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# Cause, Course, and Consequence: The Punic Wars (264 BCE to 146 BCE)

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Cause, Course, and Consequence:  
The Punic Wars (264 BCE to 146 BCE)

Angela Anne Coco

A Thesis Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Prerequisite for Honors  
in History  
At Wellesley College  
Under the advisement of  
Professor Guy M. Rogers

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*Supra lu majuri si 'nsigna lu minuri.*

We learn by standing on the shoulders of the wise.

## **Abstract**

The Punic Wars (264 BCE- 146 BCE) continued for over a century and brought ruin on a tremendous scale. The wars changed the socio-economic structure in Rome by eliminating the middle or farmer/soldier class of Roman society, affected the distribution of wealth by funneling money to the highest socio-economic classes, and altered religious and political institutions through extended contact with the East and the acquisition of new land. It is the goal of this thesis to explore how the introduction of new peoples and cultures, a new economic structure, and a new primary mode of religious thought, following the three Punic Wars, affected the life of the individual Roman citizen.

These changes altered the subsequent trajectory, growth, and overall character of the empire. Whether or not these changes to the Roman order were positive or negative is for the reader to decide. However, it is certain that the Punic Wars altered the Roman Empire forever. The descriptions of Rome (and Sicily) before and after the wars show the destructive and transformative quality of extreme and long-lasting warfare. It is important for a modern reader to understand these changes and influences because the new Rome that emerged at the turn of the century served as a foundational block of Western civilization.

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## Introduction

Throughout the course of history, warfare has influenced individuals, families, and nations. The long years of warfare between Rome and Carthage marked a critical period in the history of these two nations. For Carthage, they spelled annihilation; for Rome, the beginnings of a world-empire and the incipient evolution toward what is considered the “Roman way of life.” The object of this thesis is to examine the influence of the Punic Wars (264 BCE- 146 BCE) on the lives of Roman citizens, as well as its influence upon the development of the Roman Empire. I will show that the Punic Wars dramatically altered the mode of life for the individual Roman citizen and later brought Rome to the very height of her power and dominion. It hardly needs to be said that this new Rome would later go on to impact the subsequent development of western civilization.

While the Punic Wars were probably among the largest conflicts of the ancient world, the century-long struggle is also one of the best documented (although there still remains gaps in our knowledge). The three wars fought between the two great cities were truly epic in scale, filled with intensity, drama, and remarkable characters. The wars opened the door to future Roman conquests, brought great wealth and opened trade routes to the state, and set into motion other significant and lasting effects on economic, political, military, social, and religious institutions. As a result of these wars, the Romans became the only people in history to have successfully “united” the lands and cultures of what today comprises Western Europe, North Africa, and the eastern Mediterranean under one polity. By the mid-second century CE, Rome’s empire extended “from the highlands of Scotland to the Persian Gulf, from the Atlantic coast of Portugal almost to

the steppes of Russia.”<sup>1</sup> No other empire in history has managed to unite Europe and the Middle East, and Rome would do far more than just that in only five centuries.<sup>2</sup>

The famed quote "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," can be directly applied to our knowledge of the Punic Wars.<sup>3</sup> Like the “Great War,” (WWI , 1914-1918 CE), the Punic Wars functioned like the first *ever* World War.<sup>4</sup> The Second Punic War greatly reduced Rome’s population. In fact, the war probably eliminated about one-eighth of the whole Roman population.<sup>5</sup> There are events in history that, if they had not happened, would have set life on earth on an alternative route. The Punic Wars are one of these key events. Adrian Goldsworthy writes, “had the Romans lost the Punic Wars then the history of the world would have been very different.”<sup>6</sup> At the very least, a Carthaginian victory would have seriously retarded Roman expansion. In fact, a defeat may well have ended Roman expansion forever. If the wars turned out differently, then perhaps today, instead of English, we would be speaking a version of the Phoenician language and, instead of Christianity being the most widely practiced religion, we could be worshipping the god Baal.

The influence of these wars remains relevant to us today first because of their profound impact on the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire’s subsequent influence on the rest of the

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<sup>1</sup> Nancy Thompson, *Roman Art: A Resource for Educators* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 14.

<sup>2</sup> Adrian K. Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars* (London: Cassell, 2000), 12.

<sup>3</sup> George Santayana, “Flux and Constancy,” *The Life of Reason: Or, The Phases of Human Progress: Introduction, and Reason in Common Sense* (C. Scribner's Sons, 1917), 284.

<sup>4</sup> For reference, the percentage of the larger population that perished in Punic Wars rivaled (and in many cases, surpassed) that of our modern WWI: the total Allied Powers only lost 1.05% to 1.25% of their total populations. Other smaller countries lost larger percentages in the war, such as Serbia 16.67% -27.78% and Romania 7.73%- 8.88%.; Philip J. Haythornthwaite, *The World War One Source Book* (London: Arms and Armour, 1993), 382–383.

<sup>5</sup> L. B. Mitchell, "Background of the Roman Revolution," *The Classical Journal* 17, no. 6 (1922): 319.

<sup>6</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 13.



world (especially in Western Europe, both directly and through the revival of the Renaissance), in turn, laid the foundation for western civilization. As Europeans colonized America and established great oversea empires, they spread their Latin-based languages, legal systems, and culture throughout the globe. None of this might have happened if the Romans lost in 241 BCE or succumbed to Hannibal's onslaught. To explore these influences, this thesis represents the Punic Wars as a turning point in the history of the Roman world, as well as an important moment in the development of future Western society.

In the ancient world, the free movement of peoples and ideas across vast territories was unprecedented. Although Roman imperialism and the broad incorporation of cultures into the Roman state did not begin with the Punic Wars (since by 265 BCE Rome had already absorbed all of the Italian peninsula south of the River Po), it was greatly accelerated by the struggle with Carthage.<sup>7</sup> As a result of their victories, the Romans inherited a politically, economically, and culturally united world, including greater contact with the Hellenistic and Egyptian peoples. Richard Miles considers this joining together of nations (a sort of ancient multiculturalism), as Carthage's greatest achievement.<sup>8</sup> The Punic Wars also accustomed the Romans to waging war on an enormous scale, sending armies farther and farther afield to fight widely separate conflicts simultaneously.

Because an exhaustive study of the effects of the Punic Wars would fill volumes, a strict limitation of our subject matter is imperative. We shall concentrate our attention upon a few points which had a direct effect upon the individual Roman, coloring his whole attitude toward life: changes in land tenure and slave practices; wealth and trade; religious practices; and

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<sup>7</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 12-13.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed* (London: Penguin, 2011), 373.

political and military practices. The relatively small island of Sicily, which I had the opportunity to visit for this thesis, will function as a microcosm of the Roman Empire. The war in Sicily and its acquisition after the First Punic War set in place most of the changes we will discuss, especially the further introduction of Eastern and Hellenistic influences into the empire. Surprisingly, many of Sicily's ancient artifacts remain untouched by the effects of time (barring earthquakes, volcanic activity, and general erosion). The amount of information left intact on the island makes Sicily the perfect place to explore the effects of ancient Greek, Carthaginian, and Roman conquest. Sicily will help us to better understand how the Punic Wars impacted Rome as a whole.

In my travel and research on the island of Sicily, I personally observed several changes brought on by the Punic Wars. Among other cities, I visited Piazza Armerina, Agrigento, Selinunte, Palermo and Marsala (figure I.1).<sup>9</sup> At these locations, I viewed archeological evidence of change from Greek, to Carthaginian, to Roman rule from the 4th to 1st centuries BCE and later. Through archeological remains such as mosaics, religious idols, coins, pottery, villas, and stelae, I witnessed a change in the mode of life for those who inhabited Sicily. My finds in these local archaeological museums shed further light on the immense impact that the wars had on everyday Romans.

Unlike the works of other prominent historians, this thesis will not make a moral argument about the wars. Though some believe that wars were the beginning of the end for Roman morality, leading to its eventual fall, others think that the wars were the brilliant birth of the western canon. Both views of the wars are controversial and involve the imposition of one's

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<sup>9</sup> I also visited Rome, Taormina, Aidone (Morgantina), Lilybaeum, Mozia (Motya), Erice, Segesta, Catania, Syracuse, Noto, Tindari, and Patti, among other smaller towns/cities.

own values onto the distant past. This thesis will, however, make use of architecture, archeology, and ancient text sources, all together in conversation, to allow for a better understanding of the effects of these wars. It will acknowledge the disparate opinions of prominent historians, but will leave the difficult questions of morality to the reader's judgment.

To understand the changes that the Punic Wars had on the Roman *familia*, and eventually Rome herself, one must first begin with background. Chapter One of my thesis explores what life was like in Rome before the First Punic War began. I will address the demographics of Rome, typical practices of land tenure, religion, commander/soldier relationships, and loyalty to the state. In addition, I introduce Carthage and explore the scholarly theories concerning the causes of the First Punic War.

Chapter Two of my thesis explains the course and "main characters" of all three Punic Wars in chronological order and identifies the wide-ranging effects of Rome's victory. I address how the wars developed, the decisive battles and their outcomes, important military strategies, and, finally, the end of the third war. I discuss how Rome's ultimate victory and involvement in the Punic Wars added territory to the Roman map and changed military relationships in a completely unprecedented way for Rome. Previously, soldiers swore allegiance to the Roman state; however, the unusual length of these military campaigns caused this allegiance to shift to commanders, rather than to Rome herself. Prominent Roman generals, in turn, rose to power and challenged Roman order in the first century BCE and later.

In Part II, I explore the effects of the Punic Wars. First, Chapter Three discusses how the Punic Wars immediately changed the people and relationships among people. The destruction of the local Roman population through extended military campaigns directly led to the rise of

*latifundia* (huge agricultural estates worked by slaves). The development of these estates radically altered the lives of a predominantly agricultural people. When many returned from war there was little available land to farm or work. I will explore what became of the farmer after the extensive slave-plantations forced him to change his occupation. *Latifundia* and this new “unemployment” contributed to wealth disparities, which later incited conflict between the wealthiest class of people, the *patricians*, and the poorer class of people, the *plebeians*. Contrary to other historians, who argue that mass warfare decreases economic inequality, I argue that the elimination of the middle class and the extraordinary horrors of the Punic Wars actually exacerbated and *produced* economic inequality.

After the wars, while *plebeians* found no redress for their situations, the development of *latifundia* made the *patricians* and the already wealthy even wealthier. Chapter Four will analyze how new prosperity in the region changed conceptions of luxury and promoted luxurious habits, in contrast with the more conservative practices prior to the Punic Wars.

Chapter Five reviews fundamental changes to religion, which were introduced through contact with foreign lands. Chapter Six addresses changes made to the political and military institutions of Rome. These changes, and those explored previously, manifested themselves in declining morality and led to the murder of the politically prominent Gracchi brothers (133/122 BCE). The murder of the Gracchi represented a turning point in the conflict of the classes. Never before the Punic Wars had Rome seen public violence such as this in her Republic.

The clash between the classes came to a head during the Social War (91-88 BCE), slave/peasant rebellions, and the revolt of Spartacus in 73-71 BCE. Unlike other historians, I argue that the violent uprisings that took place in this time period were a result of a larger trend toward violence in the empire. I continue my analysis through the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE

and the first and second centuries CE. I end my thesis with a broader look at the effects of the wars on the future of Rome and briefly explore the influence of the Punic Wars on the modern, western world.

Throughout this study, I focus mainly upon the Roman *familia*. The Roman *familia*, as we shall treat it, includes the immediate members of the household (parents and children) and their slaves. These Roman citizens and non-citizens formed an integral part of Roman society and were arguably most affected by the Punic Wars. It is my intent to uncover the effects of the various changes upon the mode of life of individual Roman citizens. With my thesis, I will bring the influence of the Punic Wars to the forefront of our understanding of Rome and the world.

*Angela Coco '19*

## Part I: Chapter 1: Rome and Carthage: A Brief Background Sketch

### Rome

By the beginning of the 4th century BCE, Rome had emerged as the leading city-state in the Italian Peninsula: a wealthy, powerful, expansionist Republic with a successful citizen army. Over the previous one hundred years, Rome had come into conflict and defeated rivals on the Italian peninsula and then incorporated them into the Roman political world. First, the Latin League was forcibly dissolved during the Latin War.<sup>10</sup> Then the power of the Samnites was broken during the three prolonged Samnite Wars. Afterward the Greek cities of Magna Graecia (southern Italy) submitted to Roman power at the conclusion of the Pyrrhic War.<sup>11</sup> By the beginning of the First Punic War, the Romans had secured the whole of the Italian peninsula, except Gallia Cisalpina (Cisalpine Gaul) in the Po Valley.

Prior to the start of the First Punic War (in 264 BCE), the citizen population of Rome (18+ years old, landowning, free males) was somewhere between 250,000 and 300,000.<sup>12</sup> Most of the Roman citizens at this time were subsistence farmers. They owned or leased their own small tracts of land, worked their farms during the harvest, and fought in the Roman army during the off-season. After the wars were over, they returned to their farms and families. Staple crops included wheat, emmer, spelt, and barley, all of them used (among other things) for bread, the mainstay of every Roman table at this time.<sup>13</sup> In 368, a limit on the amount of land that a citizen

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<sup>10</sup> Chester G. Starr, *A History of the Ancient World* (Oxford University Press: 1965), 464-465.

<sup>11</sup> Starr, *A History of the Ancient World*, 465.

<sup>12</sup> Walter Scheidel, *Roman Population Size: The Logic of the Debate* (Stanford University, 2007), 4.

<sup>13</sup> Cato the Elder, *De Agri Cultura (on Agriculture)*, 1. 1. 7.

could own was introduced (*Lex Licinia Sextia*). Violating these laws came with heavy fines, so at the time of their introduction they were generally followed.<sup>14</sup>

The Roman army at this time was truly an amateur organization. Most Roman male citizens served in the army and the soldiers of Rome considered military service an extremely honorable endeavor. Each family venerated their relatives and ancestors for their service and sacrifice. Before the Punic Wars, a soldier did not generally spend more than one year in continuous service. Campaigns were short, conducted close to home, and fought mainly in the summers when the crop cycle left farmers with little to do in their fields. The arrival of autumn brought an end to the fighting. Soldiers were mustered out of their legions and returned home to plant and cultivate the next year's crops until the following spring, when military duty would again call them away from their plows. For this reason, there was simply no time to build a long-term connection between commanders and soldiers.

Because of the short training period and turn around (back to a season of farming), those drafted saw themselves as fighting for the Roman state, for Rome herself, rather than for a single man. Although the consuls of Rome (the highest political magistrates) were Rome's senior military commanders, they were not themselves professional soldiers. Roman generals were amateurs in a modern sense; they received no formal staff college training and the 12-month political cycle ensured that very few officers ever enjoyed long periods of command.<sup>15</sup>

A strong sense of community bound all of the socio-economic classes of the state together. Roman citizens identified very strongly with the Republic and felt a part of it. Because

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<sup>14</sup> Richard A. Bauman, *Lawyers in Roman Republican Politics: A Study of the Roman Jurists in Their Political Setting, 316-82 BC, Issues 75-77* (C.H. Becksche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1983), 257-258.

<sup>15</sup> Nathan Rosenstein, *Rome at War: Farms, Families, and Death in the Middle Republic* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 3-4.; Adrian Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage: The Punic Wars 265-146 BC* (London: Cassell, 2000), 40.; 52.

everyone shared in both the danger and the prizes of victory, there was a sense of a collective Roman community. Because of this unity, Romans were inspired to sacrifice through a tough military training process. The willingness of Roman citizens to submit to harsh military rule and conditions allowed Rome to develop an army that was larger, better trained, and more complex than the citizen armies of any other city state.<sup>16</sup>

The religion of these early Roman citizen-soldiers was focused the spirits of family life, tribal organization, and the common occupations - farming, cattle raising, and warfare. The gods were conceived of as supernatural beings or *numina* (powers), believed to exist and to operate in natural objects.<sup>17</sup> These divine powers were forces, which, by their presence within an object, enabled that object to perform its natural function - the fire to burn, the crops to grow.<sup>18</sup> In early Rome, these deities were not clearly recognized personalities with distinct attributes. Robert Turcan, an expert on Roman theology, describes the early Roman religion as “strict ritualism” with very specific “formalism of words and gestures.” The same sacrifice might be repeated thirty times (or indefinitely) if it were done incorrectly, not well enough, or did not evoke the right response. In some cases and places, a ritual thus governed every moment of the domestic day. This “formalistic” piety was still observed in certain rural and even urban circles well into the Roman imperial era (27 BCE to 284 CE).<sup>19</sup>

As Rome expanded throughout the 3rd century, so did her citizen population, which, combined with her allies, gave Rome “vast resources of military manpower, far greater than those of Carthage.”<sup>20</sup> The Roman willingness to extend its citizenship was something unique in

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<sup>16</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 44-45.

<sup>17</sup> George C. Ring, "Anthropomorphic gods in Roman religion," *Historical Bulletin*, vol. XII, no. 4 (May, 1934): 69.

<sup>18</sup> Ring, "Anthropomorphic gods in Roman religion," 69.

<sup>19</sup> Turcan, *The Gods of Ancient Rome*, 3-15.

<sup>20</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 39.



the ancient world and was a major factor in her eventual success. Freed slaves in Rome received full citizenship (at least within a generation), including the right to vote, and, by the 3rd century BCE, many members of the population had a freedman in his or her family line.<sup>21</sup>

## Carthage

There is a significant problem in writing about Carthage before the Punic Wars that is not present in writing the history of Rome. Likely as a result of the Punic Wars, no history written by a Carthaginian, or with a Punic perspective, has survived.<sup>22</sup> All of our contemporary sources were written by Romans. This fact becomes even more problematic when the Romans' opinions of the Carthaginians are considered. During and after the wars, the Romans used language meant to demean Carthage. The brutal destruction of the city in 146 BCE gave Romans the freedom to transform Carthage into a villainous antitype, against which the "Roman" virtues of faithfulness, piety and duty could be applauded.<sup>23</sup> From this attitude "*fides Punica*," literally "Carthaginian faith," came to be widely used in the Roman vernacular as an ironic expression denoting "gross faithlessness."<sup>24</sup> As long as the Romans needed proof of their greatness, the memory of Carthage would never die.

We also see multiple derogatory remarks about the Carthaginians in the works of Livy. For example, Livy writes that Hannibal's father held him over Baal's great furnace and compelled the boy to dedicate his life to fighting the Romans.<sup>25</sup> By insisting that Carthage inculcated its children with hatred, Romans justified their own need to crush Carthage.

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<sup>21</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 38.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Miles, "Carthage: A Mediterranean Superpower," *Historically Speaking*, vol. 12, no. 4 (Johns Hopkins University Press) (September 2011): 35.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed* (London: Penguin, 2011), 373.

<sup>24</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Titus Livius (Livy), *The 2nd Punic 'Hannibalic' War*, 21. 2.

Additionally, in Virgil's *Aeneid*, the line "*Quippe domum timet ambiguum Tyriosque bilinguis*" (She fears the unreliability of this house and the duplicitous Tyrians) appears when Dido fears allowing typical Carthaginian behavior to occur.<sup>26</sup> Essentially, the phrase implies ambiguous/deliberately dishonest language being spoken by Carthaginians. This represents a Roman stereotype of Carthaginians as liars or "fork-tongued."<sup>27</sup> The influence of this representation is profound, and according to Richard Miles:<sup>28</sup>

Our understanding of Carthage has been distorted by long standing Greco-Roman bias. The Greeks and Romans depicted Carthaginians as 'uncultured barbarians and effeminate, lazy, dishonest and cruel orientals.' Today Carthage is principally remembered as being the loser in an ancient Mediterranean power struggle with Rome, despite the ambitious campaigns of its famous general Hannibal Barca.<sup>29</sup>

The word "Punic," (Latin: *Poenicus* and later *Punicus*) began as a pejorative invented by the Romans and was never what the Carthaginians called themselves.<sup>30</sup> With this in mind, historians must sift continuously through the perspectives of the victors to uncover the realities of Carthaginian life.

The city and later empire of Carthage originated as a Phoenician colony (founded c. 814 BCE). Because of its strategic location, now on the coast of modern Tunisia, Carthage soon developed into an "extensive commercial empire that far outstripped Phoenicia in power and

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<sup>26</sup> Vergil, *Aeneid*, 1.657–1.663.; John H. Starks Jr., "Fides Aeneia: The Transference of Punic Stereotypes in the *Aeneid*," *The Classical Journal*, vol. 94, no. 3 (Feb. - Mar., 1999): 255-283.

<sup>27</sup> Starks, "Fides Aeneia," 255-283.

<sup>28</sup> In his research, Richard Miles seeks to rescue Carthage "from the dead weight of wanton destruction and gross misrepresentation that has for so long subsumed it." Miles makes the case that Carthage should be viewed as a dynamic and dominant maritime power in the Western Mediterranean throughout much of the first millennium BCE.

<sup>29</sup> Miles, "Carthage," 35.

<sup>30</sup> Starks, "Fides Aeneia," 255-283.

wealth” (figure 1.1).<sup>31</sup> Carthage, like many Phoenician settlements that dotted the shorelines of the western and central Mediterranean, served as an essential staging post on the trade route, as well as a local trading station. But Carthage’s Phoenician name, Qart-Hadasht or “New City,” suggests that it was set up as a colonial settlement and not just as a trading post. Strategically the site could not have been better chosen, for it stood on the nexus, not only of the Cadiz-Tyre maritime superhighway, but also on the equally important north-south trade route that connected North Africa with Sicily, Italy, and Greece.<sup>32</sup> About the power of Carthage, Cicero had this to say: “Carthage could not have maintained her pre-eminent position for six hundred years had she not been governed with wisdom and statesmanship.”<sup>33</sup> This was a rare tribute from a Roman, at a time when the bitter legacies of the long struggle of the wars must have still been very much at the forefront of his compatriots’ minds.

According to Goldsworthy, at the beginning of the 3rd century BCE, Carthage was “undisputedly the greatest power in the Western Mediterranean.”<sup>34</sup> Carthage dominated the political, military and economic affairs of the western Mediterranean Sea, especially on the North African coasts and islands, mainly due to its superior navy.<sup>35</sup> In the 4th century BCE, the Carthaginians were the first to develop the quadrireme, which was both bigger and more powerful than the trireme, the ship that had dominated naval warfare for the previous 200 years.

<sup>36</sup> Their naval successes helped Carthage conquer nearly all her neighbors. But, despite large landholdings, the Carthaginian population was not large, at least compared to that of Rome. As a

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<sup>31</sup> Guy Rogers and C. Warren Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition* (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2007), 175.

<sup>32</sup> Miles, “Carthage,” 35-36.

<sup>33</sup> Nigel Bagnall, *The Punic Wars 264-146 BC* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002), 13.

<sup>34</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 25.

<sup>35</sup> Starr, *A History of the Ancient World*, 477.

<sup>36</sup> Miles, “Carthage,” 36.

result, Carthage could not sacrifice their citizen population to serve in the army as Rome could.<sup>37</sup> For this same reason, Carthage's navy was mainly comprised of foreign and mercenary soldiers. Carthage did not have a large land army, but they did have one unique asset-- elephants. Carthage's African colonies allowed them to make use of African forest elephants in their land battles (these now extinct elephants were more amenable to training than today's African elephants).<sup>38</sup> No other army in the Mediterranean region had any experience with elephants, much less in fighting them.

The majority of Carthaginian wealth came from productive trading posts and a highly organized and effective agricultural base, which supplied the city and provided a great surplus for export.<sup>39</sup> Carthage's trade networks extended from Gadir (Cádiz) along the coasts of southern Iberia and North Africa, across the Balearic Islands, Corsica, Sardinia, and the western half of Sicily, to the ports of the eastern Mediterranean, including Tyre, its mother city, on the coast of the Levant.<sup>40</sup> In 300, the lands controlled by Carthage were much greater than the *ager Romanus* (Roman lands in Italy).<sup>41</sup> By the time of its war with Rome, Carthage was "clear master" of all the southern and western parts of Sicily, Spain, North Africa, and parts of the Near East.<sup>42</sup>

### **Tension Builds- Causes for War**

Prior to 264 relations between Rome and Carthage had generally been peaceful. There were treaties and communications between the two powers that give insight into an at least

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<sup>37</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 30-32.

<sup>38</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 34-35.

<sup>39</sup> Serge Lancel, *Carthage* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995), 269-288.

<sup>40</sup> Starr, *A History of the Ancient World*, 478.

<sup>41</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 29.

<sup>42</sup> Gilbert Charles Picard, *Carthage* (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 1991), 56-124.; Lancel, *Carthage*, 78-102.

diplomatic relationship between the two great empires.<sup>43</sup> However, we also know that at the height of power, just before the First Punic War, Carthage was hostile in some cases to foreign ships (such as Roman and Greek vessels) in the western Mediterranean.<sup>44</sup>

While the deeper causes of the first war between Rome and Carthage are obscure and controversial, the proximate causes were not. In 264, the Mamertine people in Messana on the island of Sicily (modern day Messina) appealed to both Carthage and Rome for help against a rising tyrant who threatened to invade them, Hiero of Syracuse (Siracusa). Unsurprisingly, Carthage answered the appeal. They had long been active in Sicily, except in Syracuse, Sicily's biggest city. It was only logical to respond to the Mamertine's request, as Carthage sought to control the entire island of Sicily. However, it was a very different story for the Romans. It is possible that Rome was nervous about Carthage's complete control of Sicily because of the island's close proximity to southern Italy. The southern region of Italy was only recently added to Roman *imperium* and possibly looked "particularly vulnerable" to attack. On the other hand, if Rome, instead of Carthage, had a stronghold in Sicily, their territory would be safe from Mediterranean invasion.

Though the Romans had never fought outside of their peninsula before, the two consuls of Rome were eager to expand Rome's *imperium* and persuaded Roman citizens to vote for war with promises of "rich booty" among other benefits. The Roman state (as well as individual Romans) additionally had economic and political interests in Sicily even before the outbreak of

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<sup>43</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 65.

<sup>44</sup> Starr, *A History of the Ancient World*, 478.

that war, since the island had been a source of food for the expanding city of Rome since at least the fifth century BCE.<sup>45</sup>

The central position of Sicily was also very appealing to each side. If one were to control Sicily, one effectively controlled the flow of imports and exports of the entire western Mediterranean. In addition, as Carthage grew during the 3rd century, the Carthaginian state became more assertive and interventionist, particularly in pursuing its economic goals in the central Mediterranean.<sup>46</sup> With this background context in mind, we can understand why Rome might be wary of Punic influence so near to their own expanding region of influence.

To make the story complicated, some historians cite a prior Carthaginian/ Roman treaty, which made Sicily the territory of Carthage, in exchange for Roman use of Carthaginian ships. By invading Sicily with a hostile intent, Rome violated this treaty. However, the ancient sources are divided on this treaty's existence and whether or not this treaty had been violated. Philinus says that Rome did violate a treaty. Polybius says Rome did no such thing. Keeping in mind that the story of the treaty is told only by Roman authors, all we can be certain of is that any alleged treaty means that Rome and Carthage were at least reasonably amicable before the First Punic War.<sup>47</sup>

While the war can be seen as motivated by outright aggression and imperialism, historians typically take a much more nuanced view.<sup>48</sup> Some argue that Rome's expansion was driven by short-term defensive and inter-state factors (relations with city-states and kingdoms

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<sup>45</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 67-68.; Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 68.; Laura Elizabeth Pfuntner "The Changing Urban Landscape of Roman Sicily," PhD diss. (University of California, Berkeley, 2013), 2.

<sup>46</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 166-167.; 112.

<sup>47</sup> Polybius, *Histories*, 1. 14-15.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 69.; 70.

<sup>48</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 38.

outside of Rome).<sup>49</sup> Rome's growth greatly expanded the potential enemies that Rome might face, and moved Rome closer to confrontation with major regional powers.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, Polybius thought that Rome was shamelessly opportunistic in its involvement on the island of Sicily. Dio cited a "mutual fear" between Rome and Carthage. Goldsworthy believes that favoring expansion was the prime cause of the war.<sup>51</sup> Other historians have cited economic reasons: the acquisition of slaves, or simply military glory for commanders.<sup>52</sup> No matter what the actual reasons for the war were, nobody in Rome expected more than a "brief confrontation" with the Carthaginians in 264.<sup>53</sup> What they found, instead, was the beginning (and end) of an entirely new chapter for these two giants of the ancient world.

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<sup>49</sup> Arthur Eckstein, *Rome Enters the Greek East: From Anarchy to Hierarchy in the Hellenistic Mediterranean, 230-170 BC* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 22.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas Madden, *Empires of Trust: How Rome Built--and America Is Building--a New World* (Oxford: Plume, 2009), 53.

<sup>51</sup> Polybius, *Histories*, 1: 14-18.; Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, XI. 43.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 70-72.

<sup>52</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 70-72.; Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 71.

<sup>53</sup> W. V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC* (Oxford University Press, 1979), 183-185.

## Chapter 2: Short Overview of The Wars

Rome was a growing city of trade by the Tiber River while Carthage reigned supreme; but the island of Sicily soon became the flashpoint for growing resentment between Rome and Carthage. Although the Punic Wars grew to be the biggest conflict in the history of either side, neither the Romans nor the Carthaginians imagined that their clash would end with the complete destruction and subjugation of one of them. The physical proximity and ongoing expansion of these two great superpowers made an eventual collision possible, but the intensity of the wars to come was partly a result of the fortitude, pride, and power of each side. Rome was fierce: “*Degeneres animos timor arguit*” (Fear is the proof of a degenerate mind).<sup>54</sup> Carthage was strong: “*Aut viam inveniam aut faciam*” (I will either find a way, or make one).<sup>55</sup>

### The First Punic War (264 BCE- 241 BCE)

In Sicily, Hiero II, the dictator of Syracuse, posed a threat to the freedom of the Mamertines in Messina. In response to attacks by Hiero, the Mamertines first asked Carthage and then Rome for help against their enemy. Because the Carthaginians had already agreed to help the Mamertines, the Carthaginians felt betrayed by the Mamertines’ further appeal to Rome. Fatefully, the Carthaginians changed sides, sending forces to aid Hiero II instead. Afterward it was Syracuse with Carthage versus Messana with Rome, each party acting in its own self-interest. In 264 BCE, Hiero created a blockade around Messana. In response, the Roman commander Appius Claudius attacked Hiero’s camp. Hiero was defeated and headed back to

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<sup>54</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid*, IV. 13.

<sup>55</sup> Latin proverb, commonly attributed to Hannibal in response to his generals who had declared it impossible to cross the Alps with elephants; English translation as quoted in James Samuel Knox, *Salesmanship and Business Efficiency* (Cleveland: Knox Business Book Company, 1922).



Syracuse. Following him, Claudius raided and destroyed the Sicilian countryside in a “demonstration of force.”<sup>56</sup> That same year, Rome and Carthage declared war on each other, mainly over the control of Sicily.<sup>57</sup>

For the first time ever, Rome sent armies outside of the Italian peninsula. Leading two legions, the Roman consuls told Sicilian cities to defect from Carthaginian control or they would be taken by force. Most cities defected, as the Sicilians sought to protect themselves by allying with the strongest power. Syracuse was soon Rome’s main target, as it was the prime enemy in fighting Rome alongside Carthage. Unsurprisingly, Hiero II surrendered to Rome. In a treaty, he guaranteed provisions to Roman armies in perpetuity in exchange for his continued control of an independent Syracuse. According to Goldsworthy, without Hiero, the Roman campaigns in Sicily would “not have been possible,” because it was Syracuse that provided Rome with food, a camp, and a port.<sup>58</sup> In June 262, Rome took Agrigentum (Agrigento) with heavy losses, one of Carthage’s biggest cities and most important ports.<sup>59</sup>

The destruction on the island of Sicily was profound as a result of the fighting. In Agrigento today, remnants of Carthaginian burning and devastation can still be seen. On the eastern side of the temple of Juno, some stone blocks are still visibly reddened. This discoloration is evidence of the fire set during the Siege of Agrigentum (figure 2.1: see figure below).<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 73.

<sup>57</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, bk. 16.

<sup>58</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 74-77.

<sup>59</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, bk. 16.

<sup>60</sup> Standing Text, *Tempio di Giunone (Temple of Juno)*, Valle dei Templi Archaeological Site, Agrigento, Sicily, Italy, August 21, 2018.



Figure 2.1: Discoloration on the *Tempio di Giunone* (Temple of Juno)- evidence of the fire set during the Siege of Agrigento. Agrigento, Sicily.

Following the battle, Agrigento was occupied and the whole population was sold into slavery. Agrigento's brutalization hardened the attitude of many other Sicilian towns, which might otherwise have proven friendly to Rome.<sup>61</sup>

Whenever Carthage and Rome met on land, Rome had the upper hand because of their superior numbers and fighting techniques. Land battles were never the best option for the Carthaginians, as they suffered heavy losses and often had their war elephants captured. Additionally, Carthage just could not rival the quick replacement rate of Roman soldiers.

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<sup>61</sup> Standing Text, *Guerre Punique (Punic War)*, Valle dei Templi Archaeological Site, Agrigento, Sicily, Italy, August 21, 2018.

Carthaginian success prior to this conflict was always attributed to their navy. Therefore, it was no surprise that after several sieges and capture of their Sicilian cities on land, Carthage took again to the sea: “Carthage rules the waves.”<sup>62</sup>

Rome, a land power with virtually no fleet of its own, did not pose any challenge to Carthage’s navy, at least initially. In fact, Carthage considered the Roman’s lack of navy as proof that their tenure on the island of Sicily would not last long.<sup>63</sup> In 254 BCE, Rome had no navy and knew nothing of sea battles. To make up for their lack of naval expertise, Rome allegedly stole two Carthaginian ships from the ancient city of Lilybaeum (now called Marsala) and copied their design.<sup>64</sup> Polybius suggests that the Romans captured a Carthaginian vessel in a battle in the straits of Sicily in 264 and used it as a model for a new Roman naval fleet, which eventually turned the course of the war in Rome’s favor.<sup>65</sup> Rome’s ability to learn from their opponents and adapt made them particularly formidable. Not long after copying the Carthaginian design, Rome built and equipped 330 ships.<sup>66</sup>

Prior to the conflict, Rome had only been in a sea battle once before. In 282 BCE, they fought against the Tarentines and lost badly. Since then, the Romans had relied on their allies for shipping and transport. They had little need for any warships because a treaty dated to 278 provided for support from the Carthaginian navy, should the need arise in the Mediterranean.<sup>67</sup> However, Rome learned from their previous naval mistakes and adapted with great speed. The

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<sup>62</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 94-95.; Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 177.

<sup>63</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 177.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 75.

<sup>64</sup> Wall Text, Lilybaeum, Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

<sup>65</sup> Polybius, 1. 20.; Josephine Crawley Quinn, “Translating Empire From Carthage To Rome,” *Classical Philology* 112, no. 3 (July 2017): 316.

<sup>66</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 62.

<sup>67</sup> Appian, *Roman History*, bk. 3.; *The Samnite Wars*, vol. 1, bks. 1-8.; Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 179.

Senate's decision to construct and man a fleet of 100 quinqueremes and 20 triremes (three banked ancient warships) clearly marked a major change in Roman practice. A fleet of that size required over 30,000 rowers. The major financial and social risk of these ships, in terms of both men and property, was highly calculated. The ships were essential to keep Sicily under Roman rule and to supply her armies there; only defeating Carthage by sea would allow this.<sup>68</sup>

The Italian archeologist Rossella Giglio hypothesizes that the length of the Punic warship was 35m and 4.80m wide. It weighed 120 tons, with a possible crew of 68 rowers, or 34 per side, which handled 17 oars (figure 2.2-4).<sup>69</sup> Carthaginian crews were particularly adept at ramming into other ships; they were the experts at this technique.<sup>70</sup> The Carthaginians even had countermeasures on their ships so that if a ship rammed into them first, the ship would get stuck and the Carthaginians could easily counterattack (figure 2.5).<sup>71</sup> On the other hand, Roman ships were neither as fast nor as maneuverable as their Punic counterparts.<sup>72</sup> The Romans could copy Carthaginian ship construction, but not the expertise of well-trained Carthaginian sailors.

In order to overcome these problems, the Romans developed a new type of boarding bridge called the *corvus* (beak), a moveable gangplank, which could be attached to an enemy's ship and held in place with hooks (figure 2.6). When a Roman vessel got close enough to a Carthaginian one, they could use the bridge to pierce the deck planks of their opponent, board the Carthaginian ship, immobilize it, and swarm the enemy, overwhelming them with their superior

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<sup>68</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 96-97.; 105.

<sup>69</sup> R. Giglio, *Lilibeo e il mare. Marsala. Il Museo Archeologico Regionale Baglio Anselmi ed il relitto della nave punica* (Marsala: Museo Archeologico Regionale Baglio Anselmi, 2007).

<sup>70</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 178.

<sup>71</sup> Wall Text, *The First Punic War*, Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

<sup>72</sup> This information is actively being discovered and the scholarly theories are changing. An anchor from a Roman warship was discovered off of Sicily while I was studying in Sicily the summer of 2018. The Antonio Cordici Erice Museum suggests that these anchors were cut during the final battle of the First Punic War-- the Battle of the Egadi Islands (Aegates).

numbers and swordsmanship (figure 2.7). With these techniques, the Romans extended their land fighting advantages to naval battles.<sup>73</sup>

While the Romans took Carthaginian cities in Sicily, the Carthaginian general Hamilcar Barca began to attack Roman ports. Hamilcar was surnamed Barca (meaning “lightning”) because of his speed in attack. He struck without warning up and down the coast of Italy, cutting off Roman supply lines. In a last ditch effort to drain Carthaginian power and gain the upper hand, Rome invaded Carthage’s African colonies (256-55 BCE). The invasion was never intended to establish a permanent Roman presence in Africa. Rather, it was a means of applying further pressure on the Carthaginians in the hope of forcing them into submission. As a result of the attack, Rome allegedly obtained 20,000 slaves and delivered them back to Rome (including former Roman soldiers turned prisoners of war). Rome eventually gave up her efforts in Africa and left due to the distance and the expense. Hamilcar defeated the Romans within a few years at the Battle of Drepana in 249 BCE, but, like the Romans in Africa, was eventually forced to withdraw, due to a lack of supplies.<sup>74</sup>

Described by Goldsworthy as “the greatest naval conflict in antiquity,” the First Punic War produced staggering losses in men and material on both sides.<sup>75</sup> In addition to numerous sea battles, where hundreds of men died in a matter of hours, there were terrible storms around Sicily that sank vessels full of men and supplies.<sup>76</sup> Finally, the Battle of the Egadi Islands (also known as the Battle of the Aegates) in 241 BCE brought an end to the First Punic War after over 20 years of continuous fighting (figure 2.8).

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<sup>73</sup> Wall Text, *The First Punic War*, Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 106.

<sup>74</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 129.; 84.; 91.

<sup>75</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 96.

<sup>76</sup> Brian Herbert Warmington, *Carthage* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc, 1993), 170-180.

Under the commander Catulus, Rome ambushed the Carthaginian fleet led by Hanno, which was heavily loaded with supplies in order to relieve the besieged city of Lilybaeum (Marsala). On the morning of March 10, the wind favored the Carthaginians and Hanno immediately set sail. Catulus had the Roman ships stripped of their masts, sails, and other unnecessary equipment, to make them more seaworthy in the rough seas. During the ensuing battle, the Romans enjoyed far greater mobility, since their vessels were carrying only the bare necessities, while the Carthaginians were burdened with men, equipment, and provisions. The Carthaginian crews were also hurriedly levied and inexperienced. The Romans quickly gained the upper hand, using their ships' greater maneuverability to ram, board, and burn the enemy vessels.<sup>77</sup> As a result, the Romans sank or captured Carthage's last fleet. The Romans lost 30 ships and had 50 damaged, while 50 Carthaginian ships sank (20 of them with all hands on board), and 70 captured, along with thousands of men.<sup>78</sup>

After the great defeat, Carthage had few ships left and either did not have the drive or the resources to build another fleet. Rome, too, experienced heavy losses. After the war, there was a 50,000-person decline in the subsequent Roman census, which might be an indication of all their losses at sea. Ultimately, the Romans won because their ruthless determination and single-minded pursuit of victory made them willing to accept its high price in men and ships.<sup>79</sup>

Finally, peace was negotiated between Rome and Carthage. The terms of the treaty required Carthage to evacuate Sicily, return all prisoners, and pay an indemnity of 2,200 talents

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<sup>77</sup> Wall Text, *The First Punic War*, Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

<sup>78</sup> Polybius, *The Histories*, 1. 60.; Diodorus, *Library of History*, 24. 11.; Paul Rodgers, "High Fashion On The Punic Battlefield," *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 2 Feb. 2015.

<sup>79</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 122.; 125-6.

(roughly \$66,000,000 USD) over the next 20 years.<sup>80</sup> Although the treaty introduced an era of reconciliation between Carthage and Rome, it did not herald a period of peace for either. In order to pay back Rome, Carthage had to campaign aggressively in Spain, their colony with the greatest resources, particularly its silver mines. Carthage's campaigns in Spain made Rome nervous.<sup>81</sup>

Soon after the First Punic War, Rome renewed a long-standing conflict with the Gauls and an extension of her power across the Adriatic into Illyria.<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, however, the Carthaginians suffered losses of local control. In 240 BCE, Carthage's African colonies revolted, and so, too, did their disgruntled mercenary army (which had not been paid). While Carthage was trying to quell these rebellions, Rome usurped the islands of Sardinia and Corsica from them (238 BCE).<sup>83</sup>

Carthage considered Rome's seizure of Sardinia and Corsica an act of betrayal. Sardinia, especially, was necessary for acquiring the resources that Carthage relied upon after the loss of Sicily. The island exported a significant amount of agricultural products to Carthage, far more than the city of Carthage produced or the production of any of their other Mediterranean provincial islands, including Sicily. Sardinia was also prosperous. Its opulence is shown by the number of lavish public and private buildings on the island's Punic cities, as well as fine imported objects and luxury goods that the elite were buried with.<sup>84</sup> Sicily and Sardinia were also the largest overseas exporters of wine to Carthage.<sup>85</sup> A lack of wine was of even greater

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<sup>80</sup> One talent is equal to around \$30,000 USD.; Dennis, "The Relative Value of Ancient Coinage," *The Campvs*, March 21, 2006.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 128.

<sup>81</sup> Nigel Bagnall, *The Punic Wars: Rome, Carthage, and the Struggle for the Mediterranean* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2005), 111.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 138-143.

<sup>82</sup> Nigel Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 111.; 127-141.

<sup>83</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 133.

<sup>84</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 135.; 113.

<sup>85</sup> Miles, "Carthage," 37.

significance to Carthage because wine was consumed in response to the lack of fresh water in the city, and for a primarily maritime people, Carthage needed this wine to supply their navy as well.

<sup>86</sup> The loss, therefore, of both of these islands was a very serious blow to Carthage, and, to say the least, they were not happy about it. Rather than trying to drive the Romans out of their former colonies, however, Carthage concentrated their efforts on the conquest of Spain.

The twenty-three years which separated the First and Second Punic Wars brought about intense activity and change for these two states, involving territorial expansion and constitutional adjustments, both of which eventually brought them, once again, into open conflict. Around 230, Hamilcar's priority was to ensure that the indemnity from the first war was paid to the Romans promptly and in full. The possession and exploitation of Spain enabled the Carthaginians to pay off their war debt to Rome and allowed Hamilcar to raise and maintain a mercenary army while remaining financially and politically independent. By the time he died, Hamilcar Barca had established Carthaginian dominion over southern and eastern Spain. He also took his hatred of Rome to his deathbed, but not before he shared this bitterness with his sons, Hannibal, Mago, and his son-in-law Hasdrubal, who inherited his political and military influence. Hamilcar's hatred, however, was not unique to him. After the unprincipled Roman seizure of Sardinia in 238, a similar hatred of Rome spread throughout the entire Punic population.<sup>87</sup>

Success and expansion in Spain made Carthage powerful enough to think they could defeat their old rival. The silver mines in Spain, in addition to other rich natural resources (mainly agricultural), made up for the financial loss of Sicily and Sardinia. The Spanish people (Barcid) also served as allied soldiers for the Carthaginians. In an attempt to halt Carthaginian

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<sup>86</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 179.

<sup>87</sup> Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 142-143.; 146.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 145-148.



expansion northward, the Romans drafted the Ebro Treaty in 226 BCE. The treaty stipulated that the Roman dominion would be limited to Spanish territory north of the Ebro River. Carthage would be restricted to the area they had already conquered south of the river, and neither nation would cross the boundary. The Carthaginians were insulted. Rome constantly refused to treat Carthage as an equal - Sardinia was an example of this attitude-- and the Ebro treaty represented the Roman liberty to exert control over Punic activity far from their own territory.<sup>88</sup>

After the death of his father and assassination of his brother-in-law, Hannibal came to power in Carthage, armed with the legacy of his father's military success and a familial hatred for Rome. Hannibal was ambitious. At the age of 26, he was made supreme commander of Iberia and proclaimed commander-in-chief of the army (confirmed by the Carthaginian government). Soon after, Hannibal began refining his plans and completing his preparations to secure power in the Mediterranean. By 220, Carthage paid off all of their indemnities from the First Punic War and no longer owed anything to Rome. From that point forward, Carthage was debt free, strong, and expanding once again.<sup>89</sup>

The causes of the Second Punic War will never be entirely clear, but the Second War probably came about as the result of a Carthaginian desire to reassert themselves as an independent power. Though, we cannot entirely disregard the possibility that Hannibal himself wanted power and glory. On the other hand, considering the tradition of Hamilcar and foreign relations at the time, Goldsworthy is explicit: "The second punic war was clearly a legacy of the first."<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 145-149.

<sup>89</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 149.

<sup>90</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 149.

## **The Second Punic War (218 BCE- 202 BCE)**

In 218, Carthage laid siege to Saguntum, a city near the modern town of Sagunto in the eastern province of Valencia, Spain. However, according to the Ebro Treaty, Saguntum fell under the protection of Rome. As a result, Rome sent Carthage a warning to cease and desist immediately. The “arrogant Roman demand” to abandon Saguntum was ignored by Hannibal, who rejected the treaty, saying that Carthage never ratified it.<sup>91</sup>

Some historians doubt whether Hannibal attacked Saguntum deliberately or whether the Saguntines, who had Rome’s support, provoked him. According to Nigel Bagnall, the justification of provocation seems “thin in the very least.”<sup>92</sup> Saguntum was one of the most highly fortified cities in the area and it would have been unwise to leave such a stronghold in the hands of the enemy. Hannibal was also looking for plunder, either to pay his mercenaries or to deal with his political opponents in Carthage. Bagnall goes further, suggesting that Hannibal “engineered the war,” citing his “unconcealed ambition” and his family’s “unswerving ... pursuit” for revenge.<sup>93</sup>

On the other hand, since most of the remaining ancient sources covering this period are pro-Roman, one cannot rule out the other possibility that Rome encouraged Saguntum to defy Hannibal. Either way, Rome failed to support their ally during the siege of Saguntum. This abandonment or neglect might be due to the fact that Rome's legions were occupied elsewhere or perhaps it was a calculated move to drum up support for the war in Rome. Hannibal's alleged hatred of Rome and all Romans, too, might have been Roman propaganda to justify the Second and eventually the Third Punic War.

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<sup>91</sup> Appian, *The Spanish Wars*, 7.; 10.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 150.; 145.

<sup>92</sup> Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 151.

<sup>93</sup> Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 151.

After capturing Saguntum, Hannibal established it as a secure base in Spain. The siege of the town assured him of a plentiful supply of hardy, battle-conditioned soldiers, and an abundance of natural resources to maintain them. After the siege, Hannibal went to his winter quarters in “New Carthage” (modern day Cartagena, Spain), where he prepared for the coming war. During the first war, Carthage always responded to Roman movements. This time, Hannibal Barca was determined to take the initiative. He made the key decision to mobilize his men and attack Rome on Roman territory.<sup>94</sup>

With his Spanish spoils, Hannibal was able to support a huge force of troops. According to Polybius, Hannibal began the war with 90,000 infantrymen and 12,000 cavalrymen. Hannibal was able to mobilize mercenary forces from vastly different locations and ethnicities (Barcid, Libyan, Celtic, Numidian, African, tribal, etc.).<sup>95</sup> These troops used different weapons, spoke disparate languages, and were of different races. While all of his officers were Carthaginian, Hannibal put together a cosmopolitan army. The army that Hannibal led into Italy in 218 was “probably the finest Carthaginian army ever to take the field.”<sup>96</sup>

In the spring of 218, Hannibal crossed the River Ebro. His act signaled the beginning of another Punic/Roman war. Instead of crossing the Mediterranean to get to Rome, Hannibal fatefully and famously did the impossible; Hannibal took his men and elephants across the Alps. This act assured that the war (at least at the start) would be fought entirely on Italian soil (figure 2.8). For Hannibal, defeating Rome in Rome would be worth much more than a Spanish or Gallic victory.<sup>97</sup> Hannibal did not want to destroy Rome, he simply wanted to weaken her and

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<sup>94</sup> Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 155.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 152.

<sup>95</sup> Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 155.

<sup>96</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 155.; 35.

<sup>97</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 158.; 166.

make her allies defect. Hannibal told Roman prisoners after the Battle of Cannae in 216 that he was not fighting to destroy them but rather for “honor and power.”<sup>98</sup>

During his march on land to Rome (of nearly 900 miles), Hannibal dealt with many minor attacks from Gallic tribes without too much trouble (probably because they were afraid of elephants). He likely reached the Alps in November of 218. The entire march took about 5 months, including three to four weeks for Hannibal and his men to cross the Alps. During the crossing, Hannibal’s main enemies were the terrain and the elements. The human cost of crossing the Alps was enormous; more than half of Hannibal’s men were lost in only a few months to death and attrition. However, after the crossing, Hannibal likely had the pick of his army left. The strongest men survived and were willing to stand by Hannibal no matter what. These were mainly veterans of his family’s previous Spanish campaigns. It says a lot for the stamina and recuperative powers of the survivors that, after only three days of rest and reorganization, they opened the campaign in Italy with vigor and determination.<sup>99</sup> Hannibal had achieved what many believed was impossible (crossing the Alps), and the news of his successful journey shocked the Roman Senate. The Senate did not immediately send armies to meet Hannibal, simply because they did not believe he was there. Instead, they sent an army to confront Hannibal in Spain, only to find that he was gone.<sup>100</sup>

Hannibal made it over the Alps. But all the effort up to this point had accomplished no more than to put him in a position to begin the assault on his real enemy. In order to feed his army and elephants in rural Northern Italy, Hannibal began foraging and laying waste to the

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<sup>98</sup> Livy, *From the Founding City*, 22. 5. 8. 3.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 156.

<sup>99</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 163-168.; Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 167.

<sup>100</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 161-173.

Italic countryside, pillaging, and burning it to the ground.<sup>101</sup> Inevitably, the Romans sent out legions to stop Hannibal. None of them were successful.

At the Battle of Ticinus (Nov. 218), Hannibal captured 600 Romans and crossed the River Po into central Italy. One month later at the Battle of Trebia, Hannibal's cavalry broke through the Roman line and attacked the bulk of the Romans from the front, sides, and rear. The Romans suffered heavy losses. The victory at Trebia gave Hannibal's campaign sufficient momentum to carry it through the months of virtual inactivity forced upon them by the winter weather. The win also increased the soldiers' faith in their commander.<sup>102</sup>

When the snow finally melted, Hannibal lured the Roman commander, Gaius Flaminius, into an advance along the shores of Lake Trasimene. There, Hannibal had prepared for the enemy with an ambush. Flaminius led his army into the trap, and the Romans were annihilated. Hannibal dealt a huge blow to the Roman army at the cost of minimal loss to his side.<sup>103</sup> The Roman general Flaminius was also killed in action. Livy states that the massacre was so terrible that neither army was aware of the occurrence of an earthquake, which at the very moment of the battle "overthrew large portions of many of the cities of Italy, turned rivers, and leveled mountains with an awful crash."<sup>104</sup>

Though the exact numbers are uncertain, it is clear that thousands of Roman men died. Fabius Pictor says 15,000 Romans were killed in an afternoon. Polybius says Hannibal captured 15,000 men. Livy writes that 6,000 infantry were forced to lay their arms and surrender. Hannibal also gathered a great quantity of booty and military equipment from the spoils. This

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<sup>101</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome at War*, 150.

<sup>102</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 171-173.; 180.

<sup>103</sup> David Potter, *Ancient Rome: A New History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2014), 76.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 189.

<sup>104</sup> Livy, *From the Founding of the City*, bk. 22, sec. 5.

defeat had a huge psychological effect on the Romans. There was a panic in Rome, and Romans started to have doubts about the very future of their city. But there was worse to come.<sup>105</sup>

The Battle of Cannae (August 2, 216) was Hannibal's greatest victory. At Cannae, Hannibal offered battle on the banks of the river Aufindus (in Pragen), which was a relatively compressed field.<sup>106</sup> This meant that the Romans would have to use an especially deep formation for their infantry - thereby negating their advantage in numbers and making them especially susceptible to the flanking attack that Hannibal had planned.<sup>107</sup> Hannibal's Punic cavalry attacked the much weaker right wing of the Romans in the battle, then raced to the rear line to attack Rome's Latin allies from behind, who were already engaged with Hannibal's cavalry. By the end of the day, Hannibal's outnumbered men had enveloped and massacred the greater part of the largest army Rome had ever put into the field, turning this into one of the bloodiest battles ever fought. Some historians speculate that the staggering losses rivaled even the industrialized slaughters of the 20th century.<sup>108</sup>

At the end of the battle of Cannae, 50,000 Roman infantry along with 2,700 cavalry were dead, with additional numbers taken as prisoners.<sup>109</sup> This result sent chills of doubt to Rome and her allies, and boosted the confidence of Carthaginians and other rival tribes. Livy noted:

How much more serious was the defeat of Cannae, than those which preceded it can be seen by the behaviour of Rome's allies; before that fateful day, their loyalty remained unshaken, now it began to waver for the simple reason that they despaired of Roman power.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Livy, *From the Founding of the City*, bk. 22, sec. 8.; Polybius, *Histories*, bk. 3, ch. 81-89.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 189.

<sup>106</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 197.

<sup>107</sup> Potter, *Ancient Rome*, 76.

<sup>108</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 197.

<sup>109</sup> Appian, *Hannibalic War*, 2.5.; Livy, *From the Founding City*, 22. 36-38.

<sup>110</sup> Livy, *The History of Rome*, bk. 22, sec. 61.

Rome's losses were appalling, falling heavily on the wealthier classes, senators, equestrians, and farmers who served in the infantry. Perhaps 25% of the men qualified for military service were lost through casualties and defections. To replace the men they lost, the Roman army began to recruit from the rural population of farmers and their sons.<sup>111</sup> Rome also replaced their military with men 17 and younger. They lowered the military qualification standard to include even poorer citizens, and they even promised slaves freedom and criminals amnesty if they took up arms against Hannibal.<sup>112</sup> Though it was clear that Hannibal was the superior military commander, Rome's ability to exploit the resources of Italy enabled it to overcome all their losses in men and materials.<sup>113</sup>

But despite fighting the perfect battle and never actually losing in direct combat, Hannibal was forced to evacuate Italy 12 years later, because he could not sustain a campaign with an indefinite ending. Roaming around the Roman countryside, Hannibal plundered fertile lands and devastated the rich *ager Falernus*, famous for its wines. As Hannibal looted and burned the countryside, the Roman general Quintus Fabius Maximus did not think he could win a battle directly, so he just followed Hannibal around, earning him the nickname "*Cunctator*" (the Delayer).<sup>114</sup> Hannibal was faced with the permanent problem of protecting his new allies and their territory. Hannibal did not have a great number of soldiers at his disposal (compared to Rome), especially not while Rome quickly mustered new legions, making use of slaves and criminals. Hannibal had no such reservoir of citizen manpower.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 315.; 185-186.

<sup>112</sup> Livy, 22. 57. 10-12.; 23. 14. 1-4.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 219-226.

<sup>113</sup> Potter, *Ancient Rome*, 104.

<sup>114</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 193-198.

<sup>115</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 225-227.; J. F. Lazenby, *Hannibalic War* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), 234.

The war continued, but by 208, Hannibal's control had been reduced to the extreme south of the country. In spite of his successes, Roman pressure gradually reduced his allies. Rome was winning the war of attrition, but the city and her allies were feeling the strain of maintaining the struggle for so long.<sup>116</sup> Carthage could not maintain campaigns in Spain, an attempt to retake at Sardinia and Sicily, as well as to reinforce Hannibal in Italy.<sup>117</sup> Eventually, faced with the knowledge that the Romans were preparing to mount an expedition against their other territories, Hannibal turned back to the defense of Carthage and Africa.<sup>118</sup>

Unlike most of the battles of the Second Punic War fought in Italy, the Romans fared better in Africa at the Battle of Zama (203 BCE) and at the battle of the Great Plains (202 BCE).<sup>119</sup> In the last battle in Africa, the Roman army constituted a force that was superior to the Carthaginians both in terms of arms and skills. Hannibal was convinced that his men would not be able to defeat the Roman defense, so he refused to lead his army.<sup>120</sup> The Battle of Zama dealt a decisive blow to the Carthaginian forces. Ultimately, Scipio Africanus defeated Hannibal.<sup>121</sup> Forcing Carthage into a peace treaty, Rome demanded the return of all Roman prisoners, and that all of the Carthaginian land outside of Africa be abandoned. Additionally, Carthage was required to pay a 10,000-talent indemnity over 50 years, and they were prohibited from making war outside of Africa without Rome's permission.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 233-238.

<sup>117</sup> Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 203.

<sup>118</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 244.

<sup>119</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 307.

<sup>120</sup> Bagnall, *The Punic Wars*, 293.

<sup>121</sup> Hannibal abandoned his goals and returned to Carthage. He began a new career as a politician rather than a general. He eventually died sometime between 183-181 BCE.

<sup>122</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 308.



From the beginning, the Second Punic War was a far more serious struggle than the First. The First Punic War began in Sicily and remained primarily a struggle for control of the island. The conflict became one of endurance, decided when the last Punic fleet was destroyed at the Egadi (Aegates) Islands. The resulting peace treaty left Carthage strong in Africa and still capable of expansion in Spain, but it came to seem harsher after the Roman seizure of Sardinia. The Second Punic War was a much simpler struggle for dominance, in which territory was only ever of secondary importance. The war was fought to force the other side to submit and accept a treaty favoring the victor.

The end of the second war with Carthage in 201 BCE established Rome as the most powerful state in the western Mediterranean and embroiled it in further conflicts. The war left a legacy of continuing war in Macedonia, Spain, and Africa. These wars occupied Rome for the next several decades.<sup>123</sup> Rome became involved in the rivalries among the Hellenistic kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>124</sup> Ptolemaic Egypt, Seleucid Asia, Antigonid Macedon (Macedonia), and the smaller Greek states had long been at each other's throats, and Rome's victories over Carthage made her stronger than any one of them. Whatever motives that underlay their conquests, the Romans gained control of almost all the Hellenistic world during the course of the second century BCE, including Macedonia.<sup>125</sup> Rome then took revenge upon those Roman city-states that sided with Carthage during the Second Punic War, as well as those who remained "neutral."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 248-290.; 316.

<sup>124</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 185.

<sup>125</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 185.; Potter, *Ancient Rome*, 104.

<sup>126</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 245-268.

Although the Romans were successful in the first two Punic Wars and in their international conquests afterwards, Rome suffered a number of humiliations and damaging reverses in the course of these engagements, especially at the Battle of Cannae (216 BCE). This humiliation grew into an attitude of vengeance and seeking total victory.<sup>127</sup> Once again, through campaigns in North Africa, Carthage began to regain her strength. The Roman delegation was deeply impressed and deeply concerned at the growing wealth and population of their old enemy. The mood was personified by Cato who, by this time, was in his late 70s and a influential orator. In the Senate, Cato ended every speech he delivered with the same phrase, “*Carthago delenda est*” or “Carthage must be destroyed.”<sup>128</sup> By pulling a ripe fig out of his toga, Cato exaggerated how quickly a Punic fleet might make its way to Rome to muster support for his argument. Cato often expressed the mood of the majority of the Roman population.<sup>129</sup>

Despite good relations between Rome and Carthage since 201 BCE, there was a growing sense of insecurity in Rome during the 150s. Carthage had finished paying its indemnities from the second war to Rome in 151, and Rome did not want Carthage making another comeback. Carthage’s involvement in a small conflict outside Africa without Rome’s permission (which they lost), gave Rome the perfect excuse to attack Carthage one last time.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 347.

<sup>128</sup> Plutarch, “Life of Cato the Elder,” *The Parallel Lives*, 27.1: “ἐκείνο δ’ ἤδη καὶ βιαιότερον, τὸ περὶ παντὸς οὐδὲ δῆποτε πράγματος γνώμην ἀποφαινόμενον προσεπιφωνεῖν οὕτως· ‘Δοκεῖ δέ μοι καὶ Καρχηδόνα μὴ εἶναι.’”; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 15. 20: “[Cato] clamaret omni senatu Carthaginem delendam.”; Aurelius Victor, *De Viris Illustribus*, 47. 8: “Carthaginem delendam censuit.”

<sup>129</sup> Plutarch, “Life of Cato the Elder,” *The Parallel Lives*, 27.; Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 185.; Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 333.

<sup>130</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 331- 338.

## **The Third Punic War (149 BCE- 146 BCE)**

The final confrontation between Rome and Carthage lasted for four years and took place entirely in Africa. In 146 BCE, it ended with Carthage's total destruction. Responsibility for the earlier conflicts is not always easy to assign, but there is no doubt that the Third Punic War was deliberately provoked by the Romans, who had made a conscious decision to destroy their old enemy.<sup>131</sup> The Roman general Scipio Aemilianus in 146 BCE razed the city of Carthage, and its remaining population was sold into slavery.<sup>132</sup> Tragically, this meant the violent death or enslavement of thousands of men, women and children, and the effective end of classical Carthaginian civilization. According to one modern legend, the Roman soldiers sewed the ground of the city with salt to prevent the land from ever being fertile again.<sup>133</sup> This myth reflects the perceived savagery of the destruction of the city. The brutal destruction of Carthage in 146 (and Corinth around the same time) sent a clear message throughout the Mediterranean world: opposition to Rome would not be tolerated.<sup>134</sup> In an extreme (and possibly exaggerated) view, historian Ben Kiernan alleges that this total destruction was the world's first genocide.<sup>135</sup> After 700 years of existence, Carthage was no more.<sup>136</sup>

Such destruction was never seen before in the ancient world (unless one civilization of people was infinitely smaller than their attacker and they were completely destroyed by accident). Even in those cases, never before was complete destruction the original intent. In the end, Rome's relentless pursuit of total victory destroyed her rival both physically and as a

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<sup>131</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 331.

<sup>132</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 347.

<sup>133</sup> R. T. Ridley, "To Be Taken with a Pinch of Salt: The Destruction of Carthage," *Classical Philology* 81, no. 2 (1986): 140-46.

<sup>134</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 347.

<sup>135</sup> Ben Kiernan, "The First Genocide: Carthage, 146 BC." *Diogenes*. 51 (3) (August, 1, 2004): 27-39.

<sup>136</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 5.

political entity, creating a new province in Africa to administer the region. Eventually, Carthage re-emerged as a city of the Roman Empire, preserving some vestige of its former culture, but only superficially, as Carthage was wholly Roman now.<sup>137</sup>

By 130 BCE, the Romans had gained control, either directly or indirectly, of almost all the Hellenistic world, including the Carthaginian, Seleucid, Macedonian, Corinthian, and Pergamon empires. When the second century drew to a close, Rome was the master of the entire Mediterranean world.<sup>138</sup> The acquisition of land, slaves, and wealth, brought changes that altered the development of the entire Roman empire.

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<sup>137</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 92.; 356.

<sup>138</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 185-186.

## **Part II: An Introduction to the Effects of the Punic Wars**

Perhaps the most immediate and apparent result of Rome's dearly bought victory over Carthage was her establishment as the dominant power in the entire Mediterranean world. By the end of the First Punic War, Rome was mistress of Sicily, and, a short time later, of Sardinia and Corsica as well. At the end of the Hannibalic struggle Rome's power in Spain and the whole of Italy was secure. In the East, within eleven years of the close of the Second Punic War, she had set up a virtual protectorate over all the realms of Alexander the Great's successor empires. Over 122 years, Rome had fought for existence, but had won world dominion.

In Part II of my thesis, I explore how the Punic Wars changed the lives of Roman individuals in peninsular Italy and Sicily after 146 BCE. First, I address the destruction of the population. Fleets of more than 300 oared warships, crewed by over 100,000 sailors were employed by both sides in the first war, and in the second war, hundreds of thousands of men were recruited to fight in the rival armies. The cost of constructing so many galleys, as well as paying for, equipping, and feeding so many men consumed a great part of the resources of the two most powerful states in the western Mediterranean. The human cost was even higher. During the Second Punic War, a sizable part of Rome's adult male population perished, mostly in the first few years of the conflict. In one battle alone in 216, the Romans and their allies lost around 50,000 men. Casualties were not only restricted to soldiers. Many civilians were massacred when one of the armies stormed a town or city, others were killed by the raiding bands, and, although the evidence for this is poor, we must assume that many more died of starvation. Others were captured or enslaved, living out the remainder of their days in squalid drudgery.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 12.

The destruction of the local Roman population through the extended military campaigns, directly led to the rise of *latifundia*. These large farm estates radically altered the lives of a predominantly agricultural people, because when many soldiers returned from war there was little available land to farm or work. I explore what became of the farmer after the extensive growth of slave-plantations forced him to change his occupation. *Latifundia* and this new “unemployment” helped to contribute to an already present wealth disparity, which later incited conflict between the richest class of people, the *patricians*, and the lowest class, the *plebeians*.

The next significant and lasting change to Rome as a result of the Punic Wars was the acquisition of prosperous land-holdings and an increase in the use of slaves. Before the Second Punic War slaves were employed on a relatively small scale. However, by the end of the second century BCE, large numbers of slaves were pouring into Rome, either as prisoners of war or purchased abroad by the new wealthy class of Romans who employed large staffs of domestic/agricultural servants or invested in slaves.

After the wars, while *plebeians* found no reprieve for their situations, an influx of wealth into *latifundia* made the *patricians* even wealthier. New prosperity in the region changed conceptions of luxury and promoted luxurious habits, in contrast with the more conservative practices prior to the Punic Wars. Eastern contact also revolutionized the Roman standards and manners of living. Next, fundamental changes to religion, which were introduced through the acquisition of Sicily, the Hellenization of Rome, and contacts with foreign lands, altered how Romans viewed their world.

The loss of agricultural occupations and the creation of a professional army introduced a new power dynamic. Previously, soldiers swore allegiance to the Roman state; however, the unusual length of these military campaigns caused this allegiance to shift to those in direct

power, the commanders, rather than to Rome herself. Commanders, feeding their own ambitions and fighting against social order, exacerbated issues. The conflict of the classes reached a turning point, manifesting itself in what is often referred to as a decline in morality. The murder of the Gracchi brothers (133/122 BCE) was a representation of this decline. Never before the Punic Wars had Rome seen public violence such as this since the time of the monarchy (509 BCE).

Not long after, civil unrest rose and thousands perished. Finally, when military commanders began declaring themselves lifelong emperors, the Roman Republic officially gave way to the Principate. The Punic Wars were not the sole cause of the major changes in Roman society in the mid to late Republic, but they were a highly influential episode in history that later led to the fall of Rome.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 364.

### **Chapter 3: The Price of Power: The Debilitation of Italy's Native Population, the Rise of *Latifundia*, and the Large Scale Introduction of Slavery**

*“Rome won its struggle against Hannibal at a very heavy cost.”*<sup>141</sup>

After 146 BCE, Rome had become a part of the wider Mediterranean world, governing all the major islands, Spain, and commanding authority over much of the East. While great quantities of booty and slaves flooded into Italy as a result of successful wars, Rome's victory came at a price- the displacement of the independent farmer. Further, Rome's enormous expansion produced, almost immediately, the widespread growth of the *latifundia* system, huge agricultural slave plantations.

#### **Widespread Destruction, New Jobs, and Resilient Growth**

The almost continual wars that Rome was engaged in during this period of her history were instrumental in destroying Italy's native population. The first two Punic Wars alone killed nearly a third of Rome's adult male citizens; thousands of the best citizen troops had fallen in tragic massacres, while each year of the struggle reaped a frightful toll.<sup>142</sup> Though time would restore the numbers on the census lists, nothing could repair the loss of those slain. Further, the raids that continued over decades during the war had serious consequences for the region. The losses amongst the rural workforce to capture, death, or conscription, as well as the prolonged damage to fields and livestock, reduced productivity and created a shortage of food. These disasters weakened the population and led to disease, resulting in further declines in the population and devastation of the rural districts after the Punic Wars.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome at War*, 108.

<sup>142</sup> Tenney Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 51.

<sup>143</sup> J. Roth, *The Logistics of the Roman Army at War* (Netherlands: Brill, 1999), 117-155, 286-292.



It is hardly possible to question the fact that Rome's citizenry was sapped by the almost continual warfare, especially by the frightful carnage of the Second Punic War. In the time immediately following the Second Punic War, from 218 to 202 BCE, the number of Roman citizens dropped from 270,000 to 137,108. By 204 BCE, two years after Hannibal's defeat, it had risen only to 214,000 (figure 3.1: see chart below).<sup>144</sup> P. Brunt estimated that the Republic's citizen population on the eve of the Hannibalic War was about 285,000. Of these men, Brunt calculates that, by 214, about 100,000 had been killed.<sup>145</sup>

During the wars, if a Roman legion (5,000 men) was defeated, it was quickly replaced.<sup>146</sup> This replacement of men became problematic after Rome's soldiers fell in incredible numbers at the battles of lake Trasimene (217 BCE) and Cannae (216 BCE). In some cases, multiple legions were wiped out in a single battle. In order to outperform their rivals, Rome sacrificed her men; Carthage did not have the population to replace its soldiers in such numbers. The Italian historian Elio Lo Cascio calculates that during the crisis of the Second Punic War in 212 BCE, Rome drafted up to 12.6 percent of her entire citizenry.<sup>147</sup> This loss of life was enormous and was felt throughout the entire empire.

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<sup>144</sup> Walter Scheidel, *Roman Population Size: The Logic of the Debate* (Stanford University, 2007), 4.

<sup>145</sup> P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.-A.D. 14* (Oxford University Press, 1987), 64-66.

<sup>146</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 152.

<sup>147</sup> E. Lo Cascio, "Recruitment and the size of the Roman population from the third to the first century BCE" (Scheidel, 2001): 111-137.

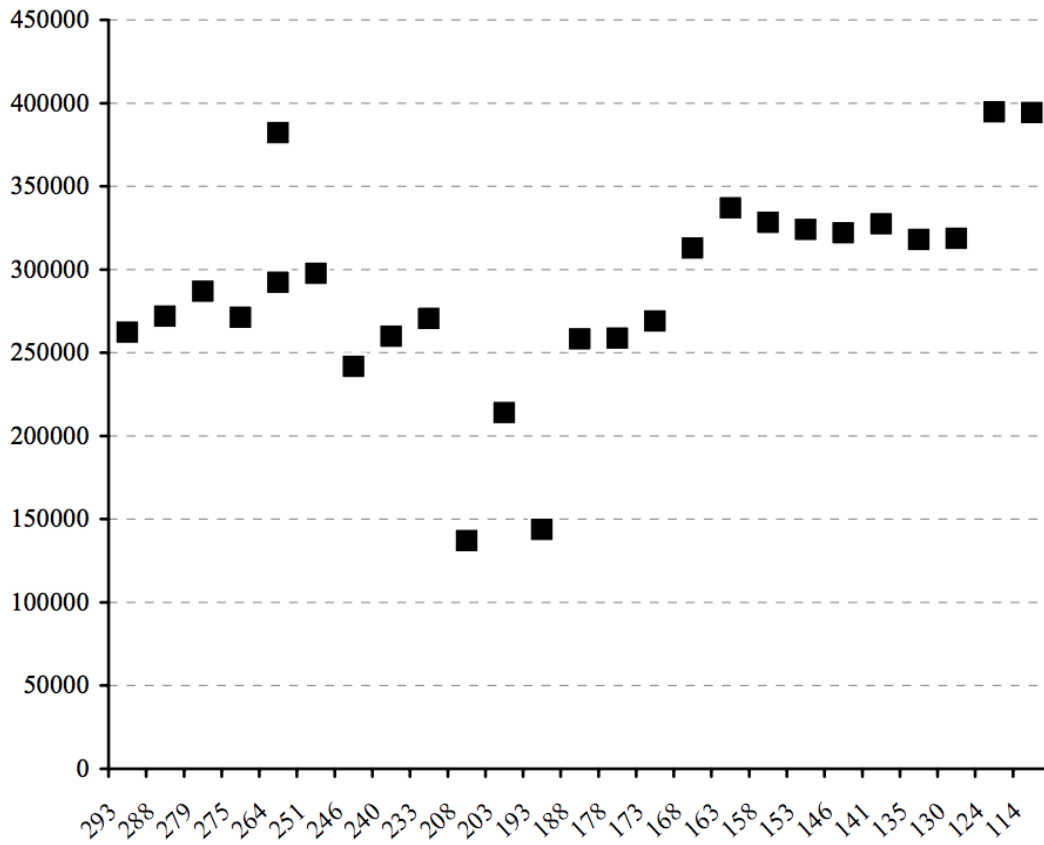


Figure 3.1: Reported census tallies, 294/3 to 115/4 BCE (census tallies count only male, landowning Romans over the age of 18).

In total, Brunt calculates that some 240,000 Roman and Italian allies lost their lives during the war with Hannibal.<sup>148</sup> Even a conservative estimate of mortality from disease adds between about 75,000 and 100,000 to deaths resulting from combat in the same period, a combined rate of mortality of between 4.75% and 5.45% annually. Put in stark terms, if 116,500 or so citizens and allies were serving with the legions every year between 200 and 168 and each

<sup>148</sup> Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 422.; Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy*, vol. 1, 473-77.

served an average of twelve years, at these rates of mortality, 34% to 40% of the men who went to war might not have returned.<sup>149</sup>

Though these numbers seem dire, Brunt does not think the effects were all negative. Paradoxically, Brunt argues that the ongoing mortality crisis significantly improved the near-term economic prospects of those who survived. Because of the “space” opened up by those who lost their lives, everyone else had more room to prosper. Despite a post-war “baby boom” that Brunt mentions (and that can be seen in the chart above), military mortality still represented a significant impact on the Roman population.<sup>150</sup>

More important than the figures would at first indicate is the fact that the losses fell chiefly upon the middle-class population, the majority of the military combatants. At this period of the Republic, the Roman army was still essentially composed of citizens possessing a certain minimum value of property (at least 4,000 asses or \$1,300 USD).<sup>151</sup> The ranks were only filled with men who had something to lose by defeat, men to whom war meant the defense of their homes and families, rather than daring adventure and prospects of rich plunder. The very poor, with no property to their names, were not enlisted. Therefore, the citizens who met the property qualification played the double role of farmer-soldier. To these men, wartime brought great hardships, and the long, drawn-out wars with Carthage, especially the Second Punic War, brought ruin.

With Hannibal in Italy, ravaging the countryside and threatening the towns with his sudden, daring attacks, every able-bodied man had to be under arms for the entire year, or at least ready to lay aside the plow for the sword at a minute's notice. Such conditions obviously were

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<sup>149</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 263.

<sup>150</sup> Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 91-130.; Rosenstein, *Rome at War*, 25.; 153.

<sup>151</sup> Dennis, “The Relative Value of Ancient Coinage,” 2006.

not conducive to careful or extensive farming, especially when a sudden raid by the enemy might destroy the results of weeks of toil in a single night. But this loss, however, was not the most disheartening feature of the wars.

Prior to the wars, the typical small farmer was entirely dependent on a few *iugera* of land for his livelihood.<sup>152</sup> For this man, his food-supply depended on the success of the crops. The clothes he wore were spun from the wool of his own sheep, and the few coins he stored away for an emergency were saved by selling what produce he did not require for personal consumption. This man was forced into debt for the necessities of life, while continued need put him at the mercy of the moneylender within a very short time. Hence, many discharged soldiers returned home to find that their lands had been mortgaged during their absence or had been swallowed up by debt. According to some historians, Romans in the Republic saw “systematic indebtedness” as a regular part of the annual economic calculus of landholders.<sup>153</sup>

During the wars, thousands of farms had been laid waste and many of the surviving men had lost the desire to return to the monotonous toil of rustic life after the excitement of military service. Above all, it was painfully evident that the restoration of wasted, weed-grown farms to their former productivity would be a long and arduous process, requiring capital and stock that these former farmers did not have and could not afford. As a result, many Roman men refused to return to farm life, especially when it meant starting over from the beginning, handicapped with debt. Unable or unwilling to gain a livelihood by struggling against such odds, farmers sold their small estates to their wealthier neighbors or to moneylenders. This cycle gutted the land-market,

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<sup>152</sup> The iugerum or iuger was a Roman unit of area, equivalent to a rectangle 240 Roman feet in length and 120 feet in width (about 71×35½ m); Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, book XVIII. ch. 3.

<sup>153</sup> Seth Bernard, "Debt, Land, and Labor in the Early Republican Economy," *Phoenix* 70, no. 3/4 (2016): 321.

as men with money bought farms cheaply and the small farmer sought a livelihood elsewhere.<sup>154</sup> When war became the only thing in a soldier's life, there was nothing to come back to when they were done with battle. Someone might have joined the Roman army at 15 and got out of service after turning 30. In those cases, reenlisting was the only option. That is the reason, then, why most of these soldier-farmers re-enlisted into military service or sought refuge in the capital city of Rome.

The newly acquired provinces, too, required the presence of many war veterans, for once conquered and occupied, they had to be kept in subjection and defended from hostile nations. Since the Roman government would not rely on foreign armies raised in the provinces, it had to meet the increasing military obligations with its own troops. Spain, in particular, presented a serious military problem because of continuous internal disorder. As a result, soldier-farmers migrated in large numbers to the newly organized provinces in Spain, Asia, Africa, and northern Italy.<sup>155</sup> The years 200-180 BCE saw the foundation of nineteen new colonies, some of which were settled for the purpose of protecting Italy from invasion: in the north, the Gauls, who had been a source of much trouble during the Second Punic War, and in the south, any hostile Eastern power possessing a large fleet.<sup>156</sup>

There was a constant flow of sturdy peasants from Italy to the subject regions, and soon the Roman governors found enough Roman citizens residing in such provinces as Spain, Asia, and northern Africa to levy a legion of them in times of need.<sup>157</sup> These emigrant peasants became

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<sup>154</sup> W. E. Heitland, *Agricola*, 144.

<sup>155</sup> George Stephen Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia* (Loyola University of Chicago, 1936), 25-38.

<sup>156</sup> Heitland, *Agricola*, 152.

<sup>157</sup> Frank, *An Economic History of Rome*, 204.

traders, officials and soldiers, as well as farmers; they prospered amid new surroundings, but their strength was lost to Italy and to Rome. The agricultural life of the Italian small farmer became largely a thing of the past. The loss of this middle class of men exacerbated existing social problems in the empire, as the wealth gap grew starker. This tension grew in subsequent years, culminating in the Social War (91–88 BCE), which will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

My analysis runs counter to the argument made by historian Walter Scheidel in his acclaimed book *The Great Leveler* (2017).<sup>158</sup> In his book, Scheidel argues that mass violence and catastrophes are the only forces that can seriously decrease economic inequality. To do so, he looks at specific moments in time, from the Stone Age to the 21st century. According to my analysis, however, the Punic Wars had the exact opposite effect on Roman society. The gutting of the middle class and the extraordinary horrors of the Punic Wars *produced* and exacerbated existing economic inequality. The conditions of the Punic Wars were the kind of situation that Scheidel argues was necessary for his proposed argument, one that “wipes the slate clean.”<sup>159</sup> Tellingly, Scheidel, however, does not consider the Punic Wars in his analysis.

For fifteen years, Hannibal’s army marauded its way through Italy, burning or consuming crops, laying waste to fields and villages, and killing the population. As a deliberate strategy, Roman commanders such as Fabius Maximus laid waste to their own territory to deny the Punic army food and fodder.<sup>160</sup> Year after year during that frightful period (218-201 BCE) crops were destroyed and the fields either were used as battlegrounds or were ravaged by the Romans and their foes, lest either side should profit from their possession. Towns, too, when they could not be

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<sup>158</sup> Walter Scheidel, *The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

<sup>159</sup> Scheidel, *The Great Leveler*, 8.

<sup>160</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 362.

protected, were taken, lost, or razed to the ground, lest the enemy should establish strongholds. Four hundred villages were wiped out in this awful series of attacks and counter-attacks.<sup>161</sup>

After the war, Rome punished those cities that defected to their Carthaginian rivals. People in those cities were killed or sold into slavery, and had their property confiscated.<sup>162</sup> In the northern territories, vast tracts of land were laid waste, a punishment that Rome inflicted on the Gallic tribes that had aided Hannibal.<sup>163</sup> Southern Italy, in particular, became a no-man's land, where neutrality and security were impossible for many years. Tenney Frank wrote that the havoc wrought at this time in southern Italy was “irreparable.”<sup>164</sup> When the war ended, much of the territory was a wasteland, and most of the famous cities on the coast were reduced to rubble.

Some historians have attempted to minimize the damage inflicted between 218 and 203, arguing that the literary accounts of widespread devastation are grossly exaggerated and even contradictory. However, while it is probable that the extent of the agrarian damage caused by the war in Italy is exaggerated, that can by no means be taken to mean that no significant hardship resulted.<sup>165</sup> Rome and Carthage's widespread destruction caused the disappearance of the country's population in those regions, and left thousands of acres of war-scarred, desolate land.

But, with victory came the winning of new lands. Rome's first substantial increase, about 2,500,000 acres, resulted from the State's appropriation of Sicily after the end of the First Punic War. Beloch's estimate of public Roman acreage added thirty years after the Battle of Zama (202

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<sup>161</sup> Appian, *Roman History*, vol. I, bk. 8, ch. 20, sec. 134.

<sup>162</sup> Theodor Mommsen, *History of Rome, vol. II* (Reimer & Hirscl, 1856), 170-172.

<sup>163</sup> Mommsen, *History of Rome*, 170-172.

<sup>164</sup> Frank, *Roman Imperialism*, 129-130.

<sup>165</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 363.

BCE) shows that the Roman acreage in Italy had increased over one hundred percent (figure 3.2: see chart below).<sup>166</sup>

Year	Acres
203 BCE	6,700,000
193 BCE	9,200,000
173 BCE	13,700,000

The accretion of the public lands, however, was due primarily to the devastation of southern Italy during Hannibal's prolonged but unsuccessful campaign. In the towns destroyed, the Senate confiscated most of the land and declared it *ager publicus* (public land). Further, Rome took possession of all lands which were without claimants: among this land were towns deserted because they lay in the path of the advancing armies, abandoned property because a family had been entirely eliminated, or were lands that were simply devastated by the fighting.<sup>167</sup>

### ***Latifundia* and Mass-Slavery**

The obvious question now arose: what could be done with the immense territory of devastated farmland? It was too extensive for all of it to be distributed among the soldiers who survived the wars, and most of it was too far away from Rome for the soldiers to care about settling there anyway. Besides, the majority of the veterans did not want to settle down to the quiet life and toil of a farmer after over 16 years of war. There were far more attractive prospects for them now. To colonize the entire region was even more out of the question, for the acreage had been more than doubled and the population of Italy had been woefully depleted.

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<sup>166</sup> Tenney Frank, "Mercantilism and Rome's Foreign Policy," *American Historical Review*, vol. XVIII, no. 2 (Jan., 1913): 245.

<sup>167</sup> Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 100.



Up to this period the backbone of Roman society was the socio-economic class of small farmers, each of whom was quite content with a few *iugera* of land, a modest home, a few slaves, and a small number of livestock necessary for the management of the farm. Farming was an honorable occupation in which anyone could engage, nor was it a hindrance to the acquisition of high offices of state. But the period of warfare with Carthage had introduced Rome to an agricultural system of quite a different character-- the *Latifundia* system. These extensive farms were operated in accordance with the latest Carthaginian and Hellenistic techniques of large-scale farming.<sup>168</sup> Punic agriculture was more industrial than Rome's. It was conducted for profit and organized for purely economic considerations.<sup>169</sup>

The introduction and development of the *latifundia* system solved the problem of what to do with the tracts of unused land. Another way to get rid of these empty lands was the use of public land to discharge debts. Rome owed significant debts to individual, wealthy Roman citizens who personally equipped warships and funded military endeavors when the Roman treasury had been drained during the wars.<sup>170</sup> To pay off the debts, Rome offered her lenders large tracts of newly public land. This practice undoubtedly promoted the formation of extremely large estates for the very wealthy.

Senators and noblemen, too, were eager to profit from this golden, fortune-building opportunity. Under the provisions of the Claudian law of 218 BCE, "no senator, no one whose father had been a senator, was allowed to possess a vessel of more than 300 amphorae burden."

<sup>171</sup> This law attempted to keep the wealthy of Rome from becoming too wealthy (especially from

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<sup>168</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 187.

<sup>169</sup> Heitland, *Agricola*, 151.

<sup>170</sup> Penelope Davies, "A Republican Dilemma: City or State? Or, The Concrete Revolution Revisited," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 85 (2017): 71-107.

<sup>171</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, bk. 21, sec. 63.

trade). If they could not have a trading ship that was extremely large (enough to hold 300 jars of food/liquid), they could not control Mediterranean trade and, therefore, the distribution of wealth. The effect of this legislation, however, was that, instead of spending money on trading ships, the wealthy concentrated their enterprise on the acquisition/ leasing of extensive land estates.<sup>172</sup> The larger part of the public southern lands, then, was leased to the Romans who had sufficient capital to engage in the raising of cattle and sheep on an industrial scale, or to manage an extensive plantation.<sup>173</sup>

These plantations were inaccessible to the small farmer. When the Senate began to discharge soldiers from service following the wars, many owners of small properties lacked the wealth to restore their devastated farms and to begin to produce a viable crop once more. The small farmer found it impossible to buy land in Italy at reasonable rates, and when he did own a few acres, he found it quite impossible to work the land profitably. Most veterans abandoned the countryside and migrated to the big cities, especially to Rome, where the profits of conquests were spent on lavish entertainments and public buildings. Their farms, along with large areas confiscated from the “rebellious” Italian cities, were added to Rome’s publicly owned land. These empty plots were then absorbed into large estates already owned by the wealthy. Purchased with the profits of overseas expansion, these estates were worked by slaves captured in those same wars of conquest. Gradually the *latifundia* came to cover much of the most fertile land in Italy.<sup>174</sup>

By law, public lands could be leased in blocks of five hundred *iugera* (about 330 acres) per holder. But some landowners gradually increased their holdings when they discovered that

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<sup>172</sup> Heitland, *Agricola*, 164-65.

<sup>173</sup> Frank, "Mercantilism and Rome's Foreign Policy," 246.

<sup>174</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 362-363.

the adjacent lands were unoccupied. Because the land market was so gutted, the State saw no reason to assert its titles.<sup>175</sup> Though this carefree policy seemed, at the time, to be the wisest method of utilizing the otherwise unproductive territory, it proved to be shortsighted. The extensive use of slave labor prevented the development of productive farming when Rome's population began to increase, and led to the Gracchan revolution, which I will discuss further in Chapter 6.

The small farmer could not compete against *latifundia* and the importation of cheap grain from other countries. When Rome gained possession of Sicily in the First Punic War, she inherited from Carthage the grain-tribute of that island. The exact amount of the grain-tithe is uncertain, but an estimate places it at about 2,000,000 modii (about 500,000 bushels) per year. This amount probably provided for about 1/10th of Rome's needs at this time.<sup>176</sup> During and after the Second Punic War, Sardinia, Egypt, Spain, and even Africa also sent grain tribute. Mommsen saw this trend as the beginning of the decline for the Roman farmer: "Italian agriculture saw its very existence endangered by the proof... that the Roman people could be supported by grain from Sicily and from Egypt instead of that which they reaped themselves."<sup>177</sup>

As a result of imported grain, the price of grain in Rome dropped considerably. Though the low prices benefited the Roman exchequer, it cut off the Italian farmer from an important field of consumption for his produce. In the provinces, particularly in Sicily, the cost of grain production was generally lower than elsewhere in Italy, due to the fertile soil and the great extent

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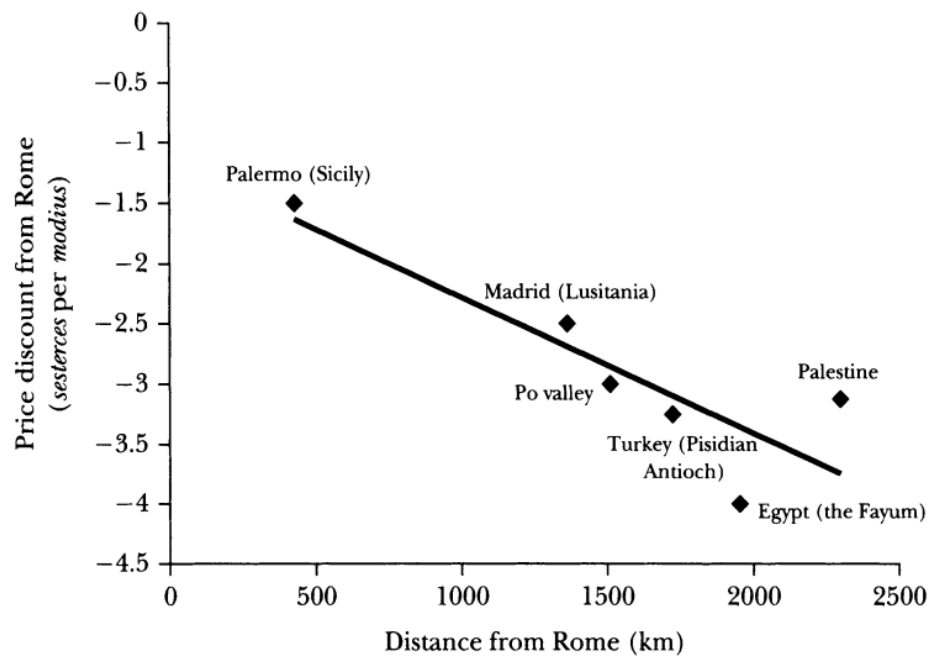
<sup>175</sup> Frank, *Roman Imperialism*, 130.; 136.; Frank, "Mercantilism and Rome's Foreign Policy," 246.

<sup>176</sup> Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 68.

<sup>177</sup> Mommsen, *History of Rome*, vol.II, bk. 3, ch. 6, 192

to which plantation farming and slave labor was conducted.<sup>178</sup> To make matters more complicated for Roman farmers, transportation from Sicily or Sardinia was actually cheaper than the transport of grain from Etruria, Campania, or even in northern Italy (figure 3.3: see chart below). A cheap trip by sea in the south, even hundreds of miles away from Rome, was significantly easier than travel in the north, where the mountainous terrain of the peninsula made transportation by land more difficult and expensive.<sup>179</sup> As a result, the landlord could afford production with cheap slave labor, but the small farmer began to find the cultivation of grain unprofitable.

### Relationship between Distance and Wheat Price Discount



Notes: The specific regression is Price differential (in *sesterces per modius*) =  $-1.10 - .0012$  (distance from Rome). The t-statistics for the slope coefficient is 3.9. The 5 percent value of the t-statistic for four degrees of freedom is 2.8. The regression has an adjusted  $R^2$  of .74 and F(1,4) of 15.

<sup>178</sup> Peter Temin, "The Economy of the Early Roman Empire," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20, no. 1 (2006): 138.

<sup>179</sup> Temin, "The Economy of the Early Roman Empire," 139-140.

Pastoral husbandry was another form of rural industry that was practically monopolized by the wealthy *latifundia* owners. Italy is so situated with respect to climate that the summer pasture in the mountains and the winter pasture on the plains supplement each other, making sheep and cattle raising a profitable year-round enterprise. The devastation of much arable land during the period of the Punic Wars stimulated pastoral husbandry, both by offering large tracts of cheap land which was no longer fit for agriculture, and by making the *latifundia* system of large-scale industry so common. The land, if good for nothing else, could at least produce sufficient fodder and herbage for sheep and cattle, and these animals could be marketed with greater ease than grain. Slaves directed by the *magister Eecoris* (cattle-master) managed of the ranches.<sup>180</sup> Such a system suited the landlord very well, for tending the flocks or herds did not necessitate the owner's frequent inspection, personal care, or even presence.

The *latifundia* owners were quick to see the advantages of engaging in this industry on a large scale and they seized the opportunity of finding a profitable use for the wastelands. After the Second Punic War, the vast areas of vacated lands were exploited by wealthy ranchers, while slaves largely manned the plantations.<sup>181</sup> Appian remarks that the landlords preferred “using slaves as laborers and herdsmen, lest free laborers should be drawn from agriculture into the army.”<sup>182</sup> The ownership of slaves brought landlords significantly more gain because slaves could work throughout the year, since they were exempt from military service:

Thus the race of slaves multiplied throughout the country, while the Italian people dwindled in numbers and strength, being oppressed by penury, taxes, and military service. If they had any respite from these evils they passed their time in idleness,

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<sup>180</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 20.; 18.

<sup>181</sup> Frank, *An Economic History of Rome*, 59.

<sup>182</sup> Appian, *Roman History*, vol.III, bk. 1. sec. 7. 15-17.

because the land was held by the rich, who employed slaves instead of freemen as cultivators.<sup>183</sup>

Someone with considerable land and influence might own slaves by the hundred or even thousand.<sup>184</sup>

Despite all these troubles for the small farmer, Heitland wrote, "there is no reason to think that *latifundia* ever swallowed up all Italy."<sup>185</sup> Instead, Heitland believed that in the rural regions of the empire, the true Roman farmer still hung on and continued his noble work. Other historians, however, quote L. Marcius Philippus, Roman tribune in 104 BCE, who said that there were "not two thousand men in the state who owned property,"<sup>186</sup> as evidence of the extent to which the great landowners ruled the country.<sup>187</sup> According to Chehayl, the trend towards large estates supplanted Rome's previously solid core of small peasant farmers and was "the chief cause for the ruin of the Roman peasant."<sup>188</sup> Goldsworthy, on the other hand, takes a more positive view, considering the introduction of slaves and land at the end of the Second Punic War as the Romans "reaping the rewards of their might."<sup>189</sup>

While it is certain that there were some Roman farmers who continued work on their small land plots, "honest" Roman agricultural employment became a thing of the past. Instead, by supplanting the traditional farmer, rich Roman landowners sowed dragons' teeth into the land, watered it with blood, and grew next season's misery. The soldiers that survived the war were

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<sup>183</sup> Appian, *Roman History*, vol.III, bk. 1. sec. 7. 15-17.

<sup>184</sup> R. Duncan-Jones, "The Finances of a Senator," *The Economy of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 1982), 24.

<sup>185</sup> Heitland, "A Great Agricultural Emigration from Italy?" *Journal of Roman Studies*, vol.VIII (Nov 1918): 46.

<sup>186</sup> Cicero, *De officiis*, 21.

<sup>187</sup> It must be noted, however, that his statement might be an exaggeration adduced to strengthen the proposal of his agrarian bill that year, which failed to pass.

<sup>188</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 5.

<sup>189</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 326.

lost. They either re-enlisted or moved to Rome. In their new “occupations,” these former farmers grew more and more discontented with the lavish wealth that was increasingly held from them.

Since the population of Rome was decreasing rapidly, a rising class of manumitted slaves eventually constituted a large portion of the Roman citizenry. Slavery had been an accepted institution in Rome from its earliest days. Before the wars, the slave was recognized as an integral part of the Roman *familia* and was regarded as a man that unfortunate circumstances had placed in bondage. Because slavery existed on a small scale (only about 10% of the population in the 3rd century BCE) where even the wealthy might have one or two slaves, there existed a more personal relationship between the master and slave.<sup>190</sup> The slave helped, but did not replace, the master in the house and farm. He would often work in the fields side by side with his master, and sat at the table with the rest of the family. Though slavery was a common institution, it was more of an economic necessity than a profitable business, and remained on a small scale. However, all of the above changed after the Punic Wars. Scheidel speculates that, by the 1st century BCE, slaves constituted as much as 35-40% of the entire Roman population.<sup>191</sup> Brunt similarly suggests that in 175 CE there were about 3 million slaves out of a total population in Italy of about 7.5 million.<sup>192</sup>

The percentage of slaves in Rome's population grew in proportion to her dominion. When Regulus landed Roman troops on African soil in 256 BCE, he was able to send back home as many as 20,000 slaves as the first fruits of the Roman aggression.<sup>193</sup> At the fall of Palermo,

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<sup>190</sup> Walter Scheidel, “The Roman Slave Supply,” *The Cambridge World History of Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 291.

<sup>191</sup> Walter Scheidel, “Human Mobility in Roman Italy, II: The Slave Population,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 95 (2005): 64-79.

<sup>192</sup> Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.-A.D. 14*, 121-124.

<sup>193</sup> Mommsen, *History of Rome*, vol. II, bk. 3, ch. 2, 43.

13,000 inhabitants were sold into slavery, while 14,000 others were able to buy their freedom at two minas each. Frank concludes that, in 241 BCE, about 30,000 slaves were obtained from the captured ships at Mylae, Tyndaris, Ecnomus, Hermaeum, and the Aegates Islands, adding up to a grand total of more than 75,000 captives during the First Punic War.<sup>194</sup>

For the Second Punic War, we have figures such as 25,000 captured or killed in storming approximately nine towns, 7,000 captives at Atrium, 30,000 sold into slavery at the capture of Tarentum 209 BCE, 10,000 at the capture of New Carthage in the same year, and another 10,000 in the following year at Baecula.<sup>195</sup> After this period the supply of slaves seemed to have increased, if anything. As only a partial reckoning, we can mention 5,000 slaves from Macedonia in 197 BCE, 5,000 Illyrians in 177 BCE, 80,000 slain or taken at Sardinia in 177 BCE, and the cruel enslavement of 150,000 Epirotes in 167 BCE at the order of the Senate. "This order," claims Frank, "might support an inference that the Senate was eager to provide cheap slave labor in Italy."<sup>196</sup>

We need to keep in mind that the numbers of slaves given by ancient writers could be varied and inexact. However, even if the numbers were exaggerated in some, most, or even all cases (as Goldsworthy thinks is entirely likely), there were still a huge number of slaves who poured into Rome at this time.<sup>197</sup> According to Polybius, the Roman column was often swollen with non-military volunteers who carried fetters and chains, expecting to capture prisoners of war and sell them as slaves.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. 1, 67.

<sup>195</sup> Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. 1, 99-100.; Mommsen, *History of Rome* vol. II, bk. 3, ch. 6, 161-162.

<sup>196</sup> Livy, *The History of Rome*, 45.34.1-7.; Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. 1, 187- 188.; Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 223.

<sup>197</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 20-23.

<sup>198</sup> Polybius 3. 80. 1-2.; 82. 1-8.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 186.



But if slaves were plentiful, they were also much in demand. In the first place, the wars were directly responsible for the increased need of slave labor. When a large percentage of the landowners were forced to leave their farms for military service, it was necessary to replace these men with slaves in order that the agricultural and industrial life of the nation might continue. The enormous loss of life throughout Italy during the First and Second Punic Wars also made the continuation of slave labor necessary. After the wars, however, when many of the discharged soldiers moved to the city instead of returning to their farms, new throngs of slaves filled the middle-class “economic vacuum.”<sup>199</sup>

Before the wars with Carthage, slaves were often domestic servants who had personal contact with the family to which they were attached. After the wars, slaves were so numerous that it was practically impossible for Romans to have a personal relationship with their slaves. In some cases, slaves were no more than human chattel. This view is well expressed by Cato in his *De Agri Cultura* when he, in the same breath, recommends that both oxen and slaves should be sold when old and useless.<sup>200</sup> This attitude was, of course, more commonly maintained in the rural districts where the contact between master and slave was brief and infrequent. On smaller farms and in households, this impersonal attitude towards the slave was less manifest and the treatment he received was more humane.

This discussion of slavery is important because a large number of slaves became, through manumission, citizens of Rome who later formed a large percentage of the populace by the end of the Republic. The manumission of slaves, though common enough even before the Punic Wars, became a more typical occurrence as the number of the slaves rapidly multiplied. During

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<sup>199</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 52-53.

<sup>200</sup> Cato the Elder, *De Agri Cultura (on Agriculture)*, 1, 2. 7.

the Hannibalic struggle, we hear of slaves being manumitted in large numbers as a reward for military service. Livy mentions 8,000 slaves who were drafted and later freed after the disaster at Cannae. By the end of the Republic, the average total of manumissions for each year was no longer 1,350 but 16,000.<sup>201</sup>

According to Roman law, these manumitted slaves became full voting, political citizens of the Roman empire. Subsequently, freedmen changed the trajectory of Roman politics, as politicians made particular appeals to “the freedmen vote” in order to be elected.<sup>202</sup> From the middle of the second century BCE, the upper echelon of society tried to limit the political influence of ex-slaves by confining them to certain voting units in the tribal and *plebeian* assemblies.<sup>203</sup> Despite these measures, however, politics were shifting toward the populist vote at the turn of the millennium. As a result, politicians who advocated for the poorer citizens easily came to power, advocating for the new class of urban poor (formerly soldier/farmer) and new freedmen. Examples of some of these politicians, such as Marius and Julius Caesar, will be explored further in Chapter 6.

The Punic Wars directly influenced the Italian native population. The wars led to the acquisition of thousands of acres of new and public land, a change in the primary occupation of the Roman farmer to soldier or urbanite, and the introduction of widespread slavery to the region. This narrative of the Punic Wars tells us about the debilitating and devastating nature of war, its effects upon society, and, in the next few chapters, its rebuilding in a completely new way.

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<sup>201</sup> Livy, *The History of Rome*, book 22, sec.57.; Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 101-102.

<sup>202</sup> Raymond Starr, “Freedmen and Freedwomen,” *Wellesley College: CLCV 243- Roman Law* (April 6, 2018).

<sup>203</sup> Paul Finkelman and Joseph Calder Miller, eds., “Freedmen: Ancient Rome,” in *Macmillan Encyclopedia of World Slavery* (New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998).

## **Chapter 4: Inheriting an Empire: Trade, Wealth, the Formation of Luxurious Habits, and the Introduction of Sumptuary Laws**

The integration of the Carthaginian Empire into Rome spurred a great expansion (figures 4.1-3). Carthage brought prodigious wealth and power under Roman control, but that very profit brought with it influences which changed the nature of Roman dominion. Toner describes this change in Rome as a “total transformation of their material world.”<sup>204</sup> The subsequent relations with eastern luxury, “morality,” and religion, exerted a strong influence over the Roman empire during the next few centuries.

This chapter will describe the acquisition of Sicily and areas associated with the greater Carthaginian Empire as the next step in redefining the Roman way of life. The acquisition of Sicily enlarged the wealth gap and led to the passage of new Sumptuary Laws. This chapter cannot treat in detail all of the various manifestations of wealth and luxury (the fine apparel, the sumptuous banquets, the expensive homes and villas and furniture). Rather, it will point out the luxurious tendencies, which were the direct consequences of the Punic War period. These tendencies led to “overconsumption” that we will explore in this chapter.

### **Growth and Acquisition**

When Rome absorbed Sicily into her empire at the end of the First Punic War, she inherited a “fascinating, eclectic melting-pot of cultures.”<sup>205</sup> Sicily’s central geographical position in the Graeco- Roman world allowed it to draw its cultural diversity from multifarious contacts around the Mediterranean, while, at the same time, forging its own distinctive, regional

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<sup>204</sup> J. P. Toner, *Leisure and Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1998), 118.

<sup>205</sup> R. Wilson, “Hellenistic Sicily, c. 270-100 BC,” *The Hellenistic West* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 119.

and sub-regional identities. As local traditions persisted, new foreign items were incorporated alongside traditional forms. Such evidence demonstrates the important role of trade/exchange and the incorporation of foreign goods within local lifeways.<sup>206</sup> Sicily, in this way, serves as a microcosm for what was about to happen on a much larger scale in central Italy.

For hundreds of years, Greek and Carthaginian cultures thrived in Sicily. After the Punic conflict ended, three-and-a-half centuries of Phoenician/ Carthaginian culture was not obliterated at a stroke by the island's political transfer to Roman hegemony.<sup>207</sup> From Sicily's close relationship with Carthage and Greece, Rome inherited the trade and culture of Carthage's entire empire, as well as Hellenistic influences.<sup>208</sup> In the west of the island, in the area of the former Carthaginian *epikrateia* ("dominion" or "province"), the lingering influence of Phoenicio-Carthaginian culture was clearly detectable.<sup>209</sup>

In the 1st century CE, the western Sicilian city of Solunto still seemed like a "typical Hellenistic town" with its agora, stoa, theater, bouleuterion and peristyle houses; yet its inhabitants buried their dead in Phoenicio-Carthaginian-style chamber tombs, approached down a staircase, as they had done during the archaic period.<sup>210</sup> Solunto was not alone. The city of

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<sup>206</sup> William Balco, *Material Expressions of Social Change: Indigenous Sicilian Responses to External Influences in the First Millennium B.C.* (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2012), 117.

<sup>207</sup> Wilson, "Hellenistic Sicily, c. 270-100 BC," 119.

<sup>208</sup> In Sicily, Greek and Roman structures were built upon most of the Phoenician and Carthaginian ones, leaving little superstructure comparable to the island's majestic Greek temples or Roman amphitheaters (Vincenzo Salerno, "Sicilian Peoples: The Carthaginians," *Best of Sicily Magazine*, Nov 10, 2005). The coexistence and cultural integration in Lilybaeum, between the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE are clear. The city of Syracuse, Sicily's largest and most important Greek city, exercised a particularly anti-Carthaginian policy, but could not always dissuade Selinus (Selinunte) from entering into alliance with the Carthaginians. It was not unusual for certain Greek cities of western Sicily to trade with the Carthaginians despite sometimes in an official state of war: (Figure 4.4) (Wall Text, *Greek/Carthaginian friendship figure*, Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.) This plaque symbolizes a friendship and hospitality pact between a Punic fellow and a Greek one.

<sup>209</sup> Denis Feeney, "Carthage and Rome: Introduction," *Classical Philology* 112, no. 3 (July 2017), 306.

<sup>210</sup> Wilson, "Hellenistic Sicily, c. 270-100 BC," 114.

Segesta, which began as a Carthaginian/Greek stronghold, remained highly integrated into Mediterranean, regional, and local exchange networks well after the First Punic War ended (and still into the late Republican and early imperial periods).<sup>211</sup>

Western Sicily today still bears traces of the Carthaginian presence, particularly in the Punic walls of Palermo and Erice, and the archeological sites at Mozia in Marsala. On the “Cyclopic walls” at Erice, Phoenician letters “beth,” “ain,” and “phe” inscribed on the stones are still visible and document an intervention by the Carthaginians into Greek life in the 6th century (figure 4.5: see figure below). These letters signify that the walls have “eyes” to see the enemy, a “mouth” for devouring the enemy in case of aggression, and that the enemy would find no safe “haven/home” here.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Excavations from the first and second centuries CE have unearthed large quantities of imported ceramics, particularly Italian transport amphorae and terra sigillata, and Eastern and early African sigillata.; Laura Elizabeth Pfunter “The Changing Urban Landscape of Roman Sicily,” PhD diss. (University of California, Berkeley, 2013), 130-133.

<sup>212</sup> “The Cyclopic Walls,” *A Friendly Walk Around Erice*, Erice: città museo, Erice, Sicily, Italy, 2017.



Figure 4.5: Cycloptic Walls of Erice

Because of its placement, Lilybaeum, too, became a major hub for commercial traffic between North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and Greece.<sup>213</sup> Founded by Carthage after the destruction of Motya (Mozia) in 397 BCE, the city was strategically placed on Cape Boeo, the westernmost point of Sicily. Allegedly involved in the final battle of the First Punic War, the wreck of cargo ship “A” at the Baglio Anselmi Museum was found to be carrying over 200 *cannellures* (a type of amphora) of fruity red wine, millstone wheat, oil, fish, and other items (figure 4.6). Additionally, the presence of some amphorae coated in a layer of pitch shows the variety of goods transported. The materials found with the wreck were mainly produced in North Africa and different Sicilian cities, through there was also goods from the Near East and Greece.<sup>214</sup> The

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<sup>213</sup> Miles, “Carthage,” 37.

<sup>214</sup> The Lilibeo Museum,” *Baglio Anselmi Museum*, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

variety of goods entering Sicily from thousands of miles away speaks to the expansive trade network that existed before the Romans entered the island.

In the century following the First Punic War, when the city came firmly under Roman control, Lilybaeum developed a hybrid role as a Roman administrative center and military stronghold; it became a key location in the expanding commercial route between Italy and North Africa.<sup>215</sup> Lilybaeum had strong economic ties to central and southern Italy as well as to Carthage, hosting a substantial population of merchants from across the Mediterranean. Cosmopolitan artifacts speak to daily life on the island and give outsiders an idea of the richness and beauty of the city that Cicero named “splendidissima.”<sup>216</sup> Lilybaeum then became the capital of Roman Sicily.<sup>217</sup>

Ancient literary sources are most vocal about the city’s military/administrative role, particularly in the context of Rome’s wars with Carthage and imperial expansion across the Mediterranean. In addition to being a base for the Roman fleet, the town also served as the permanent seat of one of the *quaestors* of the *provincia*. By the end of the third century BCE, export taxes (*portoria*) were collected from its port. Lilybaeum’s primary role in the development and maintenance of the Roman *provincia* is also reflected in the creation (or continuation) of a mint based in the city after the First Punic War. Later, the city became the

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<sup>215</sup> According to the Baglio Anselmi Museum, the Plateia (*Aelia*) was the most important road in the city and the presence of its monumental paving indicates that Roman Lilybaeum was one of the most important cities in Sicily and the central Mediterranean (figure 4.7). Rome also instituted changes to the architecture of the region. For example, *Insula I* at Lilybaeum, also known as the “Domus of Boeo,” was occupied during the Roman period. Unlike the typical rectangular *insulae* of the Hellenic-Punic period, this house was based on a square grid plan.; “Parco Archeologico di Lilibeo,” Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

<sup>216</sup> Cicero, *In Verrem*, vol. 5. 10: “Testes enim sunt qui in consilio fuerunt, testes publicae tabulae, testis *splendidissima civitas Lilybitana*, testis honestissimus maximusque conventus civium Romanorum: fieri nihil potest, producendi sunt. Itaque producteur et ad palum alligantur.” [Emphasis mine].

<sup>217</sup> “The Lilibeo Museum,” *Baglio Anselmi Museum*, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

gateway to the greater Mediterranean world: amphorae found from the 1st to 5th centuries CE contained oil from Tunisia, wine from Egypt, Syria, Asia minor (Turkey), and Cyprus, millstone wheat, fish, and other items (figures 4.8-11).<sup>218</sup>

In the 1st century BCE, Catania served as one of the major ports of eastern Sicily, attracting Roman and Italian merchants, administrators, and tax collectors and sending its own citizens across the Mediterranean. Coins of the city have been found at Delos, presumably carried there by merchants or sailors. Incorporating Sicilian cities, replete with Carthaginian and Greek cultures, allowed Rome to absorb these influences into their empire. In the later Empire, these Sicilian cities would prove so valuable that they gained the title of “ally.”<sup>219</sup>

Sicily was in a geographical position to take full advantage of pan-Mediterranean contacts. Imported artifacts from a single rubbish deposit of the second century BCE at a low-status agricultural village at Carnpanaio, just inland from Heradea Minoa on the south coast, included wine *amphorae* from Rhodes, fragments of a brazier with Silenus heads from Cyrenaica, and parts of a multi-stamped *mortarium* from North Africa, as well as oil *amphorae* made in Carthage.<sup>220</sup> In many places, distinctive decorated Spanish-made pottery, detected in a number of Sicilian coastal towns reminds us of another important trade route about which historians know little during this period; the one between Sicily and the Iberian peninsula. Fine Athenian pottery from the 1st century BCE has also been discovered on Sicily, which means there had to have been a significant amount of trade going on with the Hellenes following the Punic conflict as well.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Pfuntner, “The Changing Urban Landscape of Roman Sicily,” 154.; *Baglio Anselmi Museum*, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

<sup>219</sup> Wall Text, *Polo Museale A. Cordici* (Erice: Polo Museale A. Cordici, 2018).; Pfuntner “The Changing Urban Landscape of Roman Sicily,” 216.

<sup>220</sup> Wilson, “Hellenistic Sicily, c. 270-100 BC,” 113-114.

<sup>221</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 136.



## Wealth Expanded

The most profound influence of the trade empire that the Romans inherited was the spectacular wealth brought to Rome. Rome hugely benefited from the appropriation of the economic and political infrastructure that Carthage had previously put in place in the central and western Mediterranean, especially in Sardinia, Sicily, North Africa and Spain. According to Goldsworthy, “In 100 BCE, Rome was hugely strong and very rich and there was nothing to suggest that this would change.”<sup>222</sup> In fact, Rome would only grow richer and stronger within little more than a century. With the incorporation of Spain and the Iberian peninsula into the empire, Rome inherited its thriving export trade and rich resource base. Rome gained great quantities of silver, copper and iron, besides agricultural products and fish. The Roman economy was stimulated by the increase in profits as a result of its new prosperous land.<sup>223</sup>

Contact with the East, once it had been established, pointed out to the Romans a richer, more alluring world than they had ever known before. According to Chehayl, “In place of self-restraint and frugality, there now appeared pride and vanity, luxury and pleasure seeking.”<sup>224</sup> What Tiberius was to admit about Romans two centuries later can also truthfully be applied to the Punic War period: “By victories abroad we learned to waste the substance of others; by victories at home, our own.”<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 10.

<sup>223</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 373.

<sup>224</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 82.

<sup>225</sup> Tacitus, *Annals I-VI*, bk.3, sec. 54.

As a result of the Second Punic War and of the subsequent wars of conquest in the East, considerable wealth in the form of indemnities and booty flooded into Rome.<sup>226</sup> Prior to 295 BCE, Rome had no extensive bronze coinage. It was not until the Second Punic War that Rome struck bronze in large quantities. According to Stannard, Rome's access to bronze monetized its economy, at a time when Rome could not have provided the coins it needed.<sup>227</sup> Even though Roman primary sources do not always give figures or mention the smaller amounts of booty captured in less important towns, the data left to us present quite an imposing sum.<sup>228</sup> Wealth naturally followed in the wake of conquest. Theoretically, at least, most of this was national wealth; but as Asinius Gallus later noted, with the expansion of Roman dominion and the overflowing of the public treasury, private fortunes had grown apace.<sup>229</sup>

Some of those hauls, particularly those from the East, were truly spectacular. Flamininus brought to Rome 43,270 pounds of silver, 3,714 of gold, 84,000 tetradrachms, 14,514 gold Philippics, and 114 golden crowns, in addition to many bronze and marble statues and wagons piled high with captured weapons and armor.<sup>230</sup> Paullus' haul was even more spectacular: on the first day 250 wagons laden with statues, paintings, and other artwork rolled through the city. On the second came many wagons piled with Macedonian arms, followed by 750 large baskets each containing about 75 kg of coined silver carried by four men. Other men hauled a great variety of wrought silver tableware. The final day saw the captured gold paraded: seventy-seven large

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<sup>226</sup> It is imperative to approach this topic with caution because many of the later Roman writers were satirists. Though it is undoubtedly true that Roman conquests unlocked treasures, the result may be easily exaggerated.; Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 126.

<sup>227</sup> Clive Stannard, "'Chopped' Neapolitan Bronze Coins at Minturnae, Overstrikes with Roman Types, and the Coin Stock in Southern Latium and Northern Campania about 200 bc," *The Numismatic Chronicle 178 Offprint* (London: The Royal Numismatic Society, 2018): 103.

<sup>228</sup> See: Tenney Frank, *An Economic survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 80-81, 127-138.

<sup>229</sup> Tacitus, *Annals*, bk. 2, sec. 33.

<sup>230</sup> Livy, *From the Founding*, 34. 52. 4-8.; Plutarch, "The Life of Titus Flamininus," 14. 1-2.; Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 246.

basketfuls, each again carried by four men while others bore enormous golden mixing bowls for wine. Four hundred golden crowns offered by the various cities in Greece preceded Paullus himself.<sup>231</sup> Similar eye-popping displays of treasure distinguished the victory parades following Rome's other conquests in Greece, and although the spoils from third- and second-century BCE conquests elsewhere never matched them, they, too, filled the Republic's coffers as did the heavy, multi-year indemnities imposed on Carthage, Philip, Antiochus, and the Aetolians.<sup>232</sup>

This enormous influx of wealth transformed Rome. The wealth funded a spate of temple building, twenty-one between the years 200 and 146, most as a result of vows generals had made for victory. In addition, the censors of 184, 179, and 174 were notable for the number of projects they undertook. They constructed the basilicas Porcia, Fulvia, and Sempronia to provide areas for the administrative business of the city and to house the many shops surrounding the forum. In doing so, these censors defined the shape of Rome's central public space for generations to come. They paved streets in the city and many roads outside of it with stone for the first time and constructed a number of bridges. Among the latter was the first stone bridge over the Tiber, the *pons Aemilius*, begun in 179 and finally completed in 142.<sup>233</sup>

Other infrastructure improvements included an overhaul of the sewers in 184 at the staggering cost of 1,000 talents and a major increase in the city's water supply. The last new aqueduct had been the *Anio Vetus*, built in 272. By 144, the need was so pressing that the Senate ordered the praetor Q. Marcius Rex to build the *Aqua Marcia*, perhaps not coincidentally only two years after the plunder from Carthage and Corinth had brought a fresh infusion of cash into

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<sup>231</sup> Plutarch, "The Life of Aemilius," 32.2-33.2.; Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 246.

<sup>232</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 246.

<sup>233</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 246-247.

the treasury.<sup>234</sup> As Livy writes, drawing on the second-century historian Calpurnius Piso's description of the triumph of Manlius Vulso in 187:

For the beginnings of foreign luxury were introduced into the city by the army from Asia. They for the first time imported into Rome couches of bronze, valuable robes for coverlets, tapestries and other products of the loom, and what at that time was considered luxurious furniture – tables with one pedestal and sideboards. Then female players of the lute and the harp and other festal delights of entertainments were made adjuncts to banquets; the banquets themselves, moreover, began to be planned with both greater care and greater expense... Yet those things which were then looked upon as remarkable were hardly even the germs of the luxury to come.<sup>235</sup>

The extraordinary wealth that came into Rome was such that many ancient authors began to make note.<sup>236</sup>

Before the First Punic War, the land controlled by Carthage was significantly greater than the *ager Romanus* (lands owned by the Roman people). Carthage was rich from African trade and agricultural land and its yield was significantly greater than that of Rome's. This land later became the "Great Granaries of the Roman empire."<sup>237</sup> Following the wars, the Senate drew upon supplies from as far afield as Egypt, as the demand increased. The Romans, and most especially their elites, profited from expansion for many years. But as the rate of expansion quickened, so did the scale of the spoils. Rome was flooded with wealth, luxuries, and slaves, as well as new ideas and cultural influences. Most of the problems which beset the Republic in the century before its demise - increasingly fierce aristocratic competition; the rapidly escalating costs of political careers; the decline of the rural population and the dramatic increase of slavery;

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<sup>234</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 247.

<sup>235</sup> Livy, *From the Founding*, 39. 6. 7-9.; Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 254.

<sup>236</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 246-247.

<sup>237</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 28-29.

urban poverty and debt; and the difficulties of recruitment which led to the professional army - were all directly or indirectly the consequences of imperial expansion.<sup>238</sup>

Additionally, Roman war-making in the early decades of the second century BCE was highly profitable. A large percentage of the wealth derived from booty and the sale of war captives into slavery remained in the hands of the commanders who led the Roman armies in these campaigns. Warfare in the Hellenistic east proved especially lucrative. War heroes also returned to Rome with great wealth and riches from their campaigning and sale of slaves, which allowed them to be elected more and more easily, causing the wealth gap in Rome to increase dramatically. Families increased prestige by lavish public spending on entertainment (public games like gladiatorial events) and the construction of monumental buildings to commemorate their success and the future successes of their families. In order to keep pace with political rivals, races for political positions were often paired with major spending and debt.<sup>239</sup> For example, Julius Caesar owed over 1,300 talents before he obtained any magistracy.<sup>240</sup>

After the Punic Wars, houses also came to be furnished more luxuriously. Both Livy and the Elder Pliny trace what has been called "the first invasion of the city by luxury from foreign sources" to the return of the soldiers from the campaign in Asia in 188 BCE.<sup>241</sup> Among the booty they carried home were articles such as dining couches with bronze mounting and upholstery, silver plates elegantly figured, fancy ornamental tables, and carpets of rich gold brocade.<sup>242</sup>

The treasures of Attalus, king of Pergamum and ally of Rome in the Second Punic War, which were bequeathed to Rome at his death, "contained vast amounts of fine fabrics from the

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<sup>238</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 359.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 364.

<sup>239</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 322-323.

<sup>240</sup> Plutarch, "The Life of Julius Caesar," *The Parallel Lives*, 25: "λέγεται πρὶν εἰς ἀρχὴν τινα καθίστασθαι χιλίων καὶ τριακοσίων γενέσθαι χρεωφειλέτης τάλαντων."

<sup>241</sup> Grant Showerman, *Eternal Rome* (Yale University Press, 1924), 141.

<sup>242</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 86-87.

royal factories and palaces, tapestries, spreads, and hangings woven with gold (Attalica), and fine textiles and clothing. Such imports taught the Romans where to buy fine textiles. Trade accordingly increased with the East."<sup>243</sup> Once the way to these luxurious furnishings and ornaments had been opened and the Romans came to realize what the East had to offer, their desires would no longer be satisfied with the plain articles they used before.

In Sicily, the Villa Piazza Armerina (Roman Villa of Casale) is a testament to the immense growth of wealth in this age, with its incredible size and an enormous display of intricate mosaics (figure 4.12). During the Roman Empire, Sicilian grain and pasture were as important as ever and the senatorial families who controlled immense estates in Sicily grew rich from the proceeds. The Villa at Piazza Armerina was connected with one of these vast holdings. The fame of the residence comes from its mosaic pavements. The villa covers 3,500 square meters and more than half of them are mosaics with figured decorations executed in the vibrant colors of this branch of graphic art, as seen through the "Octagon Mosaic Room" (room 26) (figure 4.13). The walls and floors of the villa were decorated too, with inlaid marble or with fresco painting (figure 4.14). The villa was, in every way, a monument of the cosmopolitan empire surrounding it.<sup>244</sup>

The villa was built in four main sections: the main entrance with its thermal baths, a peristyle with living areas and guest rooms, the private rooms of the owner, complete with a public hall, a *triclinium* (dining area), and elliptical courtyard. In addition, there was a "massage

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<sup>243</sup> Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 239-240.

<sup>244</sup> R. Ross Holloway, *The Archaeology of Ancient Sicily* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), 167.

room” (room 9), and “frigidarium” (room 10), for oiling and massaging the body, bathing, and swimming (in warm or cold water) (figure 4.15: see below).<sup>245</sup>



Figure 4.15: Villa Romana del Casale, “frigidarium,” room 10. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.

The villa’s extraordinarily vivid mosaics, probably produced by North African artisans, depict numerous subjects, ranging from Homeric escapades and mythological scenes to portrayals of

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<sup>245</sup> Enzo Cammarata, *The Roman Villa of Casale Historical Facts and Curiosities: Morgantina* (Caltanissetta: Lussografica, 2017), 24.

daily life, including the famous tableau of girls exercising in their “bikinis” (figure 4.16: see below).



Figure 4.16: Villa Romana del Casale, “Room with the Girls in Bikini,” room 30. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.

The mosaics are also a testament to trade after the Punic Wars. Mosaic depictions of Africa and the greater Eastern world are extensive, as seen through the “ambulatory of the big game hunt” mosaic (room 28) which stretches over 60 meters (figures 4.17-23: see figure 17 below). The mosaic includes full Punic warships, elephants, tigers, ostriches, soldiers, as well as slaves.





Figure 4.17: Villa Romana del Casale, “ambulatory of the big game hunt,” room 28. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.

Recent discoveries have shown that this villa at Piazza Armerina was not unique, but, rather, one of a number of sumptuous Sicilian villas of the late Empire. One example is the Villa Patti, a sumptuous seat of a *latifundium* near Messina. The Villa Patti was at the center of a vast estate, testifying to the amount of wealth the owner of a *latifundia* had (figure 4.24). The villa was constructed in the 2nd-3rd century CE and many large rooms recall Piazza Armerina with mosaic floors, peristyle courts, and floral and ornamental motifs (figure 4.25: see figure below).

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Figure 4.25: Mosaics of the Villa Patti

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<sup>246</sup> Wall Text, "Villa Romana di Patti," *Villa Romana di Patti Marina e dell'area archeologica di Tindari, Patti, Sicily, Italy*. August, 26, 2018.

Another sumptuous home in Sicily is the Villa Tellaro (Noto). The smaller villa in Tellaro also has mosaics that can be compared to those in the Piazza Armerina. However these mosaics (likely executed by African artisans, as this home was owned by a proconsul of Africa) are unique in their type of organization and distribution. Unlike the other mosaics, these African scenes are not linear, but contain chromatic variations (figures 4.26-7: see figure 27 below).<sup>247</sup>



Figure 4.27: Mosaic in Villa at Tellaro (Noto)

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<sup>247</sup> Wall text, “*Mosaico Scene di Caccio*,” Villa Romana del Tellaro (Noto), Noto, Sicily, Italy. August 29, 2018.

According to Holloway: “Both the villa at Patti in the province of Messina and the villa at Tellaro south of Syracuse are of the same scale as the villa at Piazza Armerina.”<sup>248</sup>

In the town of Taormina, too, an extraordinary cultural heritage of public finances and wealth in display has been discovered in the form of mosaic floors in private homes dating to the late Hellenistic period and Roman imperial times (2nd century BCE- 3rd century CE).<sup>249</sup> The fine execution of the mosaics testifies to the existence of rich private buildings in the area such as the Houses of San Pancrazio and Carmine Square, which have been recently restored.<sup>250</sup> When Sicily became a part of the Roman empire, master artists came from Rome to help build mosaics at the Greek theater. Using stones from Vesuvio (Vesuvius), they made mosaics that were only found in the center of Rome before the conquest (figure 4.28).<sup>251</sup>

The wealthy people of Taormina were also required to display their finances publicly in the town center (figures 4.29-30: see figure 29 below). This practice was probably encouraged to quell unrest amongst the classes. These efforts to keep conspicuous consumption at a minimum also manifested in the form of sumptuary laws. These were laws that attempted to regulate consumption (or the appearance of consumption).

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<sup>248</sup> Holloway, *The Archaeology of Ancient Sicily*, 170.

<sup>249</sup> The First Punic War saw Taormina fall to the Romans in 212 BCE and the town became a favorite holiday spot for *patricians* and Senators, thus starting Taormina’s long history as a tourist resort.

<sup>250</sup> Wall Text, *Mosaici*, Teatro Greco Romano di Taormina, Taormina, Sicily.

<sup>251</sup> The patterns and motifs used as decorations enable experts to date it to the 1st/2nd century CE, and the significant influence of the black and white mosaics were executed in central Italy during the early imperial age.; Wall Text, *Mosaico Aula Occidentale*, Teatro Greco Romano di Taormina, Taormina, Sicily.; Wall Text, *Mosaici*, Teatro Greco Romano di Taormina, Taormina, Sicily.

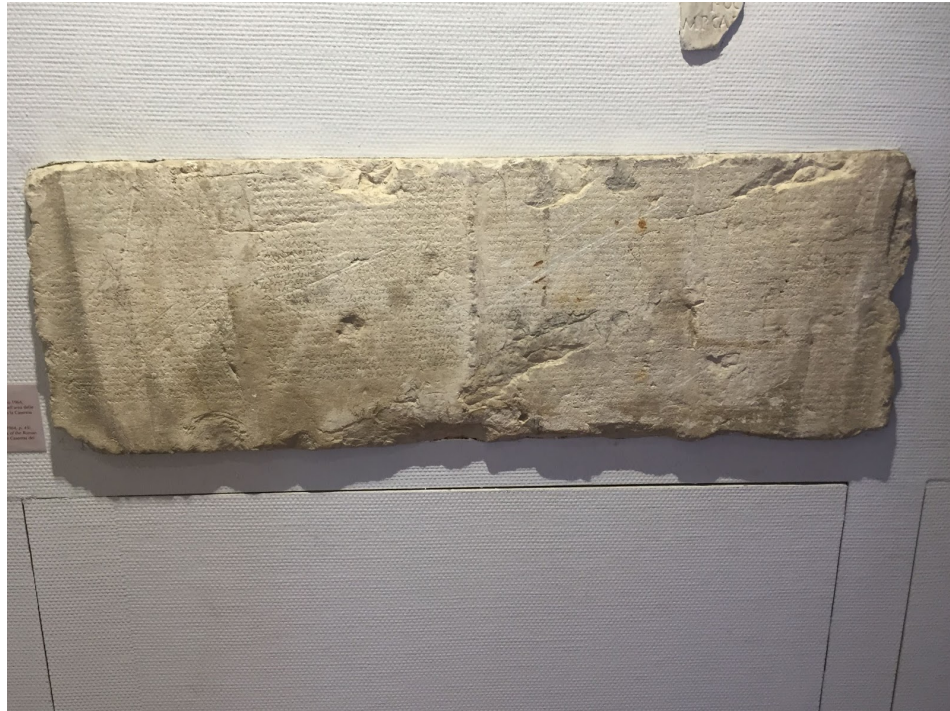


Figure 4.29: Financial account in the area of the Roman Thermae (Taormina), “Rendiconto finanziario. Ritrovato nel 1964-1965 nell’area delle Terme romane (Taormina), presso la Caserma dei Carabinieri.” Greek Theater, Taormina, Sicily.

Sumptuary laws and public financial displays were required because only a very small percent of the population of Rome lived comfortably. On the other side of the empire, the urban poor lived in crowded “apartment complexes” called *insulae*, or “islands” because of the way they often occupied entire city blocks.<sup>252</sup> Most people who lived in Rome could not afford to own a house. Roman apartments were often small, cold, dark, cramped, and building residents often shared cooking and bathroom facilities.<sup>253</sup> As Martial complained: “I live in a little cell, with one window which doesn’t even fit properly. Boreas [the North Wind] himself would not want to live here.”<sup>254</sup> These close quarters were also at high risk for disease and fire.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Gregory S. Aldrete, *Daily Life in the Roman City* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 78.

<sup>253</sup> Jo-Ann Shelton, *As the Romans Did* (Oxford University Press, 1988), 63.; Gregory S. Aldrete, *Daily Life in the Roman City* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 78.

<sup>254</sup> Martial, *Epigrams*, 8. 14. 5-6.

<sup>255</sup> Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, 63.; 65-66.

Ancient sources record numerous instances of *insulae* collapsing, but Roman law did not offer tenants much protection. Juvenal describes the walls of a typical *insula* having gaping cracks, which the unscrupulous landlord attempted to conceal, and only the liberal use of wooden props prevented the whole structure from crumbling to the ground. Those who lived in Rome enjoyed the benefits of the aqueducts, public festivals and games, voting, as well as the grain dole; rural Romans, on the other hand, might not have had easy access to these benefits.<sup>256</sup>

The wealth of senators in the beginning of the 1st century CE was truly excessive. To become a senator, a man had to be worth at least 1 million sesterces (\$1.28 million USD).<sup>257</sup> Pliny the Younger's (61-113 CE) published letters provide a picture of what luxurious life was like for senators at this time. Pliny, a young senator, maintained at least six houses in four different parts of Italy, with more than 400 slaves (most of whom worked on a single plantation in Tripolitania). He was considered a generous man, who made frequent gifts. The largest of these was a sum of 300,000 sesterces given to a friend as part of a minor act of political patronage.<sup>258</sup> He inherited one "equestrian" fortune from his uncle, and two "municipal" fortunes (from his mother and father). His three marriages were also bound to have increased his wealth further. In total, a close consideration of his letters suggests that Pliny possessed at least 16 million sesterces. Senators whose landholdings extended to the provinces might have been even richer than Pliny, whose estates were only in peninsular Italy.<sup>259</sup> Needless to say, the wealth gap

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<sup>256</sup> Juvenal, *Satires*, III. 193-196.; Aldrete, *Daily Life in the Roman City*, 80.; Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, 65-66.

<sup>257</sup> W. Scheidel and S. Friesen, "The Size of the Economy and the Distribution of Income in the Roman Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 99 (2010): 61.; Dennis, "The Relative Value of Ancient Coinage."

<sup>258</sup> Duncan-Jones, "The Finances of a Senator," 18-19.; 24.

<sup>259</sup> Duncan-Jones, "The Finances of a Senator," 18-19.

in the Roman empire was extreme, potentially among the largest in the entire history of the world.<sup>260</sup>

Prior to the wars, the average Roman was a farmer, his food was the bread and porridge supplied by the grains he produced or purchased locally. The fruits he ate came from his own garden and orchard (or that of his neighbor). His meat came from the flesh of his beasts. He could also enjoy the honey and oil of his bees and olives. He worked very hard. He had little formal education, as that was reserved for the upper ranks of society.<sup>261</sup>

The typical Roman diet was more or less the same as the diet of other Mediterranean peoples. It included grain, wine, oil, dried and fresh vegetables, dried and fresh fruits, sugar obtained from those same fruits, as well as from honey, nuts (walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pine nuts, and chestnuts), together with foods rich in animal protein (milk, cheese, meat, and fish). There was also room for items such as mushrooms, asparagus, laurel, wild fruits, and snails.<sup>262</sup> But this changed rapidly in response to massive imports of grain and oil by sea.<sup>263</sup>

Before the Romans had, without exception, partaken of hot dishes only once a day; now, after the Punic Wars, hot dishes were not infrequently served at both *prandium* (breakfast/lunch) and *coena/cepa* (dinner).<sup>264</sup> At one extreme, the poor, the peasantry, and the miserly (a favorite target of satirists) lived on *puls*, or gruel, broad beans and lentils, cabbage and turnips, and greens. *Puls*, in its simplest form, was nothing more than wheat flour mixed with water or milk. At the other extreme, the rich began to eat lavish, luxury foods: oysters, fish, and home-baked

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<sup>260</sup> Scheidel and Friesen, "The Size of the Economy and the Distribution of Income in the Roman Empire," 61.

<sup>261</sup> Showerman, *Eternal Rome*, 84-85.

<sup>262</sup> Mireille Corbier, *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present* (Columbia University Press, 1999), 129.

<sup>263</sup> Corbier, *Food*, 129.

<sup>264</sup> Aldrete, *Daily Life in the Roman City*, 112-113.

bread were marks of high social status. The elite acquired a taste for soft animal parts such as the nipple and uterus of both the domestic and wild sow. These were now served at banquets, as appetizers.<sup>265</sup>

The lives of elite Romans also began to evolve lavishly in other ways. Elite Roman women were passionately fond of jewelry. Not only was the jewelry made of costly material, but its value was enhanced by artistic workmanship. Women who cared about jewelry and ornaments were not slow to seize the opportunity, which the East now afforded, of acquiring articles that were decidedly "different."<sup>266</sup> New foods, too, were brought to the Roman table. Many poems give long lists of the most palatable fishes and fowl.<sup>267</sup> New fruits were introduced from other lands, and the improvement of native varieties was promoted by hothouse cultivation. Aulus Gellius recalls the satire of Marcus Cato, describing some of the food items found at a "lower-level" dinner party:

A peacock from Samos, a woodcock from Phrygia, cranes from Media, a kid from Ambracia, a young tunny from Calcedon, a lamprey from Tartessus, codfish from Pe(s)sinus, oysters from Tarentum, cockles from Sicily, a swordfish from Rhodes, pike from Cilicia, nuts from Thasos, dates from Egypt, acorns from Spain.<sup>268</sup>

Prolonged dinner-parties, with a large staff of slaves to cook and to serve the meals, came into fashion among the rich. Formerly, the women of the household had themselves attended to the cooking, and only for special banquets was a professional cook summoned to take charge of the kitchen. Greek customs, such as the use of perfumes and flowers at a feast, and even

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<sup>265</sup> Corbier, *Food*, 134.

<sup>266</sup> Frank, *An Economic survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 194, 198.

<sup>267</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 90-100.

<sup>268</sup> Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights (Noctes Atticae)*, vol. II, 6. 16. 65-67.



entertainment by singing girls, harp players and tumblers, were introduced at the banquets.<sup>269</sup>

Gradually, cooking became an art. The French historian Mireille Corbier writes: "Roman high cuisine was essentially an art of complexity and transformation."<sup>270</sup> In the better homes, a special cook was retained to prepare the meals.<sup>271</sup> By 171 BCE, the first bakers' shops were opened in Rome.<sup>272</sup>

Although the Roman diet began as a version of the basic Mediterranean diet, Rome's conquest of the entire Mediterranean region, including its desert fringes, along with half of Europe, broadened it in two ways. First, the Roman empire came to incorporate a substantial portion of what Fernand Braudel calls "carnivorous" continental Europe. No longer were meat eaters found solely on the periphery: they had joined the empire, and the Gauls and others supplied the capital with smoked meat and ham. Semi-arid regions to the south and east were also incorporated into the empire and became rich sources of birds (such as the guinea fowl, also known as the "African chicken," and the ostrich) and exotic fruits (such as dates). Pepper and other spices from India arrived by way of Egypt and Arabia and found their way into costly culinary creations.<sup>273</sup>

Second, the Roman diet was transformed by expanding commerce in primary foodstuffs. In Rome, for example, the *plebeians* consumed quantities of wheat imported from Egypt and Africa and oil from Baetica (modern Andalusia) and Tripoli, while the wealthy set themselves apart by opting for more exotic imports. The satirical author Martial did not shrink from using

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<sup>269</sup> Livy, *From the Founding City*, 39: 6.; Albert Grenier, *Roman Spirit Religion, Thought, and Art* (London: Routledge, 2013), 153, note 3.

<sup>270</sup> Corbier, *Food*, 135.

<sup>271</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 90-100.

<sup>272</sup> Aldrete, *Daily Life in the Roman City*, 112-113.

<sup>273</sup> Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 11.

the terms "rich" and "poor" in speaking of food. He describes certain foods such as the broad bean and the beet as being exclusively for poor people or "workers" (indeed, there is a play on words between *faba*, or broad bean, and *faber*, or worker). Along the same vein, a decorated lamp discovered in Aquileia depicts a basket containing a pitcher of wine, a round bread, and a radish with the legend: "*Pauperis cena: pane uinu radic*" (Poor man's dinner: bread, wine, and black radish).<sup>274</sup>

It was also not uncommon for the wealthy to eat just a small part of a costly animal. When Seneca wished to criticize the "monstrous sybaritic excesses of those who select only certain portions of an animal out of disgust for the rest," he singled out the practice of eating the tongues of flamingos. By contrast, ordinary people ate everything: tripe, blood sausages, leftover meat ground into meatballs, and even the heads of sheep (which Juvenal called a "feast" for a cobbler). Juvenal also remarked that a chained field hand (a slave of the lowest possible social condition) might dream of the sow's womb he once ate in a tavern.<sup>275</sup>

In a society that exhibited inequalities of status as well as fortune, distributions of food always reflected the social hierarchy. During one public banquet to celebrate a religious holiday, the Emperor Domitian (81 to 96 CE) ordered that meal baskets of different sizes and contents be distributed to senators and equestrians, on the one hand, and to common people, on the other. When generous donors gave public dinners in Italian cities, rank was always respected: municipal councilors received full dinners, while commoners were simply served a glass of wine.

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<sup>274</sup> Martial, *Epigrams*, 13.; Corbier, *Food*, 129.; 128.

<sup>275</sup> Juvenal, *Satires*, III.; XI.; Corbier, *Food*, 133.

<sup>276</sup> Corbier, *Food*, 130.; 137.

Finally, it is of vital importance to mention the expansion of slavery in its relation to luxury. Slavery was intimately connected with the aristocratic lifestyle.<sup>277</sup> Enough has been said about rural slaves and *latifundia*. On the other hand, in the city, the slave lived a very different kind of life. The urban slave was introduced into the home in order to facilitate anything his or her master had a use for: a private secretary, copyist, messenger, etc. This fact, coupled with the tendency for the rich to employ the slave as cook, waiter, and attendant, gradually built up quite a large household.

The great increase of wealth and luxury led to a demand for help; slave labor satisfied the demand that free labor could not adequately meet during abnormal conditions of wartime and empire building.<sup>278</sup> Livia, the wife of the Emperor Augustus, had hundreds of slaves waiting on her: administrative, secretarial, domestic, anything and everything she could need (and more). She had *rogators* (slaves that personally invited people to parties), slaves that dressed her, cut her hair, even *deliciae*, young child slaves whose job was to run around and look cute. At a certain level of extreme wealth, it was considered low class to have a slave do more than one thing.<sup>279</sup>

### **Sumptuary Laws**

In order to lessen tensions between those with extreme wealth and those with very little wealth, sumptuary laws were enacted. The frequent enactment of sumptuary laws from the time of the Second Punic War onwards bears ample testimony to the rapid influx of wealth and to the State's cognizance of a growing tendency to adopt luxurious habits. The criticism of these tendencies and attempts to restrain them might be said to have begun with the *Lex Oppia* (215

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<sup>277</sup> David Potter, *Ancient Rome: A New History*, 2nd ed (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2014), 102.

<sup>278</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 93.

<sup>279</sup> Susan Treggiari, "Jobs in the Household of Livia," *Publications of the British School in Rome* 43 (1975): 48-77.

BCE), which forbade women to have more than half an ounce of gold in their adornment, to wear dresses of several colors, or to ride in a carriage within the city, except for during religious festivals.<sup>280</sup>

The Oppian law promulgated during the Hannibalic war did not simply arise from considerations of social envy. Rather, this was an injunction, tantamount to requisitioning, that ensured the maximum utilization of resources for the war effort. Women had submitted to the law while the State was in distress, "but the terrible Punic war had now ended gloriously," and, in the words of Donaldson:

...success crowned all the military expeditions of the Romans, wealth flowed in from the East, the men had taken advantage of the prosperity, and it seemed singularly hard that the women alone should not share in the indulgences which riches had carried in their train.<sup>281</sup>

The law was repealed in 195 BCE. However, perceptions of inequality engendered serious social tensions. One major problem for ancient city-state authorities was the containment of envy.<sup>282</sup>

Cato the Elder was a longstanding opponent of luxury. During his consulship, he had opposed the repeal of the *Lex Oppia*. As censor, he laid a heavy tax on luxury items. His own life, by contrast, became a byword for parsimony and self-restraint. He believed that a family's wealth, built up over long years, had to be carefully preserved for future generations if they were to have the financial resources to maintain and even improve their social standing through political competition.<sup>283</sup> According to Polybius, Cato once said in a public speech "that it was the

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<sup>280</sup> Deri Pote Miles, *Forbidden Pleasures: Sumptuary Laws and the Ideology of Moral Decline in Ancient Rome* (University College London, 1987), 82.

<sup>281</sup> Miles, *Forbidden Pleasures*, 117.; Sir. James Donaldson, *Woman; Her Position and Influence* (London: Longmans, 1907), 100.

<sup>282</sup> Miles, *Forbidden Pleasures*, 82.

<sup>283</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 255.

surest sign of deterioration in the Republic when pretty boys fetch more than fields, and jars of caviar more than ploughmen.”<sup>284</sup>

The *Lex Orchia*, therefore, passed in 181 BCE, came to be identified as the first sumptuary law. It “limited the number of guests to be present at entertainments,” setting the trend for future sumptuary legislation that focused solely on banquets.<sup>285</sup> Macrobius informs us that this law was openly flouted, so much so that non-observance of the law and the persistence of “gluttony” led to the reiteration of this law in the form of the *Lex Fannia* of 161 BCE.<sup>286</sup> The *Lex Fannia* came with added provisions of greater specificity, for it “allowed the expenditure of one hundred asses a day at the Roman and *plebeian* games, at the Saturnalia, and on certain other days; of thirty asses on ten additional days each month; but on all other days of only ten.”<sup>287</sup> This law followed a decree of the Senate which provided that: “the leading citizens... would not spend for each dinner more than one hundred and twenty asses, in addition to vegetables, bread and wine; that they would not serve foreign, but only native, wine, nor use at table more than one hundred pounds' weight of silverware.”<sup>288</sup>

The *Lex Licinia* also repeated, in large part, the content of the *Lex Fannia*. Macrobius offers the justification that “the goal of passing it was to gain the authority of a new law when people were no longer cowed by the old law.”<sup>289</sup> The modifications that found a place in each new law usually revised the stipulated expenditure, raising the ceiling every time. So, while the *Lex Fannia* allowed expenses up to a hundred asses for special occasions, the *Lex Licinia*

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<sup>284</sup> Polybius, *The Histories*, XXXI. 25. 5.

<sup>285</sup> W. Smith, “Sumptuariae Leges,” *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquity* (London: John Murray, 1875), 1077.

<sup>286</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, 3. 17. 3.

<sup>287</sup> Gellius, *Attic Nights*, 2. 24. 4.

<sup>288</sup> Gellius, *Attic Nights*, vol. I, bk. 2, sec. 24.

<sup>289</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, 3. 17. 8.

“conceded two hundred asses for weddings and set the limit of thirty for other days; however, after naming a fixed weight of dried meat and salted provisions for each day, it granted the indiscriminate and unlimited use of products of the earth, vine and orchard.”<sup>290</sup>

In 184 BCE, when Cato and Lucius Valerius Flaccus were censors, all women's ornaments or garments, tableware, furniture and equipages, the value of which in any case exceeded 15,000 asses, and slaves under twenty years of age who had been bought at 10,000 asses or more, were assessed at ten times their value and a tax of three on every thousand asses was levied. That is, such luxuries were taxed at three percent, whereas ordinary property was taxed only one-tenth of one percent.<sup>291</sup>

By 143 BCE, the *Lex Didia* was enacted, restating past banquet regulations and extending them to the whole of Italy, as well as introducing penalties not only for the hosts who “gave overly expensive lunches or dinners but also those who had been invited and were present in any capacity.”<sup>292</sup> Now, even the guests at illicit feasts were made liable to punishment; and the new law was not restricted to Rome, but applied to all Italians, among whom, presumably, high living was having demoralizing effects.

About the turn of the century, from 103 BCE onwards, further sumptuary legislation was found to be necessary, especially to restrict the quality and expense of banquets. The lengthy catalogue of these decrees and laws demonstrates just how difficult it was to ensure observance of these laws.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Gellius, *Attic Nights*, 2.24.7.; See also Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, 17. 6. 9: “The nub of the Licinian law provided that on the Kalends, Nones, and market days each person was permitted to spend thirty asses on comestibles, whereas on other days, for which an exception was not made, they were permitted to serve no more than three pounds of dried meat and a pound of salted fish plus whatever grew from earth, vine, or tree.”

<sup>291</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 83.

<sup>292</sup> Miles, *Forbidden Pleasures*, 168.

<sup>293</sup> Miles, *Forbidden Pleasures*, 158.; 266.

Subsequent legislation on banquets introduced further details and minor modifications. Each new law made greater allowances, presenting more reasonable regulations to control the incessant rise of luxurious display. However, neither Gellius nor Macrobius write of mechanisms of enforcement, even though the laws did detail penalties for transgressors. Dari-Mattiacci and Plisecka posit: “the lack of enforcement seems to suggest that there was an attempt to stigmatise certain forms of behaviour while resisting the temptation to punish the violators.”<sup>294</sup>

## Conclusion

According to moralists, surplus wealth brought idleness, indolence, and low spirits.<sup>295</sup> The perceived rise in luxury and its concomitant immoralities were causally connected to the growth of leisure: “luxury came into being simultaneously with the downfall of Carthage, a fatal coincidence that gave us at one and the same time a taste for vices and an opportunity for indulging in them.”<sup>296</sup> Cato lamented the corruption of the Roman soldiers by the luxuries of eastern Mediterranean lands.<sup>297</sup>

Contemporaries explained the rise of Rome in terms of moral character, as well as political institutions, military talent, and good fortune; so it was reasonable, not only to see any decline in similar terms, but also to see changes in the moral structure, which had brought so much success, as evidence of degeneration itself. Hence, the fear of being conquered by those whom they had subjugated was exactly counterbalanced by their fear of being overwhelmed by luxury and vice. Such concerns were also evidenced in the passing of sumptuary laws. As a

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<sup>294</sup> G. Dari-Mattiacci and A. E. Plisecka, “Luxury in Ancient Rome: Scope, Timing and Enforcement of Sumptuary Laws,” *Amsterdam Centre for Law and Economics* (Nov. 2010): 2.

<sup>295</sup> J. P. Toner, *Leisure and Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1998), 118.

<sup>296</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, 33. ch. 53. line 467.

<sup>297</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 186.

result, widely violated and often unenforceable laws persisted in order to emphasize the law's symbolic functions, in contrast to the more instrumental functions of social control. These laws did not depend on successful enforcement for their effects, since their very existence symbolized public affirmation and dominance of ruling social ideals and norms at the expense of others.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> Toner, *Leisure and Ancient Rome*, 119.



## Chapter 5: Are You There God(s)?: Changes in Religious Practices

After the Punic Wars, the religious atmosphere of Rome changed considerably. As previously explained, the gods of the early Romans were mostly idol based and spiritual, focusing on the family and aspects of everyday life: farming; war; and childbirth.<sup>299</sup> But Rome's growing involvement abroad brought her into contact with Hellenistic culture. Greek influences, filtering in through Sicily, Etruria, and by way of the Greek colonies in the south, initiated a change from the Roman "aniconic numinism to Greek anthropomorphic polytheism," with its multiplicity of statues and temples.<sup>300</sup> The wars brought about a Hellenization of Roman concepts of the divinities.

Additionally, new forms of slavery in the region added an unknown social element into Italy. The slaves were brought into Italy from all over the Mediterranean world - predominantly from the East, especially Macedonia, Greece, Carthage, and Egypt. As a result, this heterogeneous crowd brought with them their national characteristics and customs, religions, moral codes, vices, attitudes, and principles.<sup>301</sup> This chapter explores the new beliefs and ideologies that entered into the Roman empire as a result of the acquisition of Sicily, the Punic/Roman conflict, slavery, new land, and the expansion of their power.

### Mixing of Religious Influences

In early Rome, deities were not clearly recognized personalities with distinct attributes. For the Romans, there were gods all over nature, presiding over narrow areas of influence. The gods only assumed human shape when Rome interacted with (and conquered) the Etruscans to

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<sup>299</sup> Ring, "Anthropomorphic gods in Roman religion," 69.

<sup>300</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 325.

<sup>301</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 72.

the north and Greek colonies in the fourth and third centuries BCE, which led to the assimilation of many Greek anthropomorphic deities.<sup>302</sup> Roman religion was practiced using two main cultic rituals: the performance of sacred rites (*sacra*) and the observance of omens to determine the will of the gods for the future (*auspicia*). Both were forms of communication between the human and divine realms. The *sacra* were requests to the gods for their assistance in human affairs using sacrifice and honorary festivals as offerings. The *auspicia*, often referred to as "taking the auspices," was a system of divination in which humans read prophetic signs from the gods. Every Roman was expected to show *pietas* through participation (active or passive) in religious ceremonies.<sup>303</sup>

In private cult, it was the *paterfamilias* (the oldest, male "head" of the family) who acted as the family priest by performing the *sacra* and representing his family before the gods. In the public state cult, a priest(ess) essentially represented the whole Roman state before the gods. One of the most important minor priestly colleges was that of Vesta, an ancient goddess who presided over the hearth of the home. Long the object of private worship, the state adopted Vesta as the protector of the metaphorical "hearth of the state," a fire kept perpetually burning in a round (and hence hearth-shaped) temple in the middle of the Roman forum. Only virgin women were eligible to serve as priestesses of the cult of Vesta. The Vestal Virgins, always of senatorial descent, served a term of thirty years.<sup>304</sup>

After the Romans' conquests abroad, however, this system of religious attribution expanded significantly. A greater blending of deities began with the acquisition of Sicily and

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<sup>302</sup> Brian K. Harvey, "Religion," *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Focus/Hackett, 2016), 212.; 211.

<sup>303</sup> Harvey, "Religion," 213-216.

<sup>304</sup> Harvey, "Religion," 213-216.; 217.

spread through sustained contact abroad. It was the practices sustained over centuries on the island of Sicily that diffused this practice throughout the Roman empire. In Sicily, the Greek shrines of the 5th century BCE were repurposed to incorporate the Punic Gods and typical aspects of Punic worship such as betyls (sacred stones) and open-air altars. In the 3rd century BCE, after Carthage took over the island of Sardinia, Nuragic deities (the indigenous population of Sardinia) were incorporated into the Carthaginian canon, and also the Carthaginian gods into the Nuragic canon.<sup>305</sup> They spread items and imagery through Sicily, Sardinia, and as far as Spain.<sup>306</sup> The combination of deities was due to a mixed Greek and Punic public population after the Carthaginian takeover. This extensive mixing of religious influences, especially from the far east, was not as popular in Rome, but after the acquisition of Sicily, the entire Roman empire began to adopt this cultural heterogeneousness.

In Sicily, starting in the 4th century BCE, religious cults changed to satisfy the cultural groups that existed on the island.<sup>307</sup> For example, the Greek “Temple B” at Selinunte was updated after the Punic sacking of 409 BCE to include the Carthaginian god “Kore.” When the area was inhabited, the Carthaginians began worshipping the Greek gods amongst their own cults.<sup>308</sup> Selinunte’s “Temple G,” “the Olympieion,” one of the largest temples in the Greek world (8x17 columns, 50mx110m), was dedicated to the major deities of the city of Selinunte, encompassing both Greek and Carthaginian gods: Zeus; Phebo; Apollo; Kore (Pasikrateia); and Demeter (Malophoros).<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 134-135.; 114.

<sup>306</sup> Robert Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1996), 75.

<sup>307</sup> Wall text, From *Temple R to Temple (B 409-300 BCE)*, Parc Archéologique De Selinunte, Marinella di Selinunte, Sicily.

<sup>308</sup> Wall text, *Tempio B*, Parc Archéologique De Selinunte, Marinella di Selinunte, Sicily.

<sup>309</sup> Wall text, *Tempio G*, Parc Archéologique De Selinunte, Marinella di Selinunte, Sicily.

In fact, some Greco-Phoenician/ native goddesses were so closely related in Sicily that it is hard for modern historians to tell them apart. In the Regional Archeological Museum Antonio Salinas in Palermo, Sicily, and the Paolo Orsi Archeological Museum in Syracuse, Sicily, museum labels use the titles “Astarte/Aphrodite,” “Demeter/Kore,” and “(Isis? Artemis?)” to describe numerous votive offerings and statues. According to the Palermo Museum, the cult of Isis became so intertwined with the Greek cult in the 6th-3rd centuries BCE that they are “indistinguishable” as figures.<sup>310</sup>

In Selinunte, the identification of the goddess of “Temple R” remains only hypothetical in the absence of literary sources and inscriptions mentioning the deity's name or epithet.<sup>311</sup> The clues that remain (as of 2017), however, make Demeter and Kore the most likely candidates. The prevalence of pigs as a sacrificial victim is characteristic of Demeter, while the sacrifice of the ram is characteristic of Kore. In any case, both of these goddesses and their offerings underscored the importance of the goddess of Temple R’s influence in the survival and prosperity of everyday life in the city.<sup>312</sup> In “Temple G,” an inscription celebrating a military victory expressly thanks three goddesses: Athena; Demeter (Malophoros); and Kore (Pasikrateia).<sup>313</sup>

Similarly, the cult of a female divinity in Erice took on multi-ethnic forms. The Sicilian city was attractive to the Greeks, Carthaginians, and then Romans because of its high vantage point above the sea (figure 5.1). The Eriçyan goddess of the sea was very similar to Aphrodite, so their cults were combined and the goddess was worshipped at the top of the mountain of

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<sup>310</sup> Wall text, *Goddess on a throne*, Regional Archeological Museum Antonio Salinas, Palermo, Sicily.; Wall text, *Materiali di età ellenistica (Material from the Hellenistic period)*, Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi, Syracuse, Sicily.; Wall text, *Terracotta statuette of a divinity with a crescent moon on her head (Isis? Artemis?) (8)*, Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi, Syracuse, Sicily.

<sup>311</sup> Wall text, *Temple R: Votive Dedications*, Parc Archéologique De Selinunte, Marinella di Selinunte, Sicily.

<sup>312</sup> Wall text, *Temple R: Votive Dedications*.

<sup>313</sup> Wall text, *Tempio G*, Parc Archéologique De Selinunte, Marinella di Selinunte, Sicily.

Erice. The goddess of Erice had been worshipped in Greco-Phoenician circles since the time of the Trojan War. The goddess was celebrated at a feast called *Katagogia* (“homeward journey”), in which the female divinity was combined with Aphrodite *Euploia* (“of safe voyages”). This similarity of femininity and support for seafaring travellers allowed the cult to spread easily through the Mediterranean. The cult was also marked by its “sacred prostitution,” linked to sacred service in the Temple of Erice. These types of sexual practices were also common in other cultural sites in the Mediterranean, related to the Semitic goddess Astarte. According to the Polo Museale A. Cordici in Erice, this correspondence with Venus Erycina could be the result of the Phoenico-Punic presence in the area.<sup>314</sup>

In the place of traditional Roman spirituality, there was the introduction of eastern religious influences on Sicily. This introduction started out small. A tiny hoard of 10 coins containing Late Republican *Denarii* from Morgantina, Sicily, shows the religious and spiritual influence of conquests that entered Roman life after Rome conquered North Africa.<sup>315</sup> One coin of note, dating from the mid-1st century BCE (but in circulation longer than that) shows the Head of Juba of Numidia alongside other coins of Hellenistic and Roman affiliations (figure 5.2: see figure below).<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Wall Text, “The Sanctuary and the Different Aspects of the Goddess Cult” (Erice: Polo Museale A. Cordici, 2018).

<sup>315</sup> Discovered on June 4, 1959 (revisited in 2013).; D. Alex Walthall, “A Hoard Containing Late Republican *Denarii* from Morgantina (Sicily): Plate OOO,” *AJN Second Series 25* (The American Numismatic Society, 2013): 1-7.

<sup>316</sup> Walthall, “A Hoard Containing Late Republican *Denarii* from Morgantina (Sicily): Plate OOO,” 1-7.



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Figure 5.2: Coin with the Head of Juba of Numidia, coin 10 in the coin hoard of Morgantina, Aidone, Sicily.<sup>317</sup>

The coin hoard at Morgantina suggests that at the end of the 3rd century/ beginning of the 2nd century CE all these coins were in use (figure 5.3).

### **Egypt and the East**

There was also fascination with the East and Egyptian practices in Sicily. In Sicily, *Aegyptiaca*, small Egyptian objects, had been used as amulets in tombs and sanctuaries before the coming of the Greeks. Many Egyptian pieces were repurposed for religious devotion and were later found buried in temples and tombs.<sup>318</sup> There are also many Eastern/ Egyptian influences in the architecture of buildings and votive offerings at Selinunte.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Walthall, "A Hoard Containing Late Republican *Denarii* from Morgantina (Sicily): Plate OOO," coin 10.

<sup>318</sup> "Magia D'Egitto nelle collezioni di Lubiana e Siracusa," Collection Catalog from the Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi, Siracusa (10 ottobre -10 novembre 2014), 3.

<sup>319</sup> "Selinunte," *Regional Archeological Museum Antonio Salinas*, Palermo, Sicily, August 25, 2018.

Egyptian artifacts can be found in Sicily as early as the 8th century BCE (through Hellenic and Punic times) and because of the Roman acquisition of Sicily, this influence was able to spread into the greater Roman empire.<sup>320</sup> Many “amulets,” once used by the Egyptians to ward away evil spirits or attract good ones, were discovered in Sicily. Ancient Romans valued them as pendants, charms, or jewelry; these items were discovered in graves just as they were in Egypt. Additionally, in Erice, Cordici found “numerous amulets of Egyptian shape” and, in Catina (Catania), Egyptian cults even became part of the civic pantheon.<sup>321</sup> Egyptian iconography was used on coins of the 1st century BCE in Catania and spread throughout Sicily. Cicero affirms that the prosperous city of Catina was one of the main ports for the export of tithe grain and other goods such as spiritual artifacts.<sup>322</sup>

Connections with Egyptian art and architecture can also be seen in the form of pendants, idols, and statues throughout the island of Mozia (Motya), situated less than 10 km from Lilybaeum (the capital of Roman Sicily)(figures 5.4-6).<sup>323</sup> Further, at the ancient site of Solunto, representations of gods have mixed iconography: a Greek/Eastern Goddess (“Astarte/Aphrodite”) is seated with sphinx, decorated with wings, and wears the garb of traditional Egyptian royalty (figure 5.7: see figure below).<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> “Magia D’Egitto nelle collezioni di Lubiana e Siracusa,” 11.; 13.

<sup>321</sup> In addition to Venus Erycina, Cordici went as far as to interpret discovery of Egyptian-style amulets as evidence of the existence of Egyptian colonies in Punic Erice.; “Magia D’Egitto nelle collezioni di Lubiana e Siracusa,” 18.

<sup>322</sup> Cicero, *In Verrem*, iii. 4. 3. 83.; iv. 23. 45.; Pfuntner “The Changing Urban Landscape of Roman Sicily,” 216.

<sup>323</sup> “Pendente d’oro di forma sferica con globo fiancheggiato da urei” (N.I.W. 3927), The Whitaker Museum, Mozia, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 25 2018.; “Idoletto di pietra o impasto a tinta verdastra” (N.I.W. 341), The Whitaker Museum, Mozia, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 25 2018.; “Statuetta egizia in una tomba punica” (N.I.W 4017), The Whitaker Museum, Mozia, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 25 2018.; “Sigillo di argento” (N.I.W. 2244), The Whitaker Museum, Mozia, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 25 2018.

<sup>324</sup> “Dea in trono,” Regional Archeological Museum Antonio Salinas, Palermo, Sicily, Italy, August 26 2018.



Figure 5.7: Goddess on the Throne, “Dea in trono,” Regional Archeological Museum Antonio Salinas, Palermo, Sicily.

Similarly, at the site of Lilybaeum in the sacred area of *Insula III*, researchers found a number of votive deposits from the second century BCE, one of which has as many as 468 oil lamps and other items dedicated to the cult of the goddess Isis and her companion Serapis. At the site they also discovered a splendid statue of Venus from the Hellenistic age and Punic remains all throughout the lagoon.<sup>325</sup> The Hellenes and Carthaginians were in very close contact with one

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<sup>325</sup> *Parco Archeologico di Lilybaeo* (Marsala: Musée archéologique Baglio Anselmi, 2018), 2.



another throughout the 6th-4th centuries BCE and when Rome conquered Sicily, they began to adopt that same type of relationship in the region. For example, the ancient Sicilian city of Lilybaeum was founded by Carthage and was inhabited by the Romans well after the First Punic War. Despite Carthaginian people being expelled from Sicily, their influences remained. In Western Sicily, “Kore” was still worshipped well into the 1st and 2nd centuries CE.<sup>326</sup>

Additionally, evidence of the spread of magic beliefs and the connected Egypt-like repertoire comes from vases in the tombs of the Fusco necropolis at Syracuse, from other sites in Eastern Sicily (Villasmundo, Megara Hyblaea, Monte S. Mauro), and from the area surrounding the sanctuaries of Syracuse. Also during the period of Roman rule, the famed “Catania Obelisk” was erected, clearly inspired by close contact with Egypt in the 1st century CE (figures 5.8-9: see figures below).<sup>327</sup>

The granite obelisk in Catania’s Piazza Duomo is decorated with carved figures inspired by Egypt. It is not an Egyptian obelisk, but a Roman imitation.<sup>328</sup> There are no hieroglyphs, but rather human and divine figures that are ornamental in scope, and at its base, there is a massive basalt elephant (possibly a piece of homage to Carthage). Additionally, the figurative system on the obelisk refers to some Egyptian divinities: Isis and Nephtys snake-goddesses; the hawk-god Horus; Anubis (animal-shaped); the god Apis; the god Ra with the snake khut; and a winged sphinx, surmounted by a double crown with a long beard.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> Wall Text, *Statua di fanciulla tipo “Kore” (“Kore” type female statue)*, Regional Archeological Museum Antonio Salinas, Palermo, Sicily.; *Materiali di età ellenistica (Material from the Hellenistic period)*, Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi, Syracuse, Sicily.

<sup>327</sup> The symbol of the Catania is *u Liotru*, or the *Fontana dell'Elefante*, assembled in 1736 by Giovanni Battista Vaccarini.

<sup>328</sup> Henry Honeychurch Goringe, *Egyptian Obelisks* (John C. Nimmo, 1885), 142.

<sup>329</sup> “Magia D’Egitto nelle collezioni di Lubiana e Siracusa,” 15.



Figure 5.8: Catania Obelisk. Figure 5.9: Catania Obelisk close up.

Not long after the conquest of Sicily, synthesized gods and goddesses spread into the greater Roman world. After the First Punic War, a reproduction of the temple consecrated to Venus Erycina was built in Rome, near the Porta Collina, in 181 BCE. This temple represented, for the Roman authorities, the presence of exotic elements in the capital city. These cults also appeared on the Capitoline Hill, on Fabius Maximus' initiative (215 BCE), and in Campania. Later, an inscription to the goddess of Erice, scratched on a bowl, was found in a camp on the German lines from the late 1st/ early 2nd century CE.<sup>330</sup> Additionally, the cult of the Anatolian mother goddess Cybele was introduced into Rome in the late 3rd century BCE and remained

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<sup>330</sup> Wall Text, "The Sanctuary and the Different Aspects of the Goddess Cult" (Erice: Polo Museale A. Cordici, 2018).

popular until the early Christian times. A Roman statue of Cybele dated from the second half of the 2nd century CE is displayed at the MET Museum of Art in New York (figure 5.10).<sup>331</sup>

## Greece

Rome's connection with Sicily also opened the door to greater Hellenization. The adoption of Hellenistic practices was nothing new; the Romans had long been in contact with the Greeks of southern Italy. After all, among the Republic's oldest cults was that of Apollo, whose temple dated to the fifth century BCE and stood in a much older precinct dedicated to that same deity.<sup>332</sup> However, in bringing the greater Mediterranean world under their dominion, Rome's connection to Greece grew stronger. After the First Punic War, Sicilian Romans began burying their own among the Greek remains from centuries earlier.<sup>333</sup> Similarly, the items found in tombs of the region show the same mixing of cultures (figure 5.11).<sup>334</sup>

In addition to religious influences, Greek philosophy also made its way to Rome. In the 1st-2nd Century CE, ring stones were created with the portrait of Socrates, the famous late 5th century BCE Athenian philosopher. At the turn of the century, Socrates was a popular subject to carve on gems.<sup>335</sup> Fifty kilometers north of Catania, Taormina became a hub of culture, featuring their large Greek theater. In the city of Lilybaeum, a statue of Venus was recently discovered.<sup>336</sup> The statue was a 2nd century CE Roman copy of a Hellenistic original. The torso of the goddess

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<sup>331</sup> Wall text, *Bronze statuette of Cybele on a cart drawn by lions (97.22.24)*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York.

<sup>332</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 256.

<sup>333</sup> Tombs 1119 and F398, Museo Archeologico Regionale Pietro Griffo di Agrigento.

<sup>334</sup> Tomb goods S1-1500, Museo Archeologico Regionale Pietro Griffo di Agrigento.

<sup>335</sup> Wall text, *Obsidian ring stone with a portrait of Socrates (L.2015. 23.3)*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York.

<sup>336</sup> Museum text, *Parco Archeologico di Lilibeo*, Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

of health, Hygeia (Igea) was also discovered.<sup>337</sup> Additionally, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York holds hundreds of examples of Romans copying earlier Hellenistic art and adopting important figures and gods into their lives, such as Asklepios, the Hellenistic god of medicine.<sup>338</sup>

In the second century, as the wealth from Rome's conquests enriched its treasury and fattened the purses of many, a host of Greeks (among others) arrived in Rome to offer their services. Physicians, architects, artists, poets, sculptors, musicians, rhetoricians, philosophers, and teachers of one sort or another, all in various ways, contributed to a growing sophistication and ease in aristocrats' lifestyles. Among other delicacies, wealthy Romans ate tastier meals, collected art, heard philosophers give lectures, rhetors declaim, and poets recite in their homes. They also appreciated the pleasures afforded to them by the refinements that Greek architects added to traditional houses.<sup>339</sup>

Cato the Elder, on the other hand, was opposed to the spread of Hellenic culture, which he believed threatened to destroy the rugged simplicity of conventional Roman life. He also argued against adding Hellenic gods to the Roman cannon.<sup>340</sup> However, even Cato was prepared to acknowledge the value of some elements of Greek culture: for instance, he kept a learned Greek slave as a tutor in his household.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> Museum text, *Parco Archeologico di Lilibeo*, Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018.

<sup>338</sup> Wall text, *Carnelian ring stone with Asklepios, the god of medicine*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/244965>; To list only a few: "Marble statue of the so-called Apollo Lykeios," (03.12.15); "Marble statue of Aphrodite crouching and arranging her hair" (1972.118.119); "Marble statue of Dionysos leaning on an archaistic female figure," (1990.247), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, August 13, 2018.

<sup>339</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 256.

<sup>340</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars 265-146 BC*, 325-326.

<sup>341</sup> Plutarch, "The Life of Cato the Elder," 20. 3.; Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 256.

Much like Cato, Rogers and Hollister write that the “intoxicating effect of unimagined wealth and military success gradually undermined the old civic virtue and encouraged arrogance and materialism.”<sup>342</sup> They go on to explain that this effect was in part because of the influence of Hellenistic culture on Rome: “the full tide of Hellenistic skepticism and individualism, which had earlier undermined allegiance to the Greek polis, began its transforming work on Roman conservatism and civic patriotism... what later Republican Rome lost in old-fashioned Roman patriotism it gained in cultural and intellectual depth.”<sup>343</sup>

### **Religious Evolution**

Later Roman religion was widely inclusive, comprised of different gods, rituals, liturgies, traditions, and cults. Cicero repeatedly points out that the Roman people were deeply religious and devout.<sup>344</sup> Romans acknowledged the gods of peoples they otherwise considered to be quite alien, such as “Aphrodite” of Erice. They even annexed the gods of despised enemies, such as Carthage’s Tanit-Caelestis. Romans accepted these divinities in a process of evocation that assigned foreign gods Latin names to make these gods more palatable to the Roman public.

By giving Latin names to foreign gods, Rome implicitly recognized the deities and thus contributed to suppressing religious xenophobia while preparing for the future. Turcan refers to this adaptation as the “Romanization of Foreign Gods.”<sup>345</sup> Like Carthage’s Tanit, this also happened with the Etruscan Uni (Juno from Veii) and the goddess of Erice (Venus Erycina).

Between the late third century BCE and the third century CE, some eastern cults, such as those of

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<sup>342</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 186.

<sup>343</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 186.

<sup>344</sup> Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, 2. 2. 5: “Itaque et in nostro populo ... deorum cultus religionumque sanctitates existunt in dies maiores atque meliores ...”

<sup>345</sup> Robert Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1996), 12.

Cybele (also known as Magna Mater), Isis, and Mithras, penetrated throughout the Roman world. The cults of Cybele, Isis, and Mithras captivated Roman citizens with intriguing rituals and the promise of spiritual renewal in this world and salvation in the next.<sup>346</sup>

Later, Roman emperors had their own preferred cults. Caligula favored Egyptian gods. Nero was interested in Syrian goddesses and the doctrines of the magi. Vespasian received his divine consecration from Serapis. Titus made a pilgrimage to the temple of Venus-Astarte at Paphos in Cyprus. Later, other emperors would focus on Isis and the gods of the Nile.<sup>347</sup>

Freed slaves (freedmen) also introduced new religions to Rome. According to Treggiari, “it is in fact difficult to see how the mystery cults could have spread without the influence of Rome’s imported slaves and freedmen.”<sup>348</sup> The first appearance of Chaldeans in Italy during the second century BCE can be linked to the influx of Syrian slaves into Italy after the war with Antiochus. We also know that the worship of Atargatis was popular among slaves in Sicily at the time of the revolt of 134 BCE. The evidence indicates a strong element of participation in such cults of slaves or freedmen. This continued into the second century CE. Juvenal wrote that “The Syrian Orontes has been disgorging into the Tiber for a good while now.” This adoption of different cultures was characteristic of the empire as it adapted and grew.<sup>349</sup>

The immense loss of life during the Punic Wars may also have led Romans to turn to new deities. After thousands of Romans fell at Trasimene and Cannae, Livy writes that the sacred

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<sup>346</sup> Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, 2. 2. 5: “Itaque et in nostro populo ... deorum cultus religionumque sanctitates existunt in dies maiores atque meliores ...”; Arina Bragova, “Cicero on the gods and Roman religious practices,” *Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica* 23 (2): 306.; Claudia Moser, “Eastern Religions in the Roman World,” *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, April 2007).; Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, 12-13.

<sup>347</sup> Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, 14.

<sup>348</sup> Susan Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 204.

<sup>349</sup> Juvenal, *Satires*, III. 62.; Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic*, 204.

rites of Ceres could not be performed because those in mourning were forbidden to take part in them, and there was not a single matron who was not in mourning.<sup>350</sup> After the Punic Wars there was a decline in traditional religious observance. Chehayl writes that it “was no wonder, then, that the women especially should turn for consolation in their grief to foreign cults and soothsayers, since their own gods seemed to have deserted them.”<sup>351</sup> By the end of the Republic, knowledge of traditional religious observance had fallen to such a low level that Varro, Cicero's contemporary, devoted sixteen books of his *Antiquities* to the gods.<sup>352</sup>

Romans were particularly receptive to foreign cults at times of social upheaval, when old beliefs no longer provided answers to new uncertainties and fears. In this moment of change we see the first evidence for feminine emotion breaking through the bonds of Roman religion. Crowds of women, for the first time, began praying and sacrificing to the gods in new religious ceremonies and rites. This is not surprising when we remember how the wars disrupted family life with the deaths of so many fathers, brothers, and sons.<sup>353</sup>

Foreign rites became more important during the late Republic. By the middle of the 1st century CE the cult of Isis was transformed from a secret rite, popular among the lower socio-economic classes of Rome, but not permitted within the sacred confines of the city, to a highly structured public cult, closely associated with the emperors. During the reign of Vespasian, Isis was officially welcomed into the Roman pantheon, and a public temple within the sacred walls of the city was erected for her. Although the cult of Isis, with its distinctive maternal

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<sup>350</sup> These sacred rites could only be performed by women.; Livy, *The History of Rome*, bk. 22, sec. 56.

<sup>351</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 101.

<sup>352</sup> Varro, *Antiquitates rerum humanarum et divinarum* (“Antiquities of Human and Divine Things”).

<sup>353</sup> Livy, *The History of Rome*, bk. 22, sec. 56.; Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 116.

and female characteristics principally attracted women, the annual spring and autumn festivals held in her honor drew both genders and all classes.<sup>354</sup>

The festivals and games of Cybele also became part of the official calendar, and Cybele received official cult status. By the time of the Emperor Augustus, Cybele had entered the visual, cultural, and intellectual repertoire of the Roman world, alongside such traditionally revered gods as Jupiter. After Cybele and the rituals of her exotic priesthood were introduced into Rome, she became a popular goddess in Roman towns and villages in Italy.<sup>355</sup>

Unlike the public rituals and processions dedicated to Cybele and Isis in Imperial Rome, the worship of Mithras was secret. At the end of the first century CE, the Iranian god, creator and protector of animal and plant life, began to appear in Italy. Mithras became especially popular among Roman legionaries, slaves, and freedmen. Not limited to the class of soldiers, however, after the cult's introduction to Rome, Mithraists were even found in the inner circles of imperial households.<sup>356</sup>

The Roman pantheon consisted of a wide range of cults and gods with different functions. But foreign cults sometimes promised something different; foreign cults offered Romans new options to what the traditional Roman cults could not change, in everyday life and even, at times, in the afterlife. The selectivity and initiatory rituals of these new cults fostered a strong sense of community, focusing on religious affiliation rather than on the public status or ethnicity of an individual within the state.<sup>357</sup> This practice made foreign cults inclusive for all levels of society.

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<sup>354</sup> Moser, "Eastern Religions in the Roman World."

<sup>355</sup> Thompson, "Roman Myth, Religion, and the Afterlife," *Roman Art*, 107-108.

<sup>356</sup> Moser, "Eastern Religions in the Roman World."

<sup>357</sup> Moser, "Eastern Religions in the Roman World."



These changes in religious practices led many to criticize their influence, and to blame the “negative” changes in Rome on new religious movements. This idea of a moral degradation actually started with the ancient historians. Livy, a well-known moralist, linked the introduction of eastern religious rites with sexual immorality.<sup>358</sup> Cato the Elder agreed, pointing out that the soldiers were returning from the East infected with Eastern *vices*, including a new interest in sexual slavery.<sup>359</sup> When Cato became censor he tried to remedy matters by placing a heavy tax upon these slaves.<sup>360</sup>

Such influences came from places such as Erice, in Sicily.<sup>361</sup> The origins of Erice are strictly tied to a sacred “*témenos*”: the open-aired temple where Venus was worshipped. This sanctuary, where the cults of the Greek goddess Aphrodite and the Roman goddess Venus Erycina were celebrated, attracted peoples from all around the Mediterranean. Inside the sanctuary, passing sailors approached the goddess through sexual rites with “priestesses” housed in the temple: young sacred prostitutes.<sup>362</sup> Strabo also refers to the presence of women in the sanctuary, clearly calling them *hierodules* (“temple slaves”). These women, coming from Sicily and abroad were bound to the sacred service in the Temple of Erice. Cato used these instances of sexual slavery as proof that outside influences brought the cult of prostitution to Rome.<sup>363</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Livy, *The History of Rome*, vol. 2 sec. 57, bk 23, ch. 11.; bk. 25, ch. 2.

<sup>359</sup> Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. I, 213.

<sup>360</sup> No permanent results were affected.; Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 97.

<sup>361</sup> Originally named “Iruka” by the Elymians (original peoples), “Erech” by the Carthaginians and “Eryx” to the Greeks and Romans.

<sup>362</sup> “Il Castello di Venere,” *Città di Erice: Pace e per la Scienza* (Erice: Fondazione Erice Arte, 2018), 1.

<sup>363</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, vol. II, bk. VI. 2. 5.; Wall Text, “The Sanctuary and the Different Aspects of the Goddess Cult” (Erice: Polo Museale A. Cordici, 2018).; Wall Text, “The Sanctuary and the Different Aspects of the Goddess Cult” (Erice: Polo Museale A. Cordici, 2018).

## **Chapter 6: The Beginning of the End: New Trajectory, Change in Military and Political Practices, A “Decline” in Morality, and Social Upheaval**

After 264 BCE, the trajectory of the Roman empire was dramatically thrust into an expansionist policy that had not existed previously. As a result, the political and military institutions of Rome were forced to adapt to a continual mode of warfare. Rome’s suddenly insatiable thirst for expansion brought on the changes explored in the previous chapters more intensely. Each new acquisition brought more land; more slaves; more money; and more drama. Exclusive political citizenship brought discontent in the form of the Social War (91-88 BCE) fought between Rome and the Italians, and mass slavery and poverty led to the slave revolt of Spartacus from 73-71 BCE. Modern scholars have generally treated these late-Republican uprisings as isolated events. I argue that these events were an inevitable outcome of the Punic Wars. Later, the rise of powerful generals and social unrest added to the already tumultuous nature of the empire.

### **New Goals**

Before the Punic Wars, there was no grand senatorial plan for world conquest. Previous expansion was purely situational. In the past, whenever the “barbarians” of northern Italy and the eastern Mediterranean had posed security risks that could not be safely ignored, Rome reacted. However, the conquests of these regions were never planned in advance. During the Punic Wars, too, senators reacted to the various situations that confronted them in the moment. This can be seen in the case of the conquest of Spain. Because arrangements remained provisional to 197, it seems unlikely that conquest was anticipated. Spain’s incorporation into the framework of

Republican governance hardly indicates the Senate's prior intention to undertake an expansionist policy.<sup>364</sup>

Additionally, the Senate had very different goals in each theater, or part of the world. The Roman record in northern Italy is one of repeated devastation, enslavement, land confiscation, and wholesale deportation of populations; actions that Rosenstein condemns as "ethnic cleansing."<sup>365</sup> As the Gallic and Ligurian presence was reduced or eliminated altogether, large-scale migration began either in the form of colonies authorized by the Senate or informally as individual settlers. In Greece and Asia Minor by contrast, Roman imperialism was very different. Although the Senate was fully intent upon subjugation once it resolved on war, it eschewed the sorts of overt techniques of control it had developed for Italy. No colonies were dispatched. No formal treaties of alliance imposed specific obligations that bound the states to serve Roman interests. Instead the senators seem to have been groping for a way to create a situation that was self-administering, yet lay under a general Roman authority.<sup>366</sup> If the Roman goal was complete subjugation and overall expansion, one might imagine Rome adopting an identical or at least similar models of war and administration for all of their territories.

However, after the Punic Wars, a clear expansionist policy evolved. The struggle against Hannibal revealed the enormous extent of the Republic's ability to wage war, not simply in terms of the number of soldiers who could be mobilized, but also in the development of a command structure and an expansion of its logistical system that enabled the Romans to campaign in several theaters simultaneously. The strategy the Senate pursued after Cannae necessitated the deployment of Roman armies in Spain, northern Italy, Greece, Sicily, and at various points

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<sup>364</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 201.

<sup>365</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 201.

<sup>366</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 201.

throughout Italy. A continuous Roman military presence in the areas led to revolts that set the stage for continuing Roman warfare in each region after Zama.<sup>367</sup>

Each region brought into play the various underlying factors impelling Rome to go to war, but in different combinations and proportions. After 146 BCE, when Rome destroyed both Carthage and Corinth, Rome expanded provincial administration to the east and south, creating provinces in North Africa and Macedonia, and, in 133, western Asia Minor (Turkey). With an increase in the number of provinces, there was a need to elect more *praetors* to meet the needs of administration in each province. This allowed many more people to become active in Roman politics.<sup>368</sup>

### **Military and Politics**

In the late second century BCE, the Senate was filled with members of the equestrian class and young men of the new generation. These men were the sons and grandsons of the established families whose senior members had been killed during the wars. The battles against Hannibal had thinned out the ranks of older, experienced senators and ex-consuls.<sup>369</sup> It was rare before 264 for a *praetor* to be given military command. But during the Punic Wars this became common practice because the Romans did not have enough commanders of consular rank.<sup>370</sup> The opportunity for more people to be involved in politics, and the young age at which these “new recruits” were getting involved, paved the way for lifelong political service. Although tenures of command were fixed at one year, men held positions in government their entire careers.

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<sup>367</sup> Rosenstein, *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 146 BC*, 209.

<sup>368</sup> Potter, *Ancient Rome*, 104.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 322.

<sup>369</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 321.

<sup>370</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 50-51.

During the Hannibalic War, Rome's ability to mobilize a large number of men was the difference between defeat and victory. Before the 3rd century, most of Rome's wars had been fought with an army of four legions: each consul was given an army of two legions. But during the Punic Wars, this changed dramatically. Polybius states that Rome mustered eight legions at the battle of Cannae in 216. That was the largest legionary ever utilized in combat during the Republic.<sup>371</sup>

Prior to the Punic Wars, Rome's weakness was that every season she needed to retrain men because her forces were disbanded after each campaign.<sup>372</sup> This system changed after the Punic Wars. Commanders no longer needed to start over from scratch. Soldiers were enlisted for nearly a decade at a time. On the other hand, extended military service had its negative consequences. As a result of this "Burden of Military service," Toynbee describes a rise in discontent and insubordination among the troops under arms.<sup>373</sup> After the First Punic War, the Romans elected more experienced commanders. These commanders were in charge of their men for decades at a time.<sup>374</sup> These two practices later helped sympathetic commanders (now well-known to their soldiers) to attain great power from the support of many trained, discontented men. This was in contrast to practices before the First Punic War, when army commanders were elected not on the basis of experience, but because of familial success and name recognition.<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> Polybius, *Histories*, 3. 107. 9.; Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 50.; Lazenby, *Hannibalic War*, 233.

<sup>372</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 52.

<sup>373</sup> Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy*, vol. II, 80.; 128.

<sup>374</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 52.

<sup>375</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 43.

Rome's vast reserves of military manpower made possible her success in the First and Second Punic Wars. Yet in the decades after 146, the Romans believed that the class of small farmers on which the legions mostly relied was in decline. That decline was the result of expanding the size of the army quickly. Many of the new soldiers were poorly trained and were either too young, too old, or otherwise incapable of the demands of service. As a result, after 150 BCE, nearly every conflict began with embarrassing defeats. Some of the defeats were on a very large scale, notably the disaster inflicted by migrating German tribes at Arausio in 105 BCE, where the casualties are claimed to have rivaled those of Cannae.<sup>376</sup>

Surprisingly, to replace the men they lost, Rome lowered its property qualification to include even poorer citizens. Recruits were no longer required to possess a minimum level of property and, as a result, tended to come from the poorest classes, for whom the army's steady, if low, pay offered an attractive living. This eventually led to the creation of a professional army.<sup>377</sup>

These poorer recruits had little to return to in civilian life after their discharges. The Senate, which continued to maintain that military service was the patriotic duty of all Romans, refused to take responsibility for these men and provide them with some sort of livelihood.<sup>378</sup> This encouraged a trend whereby legionaries became more loyal to popular commanders than they were to the Roman State. The rise of "great generals" came next, such as Mark Antony, Pompey, and Marius, each of whom motivated thousands of men to fight.<sup>379</sup>

As discussed previously, after the Punic Wars, Rome was rebuilt as successful commanders used some of their spoils to construct grand temples and other public buildings as

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<sup>376</sup> Plutarch, "Life of Lucullus," *Parallel Lives*, 27. 7.; Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 361.

<sup>377</sup> Livy, *From the Founding*, 22. 57. 10-12.; 23. 14. 1-4.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 219-226.; 362.

<sup>378</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 362.

<sup>379</sup> Potter, "The Failure of the Roman Empire" in *Ancient Rome*, 105-150.

permanent reminders of their achievements. Competition for fame and influence dominated public life. Public life, then, became an increasingly expensive business, as some men brought back massive fortunes from their victories. Senators from families who had not managed to win commands during the most profitable campaigns had an increasingly difficult time maintaining the costs of a political career.<sup>380</sup>

In second century BCE, laws were passed to crack down on *ambitus* (political corruption), a candidate's attempt to influence the outcome of an election through bribery. Among these were the *lex Orchia* of 182 BCE, which restricted the amount one could spend on banquets, and the *lex Baebia* one year later, aimed at directly combating *ambitus*. Despite Plutarch's claim that the giving of gifts in exchange for votes was punishable by death, these laws appeared to have little effect.<sup>381</sup> Thus, the gap between the richest and poorest senators steadily widened, reducing the number of men able to compete for the highest magistracies and commands.

The Republic did not create an extensive bureaucratic machine to administer the provinces. Governors only brought a small number of officials, supplemented by members of their own households, to their provinces. Much of the day-to-day business in the provinces was left to the local communities and a good deal of the administration was carried out by private companies controlled by wealthy Romans. These men were usually members of the equestrian order because senators were prohibited from participating in such contracts themselves. This was supposed to prevent business interests from influencing the opinions senators expressed in the

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<sup>380</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 23.

<sup>381</sup> Polybius, *Histories*, 6. 56. 4.; Tammo Wallinga, "Ambitus' in the Roman Republic," *Revue Internationale des Droits de l'Antiquité* (41), 1994: 422.

Senate. However, some senators nevertheless covertly invested money in companies run by Roman equestrians.<sup>382</sup>

### **A Decline in Morality: Violence, Social Unrest, and Rebellion**

With the growth of the state, wars became bloodier. In Rome, the excesses committed in the aftermath of the Punic Wars shocked many enlightened persons. Cicero mentioned with obvious disapproval the razing of Carthage and Numantia: “we must resort to force only in case we may not avail ourselves of discussion. The only excuse therefore for going to war is that we may live in peace unharmed and when victory is won, we should spare those who have not been bloodthirsty and barbarous in their warfare.”<sup>383</sup>

Unrest began to develop after 146 in both Italy and other areas for a number of reasons. First, Rome provided no ideological replacement for the destroyed powers of the Hellenistic world, and people sensed a decline in the well-being of Roman society.<sup>384</sup> Following the Hannibalic War, pressures built on small farms from two directions. The burdens of conquering an empire caused many farms to fail, and those that held out faced increasing challenges in the form of competition from new, slave-staffed estates-- *latifundia*. As discussed in Chapter 3, most citizens remained in the countryside as a desperately poor, landless proletariat.

The brothers Tiberius and Caius Gracchus took the first steps toward reform-- or revolution. The brothers advocated for a series of popular reform measures and thereby built up a powerful faction of support among the Roman commoners.<sup>385</sup> Tiberius Gracchus blamed Rome's

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<sup>382</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 23.

<sup>383</sup> Cicero, *De officiis*, I, 9.; Giorgio Ausenda and Riccardo Pozzo, “The Evolution of Learned Thinking on the Significance of War From Classical Greece to the Renaissance: A Survey,” *Effects of War on Society* (Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Social Stress, 1992): 21-35.

<sup>384</sup> Potter, *Ancient Rome*, 104.

<sup>385</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 188.



problems on mass slavery. In 133 Tiberius passed an agrarian law for the redistribution of public land in Italy. This law limited the size of *latifundia* and returned land to the poor of Rome. The expense of carrying out the scheme was enormous and it also involved a considerable loss of state revenue. It is not surprising, then, that the Senate resisted it fiercely.<sup>386</sup>

Tiberius' proposed reforms threatened the wealthy senatorial classes, so he passed these laws through the assembly of Tribes. When a colleague in the tribunate tried to stop the proceedings by imposing his veto, Tiberius organized a vote to have the man deposed from office. Tiberius was very popular with the masses, so he ran for a second consecutive term as tribune (though this was unprecedented). Not long after, the tribune passed a law that confirmed the legal limit of public land each individual was permitted to occupy, redistributed the rest to poor citizens, and raised the property class eligible for military service to include that redistributed land. Fed up, a group of senators led an armed band against Tiberius in the assembly and killed him along with 300 of his followers.<sup>387</sup>

In 123-21 BCE Caius Sempronius Gracchus (the younger brother of Tiberius) was elected tribune for two successive years. Caius conceived the idea of using some of the public land in Africa for an agrarian colony. His plan, embodied in the *Lex Rubria*, was to settle some 6,000 colonists on allotments in Africa. His opponents, however, soon annulled the law. The land was declared private property and ceased to be *ager publicus*. Caius had also introduced a highly controversial bill establishing a new colony on the site of Carthage.<sup>388</sup> Because of his

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<sup>386</sup> Hill, *The Roman Middle Class in the Republican Period*, 87.; 91.

<sup>387</sup> Plutarch, "Life of Tiberius Gracchus," *Parallel Lives*.; Tiberius' cousin, Scipio Nasica, lynched the tribune and many of his supporters, Gracchus had his head staved in with a chair leg. His body, along with those of many of his supporters, was thrown into the Tiber.; Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 26.

<sup>388</sup> This bill was abandoned after his death.

controversial reform laws, Caius met the same fate as his brother Tiberius. Conflict between Caius's followers and the Senate broke into riots and bloodshed. Caius died in the violence.<sup>389</sup>

With the death of Caius Gracchus and the subsequent purge of his supporters, the Senate recovered control of the machinery of the government. But the machinery was no longer the same and the Senate's control was far less secure. The Gracchi had created a consciousness of power in the minds of the people, and they were willing to thwart the will of the governing class. The period 111-04 BCE saw sustained attacks by popular leaders on the aristocracy. The struggle for power also went on in the law-courts, as is shown by the results of two extortion trials which took place at this time: C. Memmius, a popular leader during the Jugurthine War, and C. Flavius Fimbria, consul with Marius in 104, another prominent anti-senatorial figure, were both acquitted by a middle class jury, despite clear evidence against them.<sup>390</sup>

Over the following decades, the Republic was thrown into turmoil, as its politics became increasingly violent and rivalries among prominent senators were decided by wars.<sup>391</sup> During the early 20th century, Reid wrote that what Polybius and Livy refer to as the "rebellion of Italy" was caused by the Romans themselves, as a "creation of their own folly and cruelty."<sup>392</sup> Potter argued that the acquisition of Africa, Macedonia and Asia exacerbated problems that already existed in the empire.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> Caius is also referred to as Gaius Gracchus.; Plutarch, "Life of Caius Gracchus," *Parallel Lives.*; Hill, *The Roman Middle Class in the Republican Period*, 62.; Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 361.; Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 27.

<sup>390</sup> Appian, *History of Rome*, 12. 9. 60.; Hill, *The Roman Middle Class in the Republican Period*, 113.; 123.; 124.

<sup>391</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 360.

<sup>392</sup> J. S. Reid, "Problems of the Second Punic War: III. Rome and Her Italian Allies," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 5 (1915): 124. <https://doi.org/10.2307/296292>.

<sup>393</sup> Potter, *Ancient Rome*, 94.

During the second and first centuries BCE three large-scale slave revolts erupted in Sicily and central Italy. Each of them ravaged wide swathes of territory and were suppressed only after serious loss of life. These slave rebellions provoked horrified reactions from most ancient authors. Modern scholars have generally treated the late-Republican slave uprisings as isolated events: “the unexpected consequence of military expansion.”<sup>394</sup> But, in truth, these revolts were a long time coming, and were in keeping with the civil unrest occurring on a larger scale. Rioting in the city, disorder in the countryside, and slave revolts were all part of a greater disturbance of the first century BCE.<sup>395</sup>

As early as 196 BCE we hear of a slave rising in Etruria, and in 185 BCE a rebellion of slave-herdsmen (*pastores*) had to be quelled in Apulia. Livy describes the events in Apulia as “a great slave revolt” (*magnus motus servilis*) and a “conspiracy of shepherds” (*pastorum coniuratione*) who made the roads impassable through banditry.<sup>396</sup>

In 140, violence arose in Sicily. Rome began to levy taxes and dictate the political affairs of the island, and from this point on, Sicily was more tightly bound to Rome. Sicily’s grain tithes and tax revenue, extracted from the Greek and Carthaginian cities, provided supplies to Rome’s armies. Following the Punic Wars, enormous *latifundia* on the island produced great wealth, but this wealth did not come for free. It was founded, ultimately, on exploitation of the labor of others: landless tenants, in part, but especially imported slaves, who were concentrated in growing numbers on the island’s estates.

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<sup>394</sup> Adam Donaldson, “Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic” (The University of Arizona, 2012), 7.

<sup>395</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 363.; Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 54-63.

<sup>396</sup> Livy, *From the Founding*, 39. 29. 9.; Heitland, *Agricola*, 162.; Donaldson, “Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic,” 23.

Large estates and the increasing wealth of elites led to large numbers of agricultural workers (slaves) being brought to the island. Generally, those workers were treated poorly and were supported at the smallest possible expense on the part of their owners. The material deprivation of these workers created the same conditions that, in other contexts, could ignite revolt among free agricultural workers. The growth of estate agriculture in Sicily therefore acted, in a sense, to import peasants from elsewhere and induce them to revolt. According to political scientist Jack Goldstone: "material deprivation is an underpinning even to ideological-driven revolts/unrest."<sup>397</sup>

In a period of little more than thirty years Sicily was host to two massive slave uprisings. Diodorus considered the brutality and arrogance of Sicilian slave-masters to be a principal contributing factor in the outbreak of Sicily's rebellions. Their treatment of their servants and field slaves was one symptom of the arrogance of their lifestyle. As Diodorus describes it: in Sicily, new wealth meant a newly wealthy class of landowners who looked only to their own luxury. For the slave owner, brutality directed towards slaves legitimized the owner's lofty position, a proclamation of high status and unrivaled personal power over the things and people he possessed. The arrogant "brands and marks" of identification put on slaves, according to Diodorus, were one key to understanding the overall treatment of agricultural slaves by their masters.<sup>398</sup> The social order that prevailed throughout the contemporary Mediterranean world

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<sup>397</sup> Donaldson, "Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic," 26-27.; J. Foran, *Theorizing Revolutions* (London: Routledge, 1997), 122.; Jack Goldstone, *Debating Revolutions* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 39-64.

<sup>398</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, 34.; 35. 2. 1-33: "When the affairs of Sicily, after the overthrow of Carthage, had remained successful and prosperous for the space of sixty years, at length war with the slaves broke out for the following reasons. The Sicilians, through the enjoyment of a long peace, grew very rich, and bought up an abundance of slaves; who being driven in droves like so many herds of cattle from the different places where they were bred and brought up, were branded with certain marks burnt on their bodies."

was hierarchical and asymmetrical: when social asymmetry was pushed too far, where it could be seen as oppression, rebellion was the result.<sup>399</sup>

While most scholarly treatments of these events tend to compartmentalize them, in reality, they were symptomatic of larger changes within the larger Roman world. The slave rebellions in Sicily contained elements of the sorts of social pressures that later manifested themselves in the first century BCE civil wars that transformed the Republic. Rather than aberrant catastrophes afflicting a Roman province, the Sicilian slave uprisings were indicative of long-term social change and point towards the sorts of social pressures that transformed Roman society. The rebellions in Sicily were slave revolts, but they were also peasant rebellions in the sense that actual peasants also either joined in or used the slave uprisings as cover for their own rebellious activities. The slaves themselves were agricultural workers responding to the same kinds of socio-economic pressure that drove free rebellions in other parts of the Roman world.<sup>400</sup>

The origins of the Roman slave wars lay in the military expansion that transformed Rome from a regional power of the western Mediterranean into a pan-Mediterranean superpower in the aftermath of the Second Punic War. While, on some level at least, the fruits of Roman victories enriched all classes of Roman society, the land-owning elite were the primary beneficiaries of Rome's transmarine empire.<sup>401</sup> The German classical historian Joseph Vogt sees the situation caused by the expansion of slavery as increasing the misery of the slaves, while also providing them with opportunities for movement and interaction with each other. This gave them both the motive to revolt and the means to carry out their plans.<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> Donaldson, "Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic," 38.; 82.

<sup>400</sup> Donaldson, "Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic," 32-33.

<sup>401</sup> Donaldson, "Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic," 33.

<sup>402</sup> Joseph Vogt, *Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1974), 44.

The pressure of slave rebellions drove the reforms of Tiberius Gracchus. He responded to rebellion in Sicily with an attempt to release some of that pressure through the legal remedies of the state. When those efforts failed as a result of the intransigent hostility of the senatorial aristocracy, populist political agitation added fuel to the increasing fire of Roman political and social divisions. The aristocracy brutally assassinated Tiberius in order to restore the status quo, but it was too late. The subsequent slaying of Tiberius' younger brother, Caius, is further proof of the growing disorder that affected the Roman social world during this period.

### **The Rise of Generals**

In 107 BCE, Gaius Marius, a *plebeian* of the equestrian class and a *novus homo* (“new man” of the magistracy, meaning his family had never before held a consulship), was elected consul and was designated by the assembly of the Tribes as general in the African war against the wishes of the Senate. He reorganized the army and successfully concluded several wars. During this time, there was also considerable unrest and rioting in Rome. Marius was elected to five consecutive consulships (though this was unprecedented) and then to a sixth consulship in 100.<sup>403</sup> Marius’ successive consulships violated a fundamental principle of Roman public life, but they could be interpreted as a necessary expedient to guide the state through a time of crisis-- The Social War.<sup>404</sup>

The war was fought over the issue of extending citizenship to those allies in Italy who lacked full legal rights. Once it began, the war was fought with a savage intensity by both sides between 91 and 89 BCE. The Social War witnessed widespread destruction, atrocities, and

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<sup>403</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 28-29.; 13.

<sup>404</sup> Also known as the "Italian War" or the "War of the Allies" from the Latin word for “ally” (*socius*).

inhumanity as Rome and her Italian subjects fought to the death over the future of Italy. Marius represented the *populares* side or the “people.”<sup>405</sup>

In 88 BCE, Lucius Cornelius Sulla, a *patrician* leader who spoke for the wealthy and the conservative senators, became the leader of the *optimates*, the “best.” Sulla was elected consul and designated by the Senate as general for the war in Asia Minor, although the assembly had given this command to Marius.<sup>406</sup> Sulla marched his legions into Rome itself to enforce his appointment and to stop the reform legislation of the *populares*; this was the first time in history that a Roman army marched into Rome. Sulla outlawed Marius and took up his command in Asia Minor. In 86 BCE, Marius returned to Rome and outlawed Sulla; he was elected to his seventh consulship and led a five-day bloodbath against the *optimates*. Marius, however, died within the year. In 82-79 BCE, Sulla returned to Italy with his army and had himself proclaimed dictator.<sup>407</sup> At times of severe crisis, the Republic had occasionally set aside its fear of one man’s rule and appointed a dictator, a single magistrate with supreme *imperium* (power over an army). It had always been a temporary post, restricted to a period of six months, but Sulla discarded these restrictions and set no time limit to his office.<sup>408</sup>

Sulla’s office was unprecedented, as was the violence he used to crush opposition. On one occasion he casually ordered the execution of his own senior military officer in the Forum because the man persisted in standing for the consulship in defiance of the dictator’s orders. Sulla conducted proscriptions, in which he posted lists of those condemned to be executed. Sulla’s bloodthirsty pogrom against his opponents was only the culmination of more than a decade of

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<sup>405</sup> Plutarch, “The Life of Marius,” *The Parallel Lives.*; Donaldson, “Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic,” 111.

<sup>406</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 46-47.

<sup>407</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 56-57.

<sup>408</sup> Plutarch, “The Life of Sulla,” *The Parallel Lives.*

violence. A large number of Roman aristocrats associated with the *populares* were proscribed and their property was confiscated. Sulla strengthened the power of the Senate, weakened the power of the tribunes, and stopped the grain dole.<sup>409</sup>

Although Sulla retired in 79 and died in 78, the unrest did not end with Sulla's death. In 77-72 BCE, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, Pompey the Great, who had been a general under Sulla and celebrated a triumph at the exceptionally young age of 24, took command of the Roman legions in Spain and put down a revolt led by the followers of Marius.<sup>410</sup> Additionally, the volatile condition of the poor that the Gracchi attempted to address was still alive and well nearly a hundred years later.

In 64 BCE, promoting a policy of debt relief, the Roman Senator Lucius Sergius Catilina (or Catiline), rallied the poor during the consulship of Marcus Tullius Cicero and Gaius Antonius Hybrida. Debt had never been greater than in 63 BCE, since the previous decades of war had led to an era of economic downturn across the Italian countryside.<sup>411</sup> Sulla's veterans were in dire economic straits as well. Desiring to regain their fortunes, they were prepared to march to war under the banner of the "next" Sulla. Additionally, as Sallust tells his readers, many *plebeians* eagerly flocked to Catiline in the hopes that he would abolish their debts or would return land lost due to Sullan proscriptions.<sup>412</sup> However, the conspiracy failed when Cicero exposed the plot. Catiline was forced to flee Rome and the remainder of the conspirators were condemned to death without trial.<sup>413</sup> As a result, the political scene of Rome destabilized further.

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<sup>409</sup> Plutarch, *Sulla*, 33.; 31.; 34.; Adrian Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 57.

<sup>410</sup> Appian, *Civil Wars*, 1. 116-120.

<sup>411</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis*, II. 84.

<sup>412</sup> Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, 14. 2.; 40. 4.

<sup>413</sup> Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, 37-55.; Cicero, *In Catilinam*, II. 8.; IV. 6.; Cicero, *Pro Murena*, 78-79.



## Spartacus

The revolt of Spartacus fits directly within these conflicts as product of the preceding episodes of civil disruption. Of the three conflicts Rome fought against insurgent slaves during the late Republic (196 and 185 BCE), the greatest was the revolt of Spartacus (73 BCE).<sup>414</sup> The war against Spartacus took place in the heart of Italy, not in the overseas province of Sicily as each of the preceding slave wars had. It was fought near both the physical and the symbolic center of Roman power (figure 6.1). But it was more than simple proximity that made Spartacus' rebellion so perilous for Rome. At the time of Spartacus' escape from captivity in the gladiator school, Rome had been disrupted by a series of increasingly violent social struggles affecting all classes of Roman society.<sup>415</sup> Spartacus' revolt should not be understood in isolation, but rather as a direct result of the unrest happening in Rome.

Spartacus was a freeborn man from Thrace, who may have served as an auxiliary soldier in the Roman army in Macedonia. He deserted the army, was outlawed, captured, sold into slavery, and trained in the gladiatorial school of Batiatus in Capua. In 73 BCE, Spartacus escaped with 70-80 gladiators, and camped on Vesuvius. Eventually, he was joined by other rural slaves, who overran, plundered, and pillaged the region. Within a few weeks, their numbers multiplied. Soldiers were dispatched from Rome to quell the rebellion, but they underestimated Spartacus and were ill-equipped to fight Spartacus and his men.<sup>416</sup> Eventually, Spartacus and his men headed south, leaving a trail of "bloodshed, torture, burning, and rape."<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>414</sup> The Spartacus War is also sometimes also called the Third Servile War.

<sup>415</sup> Donaldson, "Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic," 83-84.

<sup>416</sup> Aldo Schiavone, *Spartacus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 1-4.; 41.; 46-56.

<sup>417</sup> Schiavone writes that Spartacus did not participate in any of these "acts of violence," citing Plutarch that Spartacus stood out alone amongst the bloodshed.; Schiavone, *Spartacus*, 57-58.

Local slaves sided with them en masse. Spartacus continued to take cities and convert more men, moving North and then South again, as the Roman armies mobilized. Spartacus did not march on Rome with his men, though we do not know why. Under new leadership, the Roman army began to close in on Spartacus. After a game of cat and mouse, Spartacus was killed in battle against an army led by Marcus Licinius Crassus. In the end, 6,000 prisoners and followers of Spartacus were crucified along the Appian Way as a punishment (and as a warning to others).<sup>418</sup>

While the Spartacus rebellion was a particularly dramatic example of the increasing instability of the later Roman Republic, it was connected with the occurrence of large-scale peasant rebellions. As socio-economic disruption continued, the Roman peasantry took part in acts of collective violence that were much more focused than the apparently spontaneous explosions of the Slave Wars. The three Slave Wars were not events that occurred in isolation from the larger social and economic history of Rome. Instead, they were symptomatic of larger historical developments.<sup>419</sup>

### **Curtain Call: The Toppling of the Roman Republic**

The Punic Wars were the first act in a greater struggle between plebeians and patricians. The toppling of the Republic was the final act. Julius Caesar was born into a Republic that was four centuries old and had proved itself in Rome's steady rise. In his own lifetime, Caesar saw the Republic torn apart by civil wars- conflicts in which he himself played a leading role. In 60 BCE, Caesar, Crassus, and Pompey formed the First Triumvirate, a political alliance that

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<sup>418</sup> Plutarch, "Life of Crassus," 8-11.; Appian, *Civil Wars*, 1. 116-120.; Schiavone, *Spartacus*, 110-144.

<sup>419</sup> Donaldson, "Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic," 117.; 93.

dominated Roman politics for several years.<sup>420</sup> Their attempts to amass power as *populares* were opposed within the Roman Senate. The Senate and opposing factions continuously tested Caesar. Eventually, Caesar, like Sulla, found himself with no other option than to march on Rome. He crossed the Rubicon with the 13th Legion on January 10, 49 BCE, leaving his assigned province and illegally entering Roman Italy under arms. Again, civil war resulted. In the end, Caesar's victory in the civil war put him in an unrivaled position of power and influence.

Declaring himself “*Dictator perpetuo*” (dictator in perpetuity), Caesar violated the law and the valued ideals of the Senate, which prided itself upon short political tenures (if not in an emergency). On the Ides of March, 44 BCE, Caesar was assassinated by a group of senators hoping to return to the Republican Rome of the past, safe from dictatorship. Unfortunately, a new series of civil wars broke out and the old constitutional government of the Republic was never fully restored again.<sup>421</sup>

Caesar's adopted heir Octavian, later known as Augustus- *Imperator Caesar Augustus*- rose to sole power after defeating his opponents in the civil war.<sup>422</sup> Soon after, Octavian set about solidifying his power; the era of the Roman “Empire” began. Within the framework of the traditional Republic, Octavian achieved a position equivalent to that of a monarch.<sup>423</sup> One of the most important aspects of Octavian’s propaganda was his acquisition of the title “Augustus.” The meaning of the neologism, Augustus, is largely untranslatable in English, but probably should be translated as “revered one.”<sup>424</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 164-165.

<sup>421</sup> Plutarch, “The Life of Julius Caesar,” *The Parallel Lives.*; Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 11.; 511.

<sup>422</sup> Ending with the Battle of Actium 31 BCE.; Anthony Everitt, *Augustus: The Life of Rome’s First Emperor* (New York: Random House), 211.

<sup>423</sup> Nick Ewbank, “Augustus and Propaganda,” *ClioJournal by Dickson College*, 2010.

<sup>424</sup> Augustus, *Res Gestae divi Augusti/The Deeds of the Divine Augustus.*; R. Holland, *Augustus: Godfather of Europe* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishers, 2006), 109.

Augustus had learned from Julius Caesar's mistakes. Augustus knew he could not allow himself to be declared the sole ruler of Rome, just as Caesar was declared "dictator in perpetuity," prior to his assassination. Augustus renounced such titles; however, in reality, Augustus held all the power, just not a title that encapsulated that power. Just as Augustus desired to be seen as the "restorer" of the Roman Republic, at the same time, he utterly undermined it.

The Roman Republican system had not outlived Caesar. In fact, many named Caesar as the Republic's principal assassin. But, in the end, no one doubted that the Republic was no more than a memory when Caesar's adopted son Augustus made himself Rome's first emperor.<sup>425</sup> The Principate ushered in a new era of emperors.

## **Conclusion**

According to Appian, as Rome grew, "certain powerful men became extremely rich and the race of slaves multiplied throughout the country, while the Italian people dwindled in numbers and strength, being oppressed by penury, taxes, and military service." After the Gracchi, who, in Appian's telling, were the victims of the first instances of civic bloodshed in Rome's history, Roman politics descended into a series of civil wars, where great men and their supporters made increasing use of violence in order to gain political power. The traditional workings of Roman politics (the orderly process provided for by the *cursus honorum*) collapsed, and, as a result, Sulla became the first man to overtly use military force against his political rivals. From the beginning of the Social War (91 BCE), Appian paints the history of Rome as a series of wars among the Roman people with the Roman state as the prize of victory.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>425</sup> Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, 11.

<sup>426</sup> Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1. 7.; 1. 2-14.

Rebellions of the poor were a problem before the Punic Wars, but after they were greatly exacerbated. The Republic did not collapse due to any external threat but instead as a result of internal conflict. It was the result of the inability of the Republic to adjust to a constantly expanding empire. When the Gracchi tried to reform the Republic, the result was a period of terrible civil war. The demand of the Roman allies for citizenship - the Social War of the 1st century (90 – 88 BCE) - further destabilized the Republic. For years the Roman allies had paid tribute and provided soldiers for war but were not considered citizens. Like their *plebeian* kindred years earlier, they wanted representation.

The Social War, and the later civil conflicts, created a new and reactionary reordering of Roman society-- the dictatorship of the general Sulla. But his re-establishment of order only temporarily put a lid on the forces that resulted in the further unraveling of the Roman Republic. Sulla's victory in civil war created a false picture of order restored. In reality, his dictatorship forcefully plastered over the terrible damage inflicted during the Social and civil wars. Those wounds finally broke open and unleashed the destruction of the Slave War led by the gladiator Spartacus. Later, the vanquisher of that rebellion, Crassus, played his part in the political machinations of the First Triumvirate, the actions of which were essentially the beginning of the end for the Republican system of government.

Although the Senate had warned that awarding more people citizenship would be dangerous, full citizenship was finally granted to all people (slaves excluded) in the entire Italian peninsula. Later, Julius Caesar extended citizenship beyond Italy and granted it to the peoples of Spain and Gaul.<sup>427</sup> The empire changed and expanded until it was simply impossible to rule with a Republican form of government.

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<sup>427</sup> Plutarch, "Life of Caesar," *The Parallel Lives*, 27.

## Conclusion: Influence on Rome

The Punic Wars marked a crucial period in Rome's history. After the wars, six permanent overseas provinces had been created: Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica ruled as one, Nearer and Further Spain, Africa and Macedonia. All but the last named of these were acquired as a direct result of the conflict with Carthage. Two more provinces, Asia and Transalpine Gaul, were established by the end of the century. Even where the Romans did not rule directly, as in Greece itself and much of the East, Roman influence was far greater than that of any other state.<sup>428</sup> As a result of the wars, Rome changed from a purely Italic power in 265 BCE to the dominant force in the Mediterranean by 146 BCE.

The Punic Wars had more extensive and important effects upon her civilization than was immediately evident. The wars brought Rome into prominence as a world power with whom the other nations of the world would soon have to reckon. They also drew her into close contact with Eastern and Hellenistic cultures. According to H. H. Scullard, the Punic Wars were "a turning point in the history of the whole ancient world."<sup>429</sup>

During the period of expansion following the Punic Wars, a new division of the population made on the basis of wealth arose.<sup>430</sup> More than a century of war (264-146 BCE) led to the disappearance of the Italian small farmer, and side-by-side with a growing plutocracy, there emerged an impoverished proletariat.<sup>431</sup> Unfortunately, in Rome a prosperous middle class could not coexist with mass slavery. Expansion resulted in the establishment of a full-fledged Mediterranean slave system, with an unprecedented number of slaves in both the cities and the

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<sup>428</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 357.

<sup>429</sup> H. H. Scullard, *A History of the Roman World from 753 to 146 B.C.* (London: Methuen, 1961), 226.

<sup>430</sup> L. B. Mitchell, "Background of the Roman Revolution." *The Classical Journal* 17, no. 6 (1922): 318.

<sup>431</sup> How and H.D. Leigh, *A History of Rome to the Death of Caesar*, 233.

countryside of Italy. This number grew year after year. By Spartacus' time, millions of men and women were slaves, adding up to about a third of the empire's overall number of inhabitants.<sup>432</sup> The conflict between the two labor systems (slave-labor vs. free labor), forced free laborers to accept lower wages and longer hours, making free laborers into quasi-economic slaves, though they were technically legally free.<sup>433</sup> By comparison, the keeping of a slave was so cheap that even a moderate wage paid regularly to laborers was quite expensive for landlords.

Small farming disappeared and the citizen-soldier soon ceased to exist as the bulwark of the Roman army.<sup>434</sup> As a result of the severe strain of the wars, the devastation of homes and farms, the introduction and rapid growth of the new agricultural system, and the extensive use of cheap slave labor, the small farmer found his former occupation too laborious and unprofitable to be continued. Elsewhere, large landowners drove out their weaker neighbors, occupied their holdings, or simply absorbed whatever land became vacant when small landholders departed or died.

Even when small farmers fought to remain on their land, their inability to hold their own in the marketplace against the greater efficiencies of large-scale production, slave labor, and cheap grain imported from abroad, led many to abandon an unequal struggle. The new division of the population into two principal classes (the very rich and the masses of the poor) was a heavy blow to Rome, depriving her of the powerful conserving force of the middle class.

The rapid growth of the *latifundia* system effectively ended small-scale agriculture, which had been the principal occupation of the majority of people. The middle class was deprived of its only means of livelihood. There followed a steady stream of farmers into Rome,

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<sup>432</sup> Aldo Schiavone, *Spartacus*, 63.

<sup>433</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 25-38.

<sup>434</sup> Chehayl, *A Study of Some of the Effects of the Punic Wars Upon the Roman Familia*, 25-38.

swelling the number of the ever-growing city population. In some cases, the poor ex-farmers re-joined the army that took everything from them in the first place.

In Rome, poverty and wealth developed side by side, each bringing with it its own dire consequences. In Rome and in their countryside villas lived the idle rich, with their arrogant manners, their luxurious homes and banquets, their large retinues of slaves and clients, each striving only for more wealth and greater political power. The wealthy led a life of ease. City homes and country villas were built and adorned with the artistic splendors of the East. Expensive banquets were put on, featuring rare delicacies from all parts of the world. Garments of fine materials and costly articles of personal adornment brought on a cosmopolitan spirit. An unbounded craving for wealth, honors, and power, characterized the lives of the elite.

Below them, the masses lived in squalid poverty, crowded together in tenement houses, living on the state doles. Now, the Roman populace of landowning peasants knew suffering. They were still free citizens, but no longer had property, having lost it as a result of long spells of military service and the new slave economy. They were angry. Out of luxurious ease and painful toil came conflict. This situation provided a perfect setting for civil wars, which rendered the country in twain until the time of Augustus.

All of this is not to say that the only influences of the war were negative. After the First Punic War, the acquisition of Sicily opened the door to Rome's cultural connection with Greece and Carthage. Rome also inherited Carthage's already thriving trade empire. The conquest of Sicily also opened Rome to further contacts all over the known world, and as the empire grew, Sicily remained a hub for this material trade and influence. Had Rome not acquired Sicily at the end of the First Punic War, Rome's expansion and subsequent material culture may have taken on an entirely different character. Rome's ever-growing relationship and connection with cultures



abroad changed how people in the broader Roman empire used materials and shared beliefs with one another, including religious practices.

However, this transnational expansion and great collection of wealth was not all that the Romans inherited from their new connections and occupations. During the late Republic, the conquest of the Greek, eastern Mediterranean brought to Rome many highly trained and educated slaves, whose culture and talents were highly esteemed by Romans. A large proportion of writers, artists, entertainers, teachers, doctors, and intellectuals living in Rome during this period began their Roman careers as slaves. Even later, during the empire, their training and origins often gave former slaves an edge in these fields, although freeborn immigrants also played an increasingly large role.<sup>435</sup>

In the years after the Punic Wars, belief in the old Roman gods perceptibly weakened and people turned to the gods of Greece and the East. As Rome was conquering the Greek world, it was falling increasingly under the spell of Hellenistic religion and culture.<sup>436</sup> In addition to deities associated with the Greek pantheon, Rome's polytheistic religion incorporated many gods and goddesses of eastern origin. Turcan further suggests that, because Egypt exerted a fascination over the Greeks, it was the Greek incorporation of the Egyptian pantheon that led Rome into the most direct contact with their gods, following Roman Hellenization.<sup>437</sup>

Some Romans were not happy about these changes. The seeds of the Gracchan revolt, which were inherent in the inadequate reconstruction policy adopted after the Second Punic War, were nurtured in a favorable environment - a society lacking a firm center to give it equilibrium. Additionally, serving in the same legions for several years increased the bond between

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<sup>435</sup> Finkelman and Miller, "Freedmen: Ancient Rome."

<sup>436</sup> Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 186.

<sup>437</sup> Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, 75.

commanders and soldiers.<sup>438</sup> Before the Punic Wars, men fought for the Roman state. Now, after decades of service to one man, soldiers fought for their commander. Ultimately, deep-seated problems produced a century of violence and unrest that resulted in the downfall of the Roman Republic and the advent of a new imperial government. The Spartacus revolt was only one of a series of aftershocks, which culminated in the end of the Republic.

During the first two centuries of its existence, the Roman Republic expanded through a combination of conquest and alliance, from central Italy to the entire Italian peninsula. By the following century, it included North Africa, most of the Iberian Peninsula, and what is now southern France. Two centuries after that, it included the rest of what is now modern France, Greece, and much of the eastern Mediterranean. It grew and spread to places that took years to get to, much less to control. Factional tensions led to a series of civil wars, which led to Julius Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon River, his appointment as dictator for life, and his assassination in 44. With the defeat of Mark Antony at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE, the tables had turned. By the time the Senate granted extraordinary powers to Octavian as Augustus in 27 BCE, effectively making him the first Roman emperor, the Republic had ended forever.

The Punic Wars prove that, for Rome, expansion and Republicanism were simply incompatible. Conquering more territory, Rome had no notion of representation through delegation, and abandoned the presupposed possibility of bringing together all the citizens in a single square in one day (as the idealized electoral system required). As the empire grew larger, the Republic itself moved toward implosion. In the end, the military, political, and social processes that changed as a result of the Punic Wars were a major factor in both the end of the Republic and in the later decline of the entire Roman Empire.

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<sup>438</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 227.

## Epilogue: Influence on the West

These great changes incited by the Punic Wars also opened the door to history-altering events for western civilization. An example of this is the growth and spread of Christianity. The existence of the Roman Empire, and the relative ease of travel it permitted, greatly facilitated the spread of Christianity and the creation of a Roman Catholic Church. Christianity first made progress in the urbanized centers where, in other times, the Eastern cults had recruited the largest part of their clientele, and the anti-pagan laws of Theodosius often did no more than ratify what had already taken place.<sup>439</sup> The process of adopting new cultural religions inspired by the Punic Wars made this possible. Lilybaeum, the capital of Roman Sicily, was similarly one of the cornerstones of Christian religious thought in the empire, as Christian votive items have been discovered from the 3rd century CE (figure 7.1).<sup>440</sup> Later scattered survivals in rural paganism had more to do with variations on a naturist and Neolithic religion than with the lasting signs of Eastern idolatry.<sup>441</sup>

The Punic Wars, too, played a crucial role in the genesis of Roman historiography. The Wars “first led the Romans to begin writing the history of their people.”<sup>442</sup> Roman written history began in 241 BCE by senatorial historians who were keen to document Rome’s glorious past.<sup>443</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 365.

<sup>440</sup> This discovery from the third century is early in the spread of Christian iconography, as most other locations in the region received Christianity in the fifth century CE.; “La comunità cristiana”: 13. Laterizio, III sec. d.C. Cristogramma (XP) e lettera Omega: simboli di Cristo, Insula III di Capo Boeo, 1972.; 14. Lucerna africana, V-VI sec d.C. sul disco: croce a bracci patenti, Insula III di Capo Boeo, 1972.; 15. Lucerna africana, V sec d.C. sul disco: Cristogramma (XP) Insula III di Capo Boeo, 1972.; 16. Lucerna africana, V-VI sec d.C. sul disco: cavallere al galoppo, Insula III di Capo Boeo, 1972.; 17. Lucerna africana, VI sec d.C. sul disco: croce monogrammatica, Insula III di Capo Boeo, 1972. Musée archéologique Baglio Anselmi, Marsala, Sicily.

<sup>441</sup> Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, 329.

<sup>442</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 15.

<sup>443</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 348.

To these authors, Hannibal became a mythical figure. He was the only human to lead an army across the Alps, as only Herakles (Hercules) had before crossed over the Alps and paraded throughout Sicily. (Interestingly, the city of Heraclea that the demigod allegedly founded did not survive because of a violent Carthaginian attack.) But even through all that mythical grandeur, the Carthaginians were defeated. Herakles was meant to rise again, and Diodorus suggested that he was reincarnated in Caesar. To Diodorus, Roman expansion marked a “return” to the territory already conquered by Herakles.<sup>444</sup> This obsession with Greek *mythos* and seeing Rome as the proper, fateful proprietor of Greek future, was also deeply connected to the events of the Punic Wars and may not have spread as far without the conquest of Sicily and Hellenistic contact.

Additionally, Roman gods spread out north, south, west and eastward, and Eastern gods had a place on the Capitoline hill until the fall of the Roman Empire. These spiritual trends persist, as many local communities in Sicily still celebrate originally pagan traditions now through a Christian lens: for example, preparing idols, special feasts, and leaving offerings for “patron saints” such as Saint Joseph in Fiumefreddo, Sicily or Saint Agatha (Sant’ Agata) in Catania, Sicily (figure 7.2).<sup>445</sup>

The moral effects of the war are subjectively interpreted. While some argue that the effects were all bad, leading to the fall of an ideal Rome; Rogers and Hollister write that, while the numbers of slaves were increasing during this time in Roman history, the status of women was also improving. Women were no longer under the control of their fathers, husbands, or guardians. They could own property, attend games, and move about freely through the city. Cornelius Nepos wrote in the preface to his biographies: “What Roman, for example, would be

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<sup>444</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, book IV, 8-39.; Wall Text, *Polo Museale A. Cordici* (Erice: Polo Museale A. Cordici, 2018).

<sup>445</sup> Adolfo Longhitano, “Il culto di sant’Agata,” *Agata, la santa di Catania* (Catania: Bergamo, 1998).

embarrassed to bring his wife to a dinner party? What wife does not hold the place of honor in her house and circulate in full view [or attend the public festivals]?”<sup>446</sup>

Lazenby argued that the Punic Wars should not be looked upon as a catastrophe that wrenched the Republic from its true path and set it on the road to ruin, but rather as, at most, a catalyst that accelerated processes that had already begun.<sup>447</sup> It was a turning point in the history of Rome and of the Mediterranean world, but only in the sense that it was the point at which Rome clearly and irrevocably emerged as the most powerful state in the Mediterranean world, not in the sense that during it Rome literally turned from one path to another.

### **How the Punic Wars Birthed the Modern World**

Richard Miles does not believe that the Punic Wars had long-term, modern influences, but I believe that the Punic War’s influence on the future cannot be overstated.<sup>448</sup> The vast effects of the war and the later influence on the empire had a lasting impact on the modern world: in governments and law; in languages and dialects; and in international relations. Had Rome ceased to exist as Carthage had, the Latin language may not have remained the language of educated Europeans for well over a thousand years, as it evolved into the Romance languages: Italian; French; Spanish; Portuguese; and Romanian. The dream of imperial Rome obsessed empire builders from Charlemagne to Napoleon. Further, the Rome that emerged after these wars speaks directly to the mode of life that, in part, inspired the creation of the United States of America.

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<sup>446</sup> Cornelius Nepos, *Great Generals of Foreign Nations*, preface 6-7.; Matthew Dillon and Lynda Garland, *Ancient Rome: A Sourcebook* (Routledge, 2013), 360.; Rogers and Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 186.

<sup>447</sup> Lazenby, *Hannibalic War*, 254.

<sup>448</sup> Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 22-23.

As a newly minted nation in the late eighteenth century, the United States of America needed a national identity, appropriate forms for its buildings, sculpture, and even currency. The founders of this new nation considered knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome to be a cornerstone of education (as did educated Europeans of the time), and thus they turned to the classical world to help define their Republic.<sup>449</sup>

Ancient history gave the founders important, if inexact, models for personal behavior, social practice, and forms of government. In particular, the founders esteemed the Romans of the Republic for their perceived patriotism and leadership. The authors of the American Constitution were all avid readers and interpreters of Roman Republican history. Their readings of this history, in particular, fundamentally shaped the American Constitution and continue to have influence upon ongoing debates about power and authority in American society: especially by textualist and originalist interpreters of the Constitution.<sup>450</sup>

Additionally, the ancient struggle between Rome and Carthage was reborn in the early modern period, as Europe's intellectual elite constructed—and occasionally deconstructed—a series of oppositions between the ancient cities, mapping them explicitly onto modern states. In the seventeenth century the standard modern comparison was between Britain, described by Milton in 1660 as aspiring to be “another Rome in the West,” and its great competitor for the control of international trade, the Dutch United Provinces, which were popularly associated with Phoenician Carthage.<sup>451</sup>

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<sup>449</sup> Thompson, “The Political and Visual Legacy: Rome and America,” *Roman Art: A Resource for Educators*, 10.

<sup>450</sup> Carl J. Richard, *The Founders and the Classics: Greece, Rome, and the American Enlightenment* (Harvard University Press, 1994), 134.

<sup>451</sup> John Milton, *The Complete Works of John Milton*, vol. 6 (Oxford University Press, 2014), 484-485.

Military disputes between the two were often described in terms of the Punic Wars, most famously in 1673, when the Earl of Shaftesbury declared in Parliament, “Delenda est Carthago.”<sup>452</sup> By the mid-1670s, however, the Dutch star was in decline, England was the world’s leading maritime power, and it was the French who presented the greatest threat to their interests. Even still, the scholarly opposition between Carthage and Rome turned to the military friction between England and France throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>453</sup> Napoleon Bonaparte also studied the Punic Wars. Napoleon numbered Hannibal amongst the “Great Captains” of the past, whose campaigns could teach much to modern commanders.<sup>454</sup>

Later, historians of the twentieth century readily saw parallels between the First and Second Punic Wars and the two World Wars of their own century.<sup>455</sup> The struggle between Rome and Carthage was on an unprecedented scale and resulted in massive casualties just as the Great War shattered the European powers and ended the lives of so many.<sup>456</sup> Von Schlieffen, the architect of the plan for the invasion of France in 1914, was obsessed with the Battle of Cannae. He studied the battle in incredible detail throughout his life and attempted, in his war plan, to achieve the same type of total victory. Even more military leaders during WWII referred to the battle in their writings, such as the commander of the 6th Panzer division during the battle of Stalingrad, saying that a successful day’s fighting around the obscure village of Pakhlebin was

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<sup>452</sup> Tim Harris, "Cooper, Anthony Ashley," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2008), doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/6208.

<sup>453</sup> Josephine Crawley Quinn, “Translating Empire From Carthage To Rome,” *Classical Philology* 112, no. 3 (July 2017): 313.

<sup>454</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 16.

<sup>455</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 366.

<sup>456</sup> The resentment of many on the losing side provoked the renewal of war and a wider, even more damaging conflict in both 218 BCE and 1939 CE. In many respects the situation faced by Britain in the summer of 1940 CE was similar to Rome in the late 216 BCE. Both sides had suffered military disasters and it seemed almost a matter of time before the enemy took over. Yet, Rome and Britain refused to seek peace and continued to fight, enduring further losses, among other similarities.

“the Cannae of Pahlebin.”<sup>457</sup> Lazenby, too, wrote that the “first and most important consequence of the Hannibalic War [is] that it revealed the latent power of the Roman Republic, just as the Second World War revealed that of the United States and the Soviet Union.”<sup>458</sup>

The relevance of the Punic Wars persists; the UN commander of the Gulf War (1990-1991 CE), General Norman Schwarzkopf Jr. claimed to have employed tactical principles, based on study of Hannibal’s campaigns and the battle of Cannae in particular.<sup>459</sup> Experienced soldiers are still drawn to write about the Punic Wars, using their own practical knowledge to gain new insights and often seeking lessons for modern strategy and tactics.<sup>460</sup>

With its devastating history, Carthage still serves as a powerful metaphor for the oppressed. For some, the fate of Carthage as the victim of brutal cultural vandalism by a ruthless conqueror appeared to resemble their own circumstances. The ongoing crisis in Iraq has also afforded political commentators many opportunities to equate the situation in that unfortunate land with what had happened to Carthage. American sociologist and historian Franz Schurmann wrote, “Iraq is now Washington’s Carthage.”<sup>461</sup>

Some writers even argue that the destruction of land and livelihoods permanently damaged Sicily. Immense poverty is still visible in southern Italy into the twenty-first century. According to National Geographic, “One Sicilian in Five is out of work.”<sup>462</sup> Described as “the

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<sup>457</sup> W. Heckmann, *Rommel’s War in Africa* (London: Smithmark Pub, 1981), 113.; A. Beevor, *Stalingrad* (London: Viking, 1988), 297.; Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 197.

<sup>458</sup> Lazenby, *Hannibalic War*, 233.

<sup>459</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 197.

<sup>460</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage*, 16.

<sup>461</sup> Franz Schurmann, “Delenda est Iraq—Why U.S. is on Warpath against Saddam,” *Pacific News* (Pacific News, 1998), <http://www.pacificnews.org/jinn/stories/4.04/980216-iraq.html>.; Richard Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed*, 12.

<sup>462</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars*, 363.; Jane Vessels, “Italy Apart: Sicily,” *National Geographic*, vol. 188, no. 2. August 1995 (Washington D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1995), 1.



cradle of invasion,” Sicily never really overcame its physical position between continents:

“Sicily has always been somebody else’s prize.”<sup>463</sup>

The Punic Wars, however, may even play a subtler role in our lives, or those of developing young people. In the 2004 PC video game *Rome: Total War*, capturing Segesta is always the first mission the player receives if he or she has chosen to play as the Julii faction (Julii/Iulii stems from Julius Caesar’s illustrious family gens, Iulia). The player thus sees the conquest of the city as a first step towards the expansion of the Republic.<sup>464</sup> The game implicitly teaches those who play that devastating conquest and “total” expansion is the only way to *win*.

After over a century of fighting and two thousand further years of history, the Punic Wars live on, impacting the Roman Empire and the later world broadly. The effects of the wars are actively felt-- whether that effect is recognized directly or not. In the ways described and in countless more, the legacy of the Punic Wars on classical antiquity has molded our civilization.

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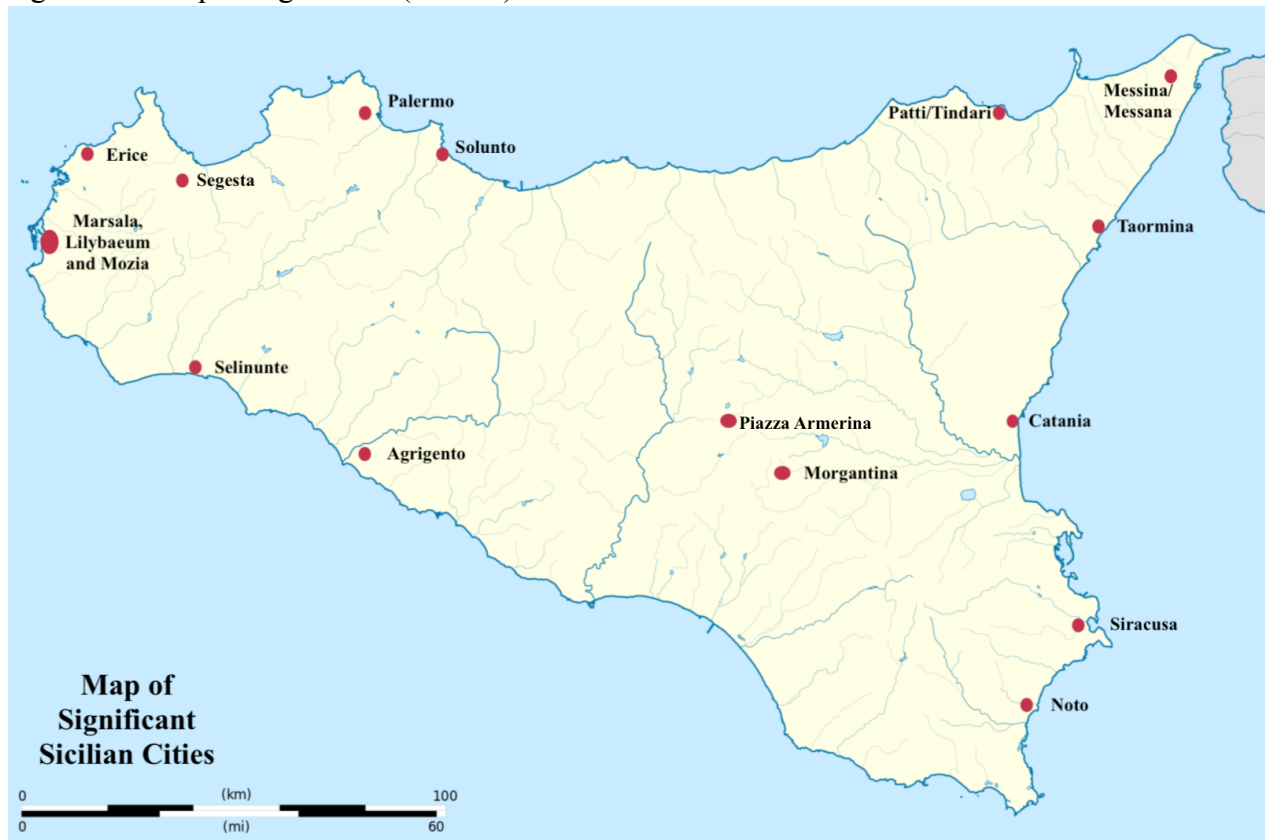
<sup>463</sup> Vessels, “Italy Apart: Sicily,” *National Geographic*, 8.

<sup>464</sup> “Rome: Total War,” video game developed by The Creative Assembly and released by Activision, 2004.

**Figures:**<sup>465</sup>

**Introduction:**

Figure: I.1: Map of significant (ancient) Sicilian cities I visited.<sup>466</sup>

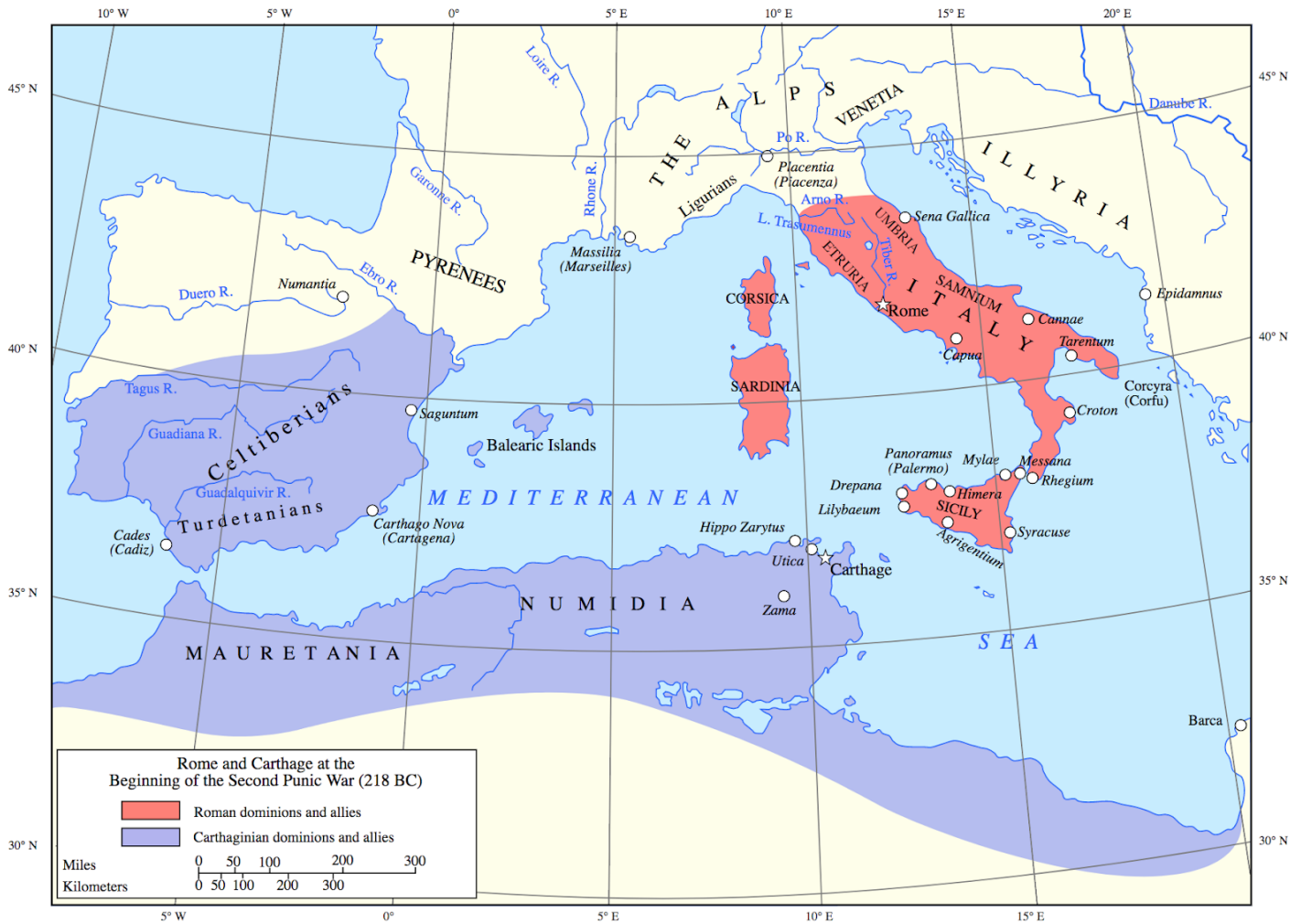


<sup>465</sup> Photos taken by the author, Angela Coco, unless otherwise cited.

<sup>466</sup> Map of Sicily, edited by Angela Coco. Original Blank map by: Sémhur, *English: Blank Map of Sicily Island, Italy. Equirectangular Projection, WGS84 Datum.*

## Chapter 1:

Figure 1.1: Map of Carthage and Rome in 218 BCE.<sup>467</sup>



## Chapter 2:

Figure 2.1: [In text].

<sup>467</sup> William Robert Shepherd, *English: Map Showing Rome and Carthage at the Start of the Second Punic War and the Theatre of the Punic Wars.*, April 29, 2012, April 29, 2012. This file was derived from: Rome carthage 218.jpg;

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map\\_of\\_Rome\\_and\\_Carthage\\_at\\_the\\_start\\_of\\_the\\_Second\\_Punic\\_War.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Rome_and_Carthage_at_the_start_of_the_Second_Punic_War.svg).

Figure 2.2: Remains of a Phoenician/Carthaginian ship, 3rd century BCE. Museo Archeologico Regionale Baglio Anselmi, Marsala, Sicily.



Figure 2.3: Remains of a Phoenician/Carthaginian ship, 3rd century BCE, Museo Archeologico Regionale Baglio Anselmi, Marsala.<sup>468</sup>



<sup>468</sup> Giglio claims that the ship above "probably sank on 10 March 241 BC, in the sea of the Egadi that ended the first Punic war." Though other historians such as Vento do not believe this particular ship was involved in the battle at all, for various reasons. The museum says that this ship was sunk in the siege of Lilybaeum 250 BCE or the Battle of the Egadi Island in 241 BCE.; R. Giglio, *Lilibeo e il mare. Marsala. Il Museo Archeologico Regionale Baglio Anselmi ed il relitto della nave punica* (2007).; Maurizio Vento, *La Nave Punica di Marsala* (Siciliana Information, 2000).; "The Lilibeo Museum" *Baglio Anselmi Museum*, Marsala, Sicily, Italy, August 22, 2018. [Photo taken by Angela Coco]

Figure 2.4: Relief of a Carthaginian merchant ship.<sup>469</sup>



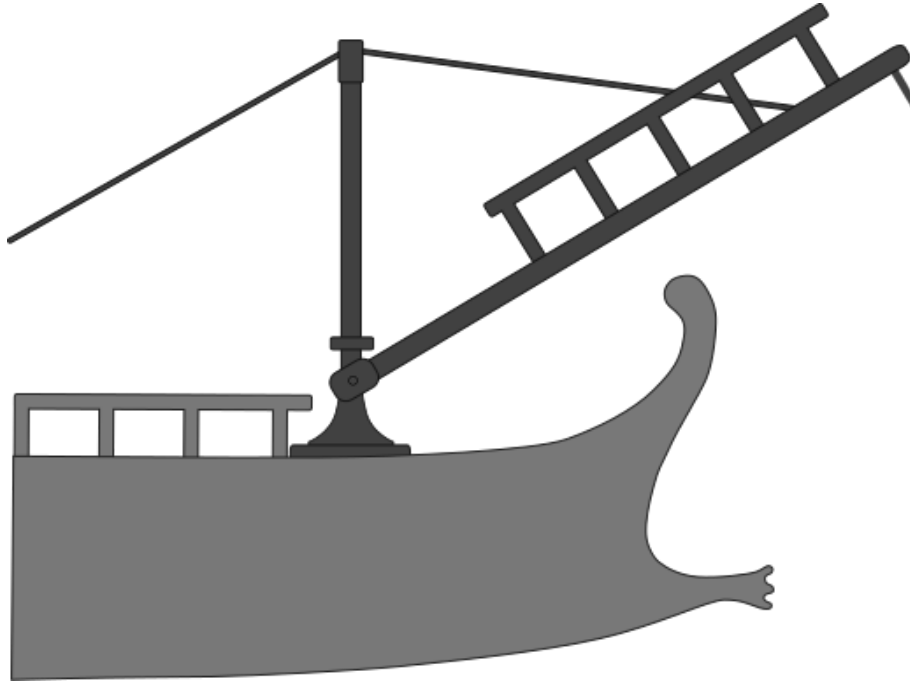
Figure 2.5: Carthaginian countermeasures on their ships.<sup>470</sup>



<sup>469</sup> M. Seemuller, *Phoenician civilization, 4th century b.c. Relief portraying a Phoenician merchant ship*. Paris, Musée De La Marine (De Agostini/Getty Images).

<sup>470</sup> Wall Text, "Dinamica della Battaglia delle Egadi," Erice: Polo Museale A. Cordici, 2018.

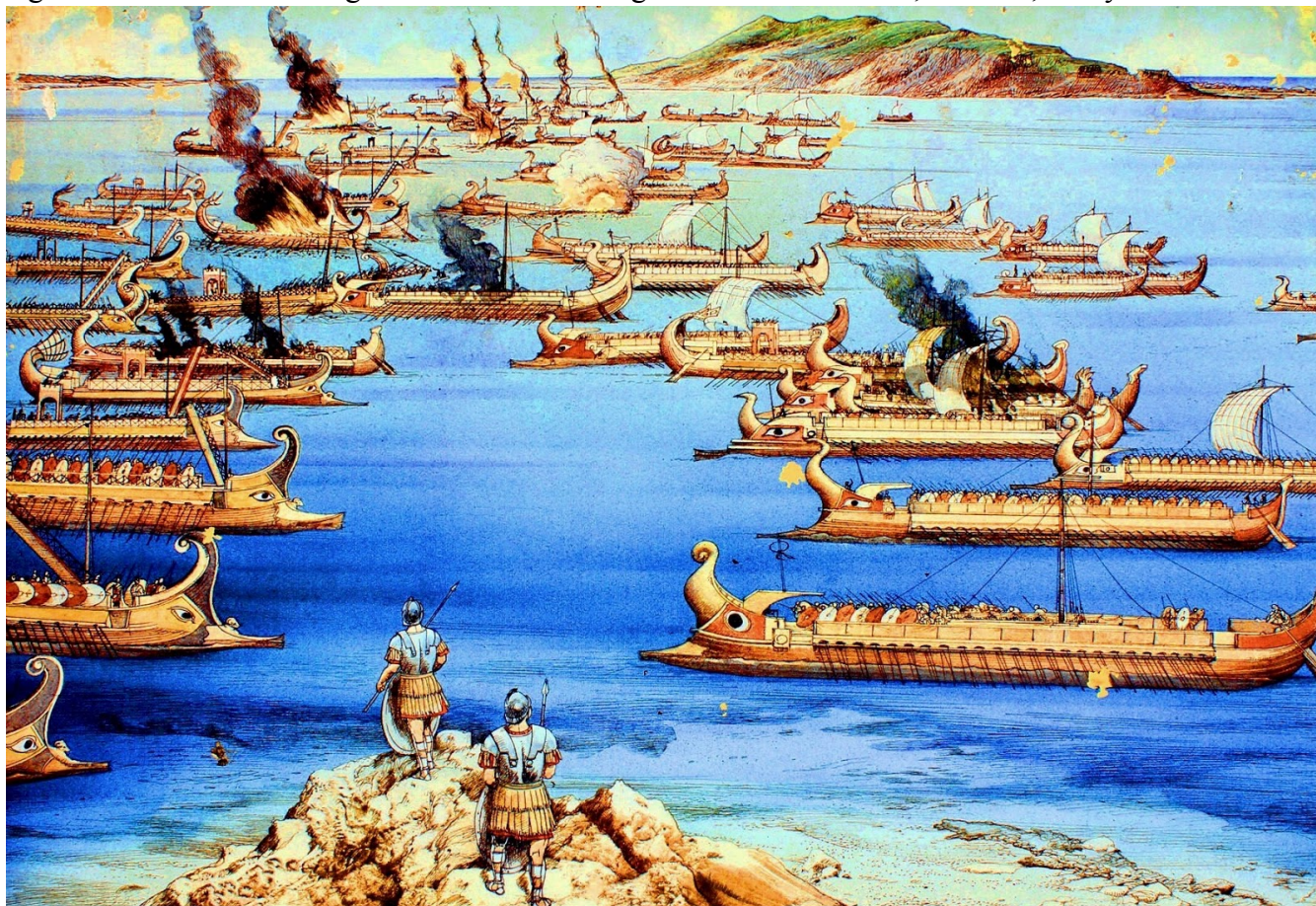
Figure 2.6: Model of the *corvus*.<sup>471</sup>



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<sup>471</sup> "Boarding-bridge diagram," based on the Model of the "corvus" by Martin Lokaj, Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Corvus.svg>.

Figure 2.7: “Battle of the Egadi Islands” at the Baglio Anselmi Museum, Marsala, Sicily.<sup>472</sup>



<sup>472</sup> Wall Text, “Battaglia delle Egadi,” Marsala: Museo Archeologico Regionale Baglio Anselmi, 2018.



Figure 2.8: Hannibal's Invasion Route, 2nd Punic War.<sup>473</sup>



### Chapter 3:

Figure 3.1: [In Text]

Figure 3.2: [In Text]

Figure 3.3: [In Text]

<sup>473</sup> Abalg Pinpin, *English: Map in English of Hannibal's Route of Invasion*, February 10, 2008, February 10, 2008, Travail personnel. La carte est vectorisée à partir de Image:Europe\_topography\_map.png. Les lieux sont repérés grâce à Image:Hannibal route of invasion.gif, Image:Second Punic War full.svg et cette carte sur Britannica., [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hannibal\\_route\\_of\\_invasion-en.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hannibal_route_of_invasion-en.svg).

## Chapter 4:

Figure 4.1: Expansion of the empire- 279 BCE.<sup>474</sup>



Figure 4.2: Expansion of the empire- 86 BCE.<sup>475</sup>



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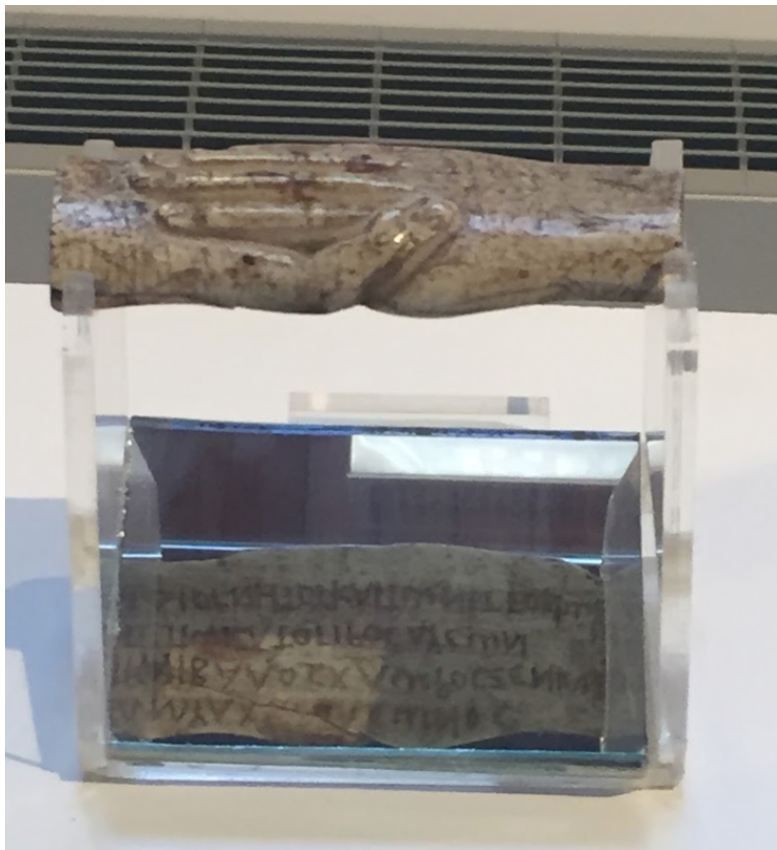
<sup>474</sup> Howard Wiseman, "18 centuries of Roman Empire," Griffith University, Queensland, Australia.  
<http://www.ict.griffith.edu.au/wiseman/Roman/19Maps.html#279%20BC>.

<sup>475</sup> Wiseman, "18 centuries of Roman Empire."

Figure 4.3: Expansion of the empire- 116 CE.<sup>476</sup>



Figure 4.4: Greek/Carthaginian Friendship Figure. Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily.



<sup>476</sup> Wiseman, "18 centuries of Roman Empire."

Figure 4.5: [In text]

Figure 4.6: *Cannellures* of cargo ship “A,” Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily.



Figure 4.7: Plateia (*Aelia*), Roman road throughout the city of Lilybaeum (Marsala).



Figure 4.8 (center): Amphora of oil and fish sauce from Tunisia. “Africana II C, metà III-V sec. d.C. Byzacena e Zeugitana (Tunisia) Trasporto di olio e conserve di pesci.” Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily



Figure 4.9 (center): Medium and Lower Egypt wine shipment, “Egizia, I-IV sec. d.C. Medio e basso Egitto Trasporto di vino,” Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily.  
 Figure 4.10 (left): Wine from Asia Minor (Turkey), “Late Roman 3, fine IV- metà V sec. d.C. Asia Minore (Turchia), Isole Egeo trasporto di vino, unguenti.” Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily.



Figure 4.11: Wine and oil shipment from Syria, Turkey, Rhodes, and Cyprus, “Late Roman 1A, fine IV-inizi XI sec. d.C. Siria, costa meridionale Asia Minore (Turchia), Rodi, Cipro, Trasporto di vino pregiato e olio.” Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum, Marsala, Sicily.





Figure 4.12: Layout of the Villa Romana del Casale, Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.13: "Octagon Mosaic Room," room 26 in the Villa Romana del Casale, Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.14: Mosaic peristyle of the Villa Romana del Casale, Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.15: [In Text]  
Figure 4.16: [In Text]

Figure 4.17: [In Text]

Figure 4.18: Villa Romana del Casale, “ambulatory of the big game hunt,” room 28. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.19: Villa Romana del Casale, “ambulatory of the big game hunt,” room 28. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.20: Villa Romana del Casale, “ambulatory of the big game hunt,” room 28. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.21: Villa Romana del Casale, “ambulatory of the big game hunt,” room 28. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.22: Villa Romana del Casale, “ambulatory of the big game hunt,” room 28. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.





Figure 4.23: Close up of an elephant. Villa Romana del Casale, “ambulatory of the big game hunt,” room 28. Piazza Armerina, Sicily.



Figure 4.24: Southwest corner of the Villa Patti. Patti, Sicily.



Figure 4.25: [In Text]

Figure 4.26: Villa at Tellaro. Noto, Sicily.



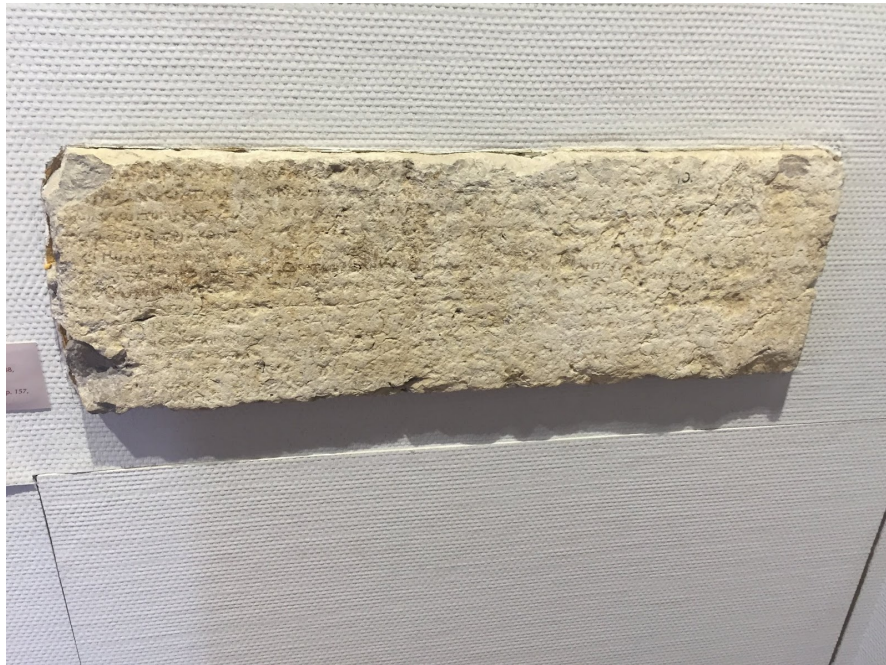
Figure 4.27: [In Text]

Figure 4.28: Stones from Vesuvius used to construct mosaics in the Greek Theater, Taormina.



Figure 4.29: [In Text]

Figure 4.30: Financial account, “Rendiconto finanziario. Ritrovato nel 1807.” Greek Theater, Taormina, Sicily.



**Chapter 5:**

Figure 5.1: View of the sea from the temple of the goddess of Erice, Sicily.



Figure 5.2: [In Text]

Figure 5.3: Coin hoard of Morgantina. Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi, Syracuse, Sicily.



Figure 5.4: Egyptian Style Green Idol. “Idoletto di pietra o impasto a tinta verdastra” (N.I.W. 341). The Whitaker Museum, Mozia, Marsala, Sicily.



Figure 5.5: Egyptian Statue in a Punic Tomb. “Statuetta egizia in una tomba punica” (N.I.W. 4017). The Whitaker Museum, Mozia, Marsala, Sicily.



Figure 5.6: Silver Seal with Egyptian influence. “Sigillo di argento” (N.I.W. 2244). The Whitaker Museum, Mozia, Marsala, Sicily.



Figure 5.7: [In Text]

Figure 5.8: [In Text]

Figure 5.9: [In Text]



Figure 5.10: A Roman statue of Cybele, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA.<sup>477</sup>



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<sup>477</sup> “Bronze statuette of Cybele on a cart drawn by lions” (97.22.24), *Metropolitan Museum of Art*. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/246700>.

Figure 5.11: Roman/Greek mixed tomb goods S1-1500, Museo Archeologico Regionale Pietro Griffo di Agrigento, Agrigento, Sicily.



**Chapter 6:**

6.1: Route of the Spartacus Rebellion.<sup>478</sup>



<sup>478</sup> Adam Donaldson, "Peasant and Slave Rebellions in the Roman Republic" (The University of Arizona, 2012), 101.

**Conclusion:**

Figure 7.1: Brick Fragment/Oil Lamps from the Christian Community in Lilybaeum in the 3rd-6th centuries CE, Baglio Anselmi Museum, Marsala, Sicily. Symbols of Christ: 13- Christogram (XP) and Omega ( $\Omega$ ). 14- Expanded Cross Arms. 15- Christogram (XP). 16- “A galloping knight” (*cavaliere al galoppo*). 17- monogrammatic cross.



Figure 7.2: Procession of the *fercolo*, a silver carriage holding Saint Agatha's relics, through the city of Catania, Sicily.<sup>479</sup>



<sup>479</sup> Daniele, "Feast of Sant' Agata in Catania | Visit Sicily Official Page," *Visit Sicily* (blog), November 16, 2015, <http://www.visitsicily.info/en/santagata-in-catania/>.

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“Late Roman 1A, fine IV-inizi XI sec. d.C. Siria, costa meridionale Asia Minore (Turchia), Rodi, Cipro, Trasporto di vino pregiato e olio.”

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