Praecipitia in Ruinam: The Decline of the Small Roman Farmer and the Fall of the Roman Republic

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War and fraternal bloodshed dominated the late Roman Republic. From the tribunate of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus in 133 to the beginning of the Augustan Principate in 27, Rome was wracked by internal dissention and political anarchy.[1] The chaos was the product of the unbounded personal ambitions of Rome's leading men—ambitions that were encouraged by a militaristic culture that impelled individual aristocrats to pursue fame and glory for themselves at all cost. Powerful Roman commanders made war with each other and sacked the city of Rome with their personal armies. "Violence," according to Appian, "prevailed almost constantly, together with shameful contempt for law and justice."[2] This traumatic episode witnessed the dismantling of the oligarchic Republic and its replacement with a government ruled by the despotic authority of one man. Personal ambition tells only part of the story. The Republic was, in many ways, a victim of its own success. By 133 the Romans found themselves in command of a far-flung empire extending from Spain in the west to Asia Minor in the east, but they were forced to administer it with the government structure of a city-state. Rapid imperial expansion during the middle Republic strained nearly every aspect of the Roman system but none more so than the very foundation of Roman military strength—the small farmer. Spoils of war were channeled into agriculture by the landed elite, resulting in economic polarization and the displacement of independent labor in the countryside. This inquiry traces the socio-economic developments that led to the decline of independent farming in Rome, developments that culminated in political turmoil and civil war during the first century.

Sallust, a contemporary of G. Julius Caesar and Catiline, complained of the "shamelessness, bribery and rapacity" prevalent in the political life of his time, the "corruption of the public morals," and the "two great evils of . . . extravagance and avarice."[3] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writing towards the end of the first century, reflected on the virtuous days of the early Republic when Roman leaders "worked with their own hands, led frugal lives, did not chafe under honourable poverty, and, far from aiming at positions of royal power, actually refused them."[4] The first century historian Velleius Patercullus complained of the "private luxury" and the "public extravagance" of Rome's leading citizens.[5] This view continues to attract its

defenders. Historian R. E. Smith, for example, argued that the senatorial class was handling Rome's problems just fine up until the end of the Third Punic War and that it was the "fundamentally irresponsible" behavior of the Gracchi that disrupted the traditional political system and set in motion the decline in aristocratic morals.[6] Historian David Shotter blamed the corrupting influence of imperial wealth for the gradual loss of the "old-fashioned corporateness" of Roman society and the rise in individualism among the Roman aristocracy.[7] Historian Monte Pearson attributed the degeneration of aristocratic morals to imperial growth, the corruption of the political process, and the breakdown of collectivist norms that had once imposed an unshakeable restraining influence on the behavior of individual magistrates.[8] Historian Pamela Marin drew attention to the erosion of long-held Roman ideals of patriotism and selfless service to the state and their replacement with "competition, desire, and greed" on the part of the Roman elite.[9] Historian Ronald Syme focused on the incessant squabbling of the Roman nobility and their corrupt, sinister, and fraudulent behavior in his discussion of the Republic's end.[10]

The central thrust of this traditional interpretation was that there was some sudden change in the behavior of the ruling aristocracy,[11] that "love of office and the disgrace entailed by obscurity"[12] seized the aristocracy and expanded the extent to which aristocrats were willing to go to win political power for themselves at the expense of the state. According to the argument, this was not always the case. The community sentiment of the early Republic imposed such a powerful constraint on aristocratic ambition and behavior that fame, glory, and wealth were not pursued at the expense of the common good. Prestige for one's self and for one's family was won through selfless acts of bravery that primarily benefitted the state rather than the individual.[13] This selfless behavior was engendered by the unusually high value the typical Roman placed on his citizenship. It gave even the lowliest member a stake in the future of his great city, and it created a sense of community that permeated every rung of Roman society.[14] As the second century satirist Lucilius so romantically put it, virtue is "thinking our country's interests to be foremost of all, our parents' next, and then thirdly and lastly our own."[15] The sense of community broke down by the first century. Deprived of cities to besiege and armies to defeat, so the argument goes, members of the ruling elite eventually turned their competitive wrath on each other.[16] Constructive competition turned destructive as personal prestige took precedence over the well-being of the Roman state, and whereas the heroes of Rome's wars of expansion fought for the glory of their country and the praise of their fellow citizens, the leading men of the late Republic fought simply to enhance their personal fame and wealth.

Roman culture was indeed highly competitive, especially for those at the top of the social hierarchy.[17] Historian Norman Cantor described it as a "one-class"

society dominated by a single group—the Roman *nobilitas*.[18] Collectively, this group monopolized all military and political power and steered the affairs of the Roman state. Individually, however, aristocrats of the Republic exercised political power indirectly by way of elections and assemblies.[19] Winning the esteem of other aristocrats was crucial if one was to enjoy influence over the political process. Therefore, the Roman ruling elite sought to constantly outdo each other in terms of prestige, fame, and glory, for winning all three meant leverage in the assemblies and election to the magistracies. For an ambitious aristocrat, the shortest route to glory and fame—and political power—was through a successful military command. Evidence of this can be seen in the peculiar characteristics of Roman culture itself, a culture which—through its outward physical symbols, its stories of past heroes, and its social rewards system—cherished military success above all other social accomplishments. The high value placed on warfare increased the frequency and severity of Rome's wars and explains, at least in part, the rapid march of Roman power throughout Italy and the Mediterranean during the early and middle Republic.[20] In this way at least, the aristocratic pursuit of glory and fame through warfare served the interests of the Roman state, for the competitive energies of the ruling aristocracy were absorbed by neighboring communities during the initial flush of Roman expansion. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the typical Roman aristocrat was exposed to combat and military command at an early age and throughout his political career.[21]

The moral interpretation of the Republic's decline has some serious flaws. Greed, ambition, and lust for power are constants in human nature, and as Harris convincingly demonstrates, the aristocratic pursuit of fame and glory was not exclusive to the late Republic—competition for both among the Roman elite was already vigorous during the late fourth century.[22] Roman aristocrats preferred fame to obscurity long before the so-called period of moral decline in the second century, and it is therefore unreasonable to assume that the nobility of the late Republic were less ambitious than their counterparts in the early Republic.[23] Furthermore, the use of violence in domestic politics was just as common, if not more so, during the early Republic as in later times. This was especially true during the Conflict of the Orders, a drawn-out civil struggle in the fifth and fourth centuries waged by the lesser nobility to break the higher nobility's exclusive grip on political power.[24] The assertion that ambition, greed, and political violence were the main drivers of political decline is seriously undermined by the presence of these tendencies during the early days of the Republic. Furthermore, the moral interpretation is far too simplistic and superficial and does little to acknowledge the immense socioeconomic changes brought on by the process of empire. Rome found it increasingly difficult to replenish its legions as the economic position of its yeomanry declined. The

manpower shortage was a chronic symptom of fundamental economic changes occurring at the heart of Rome's traditional, subsistence-based economy. Marius saw professionalization as the only means of balancing the recruiting deficit, and his decision to enlist propertyless men in his *supplementum* of 107 was one of monumental consequence for the later history of the Republic. Professional armies became instruments of unscrupulous commanders who were willing to use them against the state. Political decline and civil war were thus the final steps in a long economic process that originated in the late third century. Rome's independent farmers were squeezed by a number of specific economic developments including the development of large estates, the influx of slave labor, the importation of cheap grain from newly acquired provinces, and a sharpening of the economic divide separating the landed elite from the urban and rural *proletarii*.

The growth of Rome's Mediterranean empire during the second century was both rapid and unplanned, and it set in motion a number of economic developments that, in combination, fundamentally altered the nature of Rome's traditional subsistence economy. Wars of conquest brought untold wealth into the city in the form of plunder, tribute, and slaves. These went overwhelmingly to members of the *nobilitas* who, in turn, channeled this new wealth into agriculture—the most lucrative and sustainable investment available at the time. Independent farmers found themselves unable to compete with the *latifundia*, large agglomerations of public land and abandoned farms. These sprawling estates made extensive use of slave labor and concentrated on the production of lucrative goods like olives, grapes, and animal products. Commercial farms enjoyed the benefit of scale, and their use of cheap slave labor gave them a cost advantage over small farms that had to rely on the efforts of their owners. Many yeomen were economically ruined and forced to sell their holdings to rich investors, furthering the cycle of dislocation and impoverishment.[25] Meanwhile, imperial growth brought new provinces into the Roman orbit, territories that were particularly efficient at producing grain for consumption in Roman cities. The introduction of Spanish, North African, and Sicilian grain to the Roman market lowered its price and made it impossible for small farmers to compete. Taken together, these developments led to a sharp reduction in the Roman middle class and a radical shift from a traditional subsistence economy to a market-oriented one.[26] Imperial growth thus struck at the heart of Rome's strength in ways that its conquered enemies never could. The weakening of the Roman middle class brought on a progressive decline in the number of men qualified to serve in the army, leading to a military recruitment crisis in the late second century that served as the prime motivation for the reforms of Marius.

New wealth was one of the principal stimulants of socio-economic

change throughout the second century. In a short period of time, Rome was transformed from a rural backwater into a magnificent urban metropolis as war booty and tribute flowed into the city. The din of new construction was constant as the city became adorned with elaborate new temples, gymnasia, baths, and palaces. Plunder from the communities of the Hellenistic east was a particularly lucrative source for the treasury and the aristocracy. Lucius Aemilius Paullus Macedonicus's triumphal procession of 167 is largely representative. It took three days to complete. The first was scarcely long enough to exhibit the priceless works of plundered Greek art, carried through the city streets on 250 wagons. The next day featured carts upon carts of fine Macedonian arms and armor along with some 2,250 talents of silver carried in large pots by some 3,000 men. The third displayed 231 talents of gold, 400 gold wreaths, and the enslaved royal coterie. Aemilius left these riches for the state treasury, but he took the entire Macedonian library for himself.[27]

Tribute was another means of extracting wealth from conquered people. Defeated rulers were saddled with crushing indemnities for resisting Rome. Philip II of Macedon, for example, was made to pay 1,000 talents of silver after his defeat at the hands of Titus Quinctius Flamininus in 197,[28] and the Seleucid ruler Antiochus III was forced to pay a ruinous 15,000 talents in 188.[29] Roman aristocrats funneled the wealth they derived from foreign commands and provincial governorships into land ownership and agriculture. Agriculture, for both social and economic reasons, was the most attractive investment available to a rich aristocrat during the late Republic. Romans held an elevated view of land ownership, and Roman culture associated farming with lofty social values. Members of the nobility competed with each other by increasing their landed possessions much like they did in commissioning grandiose works of art, constructing new public buildings, and sponsoring elaborate public games and festivals. Cato called farming the "most highly respected" occupation.[30] Varro perceived agricultural work as the key to a healthy body and a cure for idleness.[31] Cicero claimed that there was "none more profitable, none more delightful" than agriculture.[32] Agriculture was so valued that Roman senators were legally prohibited from engaging in any profitable activity other than farming out of fear that doing so would taint their character.[33] Large-scale farming was also the safest and most sustainable source of continuous wealth for the ruling class.[34] While election to the higher magistracies had the potential of yielding considerable returns for a successful commander, it was difficult to secure and never certain. Because of this, the typical aristocrat felt intense pressure to make his fortune quickly once appointed to a command or a governorship. He then sank that wealth into land upon leaving office. Doing so guaranteed his long-term financial health and that of his progeny.[35]

Through purchases, extortion, or force, the wealthy gradually expanded

their estates by acquiring adjoining farms and encroaching upon the *ager publicus*.[36] The landscape of Italy came to be dominated by these *latifundia*, many of which grew far larger than the stipulated 500 *iugera* maximum set by Roman law.[37] Appian, Livy, and Plutarch are unanimous in attributing the problems of the late-Republic to the growth of these estates.[38] These commercial farms employed large numbers of slaves.[39] Unlike tenant labor, slaves were a substantial fixed cost, and it was because of this that slaves had to be worked longer and more intensively than wage laborers. Aristocratic landowners had an incentive to capitalize on economies of scale in the presence of such fixed labor costs. They did this by concentrating on the mass production of a few commodities that could be profitably exported to urban and overseas markets. Included in this category were olive oil, wine, meat, and hides, products that commanded much higher prices than grain. These goods held a much higher value-to-weight ratio than cereals, a characteristic that made them ideal for export.

The economic independence of Rome's small farmers was further harmed by the exactions of war. Rome's ad hoc system of army recruitment worked, as long as campaigns were short enough and close enough to home to allow veterans to return to their farms with minimal disruption to their normal routines.[40] However, as campaigning seasons grew longer and legions went further afield from the First Punic War onward, the farmer-legionnaire of the middle Republic came to be called away from home for much longer than his counterpart in the early Republic. Many farms were ruined for want of maintenance and subsequently abandoned by their owners.[41] Dionysius of Halicarnassus recounted the plight of Cincinnatus who, upon being called away from his plough, lamented, "my field will go unsown this year, and we shall be in danger of having not enough to live on."[42] Although a legendary story, the sentiment was probably shared by scores of small farmers who were called away for extended service in the legions. Livy and Polybius also tell of farms suffering physical destruction at the hands of rampaging armies, both Roman and foreign, especially during the Hannibalic War.[43] Scores of veterans returned home only to behold the burnt remnants of their once-productive farms and were forced to sell or abandon their plots when they could afford neither the resources nor the time to restore them.[44]

Slavery was a critical component of the *latifundia* system of agricultural production and an important facilitator of peasant dislocation. Slavery was not a new institution for the Romans—they had been enslaving their foes since the early Republic[45]—but both the number of slaves and their importance to the Roman economy grew precipitously throughout the second century. Chattel labor gradually supplanted free peasant labor in the countryside, but the displacement was not complete. There remained a substantial number of non-slave laborers working the

land well into the first century.[46] Still, the consolidation of innumerable small farms into large, slave-worked ones had the effect of reducing the employment of free, non -slave labor in the countryside.[47] This dislocated an immense rural labor force that had previously been fastened to small plots. Some emigrated to the provinces. Others remained to labor on the estates of the rich as free but property-less laborers. Many flocked to the cities to swell the ranks of the urban poor. Although the rich employed both free men and slaves on their farms, they preferred the latter. Why this is so is less clear, and several hypotheses have been advanced.[48] However, the profit motive was the foremost concern of wealthy landlords, so slave labor was probably preferred because it was the lower cost production method in the long run.[49] Indeed, the profitable acquisition of slaves was probably an important influence on the willingness of Roman aristocrats to go to war during the second century, as Harris has suggested.[50] Slaves, unlike free laborers, were exempt from military service, and the natural reproduction of slaves meant that the value of the initial investment was constantly increasing.[51]

Like the concentration of land ownership, the growth of slavery was a product of overseas expansion. War captives from newly-conquered territories were the main source of slaves.[52] The great bulk was extracted from provinces conquered during the second and first centuries. Thousands of Spaniards, Illyrians, Greeks, Gauls, Macedonians, and Africans were forced under the Roman yoke as the great Roman war machine lumbered through their territories. One consul reportedly took 150,000 slaves during a single punitive campaign.[53] Estimates place Roman slave imports to Italy at between 100 and 300 million throughout the period of the Republican empire, far more than were involved in the transatlantic slave trade during the age of colonialism.[54] The unfortunates were employed in nearly every occupation as stewards, secretaries, builders, architects, household servants, readers, physicians, and tutors to name but a few.[55] Most were unskilled and were put to work in sprawling plantations where they served as key inputs into an agricultural system that produced massive surpluses for the market. The wealthy owned the most slaves. Crassus, a man who was worth 142 million dollars (as measured in 2004 U.S. dollars), employed 500 slaves for his building projects in Rome alone.[56] Most suffered a brutal existence. Cato, for example, reportedly flogged his slaves for the slightest error in serving food and drinks to his guests.[57]

Roman slavery was unique in a number of ways, especially in the nature of the master-slave relationship. Slaves were granted both their freedom (*libertas*) and their citizenship (*civitas*) upon their emancipation (*manumissio)*, a unique feature of Roman law and one that was established very early on in the history of the Republic.[58] Emancipation was the constant hope of Roman slaves, and most understood that this was attainable through good behavior and loyalty rather than

rebellion. Although a former slave faced some social stigma, a freed person was more fully integrated into Roman society than in other slave societies. The act of manumission created a patron-client relationship between the freedman and his former owner, and because clients were obligated to provide their patrons with political support, ambitious politicians had an incentive to free as many slaves as possible to build a solid voting base in the forum and in the popular assemblies.[59] The incidence of manumission was therefore relatively high during the Republic, and this sustained a strong motivation within slaves to be diligent in their work.[60] As a group, freedmen were numerous, and they played an important role in Roman politics.[61] By the late Republic more than a few prominent statesmen possessed slave ancestry. All of this is not to say that slavery was a desirable condition. Roman slaves, like their counterparts in other socio-economic systems, were treated with a degree of harshness and inhumanity that is difficult to comprehend. Slaves were the property of their masters, subject to all their whims and desires. Still, overall, the legal device of manumission provided both a strong incentive for slaves to be cooperative and an additional source of political support for ambitious politicians.

Just as they steered decisions on *how* to produce, market incentives steered landowners' decisions on *what* to produce. As profit-seeking actors, Roman aristocrats rejected grain in favor of olive oil, wine, and animal products, high-margin cash crops that could withstand the cost of transportation.[62] The demand for grain, however, only increased throughout the period of agricultural innovation. Rome's population grew throughout the third and second centuries, and massive quantities of grain were required to feed it. The conversion of Italian land into pastures, vineyards, and orchards reduced the grain yield of Italy at the same time that demand was increasing, but this was offset by large imports from Sardinia, Sicily, Spain, and North Africa.[63] These provinces held a comparative advantage in the production of grain. So efficient were their fields that the Roman grain supply experienced no chronic crisis during the latter second century.[64] The conversion of the Mediterranean into a Roman-controlled lake throughout the century lowered the cost of shipping further than it already had been and made trafficking in grain a profitable endeavor for both public and private entities.[65] That long-distance trade was sufficient to meet the demand of large urban populations in Rome and in Italy's other urban centers is supported by the very existence of these large, non-farming populations.[66] Grain imports from efficient provincial sources put downward pressure on the price of grain and created yet another source of hardship for small farmers. With their limited production volumes and higher per-unit costs, independent farmers could not cover their expenses at the market price and were forced out of business.[67]

The assertion above rests on the assumption that Roman Italy's grain

market was linked to the regional grain markets of its provincial periphery, that the price of grain was more or less consistent throughout the Mediterranean. This assumption has been challenged by historians of the twentieth century. M. I. Finley rejected the idea, claiming that ancient societies, Rome included, "did not have an economic system which was an enormous conglomeration of interdependent markets."[68] Paul Erdkamp echoed him three decades later.[69] Economic historian Peter Temin, however, has convincingly shown that the Roman economy was a market oriented economy in which price was determined by the interaction of supply and demand, that a significant volume of goods and services were exchanged in markets, and that "the parts of this economy located far from each other were not tied together as tightly as markets often are today, but they still functioned as part of a comprehensive Mediterranean market."[70] Through an empirical analysis of the existing data, Temin showed that grain prices moved in response to the forces of supply and demand, and he demonstrated that enough goods and services were exchanged in markets to consider the Roman economy, overall, a market-driven one.[71] He also showed that Roman grain farmers faced a highly competitive market and were price takers. That is, individual farmers took the market price for wheat as a given and were unable to affect it. Therefore, farmers made production decisions, including decisions on whether or not to continue producing, based on a monolithic market price.[72]

This new interpretation paints the Roman economy as a dynamic, evolving system, one that underwent a period of profound change during the second century in response to external stimuli. Seen in this way, the shift in Roman agricultural production from many small, inefficient producers to a smaller number of larger, more efficient ones was a natural outcome for the Roman economy as a whole made possible by the injection of large amounts of liquid capital. The price of grain fell as land, labor, and capital were diverted towards the most efficient means of production, the *latifundia*. The older system based on small independent farmers collapsed simply because small farmers were less efficient than the large estates and provincial grain producers who supplanted them. The contribution of the latter was made economically viable by the reduction in shipping costs following Rome's victory over Carthage, her chief maritime rival in the Mediterranean, in the first and second Punic wars. Cheaper shipping set the stage for regional specialization based on comparative advantage. Italian agriculture increasingly specialized in the production of high-value crops while the periphery concentrated on producing a high volume of grain for consumption at the core. As in all economic decisions, tradeoffs were involved. Some were made winners while others lost as the structural adjustments took place. Members of the landed aristocracy were clear winners, as were the private individuals involved in the pan-Mediterranean grain trade. The

losers, of course, were the thousands of small agriculturalists who were economically displaced at a time when Rome had no significant urban industries to absorb their productive energies. The "proletarianization"[73] of the Roman small farmer was therefore a complex process of structural economic adjustment set in motion by capital asset formation (slaves and liquid wealth) and the emergence of regional specialization based on comparative advantage—both side effects of imperial expansion during the middle Republic.

A brief review of Roman army organization is useful at this juncture. The strength of the Roman Republican army was based on a citizen militia of property-owners who were first divided into five wealth-based classes by the legendary Roman king Servius Tullius of the late sixth century.[74] Livy defined the property requirements for the five classes as those who held a minimum of 100,000 (Class I), 75,000 (Class II), 50,000 (Class III), 25,000 (Class IV), and 11,000 asses (Class V).[75] As in classical Greece, Roman infantrymen were expected to furnish their own arms and armor.[76] The first class was the *equites,* Roman cavalrymen rich enough to maintain horses. The next three classes encompassed the three degrees of heavy infantry, the *hastati, principes,* and the *triarii*. The lowest and poorest class formed the Roman light infantry skirmishers, the *velites*.[77] Those who did not meet the requirement for the lowest class were excluded from service in the legions, but these *proletarii* were not absolved of the duty to serve. They were compelled to row in the navy and to take up arms to defend the city in times of exceptional emergency.[78] Legions were called up for some specific campaign by the consuls through the *dilectus*, first in Rome itself and then in allied (*socii*) cities by consular representatives.[79] Allied contingents (*alae sociorum*) contributed approximately half of the typical army's military strength, sometimes even more. Soldiers received a negligible amount of pay through the *tributum* to partially compensate for expenses incurred while on campaign.[80] Legions were then disbanded after hostilities had ceased or the campaigning season had ended, and soldiers returned to their fields.[81]

Rome found it increasingly difficult to raise troops as the number of propertied citizens (*assidui*) declined,[82] and the poorest members of the *assidui* were struggling to survive by midcentury. Using conservative estimates of land prices, wheat yields, and nutritional requirements, Brunt convincingly shows that 4,000 asses—the minimum wealth requirement for the fifth and lowest class of *assidui*—was insufficient to feed a typical Roman family of four.[83] Evidence for this persistent recruiting crisis can be seen in the progressive reduction in the fifth class wealth requirement.[84] What was probably a temporary measure to replenish the ranks following the disasters at Cannae and Trasimene during the Second Punic War became a permanent change made necessary by Rome's constant wars of expansion throughout the second century. This reduction was carried out twice throughout the

middle Republic: from 11,000 asses to 4,000 asses during the Hannibalic War and then to 1,500 asses around the time of the Gracchan Revolution.[85] The census was eventually abandoned altogether as the basis for military recruitment in 107 under Marius.[86] The dramatic reduction in the wealth requirement of the fifth class artificially increased the number of *assidui* by allowing ever increasing numbers of *proletarii* to qualify for service in the legions. Brunt agrees that manpower shortages were the impetus behind these reductions, offering as evidence the "difficulties that magistrates encountered in some years in carrying out levies, the concern evinced by Tiberius Gracchus and his contemporaries at a putative decline in manpower, and a decision . . . to raise once more the proportion of allies serving with the legions."[87]

The expansion of Rome's Mediterranean empire simultaneously increased the demand for recruits and, through the effect of victory on the Roman economy, reduced their supply, a dual squeeze that, in the absence of fundamental reforms, made the professionalization of the Roman army almost inevitable. Rome pacified many enemies in the years following their victory over Hannibal. The Romans tangled with a variety of Gallic and Germanic peoples to their west and north—the Boii, Insubres, Allobroges, and Arverni in Northern Italy; the Celtiberi and Lusitani in Hispania; and the Teutones, Ambrones, and Cimbri in Transalpine Gaul. The Romans dealt with the Numidians and the Carthaginians in northern Africa, and they subdued the Greeks, Macedonians, Thracians, Pergamenes, and Seleucids of the eastern Mediterranean. While chronic, the recruitment problem approached crisis levels in the last decades of the second century, a time when the Romans faced acute demands for military manpower from several fronts. The Cimbri and the Teutones, Germanic tribes from beyond the Rhine, began encroaching upon Roman territory in 113 and defeated several consular armies in southern Gaul before they were defeated by Marius in 102 and 101 respectively.[88] The defeat of Gnaeus Manlius and Quintus Servilius Caepio at the hands of the Cimbri in 105 was particularly devastating. The consuls barely escaped with their lives, and Roman losses totaled 80,000 soldiers and 40,000 camp attendants.[89] Meanwhile, the Romans waged the Jugurthine War in Africa from 111-105, a protracted struggle against a nimble enemy that perplexed several Roman commanders.[90]

Gaius Marius is a looming figure in the history of the Roman Republic, an uncommonly talented soldier, commander, and military organizer with complex political inclinations. He played a large role in the Jugurthine War and was instrumental in defeating the Cimbri and Teutones. More importantly, it was he who undertook the final step of professionalizing the Roman army. Marius, according to Plutarch, was "born of parents who were altogether obscure—poor people who lived by the labour of their own hands."[91] He served with distinction under Scipio Aemilanus, the destroyer of Carthage, during the Numantine campaign as military

tribune in 134 and as Quaestor in 127.[92] Marius was elected to the tribunate in 119 at the age of 38, and in 115 he won election to the praetorship and was awarded the governorship of Hispania Ulterior.[93] The consul Caecilius Metellus selected Marius as one of his legates in the war against Jugurtha in 109, but Marius soon asked for leave to campaign for the consulship.[94] He leveraged the growing disillusionment with aristocratic military leadership during his campaign and won the consulship of 107 at the age of 50.[95] His famous *supplementum* of 107 came in the immediate aftermath of this victory.[96]

Marius's *supplementum* marked the final transition of the Roman army from a citizen militia of propertied men to a state-funded professional force, but its significance has been overstated.[97] It loses much of its impact when viewed in relation to the long-run changes undergone by the citizen militia throughout the second century. The Roman army was moving towards professionalization long before Marius, evidenced by the growing "continuity of service" and a rising "mercenary outlook" among the Roman soldiery.[98] The need to serve for extended periods on campaign increased the burdens of legionary service and created economic losses that "gave rise to a demand that citizen soldiers should be rewarded on discharge after service."[99] Furthermore, the dwindling number of *assidui* and the consequent shortage of recruits were felt long before 107. Shortages had prompted the use of volunteers at least twice before.[100] Already in Polybius's time there was an established precedent of the state furnishing arms and armor to its soldiers, perhaps to achieve uniformity, but the practice made obsolete the old rule that soldiers must be wealthy enough to supply their own equipment.[101] The failure of the Gracchi to address the problem at its source made the final reduction in the census requirement a military necessity, and at 1,500 asses the poorest members of the *assidui* were virtually indistinguishable from the *proletarii* by Marius's time. In any case, as noted before, even the higher requirement of 4,000 asses was probably insufficient to guarantee that a man could sustain his family, let alone furnish his own panoply, and the much lower requirement of 1,500 asses totally precluded such a possibility. In light of these developments, Marius's enlistment of the *capite censei* in 107 seems less revolutionary than it is usually portrayed.[102]

Marius's intentions in enlisting the *proletarii* are somewhat harder to discern, but there is little evidence that he was motivated by political ambition as his enemies have suggested.[103] Instead, his *supplementum* was probably motivated by military necessity. As A.N. Sherwin-White pointed out, soldiers at this stage were not yet willing to commit violence against the state on behalf of their generals.[104] Indeed, by pursuing legislation for their settlement, Marius supported his veterans more than they supported him. He was not a radical reformer, and while he did associate with the radical Lucius Appuleius Saturninus to secure land allotments for his veterans, he

repeatedly demonstrated an unwillingness to remove senatorial authority.[105] Marius was "conditioned by the political habits of the second century," an "unimaginative child of his age."[106] That is, he sought power within the context of the existing senatorial system and did not dream of supplanting the establishment through violence. That destructive innovation was left for others to pursue.

Whatever his intentions, Marius's enlistment of the *capitei sensei* had enormous consequences for the Republic. The connection between land ownership and military service was decisively severed, and veterans gave their loyalty to unscrupulous commanders who did not hesitate to use them against the state. During the middle Republic, veterans of Rome's wars simply returned to their farms and resumed their lives, but that happy equilibrium was destroyed along with the economic position of Rome's independent agriculturalists. Possessing little to no property, veterans of the Marian period needed a place in Roman society upon discharge. Marius solved this problem by settling his veterans in Africa and Italy with the help of Saturninus, a ruthless demagogue.[107] He also awarded Roman citizenship, a coveted prize, to those among his soldiers who had displayed "conspicuous bravery" on campaign.[108] Marius's *optimate* opponents in the senate generally opposed both the settlements and the granting of citizenship, and their obstructionism made the political establishment an enemy in the minds of veterans and generals alike. Therefore, the connection between a commander and his veterans—already stiffened by many years of hard service under austere conditions—was further solidified by the presence of a common enemy in Marius's time. Once discharged, veterans remained connected to their former commanders, and they expected the opportunity to share in the spoils of future campaigns.[109] Their economic well-being became tied to the success of their generals, and they gave their loyalty to commanders who promised to provide for them in peace and to lead them to plunder in war. The terrible potential for the misuse of veterans was realized when Sulla marched on Rome with six legions of his veterans in 88.[110] Sulla's example was followed many times: by Lucius Cornelius Cinna in 87, by Sulla again in 82, and by Marcus Aemilius Lepidus in 78.[111] The situation continued to worsen as the Republic entered its twilight phase. Gnaeus Pompeius, Julius Caesar, Gaius Octavius, and Marcus Antonius chased each other around the empire leaving death and destruction in their wake while the senatorial oligarchy in Rome sat helpless and unable to intervene. Civil war had come to Rome. The convulsions of the late Republic were essentially a series of painful but logical changes to the political-economy of the Roman state. Economic restructuring brought about by imperial growth culminated in the rise of personal armies, civil war, and the end of the Roman Republic.

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Notes

1. All dates are B.C.E. unless otherwise noted.

2. Appian, *The Civil Wars*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Horace White (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), 1.2.

3. Sallust, *The War with Catiline*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), 3.3, 5.8.

4. He contrasted this noble behavior with the rampant greed of his own day when Romanaristocrats followed "the very opposite practices" as those he mentioned. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Earnest Cary (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937), 10.17.6.

5. Velleius Paterculus, *The Roman History*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Frederick W. Shipley (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), 2.1.2; 2.10.1.

6. R. E. Smith, *The Failure of the Roman Republic* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 82-4.

7. Changing norms, according to Shotter, led to the "ruthless pursuit of dominance" by ambitious individuals who sought to "dominate Rome through the relationship between the tribune and the plebian assembly." David Shotter, *The Fall of the Roman Republic* (London, GBR: Routledge, 1994), 2-85.

8. Monte L. Pearson, *Perils of Empire: The Roman Republic and the American Republic* (New York, NY: Algora Publishing, 2008), 157-78.

9. Pamela Marin, *Blood in the Forum: The Struggle for the Roman Republic* (London, GBR: Continuum, 2009), 7.

10. Liberty and peace, according to Syme, could not coexist in a Republic led by men whose "personal ambition and political intrigue" constrained their ability to defend the state. Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, GBR: Oxford University Press, 1939), 9-27; 17.

11. The sources vary in identifying the exact moment when aristocratic morals collapsed, but almost all point to the second century. The nineteenth century Roman historian Theodor Mommsen drew attention to the emergence of "short-sighted, selfish, and negligent" behavior within the ranks of the hereditary nobility during what he described as a period of "tranquility" following Rome's conquest of the Mediterranean world in the second century. "The single leading thought of the governing corporation," according to Mommsen, "was the maintenance and, if possible, the increase of their usurped privileges." Theodor Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, trans. William P. Dickson (London, GBR: Richard Bentley, 1867), 3:72. Polybius pointed to the destruction of Carthage at the end of the Third Punic War as the point when life became "more extravagant and the citizens more fierce in their rivalry regarding office and other objects than they ought to be." Polybius, *The Histories*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. W. R. Paton (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1922), 6.57; 38.21. Livy traced the "beginnings of foreign luxury" to the spoils of war brought to Rome after Gnaeus Manlius Vulso's successful campaign against the Galatians in Asia Minor in 189. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 39.6.

12. Polybius, *The Histories*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. W. R. Paton (Cambridge,

MA: Harvard University Press, 1922), 6.57.6.

13. Sallust, for example, claimed that service to the state was once the highest form of accomplishment, and to be publicly praised for such service was a Roman's highest reward. Sallust, *Catiline*, 7.6. Livy tells the story of the humble sixth century consul P. Valerius Publicola who held the post four times during his life but was said to have been so poor upon his death that the state had to pay for his funeral. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 2.16.

14. Livy notes that political control had to be wrenched from the last Roman king (*rex*), and it was jealously preserved throughout the early and middle Republic. Livy's record of the early Republic is filled with celebratory tones extolling the "public liberty," the freedom of the people of Rome to participate in the political steering of their city. His account should be used with caution. While political control was decentralized after the expulsion of the king, by no means was a democracy established. Political control was fragmented into the hands of a narrow elite, the *nobiles,* but it was not handed to "the people" in spite of what Livy believed. Still, this early political struggle must have shaped the Romans' view of their republic as something unique in the world that was both destined for great things and that needed to be protected from outside forces at all costs. This feeling of uniqueness probably contributed to the Roman belief in the just use of preemptive warfare against its neighbors. Livy, *The History of Rome from the Founding of the City*, ed. Ernest Rhys, trans. Canon Roberts (London: J. M. Dents & Sons, 1905), 2.1-41. For more on Roman attitudes towards preemptive war, see Susan P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 171 and William Vernon Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327-70 B.C.* (Oxford, GRB: Oxford University Press, 1979), 169-72.

15. Lucilius, *Remains of Old Latin*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, ed. and trans. E. H. Warmington (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 1210.

16. "Impetuous and premature ambition" seized the corporate nobility, according to Mommsen. Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, 3:74.

17. At least part of this competitiveness can be attributed to the powerful internal locus of control held by most Romans. As the famous saying of Appius Claudius Caecus goes, "Every man is the architect of his own fortune." Sallust, *Speech to Caesar on the State*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), 1.2.

18. Norman F. Cantor, *The Civilization of the Middle Ages* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1993), 7-9.

19. William Vernon Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327-70 B.C.* (Oxford, GRB: Oxford University Press, 1979), 17.

20. Diodorus Siculus claimed that "the most distinguished men are to be seen vying with one another for glory, and it is by their efforts that virtually all matters of chief moment to the people are brought to a successful issue." Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. F. R. Walton (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 31.6. Sallust held a similar view, attributing Rome's remarkable achievements to the "thirst for glory that had filled men's minds." Sallust, *Catiline*, 7.4-6. In his study of Roman attitudes towards warfare, Historian William Harris noted that "the Romans' regular warfare grew out of and was supported by the social ethos, above all by the ideology of glory and good repute." William Vernon Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327-70 B.C.* (Oxford, GRB: Oxford University Press, 1979), 2.

21. Indeed, successful military experience was a prerequisite for holding office. Harris, *War and Imperialism*, 11-5.

22. Harris points to the existence of institutions that glorified personal and family fame—the triumph, the use of imagines during funeral processions, public laudations, and a political system which emphasized reputation and *clientela*—during the Italian wars as evidence that aristocrats were always concerned with individual fame and that competition was already vigorous among leading families of the state during the latter-fourth century. Harris, *War and Imperialism*, 27-30. 23 Even Sallust acknowledges this. He noted that it was important for nobles of the early Republic to be seen while they carried out brave acts in the service of the state: "their hardest struggle for glory was with one another; each man

strove to be the first to strike down the foe, to scale a wall, to be seen of all while doing such a deed... It was praise they coveted...” Sallust, Catiline, 7.4-6.

24. Mark Toher, “The Tenth Table and the Conflict of the Orders,” in *Social Struggles in Archaic Rome: New Perspectives On the Conflict of the Orders*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., 2005), 268-91; Alexander Yakobson, *Elections and Electioneering in Rome: A Study in the Political System of the Late Republic* (Stuttgart, Germany: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), 189. Riots and mob lynching occurred with frequency and shaped the final form taken by the political settlement. Jurgen von Ungern Sternberg, “The End of the Conflict of the Orders,” in *Social Struggles in Archaic Rome: New Perspectives On the Conflict of the Orders*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., 2005), 312-31; Kurt A. Raaflaub, “From Protection to Defense to Offense and Participation: Stages in the Conflict of the Orders,” in *Social Struggles in Archaic Rome: New Perspectives On the Conflict of the Orders* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., 2005), 185-221.

25. Henry C. Boren, *Roman Society: A Social, Economic, and Cultural History* (Lexington, DC: Heath and Company, 1992), 70.

26. Mousourakis partly attributed the crisis of the late Republic to “the deepening schism between the growing urban and rural proletariat on the one hand and the landowning senatorial aristocracy on the other.” Mousourakis, *A Legal History of Rome*, 44.

27. Plutarch, *Aemilius*, 32-4. A talent was the equivalent of 6,000 Athenian drachmas or Roman denarii.

28. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 33.30; Polybius, *The Histories*, 18.44; Plutarch, *Life of Titus Flamininus*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 9.5.

29. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 37.45.

30. Cato the Elder, *De Agricultura*, praef. 4.

31. Varro, *De Re Rustica*, 2.praef.

32. Cicero, *De Officiis*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Walter Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), 1.151; See also Cicero, *Cato Maior de Senectute,* Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. W. A. Falconer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 16.56.

33. The Lex Claudia of 218. Livy, *The History of Rome,* 21.63; Cicero, “In Verrem,” in *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, trans. C. D. Yonge (London, GBR: George Bell & Sons, 1903), 2.5.45.

34 P. A. Brunt, “The Army and the Land in the Roman Revolution,” *The Journal of Roman Studies* 52 (1962): 69.

35. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 14.

36. Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.8.

37. The Licinian Law of 367. Varro, *De Re Rustica*, 1.2.6; Livy, *The History of Rome,* 6.35; Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.8; Livy, *The Periochae of Livy*, 58. An iugerum was approximately one-fourth of a hectare. Harris notes that “we know that by 173 the tendency of landowners to engross in excessive quantities of *ager publicus* was clearly perceived..” Harris, *War and Imperialism,* 82.

38. Plutarch, *Life of Tiberius Gracchus*, 8.1-3; Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.8-9; Livy, *The Periochae of Livy*, 58.

39. Harris, *War and Imperialism,* 80-84.

40. Indeed, this was a Roman romantic ideal. Livy relates the story of L. Quinctus Cincinnatus, a modest and hardworking citizen who was called away from his farm by the Senate to serve as dictator

during a crisis. He demonstrated remarkable bravery and soundness of command in leading his legions against the enemy and won many spoils and a triumph upon his return to Rome. He dutifully relinquished the dictatorship after a mere sixteen days even though his appointment was for six months, judging his duty to Rome fulfilled and opting to return to his quiet farm to resume his husbandry. Livy, *The History of Rome,* 3.26-29. Plutarch told a similar story, of one Manius Curius Dentatus, a hero of Rome's wars against the Samnites and Pyrrhus of Epirus. Dentatus returned to his humble farm, a "little patch of ground," after winning three triumphs for his heroism. Envoys of the Samnites reportedly found him seated by his hearth cooking turnips and offered him a large bribe in gold. Dentatus rebuffed their offer, saying that he had no need of gold with such a fine meal of turnips at his feet and that he would rather conquer the possessors of the gold than have the gold itself. Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Elder*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 2.1 -2. The two stories clearly reveal the model Roman leader—equal parts farmer, soldier, and patriot. The Romans believed that farmers made the best soldiers. Cato the Elder, *De Agricultura*, praef. 4. The difficulty of agricultural work was thought to strengthen the body and steel the constitution, and it was believed that land ownership gave soldiers a greater stake in the outcome of Rome's wars. Marius, in a speech attributed to him by Sallust, portrayed himself as being of the same mold as these heroes of old—a modest, hardworking, and self-sacrificing leader who worked for the good of the state. Sallust, *The War with Jugurtha*, 85.

41. A. Toynbee takes this view, arguing that the independent position of the Roman and Italian peasantry was irreversibly ruined by the increasingly burdensome military levies required to fight Rome's many second century wars. Arnold J. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy, the Hannibalic War's Effects On Roman Life*, vol. 2, *Rome and Her Neighbours After Hannibal's Exit* (London, GBR: Oxford University Press, 1965). E. Gabba agrees with Toynbee's assessment in his review of the latter's work, noting that "the harshness of the levies and . . . the continuous demands for large numbers of soldiers to fight the wars of the second century . . . is the fundamental cause of the collapse of the traditional small peasant farms." Emilio Gabba, "Review of Toynbee, Hannibal's Legacy," in *Republican Rome: The Army and the Allies*, trans. P. J. Cuff (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1976), 157. Brunt agrees as well: "The peasantry . . . must have suffered gravely [during the Second Punic War], not so much from devastations of their lands as from deterioration in husbandry, which inevitably ensued from the protracted absence of so many able-bodied men." Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 404.

42. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 10.17.5.

43. Livy, *The History of Rome,* 22.3; 22.14; Polybius, *The Histories*, 3.82.9-10; 3.88.3. Livy told of a former centurion who had fought valiantly in the Sabine War of the late-sixth century. The old centurion's experience in private life did not match his success on the battlefield, for he lost his farm to the "depredations of the enemy" and was forced into indentured slavery. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 2.23.

44. While Toynbee accepts the idea that physical destruction played a major, long-term role in economically ruining the independent farmer, several other authors believe that the legionnaires' prolonged absence and the progressively heavy burden of the *dilectus* were much more impactful. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy*; Gabba, "Review of Toynbee, Hannibal's Legacy," in *Republican Rome*, 154 -61; Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 269-77, 404.

45. Livy, *The History of Rome,* 2.22.

46. M. Terentius Varro, *De Re Rustica*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. W. D. Hooper and H. B. Ash (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934), 1.17.2. The dynamic processes which contributed to the growth of slavery were well underway by the time Varro wrote his treatise on agriculture in the first century. He observed that "all agriculture is carried on by men—slaves, or freemen, or both; by freemen, when they till the ground themselves, as many poor people do with the help of their families; or hired hands."

47. Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 283.

48. See Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 13 for several ideas on why rich landowners preferred slave labor to free labor.

49. Harris, *War and Imperialism*, 80; Varro, *De Re Rustica*, 1.4.1. In his *De Agricultura*, Cato assumes that slaves will assume the bulk of the agricultural work in the ideal farm. Cato, *De Agricultura*,

2.2, 5.1-5.

50. Harris, *War and Imperialism*, 82.

51. Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.7.

52. Plutarch, *Cato*, 21.1.

53. Aemilius Paullus after his victory over Epirus in 167. Plutarch, *Life of Aemilius*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 29.4. Plutarch's flattering style suggests that the figure is inflated, but even a third of this number is staggering.

54. Walter Scheidel, *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Economy* (Cambridge, GBR: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 90-4; Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 1: 9

55. Plutarch, *Life of Crassus*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 2.6.

56. Plutarch, *Crassus,* 2.3-4.

57. Plutarch, *Cato,* 21.3.

58. Livy, *The History of Rome,* 2.5. The free population of Rome was divided into those who were formally manumitted from slavery (*libertini)* and those who were born free (*ingenui*). Gaius, *The Institutes of Gaius*, trans. James Muirhead (London: Stevens and Sons, 1880), 1.10-11.

59. Plutarch, for example, complained that Scipio Aemilianus was frequently accompanied to the forum by "men who were of low birth and had lately been slaves . . . who were frequenters of the forum and able to gather a mob and force all issues by means of solicitations and shouting." Plutarch, *Aemilius*, 38.4.

60 Indeed, Edward Gibbon painted a rather rosy picture of Roman slavery by suggesting that Roman slaves were motivated workers and not merely mindless drones being forced to labor at whatever task their masters deemed worthy. "Hope," he wrote, "was not denied to the Roman slave; and, if he had any opportunity of making himself either useful or agreeable, he might very naturally expect that the diligence and fidelity of a few years would be rewarded with the inestimable gift of freedom." Edward Gibbons, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. John Bagnell Bury (New York: Fred DeFau & Company, 1906), 1:51. This optimistic view is reinforced by the advice of Varro, a first century farming expert who prescribed liberal treatment as a means of securing what modern management scholars call "buy-in"—hard work and commitment to superordinate goals. Varro believed that the liberal treatment of slaves made them "take more interest in their work," and resulted in "their loyalty and kindly feeling to the master." Varro, *De Re Rustica*, 1.17.6-7.

61. Brunt inferred from the literary and epigraphic evidence that "freedmen were a very numerous class." P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower, 225 B.C.-A.D. 14* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1971), 121-2. While the senate and the magistracies were closed to *libertini*, their *ingenui* sons could hope to enter the ranks of the *nobilitas* one day. Gaius, *The Institutes,* 1.10-11.

62. Cato, *De Agricultura*, 1.7. Significantly, he ranked grain sixth in importance behind wine, olive oil, and even vegetables. See Varro, *De Re Rustica,* 2. Praef. 4 to read Varro's complaints of grain land being converted into pastures "out of greed and in the face of the laws."

63. Paul Erdkamp, *The Grain Market in the Roman Empire: A Social, Political, and Economic Study* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 206-36; Peter Garnsey and Dominic Rathbone, "The Background to the Grain Law of Gaius Gracchus," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 75 (1985): 23; Varro, *De Re Rustica,* 2.praef.3. Sicily was a particularly productive province and a crucial producer of grain for Rome. See Livy, *The History of Rome*, 26.40, 27.5; Grain was also brought in from Spain. See Plutarch, *Life of Caius Gracchus*, 6.2-3.

64. There were, however, acute crises caused by famines, poor harvests, war, slave rebellions,

and the like, but these were temporary supply disruptions in an otherwise abundant grain market. The real contribution of Gaius Gracchus's grain legislation was increased predictability and stability in both the supply and demand side of the Roman grain market. Intermittent supply shocks were reduced by the creation of proper storage facilities in Rome and the demand for grain was smoothed out by the minimum grain allotment. Garnsey and Rathbone, "The Background to the Grain Law of Gaius Gracchus," 21-5.

65. The flow of imported grain was in the hands of public officials (the aediles), profit-seeking private entities, and their agents. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 30.38, 38.35; Peter Temin, *The Roman Market Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 30-33, 97-107.

66. Temin, *The Roman Market Economy*, 3. Erdkamp argues convincingly that Roman grain producers enjoyed relatively high yields compared to other societies in pre-industrial Europe and that they generated large surpluses for the market. Erdkamp, *The Grain Market*, 12-54.

67. Boren, *Roman Society*, 70.

68. M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973), 22-3.

69. Erdkamp, *The Grain Market*, 194-5, 204.

70. Temin, *The Roman Market*, 4.

71. Temin argues that very low transaction costs permitted productive specialization based on comparative advantage. Temin, *The Roman Market*, 9-27, 30.

72. Ibid., 17.

73. The term is Gabba's. Emilio Gabba, *Republican Rome: The Army and the Allies*, trans. P. J. Cuff (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1976), 5.

74. Livy also credits Servius with the creation of the census. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 1.42-43.

75. Ibid.

76. Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 402.

77. Polybius, *The Histories*, 6.21.6-23.14; Livy, *The History of Rome*, 8.8.

78. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 22.57, 41.34, Polybius, *The Histories*, 6.19; Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 402.

79. Polybius, *The Histories*, 6.19-6.21.5.

80. Polybius, *The Histories*, 6.39.12-14; Livy, *The History of Rome*, 4.59; Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, 14.16.5; Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 402.

81. Accounts of legions being raised for specific purposes and for limited durations and objectives are prevalent in the written record for the period of Roman overseas expansion. For some examples see Polybius, *The Histories*, 3.88.7; Livy, *The History of Rome*, 3.27.

82. Mousourakis notes that "a major cause of the crisis was the decline of the free peasantry. . . [and] the growing inability of the state to recruit enough yeoman legionaries to fight its wars." George Mousourakis, *A Legal History of Rome* (London, GBR: Routledge, 2007), 44. Harris observes that "in the second century, as the number of *assidui* declined . . . it became difficult to recruit as many legionaries as the leaders of the state wished." Harris, *War and Imperialism*, 101. Gabba describes the "proletarianization of the middle class *adsidui*" as a grave injury to the military readiness of the Roman state and one of the main causes of the professionalization of the Roman military under Marius. Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 9. Rome also endured a declining population and a general increase in poverty during

the second century. Polybius, *The Histories,*1.61.1-2; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 4.18; Cicero, *De Officiis*, 2.21.73.

83. Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 194, 405-6. He did this by placing the price of a *iugerum* of land at 250 asses during the latter-second century, a conservative extrapolation based on the prices given by Columella in the first century C.E. The poorest *assidui* of the late-Republic could only afford 6 to 16 *iugera*, an amount insufficient to sustain a family of four that consumed 120 *modii* of wheat.

84. This argument is skillfully laid out by Gabba. Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 1-19.

85. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 1.43; Polybius, *The Histories*, 6.19.2. Cato the Elder, writing in the mid-second century, placed the daily wage of an unskilled transportation worker at 2 sesterces per day. This means that an unskilled worker would have had to labor for 800 days in order to amass the 400 drachmae (4,000 asses) required to qualify for military service at the time. Cato the Elder, *De Agricultura*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. W. D. Hooper and H. B. Ash (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934), 22.3. Information on the relative values of second century Roman coinage is derived from Dunstan, *Ancient Rome*, 99. Both Gabba and Brunt agree on these reductions and their timing. Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 3-7; Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 403-4.

86. Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 9.1.

87. Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 404-5. Brunt also points the fact that Gaius Gracchus felt it necessary to enact that boys under 17 be prohibited from being conscripted in the army, meaning that the practice must have been common enough to warrant its legal prohibition. See also Plutarch, *Life of Caius Gracchus*, 5.1.

88. Paterculus, *The Roman History*, 2.8.3, 2.12.2-5; Livy, *The Periochae of Livy*, 63, 65; Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Earnest Cary (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 27.

89. Livy, *The Periochae of Livy*, 67.

90. Paterculus, *The Roman History*, 2.11.1-12.1.

91. Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, 3.

92. Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, 4; Paterculus, *The Roman History*, 2.17.

93. Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, 4-5.

94. Ibid., 7-8.

95. Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, 9; Sallust, *The War with Jugurtha*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), 85.

96. Sallust, *The War with Jugurtha*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), 86.2; Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 9.1.

97. The *supplementum* was modest in absolute terms as well—Marius enlisted but 5,000 *proletarii* in 107. Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 430.

98. Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 11; Livy, *The History of Rome*, 32.3, 32.9, 37.4, 42.32.

99. Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 11. Gabba points to a *senatus consulto* of 201 that provided Scipio's African veterans with allotments of Samnite and Apulian land and the later extension of this provision to include veterans of other foreign wars as well. Livy, *The History of Rome*, 31.4, 31.49, 32.1.

100. Scipio Africanus reportedly raised 7,000 volunteers during the Hannibalic War. Livy,

The History of Rome, 28.46; Appian, *The Foreign Wars*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. Horace White (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), 8.8. Scipio Aemilianus raised some 4,000 volunteers in 134 for his Numantine campaign. Appian, *The Foreign Wars*, 6.84.

101. The cost of equipment was deducted from the soldiers' pay. Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 9-10; Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 405.

102. Gabba champions this view. He saw the proletarianization of the Roman army as a century-long process that was inaugurated by the tremendous manpower requirements of the Second Punic War and sustained by the progressive impoverishment of the *assidui*. He views the professionalization of the army under Marius as the logical final phase of a process that, for over a century, saw the inclusion of ever increasing numbers of *proletarii* in the legions. According to Gabba, Marius's *dilectus* of 107 was "not a genuine reform of the Roman military system but the outcome of developing tradition." Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 15.

103. Paterculus was one of them, describing Marius as "excellent a general as he was an evil influence in time of peace." Paterculus, *The Roman History*, 2.11.1.

104. A. N. Sherwin-White, "Violence in Roman Politics," *Journal of Roman Studies* 46 (1956): 5.

105. Marius nearly broke with Saturninus in 100 over the latter's famous oath that compelled senators and magistrates to implement plebiscites or be exiled, and when Saturninus's political methods turned violent, Marius acted against him on behalf of the senate. Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, 29.1-3, 30.1-4; Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.30. For Saturninus's methods, see Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.28-33; Velleius Paterculus, *The Roman History*, 2.12.6.

106. Sherwin-White, "Violence in Roman Politics," 5.

107. Jurgen von Ungern-Sternberg, "The Crisis of the Republic," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*, ed. and trans. Harriet I. Flower (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 84-5; Gabba, *Republican Rome*, 41-2.

108. Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, 28. The autonomous granting of citizenship by a commander was another innovation of the Marian period. Sherwin-White points out that Cicero could not find a single example of this action before Marius. Two entire cohorts of Umbrian infantry were granted citizenship by Marius during his German war. A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, GBR: Oxford University Press, 1973), 294; Cicero, "Pro Balbo," in *Cicero Oration: Pro Caelio. de Provinciis Consularibus. Pro Balbo*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, trans. R. Gardner (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 46-51.

109. Marius regularly reenlisted his veterans. See Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, 38.12.

110. He did so by appealing to their desire for plunder in the Mithridatic campaign. Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 1.57.

111. Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 107.

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