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Edited by:

Monica D'Agostini ✦ Edward Anson ✦ Catalina Balmaceda
Charlotte Dunn ✦ Andrea Gatzke ✦ Timothy Howe
Alex McAuley ✦ Sabine Müller ✦ Nandini Pandey
John Vanderspoel ✦ Conor Whately ✦ Pat Wheatley



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Senior Editor: Timothy Howe

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The Army and Movement of People during the Roman Republic¹

Fabrizio Biglino

Abstract: With regards to colonization and the movement of people outside of peninsular Italy during the Roman Republic, the traditional narrative dates it not before the late second century BC and the final part of the Republican period. It is however possible to argue in favour of a different, more dynamic picture. Through this paper, it is my intention to suggest that Roman and Italian presence in the overseas provinces was more substantial than traditionally believed. This will be achieved by arguing that the army actually played a crucial role within this process as Roman expansion across the Mediterranean undoubtedly triggered a sustained and constant movement of people from Italy to the growing overseas empire. Through this pattern of expansion and settlement, this paper will suggest that Roman and Italian citizens actually settled on their own initiative throughout the Republican period without any relationship to state-sponsored colonization. In particular, I will offer a first attempt of framing a new, still rather unexplored category of settlers: soldiers who, at the end of their periods of service, decided to settle in the provinces where they had served rather than return to Italy. Through an examination of key provinces such as Spain and Africa, this paper will emphasize the crucial role played by the army within the overall process of movement and settlement of people, and how dynamic such a process proved to be.

Key words: Roman colonization, overseas settlement, military settlement, Roman Republic, movement of people

It is traditionally believed that the first major increase in the number of Roman and Italian citizens living overseas only happened by the later part of the Republican period. As remarked by the highly influential chronicle of Velleius Paterculus, following the failed attempt by G. Gracchus in 122 at Carthage, the first successful overseas colony was Narbo Martius.² Although met with general opposition and resistance in Rome, this colony was established in 118 in the recently subjugated province of Gallia Narbonensis. Only by the time of Caesar's dictatorship (49-44) the Republic would pursue a program of overseas settlement on a large scale, as Suetonius reports that 80,000 colonists were settled in the provinces, making Caesar the first Roman politician who successfully pursued a policy of overseas settlement on a large scale.³

In his contribution to *People, Land and Politics*, Michael Crawford offers a controversial, yet fascinating alternative to the traditional view we have just summarised, arguing that: "...half of all Roman people lived overseas after 90 BC."⁴ While I don't agree that half of the entire Republic's

¹ All dates are BC unless indicated otherwise.

² Vell. Pat., 2.7.7: "Among the most pernicious laws of Gracchus I would count the founding of colonies outside Italy. This is something our ancestors had assiduously avoided..."; on the foundation of Narbo, see Vell. Pat., 1.15.5

³ Suet. *Iul.*, 42; see BRUNT 1971, 217 and BROADHEAD 2007, 160

⁴ CRAWFORD 2008, 640

population lived overseas by the first century, I agree with him on criticizing the traditional picture and arguing for a more substantial Roman (and Italian) presence in the overseas provinces by the late Republican period. This paper, a preliminary explorative work on a very intricate topic, aims to argue that the movement of people across the Mediterranean during the expansion of the Roman Republic was more complex than traditionally assumed. State-sponsored colonies, usually viewed as the main factor in this process, were only a part of it, as it is possible to uncover a deeper reality with regards to the movement of Romans and Italians outside of peninsular Italy.

As said, the traditional narrative dates the beginning of overseas colonization to the late second century, following the foundation of Narbo, though, in my opinion, this narrative that should be rejected. As argued by Edward Bispham, it is possible to date Roman colonial initiatives outside of Italy already by the early fourth century: a passage by Diodorus reports of an expedition to Sardinia in 378, while Theophrastus attests that Rome, around the same time, also sent one to Corsica.⁵ Such episodes offer a rather different narrative on Roman overseas colonization from Velleius, who does not mention these potential early Republican initiatives.⁶ According to Bispham, this “alteration of history” – still generally accepted by historians today – is the result of the strong political opposition to G. Gracchus’ colonial plans.⁷ At the same time, it is important to remember that Roman colonization, overall, was a rather fluid process that changed considerably over time. It was only by the late fourth century that it assumed its traditional picture of state-sponsored colonies established through the senate’s authority, while before, colonization was primarily a private initiative sponsored and/or performed by powerful individuals.⁸ Such difference plays an important role in framing Republican initiatives outside of Italy, both earlier ones like in Sardinia and Corsica and later in the provinces. Mid-Republican overseas settlements, in fact, retain that sort of private initiatives due to the key role played by military commanders both in the establishment of “colonies” or in individual land donations.

However, while it is possible to argue for an earlier beginning of overseas colonization, through this paper I will explore the possibility that Roman and Italian citizens settled in the provinces on their own initiative without any relationship to colonization. Within this process of movement of people, I believe that the army played a crucial role, as Roman expansion across the Mediterranean regions since the second century undoubtedly triggered a sustained migration from Italy to the overseas provinces.⁹ In particular, I am going to consider the possibility that soldiers, due to the opportunities offered by military service, once they left the army, decided to remain in the provinces instead of returning to Italy. After all, though from a later prospective, Seneca remarked that:

⁵ Diod. Sic., 15.27.4: “While these things were taking place in Greece, the Romans dispatched five hundred colonists, who were exempt from taxes, to Sardinia.”; Theophr. *Hist. Pl.*, 5.8.2: “For it is told how the Romans once made an expedition to that island [Corsica] with twenty-five ships, wishing to found a city there...” on these early Roman overseas colonial activities see BISPHAM 2006, 123; CRAWFORD 1995, 190; TORELLI 1993, 100-101; CORNELL 1995, 321-322; STEK 2017, 286 and BIGLINO 2018, 79-83.

⁶ Vell. Pat., 2.7.7: “Among the most pernicious laws of Gracchus I would count the founding of colonies outside Italy. This is something our ancestors had assiduously avoided...”; see TORELLI 1988, 65-66; also see BISPHAM 2006, 76

⁷ BISPHAM 2006, 123

⁸ On early colonization see BRADLEY 2020, 288-290; BIGLINO 2018, 86-89; CORNELL 1995, 144 and CASSOLA 1988, 17

⁹ PURCELL 2005, 85: “During the period of the Roman conquest of the Mediterranean basin [...] a whole diaspora of mobile, opportunistic Italians outside Italy [...] had come into being by the beginning of the first century BC.”

“*Ubi cumque vicit Romanus, habitat* (wherever the Roman conquers, he dwells)”¹⁰ thus emphasizing the connection between expansion and settlement.

When examining the aftermath of the campaigns in Northern Italy during the third century, William Broadhead offers an attractive model that could be applied to more “independent” colonization and settlement practices:

It is likely that some of the men serving in the region, having seen the opportunities available, would have settled there themselves. It is also likely that these men, and those who chose not to settle but returned home, would have passed information about the situation on to relatives and friends back in Central and Southern Italy.¹¹

It seems only logical to suggest that this pattern was repeated following the campaigns of the second century, as the army moved very large numbers of men across the Mediterranean. The connection between overseas settlement and the army has also been highlighted by Fiona Tweedie: “A series of colonial foundations in Spain suggests that many legionaries were remaining overseas on discharge.”¹² The settlement of discharged soldiers in the provinces, however, was not exclusively the result of state (or army) sponsored colonization. This paper will highlight the role played by the army in terms of indirect migration in the form of soldiers who, following their service in the legions, decided on their own initiative to settle where they had served instead of returning to Italy.

Republican colonization and the sources

Before investigating this indirect migration of soldiers who settled in the provinces following their military service, it is necessary to consider the sources on Republican colonization and the reliability of later authors such as Velleius. Particularly delicate is the second half of the second century and above all the period following the end of Livy’s chronicle.¹³ Characterized by a shortage of literary evidence on colonization, it has nevertheless strongly influenced our understanding of the history and role of colonies during this key period of Roman history. It is generally believed, in fact, that following the foundation of Luna in 177, the last new colony mentioned by Livy, the Republic halted its colonial initiatives because the strategic need had been met.¹⁴ As remarked by Broadhead: “With Italy south of the Alps now firmly under Roman control, there was no longer a need for the *propugnacula imperii* that had played so important a role in Roman expansion of the previous century and a half.”¹⁵ Of course, it is always important to stress how the loss of the rest of Livy’s chronicle, fundamental in framing the chronology of Republican colonization, has shaped this topic.

¹⁰ Sen., *de cons. ad Helv.*, VII. 7

¹¹ BROADHEAD 2000, 155-156

¹² TWEEDIE 2011, 469.

¹³ On the impact of the loss of Livy’s narrative, see TIBILETTI 1950, 233: “Tale essendo lo stato delle fonti, sarebbe grave imprudenza voler disegnare l’andamento della politica agraria dei trent’anni che seguono il XLV libro di Livio con lo stesso grado di probabilit  con la quale era possibile disegnarla per i decenni precedenti...” and TWEEDIE 2011, 458

¹⁴ Livy, 41.13

¹⁵ BROADHEAD 2007, 157; also see SALMON 1969, 109 and 112.

This whole picture, however, is rather controversial. First of all, there is evidence in the literary sources suggesting that Rome continued its colonial activity in Italy after 177: for example, Livy mentions that Aquileia in 169 received 1,500 new colonists as reinforcements.¹⁶ More controversial, on the other hand, is Velleius' passage in which he states that Rome sent settlers to Puteoli, Salernum, Buxentum and Auximum in 157.¹⁷ Salmon rejects this possibility and postpones the establishment of Auximum to 128, thus connecting it to the Gracchan era, while not mentioning the other three.¹⁸ His suggestion, that the colony was established by Tiberius Gracchus's opponents to counterbalance his influence, however, is rather unconvincing.¹⁹ After all, it is likely that such an attempt from Gracchus's political adversaries would have been highlighted by the numerous sources in our possession on this turbulent period, just as they did in 122 when M. Livius Drusus proposed the foundation of colonies to undermine Gaius Gracchus.²⁰ Finally, it should be highlighted that all four colonies are already mentioned by Livy: Puteoli, Salernum and Buxentum were established in 194 – and Buxentum re-established in 186 –, while Auximum is mentioned for the first time in 174.²¹ Therefore, it is possible that Velleius is actually reporting the reinforcement of existing colonies, and not the establishment of new ones.²²

Second, this traditional picture draws heavily on ideologies of Republican colonization and the role that colonies were supposed to play applied by later historians. As highlighted by Torelli, most of our information, after all, is filtered through the ideologies of the late Republic and Augustan Age.²³ During this period, historians most likely attempted to standardize the colonization process in order to create a strong sense of unity with the past. The way they did this was to apply the model that was most familiar to them, the one developed by the first century, to the entire history of Republican colonization. The best representation of this is Cicero's definition of colonies as *propugnacula imperii*, the bulwarks of empire, that has become synonymous with Republican colonies.²⁴ Therefore, according to the more traditional view, colonies, up until 177, had an exclusively strategic function, as they projected Roman power into still-hostile regions and consolidated control, while socio-economic issues only began to be considered in the late second century.²⁵ Such a rigid division, however, limits our understanding of the establishment of colonial foundations since, as remarked

¹⁶ On the reinforcements to Aquileia, see Livy, 43.17; also, TWEEDIE 2011, 465-466 argues that colonization might have continued after the 170s, but it cannot be detected due to the loss of Livy.

¹⁷ Vell. Pat., 1.15.3

¹⁸ SALMON 1969, 112 and 188: "A colony in 157 would be an isolated and aberrant phenomenon..."

¹⁹ SALMON 1969, 113

²⁰ Plut., *C. Gracc.* 10 and *App. B. Civ.*, 1.23; BELOCH 1926, 493 suggests that at least three more colonies, Abellium, Grumentum and Herculia Telesia, should be included as colonies of the Gracchan era because their chief officials were called *praetores duoviri* like those at Narbo, established a few years after the death of G. Gracchus. Also, Abellium has the adjective *Livia* as part of its full title (*Veneria Livia Augusta Alexandriana Abellinatum*), implying that this might actually have been one of the colonies proposed by Livius Drusus.

²¹ Livy, 34.45 on the establishment of Puteoli, Salernum and Buxentum in 194; Livy, 39.23 on the re-establishment of Buxentum in 186; on Auximum see Livy, 41.21 and 27

²² Although Velleius does not explicitly mention the reinforcement of colonies in his chronicle, as mentioned by TIBILETTI 1950, 232: "...Velleio omette tutte le assegnazioni agrarie e i supplementi coloniarì oltre che, naturalmente, tutte le altre operazioni d'insediamento..."

²³ TORELLI 1988, 65-66; GABBA 1973, 351-352 on the impact of Late Republican ideologies on Velleius; also see BISPHAM 2006, 76 and STEK 2017, 272-273

²⁴ Cic. *Leg. Agr.*, 2.27.73

²⁵ SALMON 1969, 15 and BRUNT 1971, 538; SALMON 1969, 114: "Colonization ceased thus to be mainly military in its aim and became political and economic."

by Bradley: “Whilst it is reasonable to accept most notices of colonial foundations, it is necessary to be more cautious about ancient interpretations and preconceptions.”²⁶

Lastly, and very important in my opinion, it should be noted that this debate is entirely focused on peninsular Italy, while the role of overseas settlement has been severely overlooked. This topic suffers from a general lack of attention by the sources. First of all, as remarked by Purcell, Romans and Italians living overseas acquired notoriety in the sources only after the well-known, and controversial, episode of the Asiatic Vespers (88).²⁷ Second, the chronicles of Velleius and Suetonius, both of which push for a late start to overseas colonization (no earlier than 118), have deeply influenced the historical narrative. As previously stated, however, it is possible to argue for a different narrative: not only Roman overseas colonization can be dated as far back as the early fourth century, but the sources report that several foundations took place between 178 (Gracchuris) and 122 (Aquae Sextiae), a timeline suspiciously similar to the supposed gap in Italian foundations (176-125).²⁸ Therefore, it is possible to suggest that, during this period, Rome was focusing its colonial efforts overseas rather than in Italy and doing so with the army as the main driving force behind it.

Soldiers and settlers

Overall, it is unquestionable that provincial settlements followed military operations: the legions, after all, provided thousands of potential colonists/settlers all eager for land and, more importantly, willing to stay in the provinces. As a result, there is no doubt that alongside traditional colonial enterprises, the category of soldiers who decided to remain on their own initiative should be included among those people moved by the army during the expansion of the Republic. At the same time, however, having examined the status of the sources on Roman colonization during the mid-to-late Republican period, it is not surprising that this category of settlers is not very prominent, especially when compared to veterans included in land donation schemes or in the foundation/reinforcement of a colony. Nevertheless, the second century is a period that brought important changes to the Roman army and military service, most likely affecting veterans’ settlement practices in the process as well. Following the Punic Wars and the beginning of the overseas expansion of the Republic, it became more common for Roman soldiers to be stationed overseas and periods of service, though variable, could be longer than usual. In my opinion, the Spanish provinces offer the best examples of how military-related settlement was changing. Here, depending on the situation, Rome maintained a constant military presence, varying from garrison forces to large consular armies, and service in the region is reported in the sources as more unpredictable as elsewhere.²⁹ Consequently, this would have increased the chances of soldiers interacting with the local population, as implied by episodes such as the one of Carteia (171).³⁰ Overall, the Republic adopted different colonial and settlement

²⁶ BRADLEY 2006, 164; also see STEK 2017, 286: “...viewing colonies as ‘single-purpose fortified garrisons’ is unnecessarily reductive...” and BIGLINO 2018, 89-90

²⁷ PURCELL 2005, 86: “The Italians overseas first became spectacularly visible in 88/7 BC, when king Mithridates of Pontus ordered massacres of the Romans resident in the areas under his control...”; on the scale of the massacre, see Val. Max., 9.2 ext. 3; Vell. Pat., 2.18.1-2; Plut. Sull., 24; Cic. Leg. Man, 7 and 11; also see DE LIGT 2012, 343 and KALLET-MARX 1995, 155.

²⁸ On Gracchuris (178) see Livy, *Per.*, 41 and Plin., *HN*, 3.3.196; Livy, 43.3 for Carteia (171); Strabo, 3.2.1 for Corduba (152); Livy, *Per.*, 55 on Valentia (138); Strabo, 3.5.1 on the establishment of Palma and Pollentia (123) by Q. Caecilius Metellus *Balearius*, and finally see Vall. Pat., 1.15.4; Livy, *Per.*, 61; Strabo, 4.1.5 and Plin., *HN*, 31.2.4 for Aquae Sextiae (122).

²⁹ See Livy, 39.38 on the case of soldiers in Spain in 184 serving for longer periods of time.

³⁰ Livy, 43.3

schemes with regards to the Spanish provinces, all hinted in the sources. Colonies such as Corduba, Valentia, Palma and Pollentia were all established after military campaigns, thus were not too dissimilar from the traditional *propugnacula imperii* model employed in Italy. At the same time, however, the Spanish provinces also present alternative settlement practices: the growth of Tarraco or Italica from military outposts to proper cities, or episodes such as the already mentioned one in Carteia – thus the growth of a Romano-Hispanic population – on the other hand, might be indication of the growth of independent settlement and migration in the Spanish provinces.³¹

Such forms of settlement, however, bear little resemblance to the one traditionally associated with the Republic. It is by examining evidence from the early Imperial period that, on the other hand, certain similarities start to surface. Tacitus, in this passage dated to AD 60, offers a very interesting description of military-related colonization and settlement practices:

The veterans enrolled as citizens at Tarentum and Antium, however, did not relieve the depopulation there: most scattered into the provinces where they had served and – unused to marrying and raising children – left their houses childless, without posterity. For the days had passed when entire legions – with tribunes, centurions, privates in their proper centuries – were so transplanted as to create, by their unanimity and their comradeship, a little commonwealth. The settlers now were strangers among strangers; men from totally distinct maniples; leaderless; mutually indifferent; suddenly, as if they were anything in the world except soldiers, massed in one place to compose an aggregate rather than a colony.³²

It would seem that, from the state's perspective, the settlement of veterans was not that different from how it used to be during the late Republican period: soldiers, at the end of their service, received land and/or were moved into a colony to reinforce (or replace) the population. At the same time, however, Tacitus highlights how veterans preferred to settle where they had served rather than being moved either to Italy or other provinces.³³ It is important to remember that, by the mid-first century AD, the army was very different from how it used to be during the mid-Republic. With regards to the topic under examination, certain changes should be emphasized: first of all, Tacitus is talking about a standing army of professional soldiers who served for very long periods of time. Dio, for example, mentions that standard legionaries served for sixteen consecutive years.³⁴ This, consequently, increased the chances of soldiers interacting with the local population, building up relationships with local women and having children with them. During the Republic, on the other hand, military service was centred around individual campaigns that, once ended, might saw entire armies being disbanded. Also, citizens could re-enlist for further military service after periods of civilian life.³⁵ Secondly, imperial soldiers were paid substantially better. Infantrymen during the mid-Republic received 1,080 *asses* per year – 108 *denarii* (10:1 rate) – while, by the early Empire, following Caesar's changes to military payment, soldiers received a yearly *stipendium* of 3,600 *asses* – 225 *denarii*

³¹ On Tarraco see Plin. *HN*, 3.3.21: "...Tarraco, which was built by the Scipios..." and Livy, 21.60-61; on Italica see App. *Hisp.*, 7.38; the city was also known for being the birthplace of emperor Trajan, as his ancestors settled there after moving from Umbria (see Eutr. 8.2). Also, the paternal side of emperor Hadrian's family, the Aelii, came from Italica since 'the time of the Scipios'; also see BIGLINO 2018, 84

³² Tac., *Ann.* 14.27

³³ CIL III 4461 and CIL XVI 14; also see AE 1929, 200 and 204; also see DOBSON and MANN 1973, 197

³⁴ Cass. Dio, 55.25.5-6

³⁵ See BIGLINO 2020, 220

(16:1 rate).³⁶ Finally, as part of Octavian's military reforms, imperial soldiers, differently from their republican counterparts, received a pension (*praemium*) upon completing their service.³⁷ Most importantly, such *praemia*, that by the end of Augustus' reign, amounted to 12,000 *sesterces* (3,000 *denarii*) per soldier, were guaranteed.³⁸ During the Republic, on the other end, post-service donatives were not (at least up until the mid-second century) and could vary considerably in entity, thus being far less secure for soldiers. Finally, as remarked by Scheidel, while 62% of soldiers came from Italy between 30 and AD 41, by the period AD 41-68 the proportion was inverted, with 63% of them being of provincial origin.³⁹ Therefore, it is not surprising that these differences, once taken into account, influenced veterans' movement and settlement patterns and, as remarked by Dobson and Mann: "For most veterans the decision to settle where they had served must already have been made long before discharge."⁴⁰ Also, elements such better payment and guaranteed post-service pension, would definitely provide further incentives to the aforementioned category of soldiers who settled on their own initiative.

Despite all of the differences just listed, however, it might be possible to suggest a similar attitude toward overseas settlement already by and from the mid-second century. While military service of the time consisted in Rome raising its legions within Italy and then moved them wherever they were needed, certain elements of military service were changing.⁴¹ The Spanish provinces are a good example of this, thus offering a potential precedent to the trends described by Tacitus. Here soldiers could serve for longer periods of time, which allowed them to interact more with the local population – as demonstrated by the case of Carteia. Also, by serving in a certain area for longer periods of time, they became more aware of its economic possibilities and opportunities, thus, as suggested by Broadhead, increasing their interest and willingness of settling rather than return to Italy.⁴²

Overall, with regards to the movement of people overseas, there might have been different options for the Republic well separated from the traditional state-sponsored colonies. First of all, it would seem that the most common option was to leave responsibility to the individual commanders, as demonstrated by the numerous foundations in Spain since the late third century – when this region was not even a Roman province. Second, it is possible that commanders assigned individual grants (*virittane* settlements) of provincial land to soldiers.⁴³ The most famous instance of this happened after the Second Punic War, when Scipio discharged veterans of the Spanish and African campaigns (between 40,000 and 50,000 men) and rewarded them with 2 *iugera* of land in Samnium and Apulia for each year of service.⁴⁴ It is possible that commanders in the provinces adopted a similar solution when awarding land to their soldiers. Finally, as suggested by this paper, soldiers could have decided to settle independently from official land donations schemes. Such decision, ultimately, was triggered by two key elements:

³⁶ Suet., *Iul.* 26; also see ALSTON 1994, 114

³⁷ Suet., *Aug.* 49.2

³⁸ See Cass. Dio, 54.25; to ensure that soldiers received their pensions, Augustus used its own money to set up the *Aerarium* – see Cass. Dio, 55.25.1-3

³⁹ See SCHEIDEL 2008, 41

⁴⁰ DOBSON and MANN 1973, 197

⁴¹ On the changes affecting the Roman army during the second century see BIGLINO 2020, 66-86

⁴² Also see WILSON 1966, 25

⁴³ See BROADHEAD 2007, 155

⁴⁴ Livy, 31.4 and 31.49.

1. Economic status at the time of enlistment

This is the most important factor to be considered since the main reason for soldiers to stay in a province rather than returning to Italy was the prospect of improving their socio-economic conditions. The most direct way to understand the economic status of the citizens is to look at the traditional class division of Roman society. It is generally accepted that the majority of Roman recruits were drafted from the lower ones, as they were demographically stronger. Membership in the fifth class, the lowest in Roman society, included citizens whose property, by the second century, was worth between 4,000 and 25,000 *asses*.⁴⁵ As suggested by Rathbone, it is possible to translate these values in land at a nominal rate of 1,000 *asses* per *iugerum*, meaning that 4 *iugera* of land can be seen as an hypothetical minimum amount of land to allow membership to the fifth class, access to military service (and its rewards) and were probably enough for economic subsistence.⁴⁶ During the mid-second century, however, the minimum requirement for military service was further reduced to 1,500 *asses*, roughly enough for 2 *iugera* of land.⁴⁷ So, citizens who owned between 4,000 and 1,500 *asses* worth of property were those the most interested in alternatives to improve their conditions and were surely interested in options that involved the provinces. Also, once the *capite censi*, the poorest elements in Roman society, properly entered the military scene by the late second century, they should be included as they were surely open to the possibility of settling in the provinces if it would have improved their conditions.

Another option regarding the citizens' economic status at the time of enlistment is to examine the case of Spurius Ligustinus, as it is one of the few instances regarding an individual citizen in the sources.⁴⁸ It should be stressed, however, that his case is more complicated than it seems, primarily because of his claim of owning just one *iugerum* of land. This, after all, would have made it impossible for him to join the army in 200 or raise a family as numerous as his. Perhaps, at first, he owned just one *iugerum* of land, but it was rather valuable, and it allowed him to join the army regardless the size of his property. Alternatively, he owned more than the declared *iugerum*, but Livy reduced it in the speech for patriotic/rhetorical reasons.⁴⁹

In any case, the simplest motivation for soldiers to remain in a province at the end of their military service was the possibility of obtaining more wealth than they had. Land is the first element that should be considered. As remarked by Broadhead and Purcell, the prospect of getting better land was an important motivation; after all, most of the best land in Central and Southern Italy was already occupied by the mid-to-late second century.⁵⁰ The colonial foundations of the second century, as highlighted by the sources, show how wide-ranging in size land grants were: from a minimum of 5 *iugera* to the settlers of Mutina to the 50 *iugera* at Bononia.⁵¹ Other colonies also show that land was

⁴⁵ See Polyb. 6.19 on the minimum census requirement of 4,000 *asses*

⁴⁶ RATHBONE 2008, 308-309; ROSENSTEIN 2002, 190 argues: "No source informs us of the minimum number of *iugera* that a citizen would have had to have owned during the middle Republic in order to qualify as an *assiduus*. Quite probably no fixed figure existed ..."

⁴⁷ On the minimum requirement of 1,500 *asses*, see Cic. Rep., 2.40; Gell. NA., 16.10.10; Non. 228L; also see ROSENTEIN 2004, 57

⁴⁸ Livy, 42.34

⁴⁹ On these issues within the speech of Ligustinus see BIGLINO 2020, 215-218

⁵⁰ BROADHEAD 2000, 165-166; PURCELL 2005, 90: "Soldiers, who before Augustus did not join up for fixed periods of years, had access to a wide range of opportunities for social and economic betterment in the lands whose rule by Rome they had been involved in maintaining."; also see DE LIGT 2012, 185 and 187

⁵¹ For Mutina, see Livy, 39.55; see Livy, 37.57 for Bononia.

granted according to the hierarchy of the settlers: at Copia, infantrymen received 20 *iugera* of land, while centurions were granted 40; at Aquileia soldiers received 50 *iugera* each, centurions 100.⁵² Therefore, for citizens who owned 4 *iugera* of land or less in Italy, or for the *capite censi*, the prospect of moving to a province where they had the concrete chance of obtaining large land allotments, would have been quite attractive.

The matter of land is also connected with the wider economic landscape. As mentioned earlier, Imperial evidence suggests that soldiers did not like to be settled away from where they had served. As argued, this might have been the result of how the army was organized by that point, and due to the soldiers being, primarily, of provincial origin. In theory, the same argument can be applied to Republican soldiers. Legionaries, at least until the late first century, were recruited almost entirely in Italy and then moved where needed. Therefore, it might seem that these soldiers were keener on returning to Italy at the end of their military service than staying in the provinces. Despite this, it is possible to argue that soldiers were more open to the possibility of moving to the provinces because of the economic landscape. It is however difficult to compare opportunities in the provinces in the mid-second and early first centuries vs Italy during first century AD. The price of land is an element that stresses such difference. Though actual information about it is rather scarce, there is no doubt that Italian land was more expensive than provincial land. First century AD agronomist Columella offers one of the best-known estimations: 1,000 *sesterces* (4,000 *asses* or 250 *denarii*) per *iugerum*.⁵³ As argued by De Neeve, however, this assessment is rather controversial, primarily when trying to apply it to other periods and/or locations.⁵⁴ Realistically, after all, Columella's knowledge of Italian land prices was most likely limited to the ones he was familiar with during his time. Furthermore, Duncan-Jones has argued that his figure is rather excessive – primarily due to very low net returns and dividends – and suggests for prices between 475 and 660 *sesterces* (therefore between 118.75 and 165 *denarii*) per *iugerum*.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, it is still possible to compare Columella's figure with the information on provincial land prices which, as a result, will suggest that – economically speaking – it would have been easier for soldiers to settle in a province at the end of their period of service. Evidence from papyri shows that, on average, land in Egypt was priced at 141 *sesterces* (564 *asses*) per *iugerum* by the first century AD.⁵⁶ This should offer a strong indication on how vast the difference in land prices between Italy and the provinces was, especially when taking into account the fact that Egypt was a famously wealthy one.⁵⁷ Looking back at the mid-Republican period, I believe that it is possible to apply this logic quite comfortably and arguing that land within the core of Roman territory – i.e., peninsular Italy – was more expensive than its periphery. As a result, this might have offered additional motivation to soldiers willing to settle overseas, as it would have been economically easier to invest their resources in provincial land.

Even when not involved in state-sponsored land donations, soldiers might have been able to settle in a province on their own initiative through the resources they were able to gather during their service (*stipendia*, rewards, donatives and booty). This, of course, might vary considerably: Gauthier, for example, argues that soldiers actually saw little profit from wars, as most of it went to

⁵² See Livy, 35.9 for Copia and Livy, 40.34 for Aquileia.

⁵³ Columella, *Rust.* 3.3.8: “...I estimate the seven iugera of ground acquired for just as many thousands of sesterces...”; DUNCAN-JONES 1982, 48-52 on the cost of land; also see REES 2009, 102-103

⁵⁴ DE NEEVE 1985, 77-95

⁵⁵ DUNCAN-JONES 1982, 51

⁵⁶ DUNCAN-JONES 1982, 366

⁵⁷ MADDISON 2007, 55 says that Egypt was by far the wealthiest Roman province and second only to Italy itself.

the elite and the *aerarium*.⁵⁸ Rosenstein, on the other hand, offers a more optimistic scenario: “Rome by the late third century had become a society with a sizeable component of citizens who could be described as of the ‘middling sort’ – not rich but certainly not scraping out a bare subsistence for their families on inadequate holdings. And there is every reason to believe that Roman warfare helped to underwrite their prosperity.”⁵⁹ The awareness for the economic benefits of military service is, without a doubt, an element of the relationship between citizens and military service that definitely deserves more consideration and, as remarked by Roselaar, not only interested the Roman side of the population, but the Italian allies as well.⁶⁰ When discussing the potential benefits from military service, it is hard not mentioning the case of Ligustinus once again. As said, he might have own a single *iugerum* of land by the time he joined the army; however, he was most likely able to expand his property through what he earned during his military career to the point that he was able to sustain his large family.⁶¹ Of course, it has been argued that Ligustinus was not your average Roman soldier, “not a typical figure” as described by Brunt.⁶² After all, his successful and profitable military career clashes with the traditional model of Roman citizens overwhelmed by the burden of military service. However, as debated by Rosenstein: “In one way or another, at least some of the wealth that the Republic’s victories produced found its way back to ordinary Romans and allies and so helped to foster a general prosperity in much of Italy during the third and part of the second centuries.”⁶³ And Ligustinus certainly proves the potential benefit that military service could offer to Roman citizens by the second century.

Another element that could have attracted veterans in a province was trade stimulated by the army itself. Roman soldiers, after all, required all sorts of military and non-military equipment and, as remarked by Verboven: “Wherever the Roman army went, a train of merchants, contractors and hangers-on followed.”⁶⁴ The presence of these camp-followers and traders is well attested, especially by some well-known cases of generals expelling them to restore their troops’ discipline.⁶⁵ Soldiers came into contact with them during their service and saw the potential profits in such activities, hence, as suggested by Nicolet, it is possible that, once discharged, they decided to continue following the army as dealers themselves.⁶⁶ From the second century onwards, the scope of military campaigns reached an unprecedented level and, as a consequence, became more complex. Therefore, trade, long-range transportation related to the army, and the number of people involved in such activities

⁵⁸ GAUTHIER (forthcoming)

⁵⁹ ROSENSTEIN 2012, 112

⁶⁰ ROSELAAR 2019, 54: “Most [Italians], in fact, seem to have been willing to engage in army life and to exploit the opportunities for glory and wealth that it offered.”

⁶¹ See BIGLINO 2020, 222-223

⁶² BRUNT 1971, 396

⁶³ ROSENSTEIN 2012, 111

⁶⁴ VERBOVEN 2007, 297

⁶⁵ App. *Hisp.*, 14.85 on Scipio at Numantia (134) and Sall. *Iug.*, 44-45 on Metellus in Numidia (111)

⁶⁶ Sall. *Iug.*, 44. 5: “...camp-followers mingled and walked about with the soldiers days and night; wandering around they wasted the fields, attacked farmhouses, held contests in carrying off slaves and cattle as booty, and exchanged them with traders for imported wine and such things.”; NICOLET 1980, 121: “[...] from the end of the Second Punic War onwards, some Roman soldiers were able to make a fortune out of trading. [...] The sale of loot after a battle brought the soldiers into contact with a whole world of camp-followers...” and 122: “Moreover, the transactions to which it led introduced the soldier to other activities not directly connected with war, and gave him the idea of setting up as a dealer after the fashion of those who visited his camp.” also see PURCELL 2005, 91: “Maintaining Rome’s military mission involved the provision of money, food, clothing, transport, and military and naval supplies. The contractors followed the legions. The traders followed the contractors.”

– like the *navicularii* or the *negotiatores* – increased exponentially, as transport of supplies was essential to the Republic’s war effort.⁶⁷ An indicator of the growing importance of sea transportation is offered by the number of shipwrecks; as remarked by both Donato and Kay, they strongly increased from the second century before reaching a peak during the first century.⁶⁸ Therefore, it is safe to assume that contracts with the army and the transport of all sorts of military supplies were a very lucrative business. Veterans, who were already familiar with the requirements of the legions and the provinces, wanted to become involved in it. Thus, as suggested by Nicolet: “Over a long period we shall come across typical careers of ex-servicemen turned *negotiatores*: the two professions are by no means incompatible and basically involve the same behaviour and attitudes.”⁶⁹ This relation between the army and traders seems to be confirmed in the sources: Cicero’s description of Gallia Narbonensis, though exaggerated, still suggests the fast growth of commerce in the province, in which the army and former soldiers, undoubtedly, were involved.⁷⁰ An inscription from Delos mentions the presence of *negotiatores* who, in 69, mobilized against pirates, while Caesar mentions dealers who had ventured into Gaul before the invasion.⁷¹

Overall, as argued by Broadhead, soldiers were inclined to settle somewhere else if the right opportunities occurred to improve their socio-economic conditions. By putting together all of this evidence, it is possible to see how settlement in a province could have been economically attractive for discharged Roman soldiers, especially when combined with the next element.

2. Post-service rewards

These, divided between donatives, rewards, or booty, represent a key asset for Roman soldiers who decided to settle overseas independently from the more traditional systems. They were paid during their service and, though the *stipendium* was not much, it was a regular payment that for many of them was an alternative to nothing at all.⁷² However, as remarked by Nicolet: “...the soldier’s pay was far from being all he got out of military service, even before the army was professionalized. [...] War was expected to bring profit to the Roman state as a whole and to each of its citizens individually...”⁷³ Livy mentions several episodes of distribution of money to soldiers following a campaign in his chronicle of the second century, a practice that continued throughout the Republican period on a growing scale.⁷⁴ The long-term impact of such a system, however, would prove severe for Rome: “The potential reward on discharge was one of the principal factors that encouraged the loyalty of soldiers

⁶⁷ The importance of long-range sea transportation for the army is already highlighted during the Second Punic War with the scandal of Marcus Postumius in 212 (see Livy, 35.3-4).

⁶⁸ See DONATO 2003, x-xi and KAY 2014, 4-5

⁶⁹ NICOLET 1980, 122

⁷⁰ Cic. *Font.*, 11: “Gaul is packed with traders, crammed with Roman citizens. No Gaul ever does business independently of a citizen of Rome; not a penny changes hands in Gaul without the transaction being recorded in the books of Roman citizens.” (*Referta Gallia negotiatorum est, plena civium Romanorum. Nemo Gallorum sine cive Romano quicquam negotii gerit, nummus in Gallia nullus sine civium Romanorum tabulis commovetur.*)

⁷¹ On Delos see BURRBACH 1921, 248-250 (n.159); Caes. *BGall.*, 7.3

⁷² ERDKAMP 1998, 269

⁷³ NICOLET 1980, 117

⁷⁴ Livy, 33.23 is the first episode of the second century (197) following the triumph of both consuls from Northern Italy; Livy, 45.43 on the aftermath of the campaign in Illyria in 167, the last of Livy’s chronicle; Dio Cass., 27.94 on one of the last episodes of the second century: Marius, after the battle of Aquae Sextiae (102), sold the very large plunder (see Plut. *Mar.*, 21) to his soldiers at low price.

to their generals rather than to the Roman state, and contributed to the civil wars that ended the Republic.”⁷⁵

Regarding soldiers in the provinces, there is little to no doubt that the possibility of receiving extra cash at the end of their service was an additional and important incentive in their decision to settle instead of returning to Italy.⁷⁶ Post-service rewards offered more resources that could be invested to improve their socio-economic conditions – like buying land or entering the trade business, as discussed earlier.⁷⁷ Kate Gilliver, however, highlights the unpredictability of this system: “The rewards of service could be equally inconsistent with some legions being settled on land [...] whilst other legions received no substantial rewards when their service was completed.”⁷⁸ Thus, post-service rewards, though common, were not guaranteed – especially during the second century – and, even more important, their consistency was rather variable. The following examples emphasize the variability of such system.

The importance of donatives for Republican soldiers on an individual level can be highlighted, once again, by looking at the case of Spurius Ligustinus. Though not directly mentioned in his speech, by examining the individual campaigns he took part to it seems that, throughout his career, he received – at least – 754 *denarii* as rewards.⁷⁹ When examining overall campaigns, as said, the consistency of the rewards varied considerably. First, let us look at a case of a rewarding campaign: the end of the Third Macedonian War in 167. Livy states that each infantryman received a bonus of 100 *denarii* to begin with.⁸⁰ Then, through the plundering of Epirus allowed by Aemilius Paullus, each of them gathered loot worth a further 200 *denarii*.⁸¹ Thus, by putting together the *stipendium*, donatives and booty, a legionnaire could have earned 624 *denarii* at the end of the campaign (324 for three years of service, 200 in Epirus and 100 as donative). As said, this was a particularly rewarding campaign, but, at the same time, it also shows the potential wealth offered by service in the army, and why Roman citizens were eager to take part in certain campaigns.⁸² The campaign of 197, on the other hand, can be highlighted as a case of one generating low rewards. Following their deeds in Northern Italy, both consuls – Gaius Cornelius and Quintus Minucius – were awarded with triumphs. On this occasion, Livy mentions the rewards given to their soldiers: 70 *asses* (7 *denarii*) for each

⁷⁵ GILLIVER 2007, 185

⁷⁶ It should be noted that some rewards were only handed out during triumphs, so that soldiers had to go back to Rome to collect them.

⁷⁷ DE LIGT 2012, 187: “...provincial land was much cheaper than Italian land, large tracts of it could be snapped up at bargain prices.”

⁷⁸ GILLIVER 2007, 185

⁷⁹ Regarding Ligustinus’ post-service rewards: in 194, Flaminius gave 50 *denarii* after his campaign in the East (Livy, 34.52); that same year, Cato awarded 54 *denarii* to his soldiers after his Spanish campaign (Livy, 34.46). In 189, Scipio’s veterans received 50 *denarii* each (Livy, 37.59) and in 180, Fulvius Flaccus rewarded his soldiers 100 *denarii* each plus double payment (Livy, 40.43). Finally, the Third Macedonian War proved very profitable. Assuming Ligustinus survived, he would have received 200 *denarii* as part of the centurions’ rewards (Livy, 45.40) and, possibly, 300 *denarii* from the plundering of Epirus (Livy, 45.34).

⁸⁰ Livy, 45.40.

⁸¹ Livy, 45.34.

⁸² Livy, 42.32 on the enthusiasm for the Third Macedonian War: “...large numbers volunteered since they saw that those who had served in the earlier Macedonian War and against Antiochus in Asia had become wealthy men.”; App. *Pun.*, 9.65 on the prospect of wealth as the main drive for recruitment at the eve of the Third Punic War.

infantryman, double for the centurions and cavalrymen (140 *asses* – 14 *denarii*).⁸³ Thus, not a particularly rewarding campaign for the soldiers.

Finally, the Spanish campaigns deserve a separate section, as they best represent the unpredictability of the post-reward system during the second century. The traditional portrait of the Spanish wars of the mid-second century is of hard-fought battles with little reward that, as a consequence, caused a serious recruitment issue.⁸⁴ The reality is that, profit-wise, these campaigns were very varied; at times, they were indeed rather unprofitable: for example, soldiers received small rewards after Servius Sulpicius Galba's campaign against the Lusitanians in 150.⁸⁵ On the other hand, there are instances in the sources in which veterans from Spain actually received generous donatives from their commanders: following Cato's triumph in 196, each soldier received 27 *denarii*, while, during Q. Fulvius Flaccus' triumph in 180, they were awarded 50 *denarii* each.⁸⁶ Also, after the difficult campaigns against the Lusitanians in 153, Appian reports that Mummius's soldiers were able to gather large amounts of booty.⁸⁷ Overall, as emphasised by these examples, post-service rewards constituted a very important asset for soldiers who decided to settle independently in the provinces after their service. At the same time, however, soldiers needed to take into account the elements of uncertainty: they would not always receive a reward, and even when they did the amount varied greatly.

To properly understand how potentially profitable military service could be, there should be an indication of what such earnings could buy. The most challenging would be estimating how much land a veteran of these campaigns would have been able to purchase. First of all, if compared with Columella's prices of 1,000 *sesterces* per *iugerum*, for veterans of the Third Macedonian War it would translate to 2 *iugera* (624 *denarii* = 2,496 *sesterces*) with almost 500 *sesterces* (125 *denarii*) to spare. In the case of Ligustinus, he would have been able to buy 3 *iugera* of land at that price (as 754 *denarii* = 3,016 *sesterces*). Of course, as mentioned earlier, applying Columella's figure to different periods and areas is not ideal, but it still offers a measure of comparison. On a provincial context, the situation could become very different, as well emphasised by De Ligt: "Large amounts of fertile land could easily be taken away from provincial communities at a very low political cost. Moreover, since provincial land was much cheaper than Italian land, large tracts of it could be snapped up at bargain prices."⁸⁸ The previously mentioned land prices in Egypt could provide an interesting comparison. As mentioned earlier, evidence on papyri suggests that, by the first century AD, Egyptian land was priced at 141 *sesterces* per *iugerum*. Such lower prices would have allowed veterans to purchase considerable plots of land, especially after profitable campaigns (e.g., 18 *iugera* in the case of veterans of the Third Macedonian War or 21 *iugera* in the case of Ligustinus). Next, it is possible to explore the sources to find other price lists that might be compared with veterans' earnings, like agricultural equipment. Cato, for example, says that mills' prices (including transportation, etc) varied between 220 and 724 *sesterces* (between 55 and 181 *denarii*).⁸⁹ Finally, it is even possible to include considerable investments

⁸³ Livy, 33.23

⁸⁴ Polyb., 35.4 on the Romans unwillingness to serve in Spain; also see RICH 1983, 317-318: "We hear of no resistance to the levy in the remaining years of the second century after the wars in Spain ended."

⁸⁵ App. *Hisp.*, 10.59-60: "Galba, being even more greedy than Lucullus, distributed a little plunder to the army and a little to his friends, but kept the rest himself, although he was already one of the richest of the Romans."

⁸⁶ On Cato, see Livy, 34.46 and Plut. *Cat. Mai.*, 10: "Despite the fact that his troops had enriched themselves during the campaign, he still gave them a pound of silver more to each man..."; Livy, 40.43 on Flaccus.

⁸⁷ App. *Hisp.*, 10.57: "All the booty that it was possible to carry he divided among the soldiers. [...] Having accomplished these results, Mummius returned to Rome and was awarded a triumph."

⁸⁸ See DE LIGT 2012, 187: "

⁸⁹ Cato, *Agr.*, 22

such as slaves, whose prices were extremely variable depending on various factors.⁹⁰ By the first half of the first century AD, sources mention that it might have been possible to purchase a slave spending between 300 and 500 *denarii*, a sum affordable to veterans of profitable campaigns, who were thus able to purchase something as valuable as a slave.⁹¹

So, with a better understanding of these elements that might have persuaded soldiers to settle in the provinces after military service, it is possible to re-examine the overall movement of people triggered by Rome's Mediterranean expansion during the second century.

Army and settlement

Traditionally, when debating the connection between the Roman army and the settlement of people, our first inclination is to look at the matter of land distribution to veterans and the predominance of colonial foundations solely intended to settle demobilized soldiers.⁹² This, as stressed by Hopkins, was a specific phase of the colonization process following the foundation of Eporodia (100) in Cisalpine Gaul – mentioned by Velleius as the last standard, non-military colony – that was pursued by the warlords of the first century for political and military reasons: “Victorious generals, Sulla, Caesar and his political heirs, Antony and Augustus, all raised armies to support their cause. When victory came, they sought peace by disarmament and gifts of land. They hoped that if an emergency arose, colonies of their ex-soldiers would be a source of support (see Appian, *BC*, 1. 96 and 2. 140).”⁹³ Therefore, as also remarked by Hopkins, it is not surprising that this more militarized phase, due to its political and strategic implications, only interested Italy.⁹⁴ During the late Republic, after all, Roman legions were still made up almost entirely by men recruited in Italy who were then moved where they were needed and supported by local auxiliaries.⁹⁵ Provincial recruitment was still in its infancy by the late first century; only well into the Empire did the provinces outrank Italy as the supplier of men for the legions.⁹⁶

Yet settlement and military service had been connected long before the first century and the military colonies mentioned by Velleius. The already mentioned episode of Scipio assigning land to his veterans in Southern Italy after the Hannibalic War provides an example of viridate settlements on a large scale. The army also provides with some of the earliest cases of overseas settlements, as Tarraco and Italica were both established in Spain well before the region was under Roman control, and the sources mention more cases of communities established outside of Italy throughout the second century. In 178 the propraetor Ti. Sempronius Gracchus established Gracchuris in Hispania Citerior after his successful campaigns against the Celtiberians.⁹⁷ In 152, consul M. Claudius Marcellus

⁹⁰ BGU 4. 1114, 16-17 (dated 5 BC) mentions a slave priced 1,200 *drachmas*; Hor., *Epist.* 2, 2.5-6 mentions that a well-trained slave with knowledge in Greek could be bought for 8,000 *sesterces* (2,000 *denarii*). Some more extravagant prices come from Pliny, *HN*, 7.40, though his reliability has been questioned (e.g., see WESTERMANN 1955, 100)

⁹¹ See Hor., *Sat.*, 2.7 and Petron., *Sat.*, 68

⁹² Vell. Pat., 1.15.5: “*Neque facile memoriae mandaverim quae, nisi militaris, post hoc tempus deducta sit.*”; BROADHEAD 2007, 158; SALMON 1969, 128

⁹³ HOPKINS 1978, 70.

⁹⁴ HOPKINS 1978, 70: “For this purpose, only colonies in Italy would be useful.”

⁹⁵ App. *Hisp.*, 11.65 and 67 on armies recruited in Italy and moved to the provinces.

⁹⁶ SCHEIDEL 2008, 41; also see BRUNT 1971, 230

⁹⁷ See Livy, *Per.*, 41 and Plin. *HN*, 3.3.24

established the town of Corduba in Hispania Ulterior with a population, according to Strabo: "...from the beginning by picked men of the Romans and of the native Iberians..."⁹⁸ Livy mentions that the consul D. Iunius Brutus founded Valentia in 138 as a reward for the veterans of the campaigns against Viriathus.⁹⁹ In 123, the consul Q. Caecilius Metellus conquered the Balearic islands and established the cities of Palma and Pollentia.¹⁰⁰ While most of these examples are drawn from the Spanish provinces, the sources report of military-related foundations from other provinces: in 122, the consul Sex. Calvinus and the proconsul Fulvius Flaccus established Aquae Sextiae after their successful campaigns of 124 in Southern Gaul.¹⁰¹ Also, between 171 and 146, Rome was involved in three major conflict in Macedonia, Greece and Africa, wars that involved a considerable number of legions and resulted in the formation of new provinces (Macedonia – which included Greece as well – and Africa). However, evidence suggesting that land grants or colonial foundations took place following the large military operations in the East is poor at best. Africa, on the other hand, hints at a pattern quite similar to the one applied to the Spanish provinces, and while the picture is not as clear as in Spain, there is substantial evidence that suggests consistent land donations and settlements in which the army played an important direct and indirect role.

Africa became a Roman province at the end of the Third Punic War (146) and its land, apart from seven recognized free cities (*civitates liberae*), was declared *ager publicus*.¹⁰² Different sources examine Roman migration toward the region in the years following the destruction of Carthage. Initially, it was most likely focused in the area of Utica, chosen as the new province's capital.¹⁰³ Well-known is Gaius Gracchus's project to found Colonia Iunonia on the site of Carthage in 122 that never came to be due to harsh opposition from the senate, a decision that, as mentioned, would heavily influence the overall view on Roman overseas colonization.¹⁰⁴ A fragmentary inscription recovered at Carthage, however, records the presence of a triumvirate made of C. Papirius Carbo, L. Calpurnius Bestia and C. Suplicius Galba who were assigning lots of land in that area in 121.¹⁰⁵ Gracchus's role in Africa was not limited to his colonial project at Carthage; as remarked by Zucca, he pushed for a distribution of colonists in the Capo Bon region and south of the Bagradas river.¹⁰⁶ Africa is also mentioned on numerous occasions in the *lex Agraria* of 111, but section ll.58-61 should be emphasised, as it highlights the size of land donations according to the hierarchy of the recipients.¹⁰⁷ This reminds of the mechanisms described by Livy for certain colonies in Italy: the assignment of large land allotments as a way to attract potential settlers, thus suggesting that Rome applied a customary

⁹⁸ Strabo, 3.2.1

⁹⁹ Livy, *Per.*, 55.

¹⁰⁰ Strabo, 3.5.1: "And he brought thither as colonists three thousand of the Romans who were in Iberia."

¹⁰¹ On the foundation of Aquae Sextiae see Livy, *Per.*, 61; Strabo, 4.1.5; Plin. *HN*, 31.2.4 and Vell. Pat. 1.15.4; also see SYME 1958, 604-605 on Gallia Narbonensis.

¹⁰² *Lex agraria*, 11.89-90: "Whatever [land is in Africa, whatever public roads and public ways] there were [in that] land, before Carthage was captured, all those are to be public..."; on the seven free cities – Utica, Hadrumentum, Thapsus, Leptis Minor, Acholla, Usalis and Teudalis – see *lex agraria*, 11. 78-82

¹⁰³ Strabo, 17.13: "Utica was second only to Carthage in size and importance, and when Carthage was destroyed, that city served the Romans as a metropolis, and as a base of operations for their activities in Libya."; also see ZUCCA 1994, 1,426

¹⁰⁴ On Colonia Iunonia/Carthage see App. *Pun.*, 20.136, Vell. Pat. 1.15.4 and 2.7.8; the project of rebuilding Carthage would be revived only by Augustus – see App. *Pun.*, 20.136. On the long-term impact of the resistance against the colony's establishment see BISPHAM 2006, 123 and BIGLINO 2018, 74-78

¹⁰⁵ See CIL I² 696 = ILS 475

¹⁰⁶ ZUCCA 1994, 1,426; also see LASSÈRE 1977, 107 and 109

¹⁰⁷ See CRAWFORD 1996, 147-148

colonial policy with regards to Africa.¹⁰⁸ At the same time, it is possible to argue that this might have been caused by the lack of potential settlers, thus the Republic was forced to offer large allotments to attract them, an issue that had happened before.¹⁰⁹ Additional evidence shows that the towns of Uchi Maius, Thibariss and Thuburnica were established by veterans – and their families – settled by Marius from 103.¹¹⁰ Further settlements of veterans in the region are mentioned by Dio in the aftermath of the battle of Thapsus (46), and in 41 by Appian.¹¹¹

Additionally, it is possible to examine Africa as a case of independent settlement of soldiers following the end of their service in a pattern very similar to the one suggested by Broadhead. Although direct evidence is missing – e.g., Livy's commentary on colonial foundations following military campaigns – there are strong hints within the indirect evidence, particularly when investigating the aftermath of the Third Punic War. In 149 the Republic had deployed a massive army of 84,000 men against Carthage, which was a very well-received campaign in Rome due to obvious economic interests.¹¹² Once the war ended in 146 with the destruction of the city, it seems that veterans were generously rewarded, as Plutarch remarks that Scipio Aemilianus, the commander of that army: "...was the one among the generals who had made his soldiers richest"¹¹³ thus suggesting conspicuous post-campaign rewards – that might have included land donations as well. Also, it is worth adding the fact that no legion is reported in the newly created province until the Jugurthine War (112-105), as veterans of the Punic War were not transferred elsewhere, thus suggesting that the large army that besieged Carthage was disbanded at the end of the war.¹¹⁴ Of course, it is possible that some of them might have done like Ligustinus (which, as suggested elsewhere, in my opinion was how Roman citizens, on average, experienced military service during this period): once the campaign ended, they enjoyed periods of civilian life before enlisting once again in the legions for another period of service – and its potential benefits.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, this picture shows that we have veterans of a very large army at the end of a profitable campaign in a newly created province which, also worth mentioning, was well-known for its wealth. Both Polybius and Livy emphasize Carthage's great wealth, while Pliny praises the land's fertility, all elements that, as remarked by Wilson, must have

¹⁰⁸ Livy, 35.9 says that at Copia (193) infantrymen received 20 *iugera*, while cavalrymen 40 *iugera*; Livy, 37.57 on the allotments at Bononia (189): 70 *iugera* of land for each cavalryman, 50 for all the other colonist; Livy, 40.34 describes the size of the allotments at Aquileia (181): 50 *iugera* for each infantryman, 100 *iugera* for each centurion and 140 *iugera* for each cavalryman.

¹⁰⁹ Livy, 35.9 on the cases of Copia (193) and Valentia (192) in Bruttium and Livy, 37.47 and 37.57 on the case of Bononia (189).

¹¹⁰ Aur. Vict., *de vir. ill.*, 73.1: Saturninus' legislation of 103 allocated land to Marius' veterans in Africa; ILS, I 1334 refers to Uchi Maius as 'coloniae Marianae Augustae Alexandrianae'; ILS II 6790 mentions Thibariss as 'municipi Mariani'; L'Année Épigraphique 1951, 29 mentions Marius as Thuburnica's 'conditori coloniae'; see also WILSON 1966, 45

¹¹¹ Dio Cass., 43.14: "Immediately after these events and before he crossed into Italy Caesar got rid of the older men among his soldiers for fear they might mutiny again." However, as suggested by KEPPIE 1983, 50, it is possible that soldiers expressed their desire to settle in Africa and were given the opportunity; Appian, BC, V. 26 mentions the presence of discharged veterans in the region.

¹¹² App. *Pun.*, 11.75: "There was a general rush of citizens and allies to join this splendid expedition, and absolute confidence in the result, and many were eager to have their names on the enrolment."; on the size of the Roman army see BRUNT 1971, 684 and GOLDSWORTHY 2001, 340

¹¹³ Plut. *Sayings of Scipio the Younger*, 1

¹¹⁴ App. *Hisp.*, 11.65 says that Fabius Maximus Aemilianus, commander of the operations in Hispania Ulterior in 145, enlisted recruits instead of the veterans of the wars in Africa, Macedonia and Greece.

¹¹⁵ Livy, 42.34; on this way of experiencing military service, see BIGLINO 2020, 220-222

attracted relocation and settlement from Italy in various forms.¹¹⁶ It is possible, of course, that some of the veterans simply returned to Italy after the war; however, as highlighted, this conflict offered the conditions to suggest that others actually decided to remain in Africa. Overall, it is possible to see how this region, throughout the Republican period, became an important destination for Roman settlement in various forms: from more traditional colonial initiatives and *viridane* settlements to soldiers settling on their own initiative after their service in the legions.

This latter type of settlement might be better emphasized by examining the origin of certain local senatorial families through epigraphic sources from the early Imperial period. The Fulvii from Leptis Magna, for example are mentioned in a couple of inscriptions dedicated to Augustus, and were probably descendants of immigrants who moved to Africa during the first century.¹¹⁷ Further evidence allows us to trace the background of another African senatorial family, the Ennii of Bisica, up to their veteran roots. Two members of the family, Quintus Ennius and Publius Ennius, were both soldiers during the Flavian period, but settled in Africa after leaving the army:

P(ublius) Ennius, T(iti) f(ilius), Epilli n(e)pos, Quir(ina), Paccianus / commodis acceptis ex leg(ione) (tertia) Aug(usta) ab / Imp(eratore) Domitianus Caesare Aug(ustuo), Ger(manico), co(n)s(ule) (duodecies)¹¹⁸

Grandson of a certain Epillius – a man of Gallic origin¹¹⁹ –, Publius Ennius left the army in AD 86 and after receiving his post-service pension (*commodis acceptis*), settled in the region and, most likely, purchased some land.¹²⁰ He was followed by his brother Quintus Ennius, formerly a centurion of the same legion, who moved to Bisica as well:

Q(uinto) Ennio, T(iti) f(ilio), / Quir(ina), E[p]pillo, / (centurioni) leg(ionis) (tertia) Aug(ustae), / fl(amini) p(er)e(etuo); / Ordo Bisicens(is) // ex collat[i]o / ne patr(ono).¹²¹

Finally, a third inscription from Bisica dedicated to this family dated to the Antonine period, reveals the presence – and career – of P. Ennius Saturninus Karo, a descendant of the Ennii, by now fully established in this territory.¹²² Overall, I believe that the case of the Ennii, albeit from a later

¹¹⁶ Livy, 36.4 says that in 191, while gathering supplies required by the Roman for the war against Syria, the Carthaginians offered to pay the whole war indemnity in one large instalments, suggesting that they had recovered very quickly from the Second Punic War. Rome, however, declined the offer; Polyb., 18.35 says that Carthage was the richest city in the world; Plin. *HN*, 5.3.24: “Then comes another section of Africa proper. [...] a district of exceptional fertility, the soil paying the farmers interest at a rate of a hundredfold.”; see WILSON 1966, 42: “...the region taken in 146 had not only important trade from its ports, but also, in the fertile plains and undulating hill country, types of agriculture like enough those of Italy to attract farmers with the necessary capital.” Finally, Africa’s prosperity is further highlighted when looking at the massive fines imposed by Caesar on the cities of Thapsus and Hadrumetum during the civil war (46) – see Caes. *BAfr.*, 97

¹¹⁷ CORBIER, 1982, 687; on their inscriptions, see IRT 320 (dated 3 BC) and 328 (dated 2 BC).

¹¹⁸ CIL, VIII, 12241 = 792

¹¹⁹ See BESCHAUOUCH 1979, 402 and CORBIER 1982, 687

¹²⁰ BESCHAUOUCH 1979, 402

¹²¹ CIL, VIII, 12297

¹²² BESCHAUOUCH 1979, 400-401

period, presents important similarities with elements previously suggested in the paper with regards to the settlement of veterans. First of all, it clearly represents an instance of soldiers settling in a province on their own initiative after leaving the army. Next, it highlights the key role of post-service benefits, as Publius Ennius, was not involved in any state-sponsored land donation scheme, but invested his discharge bonus in buying land in this region of Africa. Naturally, the fact that their *praemia* played a crucial role in the Ennii's settlement strategy, properly encapsulates this episode within the Imperial context. Finally, it also suggests the plausible pattern of soldiers preferring to settle where they served, as the Legio III *Augusta*, after all, had been stationed in Africa since the late first century.¹²³ Again, this should not be a surprise with regards to the Ennii, as soldiers during this period were expected to serve in the provinces for long periods of time.

Having examined this episode, would it be possible to apply a similar case to the mid-to-late Republican period? By bringing together the various elements discussed so far throughout the paper, I believe it is possible to suggest a plausible pattern of independent settlement employed by Roman (and Italian) soldiers following the end of their military service. I would argue that the Ennii, once the obvious differences caused by their Imperial context are taken into account, followed a pattern that, in my opinion, might be traced up to the mid-second century. By this period, more and more Roman soldiers were stationed overseas in provinces such as Spain or Africa, and could expect longer periods of service. This, as argued, prompted a better interaction with the local populations and, as suggested by Broadhead, increased the soldiers' awareness of the potential economic opportunities offered by the regions where they served. This, as a result, might have triggered their willingness to settle, thus they could invest what they have earned through military service – payment, donatives, booty, etc. – by exploiting the different economic landscape (e.g., lower land prices). As seen, this is exactly what the Ennii did: they saw the opportunities offered by the Bisica area and decided to settle there by using the economic resources offered by their military service, and this move clearly worked for them, as they reached the senatorial rank. Obviously, not all soldiers enjoyed such level of success. As argued, Republican soldiers had less resources than their Imperial counterparts (lower *stipendia* and no *praemia*), but they enjoyed a more flexible military life; and ultimately, the goal of settling overseas was not reaching the senatorial class, but enjoyed a better life than the one they left in Italy.

Final Remarks

At the beginning of this paper, I highlighted Crawford's statement about the very high percentage of Roman citizens settled in the overseas provinces by the beginning of the first century. Such a scenario, however, shows the limitations of the traditional picture of Romans overseas been intrinsically connected with state-sponsored colonization that only started by the late second century and was not pushed before Caesar. Therefore, it is possible to apply Broadhead's suggestion: the possibility that soldiers, after service in a province, saw the opportunities available and settled there themselves. This allows the creation of an entire new category of potential settlers. If this scheme is added to the settlement practices emphasized in the sources – the Spanish provinces in particular – and then applied to other provinces where Rome deployed a considerable number of

¹²³ The Legio III *Augusta* was stationed in Africa at Ammaedara (modern-day Haidra) in 30 (see *Inscr. Ital.* 13.1.570 on Lucius Autronius Paetus' triumph in 28 for his successes in the region as proconsular governor); by the end of Tiberius' reign, it was the only legion in Africa, where it remained until its first disbandment. It was moved to Theveste (modern-day Tebessa) during Vespasian's reign, and, between AD 115-120, to Lambaesis, where it remained for two centuries (see LE BOHEC 1994, 174-175). In AD 238 the legion suppressed the Gordians' revolt at the battle of Carthage (see Hdn., 7.9.5-7) but was then disbanded by Gordian III once he became emperor.

legions, the result would be an attractive alternative to the traditional settlement practices. In particular, this also emphasizes the key role of the army in the direct and, especially, indirect settlement of thousands of Roman (and Italian) citizens in the provinces especially from the mid-second century. While Broadhead focused his research on Northern Italy, there is no doubt that it is possible to replicate such a pattern in the overseas provinces, especially following periods of stronger military activity reported by the sources. The key element, as stressed by Broadhead, was the fact that men discharged from the legions were willing to settle in a province – independently of receiving land as a post-service reward – instead of returning to Central or Southern Italy if it offered opportunities to improve their status. By adding other key motivations, such as post-service rewards, it is possible to offer a more complete analysis that also better emphasizes the crucial role of the army in this process.

Keith Hopkins, in his well-known *Conquerors and Slaves*, described military service as a form of peasant migration: “Like death in war, it helped to create vacancies on Italian land, which the rich were only too anxious to occupy. But unlike death, it was temporary and unpredictable in duration. Some peasant soldiers returned after long service abroad only to find that during their absence their families had fallen into debt, or that their farms had been sequestrated by creditors.”¹²⁴ Looking at military service only as a temporary form of migration, however, is rather unilateral since, after all, it fits well with the scenario of the aggressive expansion of the large landowners.¹²⁵ Nevertheless, the army was not only responsible for the movement of tens of thousands of Roman and Italian men all over the Mediterranean, but, as suggested, it also triggered direct and indirect permanent migration, allowing for a more optimistic variation of Hopkins’s model. As highlighted by the evidence, direct migration involved the allocation of veterans in the provinces through settlements or individual viridane land concessions. The category of soldiers who settled in the provinces on their own initiative after military service, on the other hand, should be included as a form of indirect and permanent migration. This alternative would have interested poor, un-married soldiers in particular, a group that made up the majority of a Roman legion’s manpower, as it would have offered the concrete possibility to improve their status. It is even possible to suggest that the army promoted this form of migration; after all, it provided the means and the opportunity that Roman soldiers were more than eager to exploit

FABRIZIO BIGLINO

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO

F.BIGLINO@UNITO.IT

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¹²⁴ HOPKINS 1978, 30

¹²⁵ MARZANO 2015, 207 argues that villae can also be viewed as instigators of economic growth or indicators of the presence of pre-existing favorable economic conditions: “The successful establishment of villas in a region had an effect not simply in respect to surplus agricultural produce that was directed to regional or extra-regional consumption. Villas acted also as stimuli to the local economy by creating a new demand for certain goods [...] that were regularly needed on an agricultural estate.”; also MARZANO 2007, 773, 782 and 791 highlights the fact that, according to archaeological evidence in Central Italy (Latium, Etruria and Umbria), large villa estates appear to have been a phenomenon of the first century rather than the second century.

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