of office. Every magistrate, before having *imperium* conferred upon them, undertook a compulsory oath to obey the laws.⁵⁸⁴ Similarly, the British Monarchy, over the course of centuries, was neither above the law of the land nor permitted to be unaccountable to the public due to restrictions placed on its authority, such as those in the Magna Carta (1214) and the Bill of Rights (1689). Scholars are close but not quite correct to argue that the Roman citizen, regardless of class, was blindly devoted to the *res publica*.⁵⁸⁵ Kurt Raaflaub argues that the Romans were not “born

⁵⁸⁰ Drogula, *Commanders and Command in the Republic and Early Empire*, 42.

⁵⁸¹ Clifford Ando, “Was Rome a Polis?,” *Classical Antiquity* 18 (1999): 10.

⁵⁸² “Acts” *Holy Bible* 25.

⁵⁸³ “provocatio,” *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 1267-1268; Michael Crawford, *The Roman Republic* (New York: Harper Press, 2015), 92.

⁵⁸⁴ Drogula, *Commanders and Command in the Republic and Early Empire*, 33, 138.

⁵⁸⁵ Lind, “Concept, Action, and Character: The Reasons for Rome’s Greatness,” 279; Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*, 90.

to be wolves,” as accused by Mithridates of Pontus, but in fact developed into an expansionist power after incessant, sometimes desperate, battles in the fourth century BC.⁵⁸⁶ Indeed, there were bitter struggles within Rome itself, which contributed to the complex development of the plebeian movement, a peculiar “state within a state” that was designed to protect citizens from patrician abuse.⁵⁸⁷ The Roman conquest of central Italy was feasible only through strong group solidarity, and leadership provided by a ferociously competitive and disciplined warrior elite. This developed gradually over the course of centuries, and it is apparent that in order for Rome’s military and social hierarchies to be in any way stable, a degree of conscientiousness was necessary for all members of the *res publica*.

With power comes responsibility, especially when that power is manifestly visible in the case of Roman commanders on the battlefield, who had much at stake to achieve something noteworthy and aggressively, given their short terms of office.⁵⁸⁸ Indeed, the heightened aggressiveness of some commanders was motivated more by competition with other Roman elites, rather than the enemy, that is to prevent colleagues from winning all the glory.⁵⁸⁹ Maintaining discipline was crucial to morale, which was influenced by a number of factors under the commander’s discretion, including preparedness, routine, and encouragement in the event of crises or setbacks.⁵⁹⁰ Ash argues that when the system was working the enlisted ranks had fraternal feelings toward their officers; as I have argued, it

⁵⁸⁶ Raaflaub, “Born to Be Wolves? Origins of Roman Imperialism,” 300.

⁵⁸⁷ Cornell, *Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)*, 258.

⁵⁸⁸ Drogula, *Commanders & Command in the Roman Republic and Early Empire*, 44.

⁵⁸⁹ Livy 21.53.6-7.

⁵⁹⁰ Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 165; Sage, *The Republican Roman Army A Sourcebook*, 225; Campbell, *War and Society in Imperial Rome, 31 BC – AD 284*, 55.

is more paternal, but the principle of trust is the same.⁵⁹¹ This weightiness of command and responsibility for those entrusted with *imperium* by the public is expressed by Livy's summation of senatorial sentiment, as the Hannibalic War neared its end:

But inasmuch as two consular armies were so near the enemy without their commanders, the senate and the people, neglecting everything else, were possessed by one particular concern—to elect consuls at the first possible moment, and to elect especially men whose courage was quite safe against the Carthaginian wiles. Not only throughout that war, they said, had the over-hasty, fiery temperament of the generals proved ruinous, but in that very year [208 BC] the consuls in their excessive eagerness to engage with the enemy had fallen unawares into a trap. But, they added, the immortal gods, taking pity upon the Roman people, had spared the innocent armies, and had punished the rashness of the consuls by the loss of their own lives.⁵⁹²

The Roman conceptualization of discipline worked in part because the elites were held accountable for not maintaining it, as well as military defeats that were attributed to poor discipline, inept leadership, or other factors.⁵⁹³ The junior officers, the centurions, were held accountable as well, when they failed to uphold their duty in maintaining discipline and bolstering morale. The centurionate was a meritocracy that granted prestige and power, but in times of strife they were, as Tacitus reports, “the traditional objects of military hatred, and always the first objects of its fury.”⁵⁹⁴ For example, there was the tyrant Lucilius, nicknamed “Fetch-Another,” after his habit of breaking canes over soldiers’ backs and calling for another.⁵⁹⁵ He was disliked immensely and slain during the Pannonian mutiny (14 AD)

⁵⁹¹ Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories*, 168.

⁵⁹² Livy 27.33.9-11.

⁵⁹³ For criticism of Roman generalship, see P. Valerius Laevinus's command critiqued, but not his army, for the defeat at Heraclea (280 BC) (Plut. *Pyrrh.* 18.1); the censure, trial, and heavy fine of P. Claudius Pulcher, for sacrilege in addition to inept leadership prior to engaging the Carthaginians (Drepana 241 BC) (Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.7; Polyb. 1.52); some criticized P. Cornelius Scipio's generalship at Ticinus 218 BC), while others the Celts (Polyb. 3.68); Cn. Fulvius Flaccus's trial and exile, in addition to failed attempt to blame his army for the defeat at Herdonia (212 BC) (Livy 26.1.3-3.12); censure and, in some cases exile or fines, accorded to Roman commanders for criminally negligent or inept leadership in Iberia, e.g. M. Aemilius Lepidus Porcina, D. Junius Brutus Callaicus, and C. Hostilius Mancinus (App. *Hisp.* 13.83).

⁵⁹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 1.32. Indeed Garlan describes the centurionate as a “military aristocracy” (Yvon Garlan, *War in the Ancient World: A Social History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), 162).

⁵⁹⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.32.

but, another centurion, a certain Sirpilius, was protected during a dispute between two legions.⁵⁹⁶ In another instance, a soldier was falsely accused by a centurion in Caesar's army, and the latter was punished instead.⁵⁹⁷ Rosenstein is correct to notice the discrepancy between waging war frequently and not retaining the best commanders at their posts, as was the case in the early-to-middle republic.⁵⁹⁸ Nevertheless, in crises the Romans adapted custom to circumstance, whether through dictatorship, prorogation, rapid promotion, or, by the late republic, multiple consulships and extraordinary commands. Rosenstein's argument, alongside Brian Campbell's point that the Roman army had no formal military academy, does nothing to explain how the republic produced so many commanders who were highly competent, and in some cases brilliant.⁵⁹⁹ There was no way to directly enforce the levy among the lower classes or, as noted above, compliance with the law for aristocratic commanders in their area of operations. Generally speaking, there seems to have been a degree of guilt inherent in the Roman concept of *disciplina*, which reflects a well-functioning military system and social hierarchy based on conscientiousness.

⁵⁹⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 1.23.

⁵⁹⁷ App. *B Civ.* 2.47 (cited in Charles Goldberg, "Decimation in the Roman Republic," 145).

⁵⁹⁸ Rosenstein argues that critique of tactical and strategic decisions, rather than character, would lead the electorate to question the entire representative oligarchic system (Rosenstein, "War, Failure, and Aristocratic Competition," 257). This becomes irrelevant by the late republic when the aristocracy no longer sought advancement primarily through military glory, while especially gifted military commanders did and succeeded in reaching the top of the social hierarchy.

⁵⁹⁹ Isolated cases were dealt with severely. In 275 BC, one citizen who did not answer the summons had his property sold (Liv. *Per.* 14.3).

IV. Conclusion

This thesis has argued that Roman martial values, such as *virtus* and *disciplina*, are depicted relatively consistently in the literary tradition and formed an important component of Roman identity. These values are depicted as instrumental in Rome's military success. *Virtus* and *disciplina* were to an extent socially constructed, which is inevitable with complicated abstractions. Nevertheless, every military system cultivates courage as a virtue, and requires discipline to have any effectiveness. I have argued that the concepts of both courage and discipline received quite sophisticated conceptualization in the Roman army, which gradually developed through collective wisdom into an integrated system of penalties and incentives. Multiple hierarchies operate in every society, but in ancient Rome, especially in the republican period, the social and military hierarchies were closely intertwined to a degree and scale that surpassed other contemporary city-states. Indeed, the customs that governed the Roman army in the republican period produced a semi-professional conscript army that was undoubtedly more efficient than contemporary city-states but, in some cases, the professional armies of the Hellenistic east. The Roman army represents a set of hierarchies of competence that permitted the enlisted ranks and aristocratic officers to compete in a manner that was both stable and quite effective, although not perfect. After all, a perfect military system could not really exist in an elected oligarchy, as experienced commanders at a certain point became more of a threat to Rome than Rome's foreign enemies. Regarding the values of this system, I noted that *virtus* was fundamentally ethical, in that courage involves great risk on behalf of others, while not excluding self-interest. *Disciplina*, on the other hand, was a means to virtue, including but not limited to *virtus*. History, as literature, is written within a specific cultural and historical

context, and therefore the classical accounts of the Roman army and its values are distortions of reality to an extent. Nevertheless, when the classical authors do not demonstrably speak what they know to be untrue, or contradict common sense, they are reliable guides when it comes to military matters. This is despite the clear literary conventions and artistic embellishments, which in most cases can be separated from the bare historical account.

In chapter one, I outlined my interdisciplinary study that crosses many disciplinary boundaries to understand in the deepest and most profound manner possible the values of *virtus* and *disciplina*. Accordingly, I employed assumptions, models, and theories from anthropology, evolutionary biology, analytical psychology, and moral philosophy, in addition to more common approaches that have been utilized by military historians and classicists for discussing the Roman army. Theories that have no basis in reality are useless, and this study was immensely aided by the work done in the sciences. Indeed, such an interdisciplinary study as this likely would not have been necessary if theories such as deconstruction and postmodernism were not so prevalent in the humanities and social sciences, which have done much damage to those attempting to research and interpret reality objectively and with proven methods. The critique of modernity by figures such as Derrida and Foucault posed challenging questions to reason as tool for objectively and interpreting data, but their answers lacked the merit of their investigations. As I have demonstrated, literature is a product of a specific context, but one that is not independent of valid interpretation, for not every interpretation offers an optimal solution for mediating the world as a forum of action.⁶⁰⁰ Accordingly, the concept of collective memory, thick

⁶⁰⁰ Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief*, 92.

description, and New Historicism, while useful in appreciating history as distortion to an extent, remain insufficient for understanding the meaningfulness of symbols in a culture. The martial ideals evinced by Roman armies would not have been effective symbols if they lacked meaning but, not just any meaning, since they had to have some utility on the battlefield. Furthermore, as reflections of ancestral custom and wisdom, when ancient authors discussed such values as *virtus* and *disciplina* they did so not, at least primarily, to distort and manipulate truth. Accordingly, the Jungian archetypes and Campbell's monomyth model have utility in decontextualizing Roman customs, literature, and myth and studying them comparatively as manifesting universal patterns and themes. When the values of *virtus* and *disciplina* lapsed, which were manifested in service to the community, Rome reaped the whirlwind in catastrophic strife and civil war, hence the emphasis that is placed on virtue in our sources.

In chapter two, I proved that *virtus* was a virtue, a fundamentally ethical concept that did not, however, operate at cross-purposes to self-interest or personal glory. *Virtus* is consistently described as martial courage, which required the mastery of fear in service of the community. It was fundamentally ethical for that reason, that despite the actor's intent or personal character it was the deed that constituted *virtus* that counted, since virtue is something both admirable and ethical. Cicero further articulated the foundations of the *virtus*, which encompassed the cardinal virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice.⁶⁰¹ *Virtus* represented an ideal that inspired courage in a hierarchy of competence, as not every soldier had the ability, circumstance, motivation, and skill to ascend this hierarchy, which culminated for both the enlisted ranks and officers in promotion and

⁶⁰¹ Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 2.159; *Pl. Resp.* 4.427e, 4.435b.

gloria. The social hierarchy was stratified, but the enlisted ranks could still aspire to the centurionate provided they displayed *virtus*. Given the importance of centurions in Rome's often sophisticated tactical deployments, having a purely unstable, unmeritocratic, and tyrannical hierarchy with meaningless values would simply have been impractical. Again, theoretical analyses must take into account the realia of ancient warfare. Furthermore, not only different classes but many different ethnic groups thrived in the Roman military system, which furthers the notion of universal and objectively preferable behavioral patterns. Females, disabled men, and certain others, could not compete in this hierarchy, which was closely intertwined with political power and status. There was not a multiplicity of games or roles in ancient societies, Rome included, that enabled those unfit for military service to rise to the top of a hierarchy and acquire power. Nevertheless, this does not invalidate Rome's conceptualization of martial courage, and nonetheless it was possible for some men, lacking in military prowess, to gain power through literary, financial, rhetorical, or poetic talent. Accordingly, it was inevitable that *virtus* was bound up with another abstraction, manliness, since only able-bodied males were, generally speaking, fit for military service.

In the final chapter, I described *disciplina* as training, method, and orderly conduct, that was inculcated through formal training as well as informal enculturation prior to enlistment. While Foucault has a point, about discipline "making" individuals, this did not constitute the totality of Roman discipline. Again, without discipline, an army is useless in defending its territory and community, as well as offensively where the rationale for continuing to bear arms is less apparent. Indeed, the more effective the Roman army became at defending Rome and its allies, concomitantly, after the military and political

revolution in the fourth century BC, most of its wars were waged in other people's territory. Aside from the idealized descriptions of Roman discipline, the Roman army was a machine in the sense that it was not intrinsically malevolent, since *gloria* as an incentive long predated Rome's expansionism in the fourth century BC when Rome was fighting primarily defensive wars. Accordingly, *disciplina* is essentially training, having derived from the experience and wisdom of the *mos maiorum*. While *disciplina* developed obedient soldiers and prepared them to evince *virtus*, being obedient is not synonymous with being virtuous. In practice, there is no virtue in having been coerced into action. Furthermore, unscrupulous actors utilize obedience to further entirely non-virtuous objectives. Regarding the enlisted ranks, there was no tension between courage and discipline, for *virtus* did not denote reckless or wanton aggressiveness, especially when it contradicted orders. The Roman military system was effective because it constituted an integrated doctrine that mediated, relatively harmoniously, the elements of chaos and order. Similar to *virtus*, the concept of *disciplina* had universal applicability to Roman soldiers, regardless of class or ethnicity. The underlying premise of *disciplina* was the Roman acceptance of their own flaws, and that training was necessary to reach one's full potential as a *vir*, that is by acquiring glory through *virtus*. The role of stories, which for the most part constitutes our primary source material, was to present archetypal heroes that evinced Roman values as they reinforced and revived the *mos maiorum*. Although Roman in a sense became merely a legal category, Roman values such as *virtus* and *disciplina* were long-lasting and powerful concepts because they did not limit these qualities to a few.

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