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# Writing the Middle Republic: History in the Making<sup>1</sup>

CHRISTOPHER J. SMITH

## *Introduction*

The period covered by this volume and its partner on mid-Republican Latium is bookended by at the outset, Livy's clear indication that Roman history up to the sack of the city by the Gauls was unreliable because of the damage to records caused by that event, and at the other end by the first Roman history of Rome, that of Fabius Pictor, and the emergence of more or less contemporary historical writing.<sup>2</sup> Over the course of these two hundred years or so, the Romans evolved the capacity and the desire to write history in the same way, and initially in the same language, as the Greeks. Why that might be, and what it tells us about what sort of history we can write of this period, is our subject.

The essay is intended to stand alongside both volumes as an indication of the nature of the literary evidence which exists and which has been variously deployed by the contributors. The editors have not sought to impose a unity of approach on authors, but it will be evident that for the most part, the historical record is regarded as unsatisfactory by nature of its incompleteness rather than because of its intrinsic unreliability, and our capacity to understand the period suffers greatly from the loss of Livy Books 11-20, except for their summaries. In particular, there is a significant imbalance between what is available for Rome, and the scanty references to the Latin cities, usually in times of conflict or crisis. We may infer that lists of magistrates, calendars, religious texts and so forth existed in other Latin cities and from more or less the same date as at Rome, but we cannot prove it as yet. A priori, there may be some reason to regard Rome as exceptional not only in terms of size and social complexity, but also in terms of the comprehensiveness of its approach to record-keeping, but the structural change in the degree of confidence we may have in the historical record applies to the whole region.<sup>3</sup>

For the preceding period, conversely, it is genuinely very difficult to propose convincing arguments for the reliable foundations of the historical record. The regal period is full of incredible stories, and the fifth century lists of magistrates show significant problems. This has been extensively discussed and studied, and is not the subject of this volume.<sup>4</sup> However, it would be wrong to suppose that the issues are non-existent once we enter the fourth century, they simply are of a different nature, and change over the period. Sceptics find the evidence for the fourth century still very doubtful; the career of Camillus for instance looks to have been the subject of substantial invention, and some of the legislation in particular has been assumed to be invent-

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the other editors and especially to John Rich for comments and advice.

<sup>2</sup> Livy 6.1; Fabius Pictor *FRHist.* 2.

<sup>3</sup> Moreover, to be complete, different Latin cities may have had different approaches. One of the most interesting examples is Tusculum, where late Republican inscriptions indicate both mythological ancestors and *elogia* of Republican heroes, and also a set of consular fasti. See DÍAZ ARIÑO, GOROSTIDI PI 2010; GOROSTIDI PI 2014; GOROSTIDI PI, NUÑEZ MARCÉN 2016. For the earlier history of Tusculum, see. MARCOSIGNORI, VALLORI-MÁRQUEZ, BEOLCHINI, DIARTE-BLASCO 2019.

<sup>4</sup> For a very helpful selection of views and an introduction to the history of the subject, see RICHARDSON, SANTANGELO 2014.

ed on the basis of later laws.<sup>5</sup> One of the problems which remains is inaccuracy and potential invention in the lists of magistrates;<sup>6</sup> another is an increase in the volume of available evidence, not always in agreement. The critical task for the historian of the middle Republic is to find a balance between a continued scepticism and an overenthusiastic belief in the reliability of what remains a problematic source tradition.<sup>7</sup>

### *Models of the emergence of Roman historiography*

Let us begin with the reasons to be more positive. Cato the Elder via Cicero tells us that the Romans sang songs about the *clarorum uirorum laudes atque uirtutes*,<sup>8</sup> and Polybius tells us that Romans recited the deeds of their ancestors at funerals.<sup>9</sup> Both might be assumed to be elite spectacles and activities. We know from the sources that the Roman elite was formed of extended lineage groups and family groups, sometimes called *gentes*, and that these groups competed with each other, and colluded to control access to power. So it is natural to assume that these families preserved traces of their own history. The ancestral *domus* was a lieu de memoire, with its family trees and busts of the ancestors. Some of the earliest historians belonged to these elite family groups (Fabius Pictor, Claudius Quadrigarius, Valerius Antias). Cicero and Livy tell us that historians falsified the past,<sup>10</sup> but at least by the time of Livy, and probably before, we can see traces of what one might call the professionalization of the genre in the truth claims made by historians who were sifting through the different versions.

Alongside this, there are other kinds of record-keeping.<sup>11</sup> The implication of Livy's claim at the outset of Book 6 is that from early in the fourth century the records of magistrates were indeed more reliable.<sup>12</sup> We are told that the pontiffs kept a list of magistrates and events and this by a process which remains somewhat opaque became the *Annales Maximi*.<sup>13</sup> It must have undergone change, because it appears that the Romans did not use *cognomina* until quite late, so these were introduced into the lists at some point.<sup>14</sup>

The *Annales Maximi* were not just lists of magistrates however; we are explicitly told that they included key events as well; portents, famines, and presumably the great affairs of state like triumphs. Our problem with the *Annales Maximi* comes in a sense from confusing it with historiography – it was nothing of the kind. We cannot and should not see it as a first step towards historiography. However its existence is significant, and it was at least in operation to include reference to an eclipse around 400 BC. So even if we accept that there was some level of intervention, there was also a framework, and that is important.

<sup>5</sup> On Camillus see BRUUN 2000; COUDRY 2001; CORNELL 1995 gives a more positive view of the legislation of the period, but with references to the alternative views, and see also OAKLEY 1995-2005. The information is gathered in ROTONDI 1966; FLACH 1994; ELSTER 2003. The sceptical approach, and especially the notion of retrojection, was fully developed by Ettore Pais, on whom see the thoughtful account at RIDLEY 1992.

<sup>6</sup> RIDLEY 1980 for a summary of the basic problems. One issue is the question of the nature of the office of *praetor maximus*, which is regularly held to be evidence for a different organization of offices to the consulship before some time in the fourth century. However, it is also possible that we see changes in names, and that *praetor maximus* is the Roman mechanism for identifying who has the lead *imperium* at any given point, which would make the lists of names less problematic. See HUMM 2019; WISEMAN 2018 for the argument that the lists are not reliable until after about 300 BC.

<sup>7</sup> See OAKLEY 1995-2005, 1.21-108 for a positive account; for a detailed narrative see CORNELL 1990a, 1990b, updated in CORNELL 1995.

<sup>8</sup> Cic. *Brut.* 75 (= *FRHist.* 5 Cato F 113; Cic. *Tusc.* IV.2.3; Varro, *De vita populi Romani* II ap. Non. 77, 2; Val. Max. 2.1.10; MOMIGLIANO 1957; ZORZETTI 1990; SUERBAUM 2002, pp. 41-42.

<sup>9</sup> Pol. 6.53-4; FLOWER 1996.

<sup>10</sup> Cic. *Brut.* 62; Livy 8.40.

<sup>11</sup> See NONNIS 2018, as well as NONNIS 2019, for an overview of the evolution of public inscriptions.

<sup>12</sup> OAKLEY 1995-2005, 1.21-108.

<sup>13</sup> *FRHist* 1; RICH 2018a.

<sup>14</sup> SALWAY 1994 for an overview; RIX 1972; 2009; MARAS 2018.

The touchstone moment is the Licinian-Sextian legislation, in 367 BC, on possession of land, debt and the ‘restoration’ or institution of the consulship. The more sceptical one is of the Livian tradition, and the more confused and ahistorical one believes it to be, the more likely one is to doubt that Romans subsequently had a clear view of the fourth century – that the problems attaching to the fifth century continued.<sup>15</sup> Conversely, if the legislation reflects, albeit with some uncertainties, key drivers of change in the first half of the fourth century, especially in the wake of the conquest of Veii, and a real constitutional change at Rome, it is striking that it is preserved so many years before the definitive appearance of historiography, and not least because the legislation is tribunician. A story of the rebalancing of the Roman constitution – the so-called Struggle of the Orders – may have been more than a subsequent interpretation but rather an actual key feature of fourth century Rome, as we see dimly in Etruria for instance.<sup>16</sup>

There is a not unconnected move towards greater openness, both of the lists and of legal documents. This is evident from the famous but still difficult story of Gnaeus Flavius the scribe of Appius Claudius Caecus, son of a freedman, and aedile of 304 BC, who is said to have published the *legis actiones*, or legal procedures, and the calendar.<sup>17</sup> Whatever the peculiarities of the story, it may well reflect a key moment in the professionalization of Roman pontifical and legal activity. This, together with the indications from Livy that there was more information available from the later fourth century, encourages us to see an uptake in reliable record-keeping, so we start to see details of administrative matters from Livy Book 10 onwards. Rich has argued very interestingly that Fabius Pictor may have moved to an annual record of events from the later fourth century on, having treated the earlier period more episodically.<sup>18</sup> It is the conjunction of annual records, great administrative complexity and more formal senatorial procedures that will have assisted this enrichment of the historical record.<sup>19</sup> Thus the growing reliability of the historical account itself tells us something about changing Roman political society.

And there are other kinds of constructions of memory and places in which history may have been told. These include stories circulating around monuments, with the increase in temples funded by the booty from war creating a new sacral landscape, and towards the end of our period, we have evidence for plays which represented parts of the mythical history of Rome.<sup>20</sup> The development of the *comitium* may have encouraged the development of rhetoric, and the later example of Cicero shows that broad brush references to the past could be used in public oratory.<sup>21</sup> What was past history for Cicero was contemporary politics for the time, and although relatively few speeches seem to have survived, it is interesting that the first is a speech of Appius Claudius Caecus in 280 BC.<sup>22</sup>

So it is clear that there was a good deal of information, much quite reliable, at the latest from the later fourth century, which is significantly before anyone at Rome wrote a connected history.<sup>23</sup> It is possible that

<sup>15</sup> VON FRITZ 1950 outlined many of the key problems, cf. BILLOWS 1989; DRUMMOND 1978 for a lucid explanation of the gaps in the Fasti before and after the passage of the legislation and see above n. 6 on the problem of the magistracies; RICH 2008a for the difficulties over the land legislation; BERNARD 2016 for the debt legislation; ARMSTRONG 2017 for the military context. PELLAM 2014 stresses the internal consistency of Livy’s account.

<sup>16</sup> RAAFLAUB 2008 for various views of the struggle. For a recent account of Etruscan society see AMMAN 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Cic. *De Orat.* 1.186; Cic. *Pro Mur.* 25; Cic. *Att.* 6.1.8; Livy 9.46 (with OAKLEY 1995-2005 ad loc.); Val. Max. 2.5.2; Pliny *Nat.* 33.17-18; Macr. *Sat.* 1.15.9; *Dig.* 1.2.2.6. EHLERS 2014 for *libertino patre natus*; VALGAEREN 2011 suggesting that the law responded to the expansion of Roman territory and changes to the calendar (cf. RÜPKE 2011; HUMM 2000; WALTER 2006). This is then to be connected to the development of the pontificate through the *lex Ogulnia* of 300 BC as the increase in judicial activity demanded more of the pontificate (cf. with different emphases D’IPPOLITO 2013). See also HARRIES 2012, pp. 40-41.

<sup>18</sup> RICH 2018a.

<sup>19</sup> A good illustration of this is to be found in GARGOLA 1995.

<sup>20</sup> On monuments see WISEMAN 1986; 1994; MEADOWS, WILLIAMS 2001; MIANO 2011; SANDBERG 2018; COARELLI 2011; DAVIES 2017; on plays see WISEMAN 2008, pp. 84-139; 175-186; 2018 and below.

<sup>21</sup> BÜCHER 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Enn. *Ann.* 199-200 Skutsch; Cic. *Sen.* 16, *Brut.* 55, 61; Livy, *Per.* 13; Quint. *Inst.* 2.16.7; Plut. *Pyrrh.* 18-19; App. *Sam. frag.* 10; Isid. *Etym.* 1.38.2; and FGtH839 (Ineditum Vaticanum) F 1.2.

<sup>23</sup> See for the same conclusion COARELLI 1996.

there were accounts of Rome by others. References to Rome can be found from the later sixth and certainly fifth century BC in Greek sources, and it appears that Timaeus of Tauromenium gave significant information about the city in his universal history. Sadly it has survived poorly and the few fragments we have do not permit us to say what sort of account he gave, and it is quite possible that his account was extremely truncated until Rome became deeply involved with Greek affairs with the arrival of Pyrrhus.<sup>24</sup> Other histories, for example emanating from Campania or Etruria, are likely but again have not survived.<sup>25</sup> Did they recount Roman history year by year and if so from when? The answer is surely not; Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1.6.1) is clear that writers like Hieronymus of Cardia and Timaeus gave only very brief accounts of early Rome and even Fabius and Cincius wrote summary versions of events before their own time.<sup>26</sup> The implication is perhaps that the stories of heroic deeds were strung together in an accelerating story of Roman imperial development.

What changes of course is the transformation of the historical record from the Punic Wars on. Suddenly we get accounts which indisputably accessed eyewitness accounts and are presented to participants in the relevant conflicts – Naevius *Bellum Punicum* is just one obvious example. Whether this is coincidence or causal is not simple; it is true that the wars engulfed much of Italy, including historically literate populations, that those writing included non-Romans who brought a different culture of literacy, and that the wars were also of profound interest to Greek historians, touching as they did on Greek interests in Sicily. So we can reasonably claim that the Punic Wars encouraged a growing need to tell the Roman story, and that this was shared beyond the Romans but became something they wished to engage in. That has been the subject of endless scholarship, and most of this paper looks at the preceding period.

One constant however is the tension between the way the Romans thought about their past, the balance between the extent to which they celebrated family or city, which is one of the more challenging problems of the middle Republic. To what extent did Rome have a ‘national’ story to tell?<sup>27</sup> Major military successes such as the Latin wars, the conquest of the Sabina, the Samnite Wars, the contest with Pyrrhus and then the Carthaginian conflict all point to massive communal effort, but at the same time, the narratives are heavily driven by the leading men.

Wolfgang Blösel<sup>28</sup> has given one of the fullest and most sophisticated versions of the argument that Roman history emerged from an amalgam of family histories, themselves constructed through the antiquarian researches of members of the family and outsiders, men like L. Julius Caesar, and T. Pomponius Atticus.<sup>29</sup> Blösel stresses the importance of funeral orations, and uses the evidence of Polybius to argue for the significance of this moment in the construction of familial history. The performance of the funeral, the reiteration of history and the reinforcement of the lineage, graphically visible for instance in the tomb of the Scipios, is here regarded as constitutive of the discovery of how to think about the past. Recently Hans Beck has

<sup>24</sup> BARON 2013 is a now indispensable account. One interesting aspect of outside interest in Rome is the developing use of the fact that *Rhōmē* in Greek means strength. See ERSKINE 1995 for an argument that this may have been early. On the impact of Pyrrhus’ western adventure see HACKENS 1992.

<sup>25</sup> CORNELL 1974; 1976. See also GABBA 2000, pp. 51-68.

<sup>26</sup> RICH 2018a argues that Fabius Pictor probably did not begin to write in an annalistic fashion until his account of the Samnite Wars, and like Ennius, his treatment of the earlier period was more episodic. On Ennius, there has been a flurry of excellent recent work; see BREED, ROSSI 2006; FITZGERALD, GOWERS 2007; GOLDSCHMIDT 2013; FISHER 2014; ELLIOTT 2016.

<sup>27</sup> I will use national history in the rest of this essay, fully conscious of how awkward a term it is for this period, and without implying that it was fully developed before the end of our period, if at all. What I intend by this is a history which was deliberately inclusive of both the collective achievements of the Roman people (i.e. not just the elite) and one which included the ever widening circle of Roman influence, which already by 338 BC included complex formally equal alliances with the Latins and the beginnings of Rome’s unique expansion of its citizenship. The extent to which this is a Roman story, a Latin story or one co-produced by a number of agents including Greeks is an important topic now; see WILLIAMS 2001; FEENEY 2016; CARLÀ-UHINK 2017. On the problems of using the terms of statehood see LUNDGREEN 2014. For the concept of the *res publica* see now MOATTI 2018, but focused on literary sources and therefore only relevant to the end of our period.

<sup>28</sup> BLÖSEL 2003.

<sup>29</sup> On L. Julius Caesar, see references in SMITH 2010. On Atticus see *FRHist* 33 T. Pomponius Atticus.



rightly indicated that we should be cautious about taking the normative Polybian story as the way all funeral speeches worked, since all the funeral speeches we have were highly emotive and adapted to circumstance.<sup>30</sup> What makes Blösel's argument distinctive I think is that he argues that gentilicial invention was limited by gentilicial competition, and therefore these individualised competitions in the end produce a sort of collective memory (and he uses Assman here).<sup>31</sup> We have a rather interesting mix of private history developed in a very socially regulated and communal context.

In an important recent book by James Richardson,<sup>32</sup> a scholar who in a series of articles has staked out a distinctive ground for his own account of early Roman historiography, presents a different version of how Romans constructed history, but still placing the family at the centre. Richardson takes his cue from the work of Woodman and Wiseman who in various ways encouraged an account which emphasised the constructed and imaginative nature of Roman historiography.<sup>33</sup>

In his account of the Fabii, Richardson makes a strong argument for the intrusion of the Fabii into Roman history following lines which were predetermined by a sense of their character, in the same way that Wiseman had argued that Claudii were likely to be proud and arrogant.<sup>34</sup> Richardson argues first that Romans expected members of the same family to behave in similar ways and that this methodology helped them to think about and construct accounts of their past. The power of the example of one's ancestors constrained Roman behaviour and this led to an expectation of such behaviour from outsiders (contemporary or later). Second, since historiography was a Greek invention, it was unsurprising that the Romans sought models and parallels in Greek history. The Roman standard of plausibility in history therefore expected that there should be recurrent behaviour inside families and that Roman history might well look quite like Greek history.

On this argument, examples like the repeated self-sacrifice of the Decii, L. Junius Brutus inspiring Marcus Brutus five hundred years later, or the repeated arrogance of the Claudii is not to be understood as the product of a single historian – for instance an anti-Claudian annalist who invents a tradition which is then followed by others. Rather, this was a fundamental way in which the Romans understood human behaviour. Richardson goes on to argue that this influenced the way in which the Romans constructed distant history when they had few facts to go on, and that no-one would have been remotely surprised, or would have sought to question, such an idea.

The expectation that members of the same *gens* would behave in the same way was a central component of the way in which the Romans thought about the past (52). This means that the Roman tradition was artificial, unhistorical and anachronistic. This applies not only to the beginning of Rome, but also to the historical period, for instance the highly problematic accounts of the Camilli. Richardson arrives at the conclusion that 'if it is accepted that the Furius are fated to fight the Gauls, then it is easy to create a plausible campaign for an early Furius for whom no good evidence exists' (p. 55) – a reference presumably to Camillus or perhaps his son, who allegedly campaigned against the Gauls in 349 BC as sole consul (Livy 7.25.10-12).<sup>35</sup>

The same can be said of a famous Fabius, Q. Fabius Verrucosus, whose exploits in the Second Punic War led to his nickname the Cunctator. This produced a pattern against which all other Fabii were judged and indeed constructed. Fabius' caution, delay, adherence to initially unpopular policies and rescuing of colleagues are identified as core characteristics (p. 64).<sup>36</sup>

<sup>30</sup> BECK 2018.

<sup>31</sup> On memory in the Roman context, see the essays in GALINSKY 2014; and for a useful methodological introduction, STEINBOCK 2013, pp. 1-47.

<sup>32</sup> RICHARDSON 2012.

<sup>33</sup> WOODMAN 1988; WISEMAN 1979.

<sup>34</sup> WISEMAN 1979, pp. 57-139.

<sup>35</sup> OAKLEY 1995-2005 ad loc, for how unusual this was, and indeed the peculiarities of the younger Camillus' career.

<sup>36</sup> See also ROLLER 2011 and 2018 for an extended discussion of exemplarity.

There is no reason, according to Richardson, to believe that the Romans became more careful, more attentive to truth, the closer to their own time that they came. The entire tradition rests on a conception of historical argument and plausibility which was informed by an expectation of recurrently similar behaviour within families, and of parallelism with Greek history.

Richardson shows that the sorts of patterning, use of exemplarity, recurrence of events and behaviours, and borrowings from Greek historiography constitute not individual choices by individual historians, but a pervasive mindset. However, we might add that this patterning, this accumulation of parallels and recurrences, may have been gradual. Many things may have been said about the Fabii before the record makes them all cautious; and not all of them need be derived from Verrucosus' behaviour; they may have informed it. Verrucosus must have heard of his predecessor Fabius Rullianus, who fought at Sentinum.

In other words, the reading can work both ways. One can retroject exemplary behaviour, but that behaviour can influence subsequent generations. As Denis Feeney has shown us, and Nicholas Purcell in a different way, whatever the reasons which impelled the Romans to start writing history, it was not that they only then started to think historically.<sup>37</sup>

### *Family versus state in the Middle Republic*

So far we have seen two accounts of ways in which family history worked; in each case it is unclear that we can easily separate family history from a broader communal story. What do the arguments made in these two volumes have to contribute to the refinement of these models of Roman historiography?

One of the clear consequences of our project is to show yet more evidence for the importance of the fourth century as a moment of real economic movement in the city. Clementina Panella's work is of major significance here, but we may also cite the evidence of walls, roads and houses in the city, developments in the countryside, and economic activity in Latium.<sup>38</sup> We are catching glimpses of a steady economic development. Agriculture, perhaps even for climatic reasons, seems to have been increasingly productive.<sup>39</sup> The development of the precursor of the classical Republican villa is evident, and a whole range of indicators – largescale urban and imperial planning, coinage, increasing levels of social complexity – are all characteristic of the period around the end of the fourth and beginning of the third century BC.<sup>40</sup> This provides an even richer context to existing literary accounts of building projects, but also the economic conditions of the Roman citizenry. Rome, and parts of the hinterland, were flourishing in the fourth century, at the same time as some of its inhabitants were suffering from debt.<sup>41</sup> This leads us to the sorts of models which Seth Bernard has usefully offered of the heavy consequences of *corvée* labour markets.<sup>42</sup>

However it would be a mistake to suggest that the economic models are all driven by a notion of a state control economy. A better model, as Rosenstein and Bernard insist, is the harnessing of individual entrepreneurship.<sup>43</sup> Rome was a highly aristocratic society, and in explaining its economic and military development, the main new thrust is coming from Nic Terrenato's model of the clans, which has obvious relevance to our

<sup>37</sup> FEENEY 2005; 2007; PURCELL 2003.

<sup>38</sup> PANELLA 2013; see also articles in these volumes by Panella, Carafa (houses); Volpe; d'Alessio; Jolivet and Ambrosini (artistic developments); Jaia and Olcese (archaeological evidence for commercial growth); Quilici and Quilici Gigli (fortifications).

<sup>39</sup> See now di GIUSEPPE 2018 for results from the British School at Rome Tiber Valley Survey, a comprehensive publication is forthcoming. The beginning of the Roman Warm Period may be somewhere between 300 and 200 BC, see HARPER 2017, pp. 39-55.

<sup>40</sup> BECKER, TERRENATO 2011.

<sup>41</sup> For the acceleration of building activity, see DAVIES 2017.

<sup>42</sup> BERNARD 2018a and on debt more generally MEUNIER 2016; GABRIELLI 2016; BERNARD 2017. Debt is related also to the consequences of military campaigning which accelerated from the fourth into the third century; see ROSENSTEIN 2004.

<sup>43</sup> See ROSENSTEIN 2008; BERNARD 2018a. An interesting example of this may be reflected in the evidence for the exploitation of tuffs in the upper Tiber Valley, suggesting the integration and possible encouragement of microeconomies; see DIFFENDALE *et al.* 2018.

discussion. It is not new to claim that the Roman aristocratic *gentes* were of peculiar significance for the development of Roman history, but Terrenato's model is highly exciting, and will be highly influential; it is the most innovative work we have seen on mid-Republican Rome in a generation.<sup>44</sup>

Terrenato's versatile clans are so strong that the state they permit to exist can only be understood as an instrument of their power, and with specific reference to external affairs. Having argued that the early Roman state was a weak and fragile invention, which existed because of 'an impermanent peace between ruthless bosses,' Terrenato has then to find what was the utility of the state, and part of his answer is inter-state diplomacy. This interesting claim raises the question of how long it was before the perhaps unintended consequences of state formation became a constraint on elite power?

Unintended consequences are again the subject of a recent essay, in which Terrenato argues that Roman foreign policy can be read as the outcome, somewhat unexpected, of the private motivations of individual families, who hijacked the resources of Rome for their own purposes. One family who seem to illustrate this are the Plautii.

There are a number of inscriptions which refer to Plautii from various Latin, Sabine and Etruscan centres. Whether they all relate to the same family might be disputed, but the majority of attestations come from Tibur and Praeneste (though Taylor argued the family came from Trebula Suffenas).<sup>45</sup> When they do enter the Roman political scene in the mid fourth century, they must have won citizenship in one way or another, and although there are some potential doublets in the historical record, they are regularly attested as commanding campaigns at Privernum from 358 to 329 BC.<sup>46</sup> Privernum loses territory, which is distributed viritane to Romans, gains *civitas sine suffragio* after a show of courage in the Roman senate, and with support from a Plautius, and the suggestion is that the Plautii benefitted from the entry of Privernum into the *tribus Oufentina*, founded in 318 BC, and subsequently Canusium in Apulia, which also surrendered to a Plautius.

A few years ago, Jerzy Linderski undertook the task of revising Lily Ross Taylor's indispensable work on the Roman tribes.<sup>47</sup> In passing he tackled the really knotty problem of how tribal affiliation actually worked.<sup>48</sup> Certainly aristocrats did not stay in the tribes which were named after their clans. Even if there was an initial association, this broke down. This means that the spread of elite Romans through the tribes represents what Linderski called a massive land grab; and crucially it was accompanied by substantial movement out of Rome by the less privileged, and movement into Rome from Italy. This is the shadow of Terrenato's claim, that the outside hijacked Rome; this shows Rome becoming assimilated to the world as it takes it over.

The complexity of the relationship between individuals and tribes also means that the argument that the Plautii effectively gerrymandered the Oufentina tribe by incorporating foreigners is weak on the following grounds: the individual instances are unproven and unlikely; the impact would have been necessarily limited; the admission to full citizenship may well not date to before the early second century (when e.g. Fundi and Formiae are finally admitted) and there is no indication that it had any success (the family disappears completely after 318 until the second century). Moreover, the cognomen Privernas marking military success, and two of the three triumphs, go to members of different *gentes*. What the Plautii (and others) were doing – surely – is providing land for Romans, who might then have been regarded as grateful. However, taken as a whole, the brave Privernate response (which is clearly open to being untethered from any secure moorings as is shown by Dionysius of Halicarnassus's completely different date of the story in 357 BC) could be regarded as showing a substantial Plautian line on the significance of freedom and the importance of fair treatment.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> TERRENATO 2011; 2014; 2019.

<sup>45</sup> TAYLOR 1956.

<sup>46</sup> Most likely an unattested personal grant, especially if the *ius civitatis per magistratum adipiscendae* is late: MOURITSEN 1998, pp. 99-108; BROADHEAD 2001; BISPHAM 2007, pp. 173-174. This must have been approved at a state level – presumably through the *comitia curiata*, now well discussed by PELLOSO 2018.

<sup>47</sup> TAYLOR 2013.

<sup>48</sup> See also LO CASCIO 2001 and the fundamental work Forni, FORNI 1985-2012.

<sup>49</sup> Dion. Hal. 14.13.

This seems to me to fit extremely well with Seth Bernard's account of the innovative attempts to rebalance the Roman economy in the fourth and third centuries BC.<sup>50</sup> And it is noteworthy that it also still fits with Terrenato's broader downplaying of military conquest in favour of elite negotiation, to which we will return at the end.

Terrenato does not dwell on the intriguing fact that C. Plautius Venox (consul in 347) cut interest rates and managed debt repayments.<sup>51</sup> In 312 BC, his descendant shared the censorship with Ap. Claudius Caecus, whose famous censorship seems to have delivered a relatively popular set of outcomes. The Plautian successes delivered substantial land to the Roman plebs, and Terrenato and others have spoken of a 'southern policy' or a faction which supported expansion to the south. The argument for the role of independent elite groups at Rome in the development of early colonization was also hinted at by Càssola in 1988.<sup>52</sup> But it seems rather more likely that many people supported this policy, more or less, and for the benefit of the plebeians. The Plautii do merit attention as an extraordinary early group in the patricio-plebeian nobility. By good fortune we discover that they had a rival. Vitruvius Vaccus, who came from Fundi, incited the rebellion of the Privernates in 330-29 BC. He was wealthy enough to own a house on the Palatine, which was demolished after his failure to create the *prata Vacci*.<sup>53</sup> Are we somehow seeing the traces of a story in which a good plebeian stands up for moral virtues and his fellow plebeians, against a wealthy profiteer? And for the allegedly fair treatment of the allies? In that case the date of the elaboration of the story becomes relevant; subsequent Plautii, not necessarily connected with the original family,<sup>54</sup> were coining in the first century BC, at a time when the management of the provinces were on everyone's minds.<sup>55</sup>

In the complex politics of the later fourth century, the rebellion and suppression and then rehabilitation of Privernum is a fascinating story, but whilst the Plautii were significant in it, it is not for me a story which proves that Roman history was only the history of its families. Terrenato suggests provocatively that mid-Republican expansion could be described as 'the result of a patchwork of private factional actions on the part of a few original Roman clans and scores of non-Roman ones' and that in this way Rome was 'a vehicle for political clustering which was constantly hijacked and appropriated by an ever-growing number of trans-ethnic factions.'<sup>56</sup> However, my reading would insist that consuls were produced by elections, provinces allotted somehow under senatorial control, land grants were made through legal process, and that in the years of alleged Plautian dominance from 347 to 329, eighteen other families held the consulship, yet Rome maintained a fairly consistent and successful military strategy, surviving war with the Latins and several other conflicts.<sup>57</sup>

The tension between an emphasis on the power of individual family interests and an insistence on the role of the state is sometimes made into a chronological evolution from *gens* to state.<sup>58</sup> This mirrors the usual story that family history is smoothed into a grand national epic. But the key passages for the family narra-

<sup>50</sup> BERNARD 2018a, esp. pp. 118-158.

<sup>51</sup> Livy 7.27.3.

<sup>52</sup> CÀSSOLA 1988.

<sup>53</sup> Livy 8.19-20.

<sup>54</sup> On the falsity of the genealogy, see HÖLKEKAMP 2004, p. 212.

<sup>55</sup> CRAWFORD 1974, p. 420: P. Ypsae; 422 M. Scaur., P. Hypsaevs aed. Cur; see GRUEN 1974, pp. 345-346.

<sup>56</sup> Along similar lines, sustaining the argument that the *gentes* remained quasi-independent and politically significant into the fourth century, see ARMSTRONG 2016, pp. 233-289. For my own view of the *gentes*, that we should recognise that they were the subject of arguments, not all entirely successful, between parts of the Roman polity rather than settled and powerful entities, see SMITH 2006, and SMITH 2018.

<sup>57</sup> For some models of Roman politics in the period see MÜNZER 1920, the classic statement of family driven politics; translated as MÜNZER 1999, with HÖLKEKAMP 2001, which brilliantly surveys the legacy of Münzer's model, and offers alternatives; CÀSSOLA 1962; DEVELIN 1979; 1985 (proposing a relatively conflict-free period); ROSENSTEIN 1993 (stressing competition); BECK 2005 (an analysis based on career structures); HÖLKEKAMP 2011 (a revision of his classic 1987 account, which focuses on the multiple mechanisms of creating and reinforcing a ruling class, the *nobilitas*).

<sup>58</sup> Some of the more state-driven accounts include LORETO 1993, which emphasises consensus building; FEIG VISHNIA 1996, which downplays the democratic aspect of Roman politics in favour of the elite.

tive – the Fabii at Cremera, the Plautii, the arrogant Claudii, the awkward Fabii, or those other ‘fragments’ of early historiography – Coriolanus, Spurius Cassius, Manlius Capitolinus, do not tend towards happy endings. Indeed many of the stories which are supposed to be the best evidence for the rule of the mafia clan either turn out to be highly suspect, or to point in a different direction (or both). So the assumption might be that Roman historians rewrote the history to exclude the happy endings. This process is a later gloss to show the overweening power of the individual or the family as a bad thing (this is close to what Neel is doing in her interesting article on the *adfectatores regni*).<sup>59</sup> But who were the Roman historians who did this if they were not the Roman historians whom we assume wrote the family histories? If Fabius Pictor, Claudius Quadrigarius, Licinius Macer, Valerius Antias and all the rest stressed their families’ significant contribution to Roman history, precisely who glossed it over?

Indeed, the evidence for family glorification grows rather than lessens in the late Republic.<sup>60</sup> Some of this can be argued to be plebeian families outside the elite trying to imitate the behaviours of older families, inventing their genealogies and copying their mythological tricks. However, one runs fairly quickly up against the evidential vacuum; it is not just the plebeians who start the work of genealogical invention and falsification in the late Republic. The danger is that we might end up with all Roman history being invented in the last decades of the Roman Republic, and the fragmentary Roman historians project has shown that that is not the case.

Where we have got to has at best the appearance of a logical rather than a historical argument. If early history was written to glorify individual families, we should see it in the sources; if we do not it must have been written out by the historians; but the writers who are supposed to have glorified their families are the historians; therefore the historians cannot be responsible; therefore early history cannot have been written to glorify individual families. Even if the logic could hold up, the argument is terrible, and obviously inadequate, and none of those I have cited have made so crude and evolutionary a claim. However I do want to use this exercise to tease out some problems which lead back to the central question of when Romans started thinking historically about Rome, rather than its individual families, as a critical historical factor.

### *Thinking historically: contexts*

It is tempting to believe that Rome (instead of, or at least alongside, individual families) becomes the main player in the story at the point that epic and historiography begins, and is most clearly exemplified in the albeit unusual practice of Cato the Elder to omit the names of generals from his account.<sup>61</sup> Can we argue that the conditions pre-existed the construction of such histories – even that some of the conditions which supported Rome’s development were identical with those which favoured the emergence of such historiography? There is a risk that we might overemphasise the sophistication of epic and history at the expense of what preceded, for which we have little evidence but equally no strong reason to regard as hopelessly primitive. In this section we will look at some contexts for the emergence of historical thought.

### Oral tradition

A good deal of what we are skirting around is the problem of the existence of a significant oral tradition at Rome. As Feeney and Gildenhard noted, this issue was elevated to near canonical status by Suerbaum in his Handbook, but unconvincingly. Instead of legendary or mythic origins, ‘the Roman nobility primarily remembered historical facts and figures: former office-holders and their deeds .... In mid-republican Rome,

<sup>59</sup> NEEL 2015. Note for instance that Manlius Capitolinus’ story is already in Claudius Quadrigarius (FRHist 24 F3). On the concept see also MARTIN 1982-1994; RUSSO 2015.

<sup>60</sup> The classic statement remains WISEMAN 1974.

<sup>61</sup> Pliny *Nat.* 8.5.11.

oral and written, material and monumental modes of communication and commemoration co-existed. Pace Suerbaum, it is this complex, multi-media memorial culture of the Roman nobility, not the “zu erschliessende Wichtigkeit der oral tradition”, which provides the most promising point of departure for research programmes on the initial absence and eventual rise of historiographical narratives at Rome.<sup>62</sup>

At the same time, it is important to reflect on the potential complexities of oral tradition. Clearly the banqueting songs Cato referred to are presented as reflecting the great deeds of the ancestors, but there is no suggestion in any of the sources that these occasions were confined to single *gentes*, in other words, there is no warrant for us to believe that the Fabii sang songs about the Fabii to themselves and no-one else. It is a thin reed, but if we believe that the *curiae* were made up of heads of families,<sup>63</sup> then curial dinners would have potentially mixed families, and it is as easy to imagine competitive feasting and banqueting between families, as to assume families did not mix.<sup>64</sup> There are numerous other potential contests, for instance banquets offered by *triumphatores* for the senate.<sup>65</sup> In short, the context of oral tradition may well have been communal, and the contest over whose noble deeds and virtues gave greater service to the city.<sup>66</sup> What then were the arenas in which this more complex oral tradition may have been performed?

#### Political space

One area of critical significance might be the development of the *comitium*. We have already mentioned the possibility of rhetoric and oratory being a mechanism of the construction and reinforcement of memory. The work of Amy Russell has given us some better theoretical tools for thinking about the middle Republican Forum, where evidence is scarcer than for the late Republic.<sup>67</sup> By focussing on the tensions between public and private, Russell reframes our question of family versus national history. The *comitium* already existed as an important space, set apart; it was enhanced in the late fourth century through the consul of 338 C. Maenius, who monumentalised the area, adding ship's beaks to the *rostra* and thus creating a space for honorific monuments which included his own and his colleague M. Furius Camillus' equestrian statues.<sup>68</sup>

However chaotic and multifunctional the Forum was, it was not for that reason ideologically confused. Rather we need to understand the ‘ideology of publicity’ which governed interactions in a space of maximum visibility.<sup>69</sup> The spatial awareness fostered by the combination of temples, forum, *comitium*, *rostra*, explored in various contributions in this volume, are part of the conceptual picture which Humm has outlined here and elsewhere.<sup>70</sup> The increasing complexity of the Forum space reflects the complexity of the Roman social order, and the critical consequence of an increasing ideology of order and ordering. The increasing significance of the censorship, the reorganisation of the army, the development of the senate through the *lex Ovinia*,<sup>71</sup> the establishment of a magisterial order, the emergence of law as a discrete discipline are all intellectual developments which characterise the period, and many of these are crystallized in the forum and defended and promoted from the *comitium*. Even the honorific statues have to be seen in the context of communal and oligarchic marks of approval and memorialization, the interpenetration of ambition, recognition,

<sup>62</sup> SUERBAUM 2002; quote from GILDENHARD 2003. WISEMAN 1998; 2004.

<sup>63</sup> Gell. *NA* 15.27 for *genera hominum*.

<sup>64</sup> On curial dinners see PALMER 1970, pp. 120-121.

<sup>65</sup> Plutarch *Q.R.* 80 and Val. Max. 2.8.6 say that the consuls were disinvited so as not to outrank the triumphator, a wonderfully Roman illustration of how to manage exceptionalism and draw attention to it.

<sup>66</sup> Cic. *Tusc.* 4.2.3 *clarorum virorum laudes atque virtutes*.

<sup>67</sup> RUSSELL 2016, esp. pp. 62-71. I also learnt much from Russell's presentation at the conference. See also GARGOLA 2017 for space in the emerging empire.

<sup>68</sup> Livy 89.13.9, 14.12; MIANO 2011; LAHUSEN 1983; SEHLMAYER 1999.

<sup>69</sup> RUSSELL 2016, pp. 43-62, the phrase is at 55.

<sup>70</sup> Most notably in HUMM 2005.

<sup>71</sup> CORNELL 2000.

emulation and exemplarity, just as the use of the *rostra* for funeral orations combines individual achievement and state recognition.<sup>72</sup> Elite and community were in a symbiotic relationship.

Russell sums up this process by contrasting Roman political space with the Athenian space of absolute equality; in the Forum, ‘citizens understood their various roles and performed them appropriately.’<sup>73</sup> Processes of demarcation, zoning, and refashioning are all part of the role of space in constructing community and the very diversity of the Forum, its multivalence and its combination of uncontrollability and surveillance (of but also by the crowd) makes it unstable as a space for individual narratives, abstracted from the broader sweep of Roman history. The subsuming of individual contributions within the collective achievement, albeit with a clear notion of hierarchy, would mirror the sort of invention of historiography which I am hinting at here.

#### Drama, myth and spectacle

Wiseman rightly reminded us recently of the significance of the ciste Prenestine for Latin culture, and of course the Cista Ficoroni appears to indicate that at least that object was made in Rome, even though we have yet to find examples in the city.<sup>74</sup> The ciste have been brilliantly analysed by Mauro Menichetti and his emphasis on the parallel worlds of male and female virtue is an extraordinarily helpful account of the social and ideological world of the middle Republic.<sup>75</sup> Naturally it needs to be set alongside the similarly complex and sophisticated constructions on sarcophagi, mirrors, tomb paintings and so forth which we see in the Etruscan world in particular.

The suggestion that marriage and the continuity of the community through birth, and a notion of the afterlife which celebrates life spent according to notions of male *virtus* and exemplarity, is, as Menichetti argues, beautifully borne out in the Scipionic epitaphs. That of Scipio Barbatus confirms the interplay of magistrate and people:

*Gnaeuō patre / prōgnātus, fortis uir sapiēnsque  
cuius fōrma uirtūtī parissima / fuit  
cōsul, cēnsor, aedīlis quī fuit apud uōs  
Taurāsiam, Cisaunam, / Samnium cēpit  
subigit omnem Lūcānam, opsidēsque abducit.*

The epideictic nature of the inscription is demonstrated by *apud uos*, and suggests a performative context. More generally, the combined equation of *forma* and *virtus* is part of a world of self-care and appearance, which is also visible in the extraordinary *labrum* found in Panella’s excavation. This continuation of archaic preoccupations into the middle Republic was, one assumes, facilitated by the persistence of Greek mythology, but there is no reason to think that it indicated a finely wrought citizen mentality in Athens but an individualistic non-state world in Rome. There are complex cultural translations at work.

At least one of these translations is from Etruscan. As Szilagyi and Wiseman have argued, there is evidence that Livy’s account of the origins of the *ludi scaenici*, when in 364 BC the Romans invited Etruscan

<sup>72</sup> One of the first examples for the Republic is the statues of the ambassadors murdered by the Fidenates. Livy 4.17 gives their names, C. Fulcinus, Cloelius Tullus, Sp. Antius, and L. Roscius; cf. Cic., *Phil.* 9.1.4; Pliny *HN* 34.23-5. The next example is Publius Junius and Titus Coruncianus, ambassadors killed by Teuta Queen of the Illyrians in 230 B.C.: Pliny *HN* 34.23-4. The third instance is Gnaeus Octavius, killed in 162 BC: Cic., *Phil.* 9.1.4; Appian *Syr.* 46. What is striking about the first example is that all the families are relatively unknown until the late Republic. This is therefore either a striking example of unexpected survival, or else a learned fake. However, Cicero states that the statues were there until near his own time. It is perhaps worth noting here that the *lapis Satricanus* of around 500 BC has often been assumed to be a statue base.

<sup>73</sup> RUSSELL 2016, p. 55.

<sup>74</sup> *novios plvtius med romai fecid/ dindia macolnia fileai dedit*; *CIL*, I<sup>2</sup>, 561; see DUPRAZ 2006, and for a strikingly similar note of Roman manufacture on a sword from southern Latium see POCCHETTI 2012; JOLIVET 2019.

<sup>75</sup> MENICHETTI 1995.

*histriones* to Rome because they had suffered a plague.<sup>76</sup> This developed over time, from lively popular entertainment to more artful forms (thus by the time of Livius Andronicus c. 240 BC) and then there was a split between the two. Burlesque mythology, the cult of Liber, mime and Marsyas all combined and some at least of this was transferred from Etruria, perhaps other elements directly from the Greek cities south of Rome.<sup>77</sup>

Wiseman's thesis of drama as the vehicle for the preservation of popular and quasi-national myths about the early Roman period may fit here, although the evidence for there being more than an occasional specifically Roman theme is scarce. *Fabulae praetextae* were part of the density of occasions and contexts in which the Romans were able to contemplate their joint history.<sup>78</sup> It is perhaps as intriguing to contemplate the influence of drama based on Greek models, for which there is much better evidence.

Part of the challenge is to guess the audience reaction and indeed composition. Did these plays really provoke the community to contemplate the solidarity of the *polis* – as we tend to argue for their original Greek context? Or did they somehow confirm a world of elites? Did they reinforce the claims of leading clans to a cultural superiority which was part of the resource which was used to give them power, and then reinforce that superiority? The work of cultural translation which had placed Rome in the ambit of the Greek tradition, and which accelerated in the third century BC, insofar as it made Rome a *polis hellenis*, as Hellanicus of Mitylene called it as early as the later fifth century, will have certainly included heroic models, but maybe went beyond that.<sup>79</sup> Identifying the balance between the idea of aristocrats in isolation and Blösel's picture of aristocrats in their broader civic and social context, seeing what sort of *polis* Rome was in say 300 BC, a century before Fabius Pictor chose to write about Rome in Greek, is highly dependent on guesses about the kind of cultural memory and self-identification at work.

The extent to which Roman stories were naturalised in this or other contexts before the mid-third century remains unclear; from that point onwards, and increasingly as time goes on, there may have been stories which were Roman in content.<sup>80</sup> The main evidence is by way of Ovid, and therefore by necessity is an inference, to the extent that whilst Ovid, in describing events at the Ludi Megalenses and the Ludi Florales is clearly aware of what happened at those events, it is another matter to identify specific plays, otherwise unknown, and another step again to assume their date.<sup>81</sup> Most of the reconstructed plays are mythical, except for the possibility that the story of Servius was put on stage.<sup>82</sup> Of the historical *praetextae* relating to our period, we know securely only of Naevius' *Clastidium*, a battle of 222 BC; Ennius' *Ambracia*, presumably related to the capture of the town in 189 BC; Pacuvius' *Paulus*, whose precise reference is unclear; and Accius' *Aeneadae aut Decius*, which presumably refers to one of the *devotiones*, and is therefore unique thus far in referring to a non-contemporary event after the fall of the kingship.<sup>83</sup>

Yet standing back from the specifics, the increasingly rich picture of festivals which develops in the later third century combined with developing experimentation in theatrical production is surely part of the story of communal religious experience at Rome. It was by no means an easy time. In 293 BC, Livy tells us that the Romans watched the games wearing laurel wreaths for the first time (10.47.3), after the victory of Carvilius.<sup>84</sup> The curule aediles that year fined some *pecuarii* and paved the road from the temple of Mars to

<sup>76</sup> Livy 7.2.4-13 with OAKLEY 1995-2005, 2.40-72 ad loc; SZILAGYI 1981; WISEMAN 1988; MAXWELL 1996.

<sup>77</sup> See also WISEMAN 2008, pp. 84-139.

<sup>78</sup> WISEMAN 1998; for the evidence FLOWER 1995; KRAGELUND 2002; MANUWALD 2001. On performance culture more generally WISEMAN 2015.

<sup>79</sup> See for instance VANOTTI 1999; HUMM 2017.

<sup>80</sup> For the various genres, or descriptions of genres, WISEMAN 2008, pp. 194-199.

<sup>81</sup> Evidence and argument in WISEMAN 2008, pp. 210-230.

<sup>82</sup> WISEMAN 1998, pp. 30-34.

<sup>83</sup> Full details in MANUWALD 2001; and for Accius see FALLER, MANUWALD 2002.

<sup>84</sup> Livy 10.47.3 with OAKLEY 1995-2005 ad loc. See *de re militare* fr 2 = Gell 6.4.5, Festus 400L for Cato the Elder punningly contrasting being crowned as a victor or being sold into slavery sub corona, a joke which draws attention to the fine line between victory and defeat.



Bovillae, which, as Richlin says,<sup>85</sup> ‘concisely ties together the aediles, the *ludi*, the roads, the wars, the issue of land transport, and agribusiness’ – and of course, slavery. The escapism of the *ludi* (which at the same time is inextricable with attitudes to sexual mores, and is perhaps rather more troubling and less burlesque than sometimes portrayed) emerged from a desperately difficult period of Roman history, where success continued to come, but at huge cost.

#### Religion and thinking historically

With the games we have already entered the world of religion, but there is more to say here.<sup>86</sup> Anna Clark’s superb account of the impersonal deities at Rome, the divine qualities, shows the concentration of dedications in the third century and early second century.<sup>87</sup> It is a striking coincidence that at precisely the moment when we might look for a communal sense of Rome, we find the emergence of a phenomenon of temple dedications to key principles rather than potentially mythological deities. One can of course debate the focus – in the dedication by Junius Bubulcus to Salus, where is the emphasis, on the importance of the Salus of Rome, or the importance of the Junii to secure the Salus of Rome?

Clark also in some ways addresses the public / private distinctions which Russell raised, describing public religion not as a separate sphere but as ‘the register, permeating public life, that determined the tone of certain elements of the vocabularies of that public life, broadly understood.’<sup>88</sup> The divine qualities celebrated in the fourth and third centuries – Pudicitia, Concordia, Salus, Victoria, Fors fortuna, Fides, Spes, Ops, Jupiter Libertas, Honos, Virtus, and Mens – thus stand alongside the conceptual world of the ciste Prenestine and albeit blunt morality of the theatre.<sup>89</sup> Most importantly they accompany the world of exemplarity, the conceptual space also occupied by the tomb of Scipio Barbatus.

By insisting strongly on the way that the maintenance, renewal and recreation of these qualities made them part of Roman civic knowledge and self-awareness, Clark addresses in a way the prehistory of a phrase like Ennius’

*Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem*  
*Noenum rumores ponebat ante salutem.*  
*Ergo postque magisque viri nunc gloria claret.*<sup>90</sup>

When did the idea of *nobis* enter the Roman political mentality and vocabulary? And who was covered by that powerful notion of us, which is also important to the annalists?<sup>91</sup>

Here the valuable account of Craige Champion on religion in the middle Republic is helpful. Champion argues that we need to restore a sense of ‘belief’ to our understanding of elite behaviour. He defines belief at this level as ‘a genuine, collective conviction on the part of the governing elites that Roman success, and indeed the city’s very existence, depended on maintaining correct relations with the gods through orthopraxy, or exactly accurate performances of religious ceremony, ritual and sacrifice.’<sup>92</sup> Champion is surely

<sup>85</sup> RICHLIN 2017, p. 39.

<sup>86</sup> Overview in RÜPKE 2018, pp. 83-108.

<sup>87</sup> CLARK 2007; list at 283-286. See also MIANO 2017 on Fortuna in particular, and on middle Republican religion more generally di FAZIO 2019.

<sup>88</sup> CLARK 2007, p. 256.

<sup>89</sup> On staging divine qualities, largely in the second century BC, CLARK 2007, pp. 73-116.

<sup>90</sup> Ennius Ann. 363 Skutsch;

*Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem*

*Noenum rumores ponebat ante salutem.*

*Ergo postque magisque viri nunc gloria claret.*

<sup>91</sup> E.g. Cato *FRHist* 5 F87-93 (Rhodian oration); Hemina *FRHist* F6 F37; Piso *FRHist* 9 F34; Quadrigarius *FRHist* 24 F23, 26, 60.

<sup>92</sup> CHAMPION 2018, pp. xiv-v. On this see Padilla Peralta’s review, which notes amongst other things Champion’s avoidance of the archaeological evidence.

correct that – at least before the late Republic – the Roman elite took extremely seriously its role in priesthood and in preserving relations with the gods on behalf of the community in politics and in warfare. From the regal period on, and certainly in our period, this required innovation and the adoption and adaptation of foreign customs. The idea that the elite used religion in a purely instrumental way, without any personal commitment, is implausible for our period, and as a consequence we have to inject a notion of genuine sincerity into our reading of religion at Rome and of course in neighbouring communities, including Etruria and Latium. Indeed the Latin context is of particular significance as a ritual landscape which the Romans sought to make their own. This aggregation of religious resource was a part of what Champion calls accumulative civic polytheism, the buttressing against the fears and insecurities of a violent and unpredictable world. It is also however another kind of resource, and inextricably linked to temple building and religious spectacle. That the middle Republican elite used religion as a reinforcing backdrop to their own position as leaders of the Roman community is not a sign of elite instrumentalism, or rather, insofar as it is it in no way diminishes the belief content of the elite.

The relative absence of personalised divine intervention in the historiography of the middle Republic does not diminish the sense that this is a story of divinely favoured success. Indeed Levene argued that the pattern of omens and portents drove the development of annalistic history.<sup>93</sup> Ayelet Haimson Lushkov showed that the regular succession of legitimate magistracies would become itself exemplary; it was also the backbone of the priestly record.<sup>94</sup> On my reading at any rate, the more symbolic aspects of artistic expression, theatre, and monumentalization, and the combination of exemplarity and self-promotion which were part of a competitive elite, need to be contextualised within the development of a civic culture and strong intra-elite control mechanisms. These developed partly from the competitive culture, as a means of restraining their dangerous consequences, and also from the motivation for this competition, which is reflected in the two quotes above. The elite competed for the favour of the people, by defending and reinforcing the success of the community; *vos* and *nos*. If this is correct, it might have significant implications for the importance of record-keeping. The punctiliousness of Roman ritual performance and the occasionally surprising survival of names, such as the ambassadors killed at Fidenae,<sup>95</sup> the triumvirs who led the colony at Satricula,<sup>96</sup> or the unusual board of *quinqueviri mensarii*,<sup>97</sup> may be part of a culture of record we only dimly discern. One area where the combination of religion, record, and emulation in the service of the city is most clearly visible is military affairs.

### War and triumph

No-one has done more lately than John Rich to illustrate the importance of understanding one of the most significant representations of the Roman community, the army.<sup>98</sup> Rich has illustrated the close relationship between the *populus* and war, present even in the word, the frequency of Roman warfare, the relative success born of military strength and tactics, the intricate connections between war and religion, war and

<sup>93</sup> LEVENE 1993.

<sup>94</sup> LUSHKOV 2015.

<sup>95</sup> See above.

<sup>96</sup> Festus 458L; cf Vell. Pat. 1.14, and SALMON 1963 for resolving the problems of the date.

<sup>97</sup> Livy 7.21, 352 BC. See STORCHI MARINO 1993; BERNARD 2018a, pp. 146-147, against NICOLET 1963, who regards the early college as an anachronistic retrojection. Whilst the actions against debt are presented in a moralistic light by Livy, if this was actually an attempt to restore liquidity by recognising non-agricultural wealth and longer term credit, as argued by ZEHACKER 1980 for a different context, the action touched on areas covered by law, by the census, and also by the complex Roman views on money and the economy, on which see also VIGLIETTI 2011. This leads to the other hugely significant development of our period, Roman coinage. The first silver didrachms combine the god Mars and the incuse legend ROMANO(rum), exemplifying precisely the combination of elite military behaviour, state initiative, communal expression and religion argued for here. On coinage in Middle Republican Rome more generally, BERNARD 2018b with bibliography; TERMEER 2019; MANDATORI 2019.

<sup>98</sup> RICH 2007 on conditions of warfare generally; 2008b stressing the interaction of warfare and treaty arrangements, on which see also BISPHAM 2014. On warfare at the beginning of the period see also ADAM, ROUVERET 1988 for archaeology; and for the whole period, HARRIS 1979 is still valuable.

power, war and record keeping, and, therefore, war and historical writing. In this section, we will focus most on the latter, and emphasise that there is a potential positive feedback from Rome's military actions and the development of historical consciousness and a national story.

What seems to be undeniable is that the army went through a major change in the fourth century, acquiring aspects of the organization which was falsely attributed by the sources to Servius Tullius. Prior to this, the army may have been confined to the so-called *classis* or first class.<sup>99</sup> An intriguing passage of Livy may bear on this. At 4.34.6, Livy reports 'Some of the annalists have recorded a naval engagement with the Veientes at Fidenae, an incident as difficult as it is incredible. Even to-day the river is not broad enough for this, and we learn from ancient writers that it was narrower then. Possibly, in their desire for a vain-glorious inscription, as often happens, they magnified a gathering of ships to prevent the passage of the river into a naval victory.' What drives most modern interpretations is the suggestion that someone recorded that a victory had been won by the *classis* and this was interpreted as fleet rather than as the *classis* of the army.

However that is not how Livy sees it; he clearly assumed that the victory was a naval one but that no-one could describe a few ships as a *classis*. Perhaps more interesting is the suggestion that there was a reference to an inscription, and his hint is that this is on a family bust or tomb inscription. Although Livy is a very oblique source here for a claim in another annalist to have used an inscription of some kind, it is a possibility, but it is also a possibility that the claim was not as inaccurate as Livy thought, whether because it does reflect an action by the Roman navy, such as it was at the time, as Steinby believed,<sup>100</sup> or because the Roman army was still at the time only the first *classis*, or because *classis* was used to mean the army as a whole, and Livy or a previous annalist simply misunderstood.<sup>101</sup>

This is an isolated incident of where it is easy to assume a glitch in the records, or indeed a deliberate falsification. However the evidence in the end is not nearly as strong for falsification as even Livy thought. It is interesting that here, as elsewhere, one of the issues at stake is the reliability of the triumphal lists, and specifically for a dictator.

Leaving aside for the moment the manifold problems associated with that office, the challenge of invented triumphs is one well known from both Cicero and Livy. However, even here, the challenge to the transmitted tradition turns out not to be as robust as has been argued. In the key case, where Livy accuses Licinius Macer of glorifying his own family rather than reporting the truth, it seems clear that the argument is not over whether the names were correctly recorded but rather what role each individual had, and specifically whether the dictator was operating in a military sphere or to hold elections. The falsity of the triumphs then, insofar as it is alleged, is in their attribution to a specific individual more than in the fact of there having been a triumph, or the fact of the names being in the record. Vagueness in the recording of the allocation of provinces seems one of the problems.<sup>102</sup> Clearly it can be argued that this was all sorted out in a single moment of largely fictional reconstruction by the pontiffs, and Licinius Macer has to resort to the dubious linen books for an alternative source, but it is also possible that the pontifical records were occasionally ambiguous and problematic, without being systematically invented.

Although warfare in the annalists is often driven by the leaders, and was a site of exemplary virtue of the elite, the triumph was presumably a powerful communal occasion and constructed its own narrative of a more inclusive achievement. This is one of the reasons why we need to be careful not to overwork the idea

<sup>99</sup> Festus 49L, 251L and Gell. 10.15.4, 1.1.1.3 for *classis* as *exercitus*, and Gell. 6.13.1 for only members of the first class being *classici* and the rest being *infra classem*, allegedly from a speech by Cato the Elder.

<sup>100</sup> STEINBY 2007, p. 44; see also HARRIS 2017.

<sup>101</sup> BRADLEY 2015, p. 106 with n85 against the argument that Livy called the army the *classis*, but cf. RICH 2007, pp. 17-18, pointing out that Cato the Elder certainly did. My point is not that the early army was just the first class, but more that Livy's misunderstanding may not prove falsifications.

<sup>102</sup> DAY 2017 makes important points about the early somewhat informal mechanisms for provincial allotment, arguing that they were referred to popular decision only in cases of dispute; on allotment see STEWART 1998.

of Roman ‘warlords’ at any period, and certainly not from the fourth to the second centuries BC.<sup>103</sup> In the specific case of the triumphal lists, Rich again has shown that there is an internal coherence to the tradition, and whilst accepting that the early years of the Republic are problematic, there is good reason to think that from the later fourth century BC, with occasional problems, the record is reasonably secure. This means that both lists of magistrates and lists of military engagements become more reliable simultaneously.<sup>104</sup>

There is a significant consequence to all this which is that during our period, Romans took increasing care to record the achievements of the Roman people under arms, which in due course would become a driver of literature. Matthew Leigh, describing how in the 260s Rome upped its naval game substantially, claims that ‘the maritime moment and the epic moment are in fact one’ which is an interesting and challenging overlap of military and poetic poeisis.<sup>105</sup> We can add to this argument the important issue of Roman colonies.<sup>106</sup> Roman colonization with its own particular phenotype, has to be part of this story somehow, and since almost all the colonies are on the sea, and the concept of the *coloniae maritimae* is well known, this too may be part of the maritime moment. Even if the older notion that colonies were constructed along a single pattern has fallen away,<sup>107</sup> the construction of colonial and provincial landscapes may have encouraged a contemplation of Rome’s own history (just as the development of rituals of foundation surely influenced the development of the story of the foundation of Rome).<sup>108</sup>

Both military activity and colonial enterprise take the Roman story into families far below the elite, and construct a different sort of memory culture. It is not clear to me that this was necessarily very specific at all times, and it is important to remember how vague Cicero’s historical references are in law court speeches. However, just as the nature of Roman warfare was intricately interwoven with the evolution of Roman political office, so it drove commemorative culture and memory; it is notable for instance that almost all the early examples of Roman painting we have represent a military subject.<sup>109</sup> The exemplarity that was so critical for the Roman elite was also an expression of a commitment to a wider ideal of the defence of the community, as shown in the development of the fetial law, which increasingly defends Rome as a whole from any charge of impiety through the operation of a sort of sacred international law.

This section has sought to illustrate some aspects of the history and consequences of military activity in the middle republic, and to argue that they contributed to the Roman historical consciousness and that in this key area, Roman historiography is less flawed than has sometimes been alleged. At the same time, as the army developed the rules by which it operated will have become more complex, and it is to rule making that we turn next.

#### Law and administration

A recent book by Frederik Vervaeet on ‘the principle of *summum imperium auspiciumque* from 509 to 19 BCE’ seems far away from the apparently more exciting lines of Terrenato’s mafia clans and Feeney’s cultural brokers.<sup>110</sup> However, I think that Vervaeet gives us a really important insight into the legal context which co-existed with the emergence of Latin historiography, which is that throughout the fourth and third centu-

<sup>103</sup> RICH 2018b.

<sup>104</sup> RICH 2014; cf. LANGE, VERVAET 2014 which brings together scholarship on the triumph more generally. It is worth adding that the Roman record is strikingly full of defeat; ROSENSTEIN 1990; RICH 2012; ENGERBAUD 2017.

<sup>105</sup> LEIGH 2010.

<sup>106</sup> See now STEK, PELGROM 2014, which has moved the debate forwards significantly, and also TERMEER 2015.

<sup>107</sup> BISPHAM 2006.

<sup>108</sup> PURCELL 1990.

<sup>109</sup> Pliny *NH* 35.7.19 on the first Fabius Pictor painting the temple of Salus, vowed by Gaius Junius Bubulcus Brutus in 304 BC and dedicated in 302 BC – DAVIES 2017, p. 55 suggests military scenes similar to those on the tomb of Scipio Barbatus, or the Esquiline tomb. By 264 BC, by M. Valerius Maximus Messala was displaying paintings on the Curia Hostilia (Pliny *NH* 25.23) and soon paintings were a regular part of the triumphal procession; see HOLLIDAY 1997; 2002, with HÖLSCHER 2005 and HÖLKESKAMP 2005.

<sup>110</sup> VERVAET 2014; cf also DROGULA 2015 on similar themes.

ries BC, the Romans had been working out the rules for a whole range of critical decision making processes. Romans worried about these things; they may have been more adaptable and changed more than used to be thought, but that in a sense shows them to have been more engaged not less – not abiding by immemorial rules, but tweaking and nudging rules to make them reflect the needs of the time.<sup>111</sup>

The issue of the legitimate holding of power, and the entitlement that came with that, was critical in war and it was critical in politics too. Vervaeet describes the efforts which were being made to manage power sharing, between two holders of *imperium*, eventually representing two different social castes, which when connected with the other rules which seem to have pertained (never two consuls from the same gens, limitations on members of the same gens in priestly colleges, and so forth) trace a story of increasing division of power, albeit between a small class. But it was a class which was growing, and its growth, however slowly, edged open political office and therefore access to the spoils and glory of war. The story of Rome's approach here interestingly juxtaposes limits on landholding for the riches at the same time as distribution to an increasing number; it is a communal ethos albeit hard-won.<sup>112</sup>

This loops back to earlier comments about publication of laws and increases in juridical activity, as well as the development of religious knowledge amongst the priesthoods. These are technical and challenging issues, which required careful management, exactly the sort of process Vervaeet describes. And it is this spirit of the management of conflict, the resolution of competing claims, within the context of transformational warfare and conquest, which I would argue formed the backdrop to the creation of Roman historiography.<sup>113</sup> It is not the bargaining of the elite which led to the fiction of a national narrative, I suggest, but the conditions of a communal constraint on individual excess which already contextualised aristocratic competition within a broader Roman and perhaps central Italian story, which was then elaborated in the written historiographical genres of poetry and prose.

### *Networking the Elites*

The construction of Roman historiography was different from any teleological model which starts with aristocrats singing songs about their ancestors and arrives at Livy and the *Aeneid*. The transformation of the distinct culture of Rome into a version of Greek literate culture can be assimilated to the acquisition of empire.<sup>114</sup> There is an intricate connection between the cultural brokers who experienced Roman power, their translation of this experience into a literature which encompassed their own cultures, and the production and consumption of this cultural wealth as part of elite behaviour in Rome and in the towns of Latium.

I have been emphasising that the principles which influenced this transformation were not necessarily new, but arose from the specific political, legal and religious patterns which had developed at Rome as the problem of administering power sharing became acute, a problem which dates back to the Latin Wars at least.<sup>115</sup>

Here I want to return to the issue of the intersection between families and the state, but to drive an argument about the networking mechanisms which permitted a spectrum of interests to co-exist. The significance of families in middle Republican politics is indubitable.<sup>116</sup> Countless studies have sought to trace this in one way or another, through prosopography in particular, and with varying degrees of emphasis on

<sup>111</sup> LUNDGREEN 2011.

<sup>112</sup> RICH 2008a argues for the limitation of landholding in the Licinian-Sextian legislation; cf VIGLIETTI 2011 on Roman ideals of *parsimonia*.

<sup>113</sup> TAYLOR 2013; VERVAET 2014; MORSTEIN-MARX 2004.

<sup>114</sup> FEENEY 2016.

<sup>115</sup> SMITH 2019.

<sup>116</sup> See above.

the significance of family groupings within Rome. Paul Burton and Michael Fronda's work has taken this to a new level through the application of contemporary international relations theory.<sup>117</sup> Burton's places *amicitia* at the centre of an interpretation of Roman foreign affairs, and Fronda emphasises the way that Roman elites and local elites were intricately connected through ties of *hospitium* and so forth. This intersects with evidence for long-standing elite families in non-Roman cities – think for instance of the Mamilii at Tusculum, the Vinicii in Campania, the Spurrina in Tarquinia, and so forth. There remains the problem of whether homonymous individuals belonged to the same family, which is not straightforward, as we saw for the Plautii. However, the general point is clear – across Italy, certain families seem to have dominated politics in their own towns for a number of generations, and formed connections with each other.<sup>118</sup> Rome held a pre-eminent position, but it was also a magnet for some of these families.

The critical step it seems to me is to ensure that the family-oriented narrative is carefully nuanced and contextualized. The positive notion of family still contains within it a multitude of associations both within a family and between families – kinship, affection, tradition, calculation, adoption, marriage, dependence. These will in practice be multifarious, changeable over time and highly contingent on factors as diverse as personality and the circumstances of mortality.

It is not only an anthropological notion that the family is a construct; its boundaries and interrelations were inscribed in law from the Twelve Tables on. The same notion of constructedness applies in different ways to *amicitia*, where ties of affection are embedded in other social and economic relationships.<sup>119</sup> In the context of international relations, it is true that *amicitia* is one of the axes along which relationships were constructed, but it was not the only one, nor can it be dissociated from treaty or citizen relationships which formalised the mechanisms of interchange. The individual grants of citizenship which are the only ways to explain the appearance of families from outside Rome in the fourth century BC Fasti attest to the legal mechanisms necessary to sustain the behaviour of families. If we are right to see networks of elites across Italy, we will also find that these networks were partly sustained by institutional structures and ideological commitments.

The Latinization of Rome – the way that families like the Plautii were able to enter and drive Roman politics – and the assimilation of Rome to Italy (not just the *autoromanizzazione* of Italy, but the increasing sense that Rome is coterminous with Italy) are significant here.<sup>120</sup> The mechanisms whereby Rome claimed its place, and the way in which these mechanisms were explained to the outside world, and presented inside the city to encourage emulation, may have vied with each other to present a stronger not weaker picture of Roman cohesion. The historiographical equivalent of Morstein-Marx's brilliant concept of conditional monopoly may have been the competitive claim to be closer to the centre; more responsibly holding the ring; less guilty of breaking away.<sup>121</sup> If this is correct, what is at stake is what the centre is, how it is sustained, and by whom; the *vos* and *nos* which we have referred to.

The family model has encouraged us to imagine that Roman prose literature began with works that looked like Atticus' account of the Fabian and Aemilian clan;<sup>122</sup> instead it might have begun with the Greek history of a patrician Fabius, which presented *kephalaïodos* the improving stories of how not behaving like a good citizen was to be condemned, and how only putting one's own interests behind those of the state should be tolerated, and how Rome was at its best when Rome (the greater Rome) pulled in the same direction.<sup>123</sup> Fabius would not then be in stark contrast to the differently structured Catonian account,

<sup>117</sup> BURTON 2016; FRONDA 2014.

<sup>118</sup> FARNEY 2010.

<sup>119</sup> VERBOVEN 2002.

<sup>120</sup> SMITH 2019.

<sup>121</sup> MORSTEIN-MARX 2004.

<sup>122</sup> Nepos *Att.* 18.4; FRHist. 33.

<sup>123</sup> Latin Fabius: WOODMAN 2015, pp. 15-16 'The cumulative evidence therefore suggests very strongly that Pictor's work existed in Latin as well as Greek, but there seems to be no easy solution to the problem of the relationship between the two. The consistent

which emphasised in its own way the capacity of Rome to include and benefit from the absorption of the talents of others. Both of these accounts might in fact follow, not precede, the development at Rome of a concept of Italian *homophylia*, excavated by Federico Russo from the accounts of the beginning of the First Punic War.<sup>124</sup> And the prehistory of that may have been forged in the profoundly challenging environment of the fourth century BC, when Rome engaged at a profound level with one of the most intriguing of all south Italian Greek cities, Tarentum, a city which may have helped Rome create the heady mix of elements represented by the *ludi saeculares* of 348 BC, in which the Romans, collectively, prayed for the obedience of the Latins.<sup>125</sup> A hard-won notion of collective identity co-existing with the fiercely competitive ethos of individual and families in pursuit of power might then be one of the symbolic resources which helped to network the elites of Italy.

### Conclusion

This essay has focused on the argument that there was a rich tapestry of ways in which the collective history of the middle Republic in Rome and in Latium may have been presented and preserved, without claiming that this was free of ideological tendencies or personal aggrandisement. This however has consequences beyond historiography.

If nothing else comes from the collection of evidence brought together in these two volumes, which reflect on the progress in the nearly fifty years since *Roma medio-republicana*, it is that the wealth and richness of middle Republican material and urban culture should not be underestimated. The years around 300 BC seem to have been a watershed moment, which was surely driven in part by the run of victories which followed from the defeat of the Latins. Securing the hinterland, the obedience of the Latins, was critical.

Seth Bernard has recently and persuasively brought Parry and Bloch's distinction between long term and short term transactional orders of wealth, and argued that 'political success was increasingly derived from the attachment of Roman aristocrats to opposing but related economic ideologies.'<sup>126</sup> This is astute – an accelerating economy, a growing population, endemic issues of indebtedness all may have heightened the desire for immediate return over deferred return. Yet the two co-existed – and here is the key point which Bernard makes for our purpose. Both defenders of long-term orders of wealth and proponents of a short-term transactional order were successful.<sup>127</sup> The argument was about different ways to define, sustain and deploy the *res publica*. Both responses worked, but the idea that the wealth and power might stay in the hands of a single individual did not.

In short, private interest and the nascent notion of the public are held in an unremitting embrace. This is as true of the development of history as it is of the deployment of wealth or the display of military valour

assumption of the ancients that Pictor wrote a work in Latin perhaps implies that he himself translated his work from one language to the other. Those scholars who accept this conclusion assume that Pictor translated his Greek text into Latin; the possibility that he first wrote in Latin and subsequently translated his text into Greek has not found favour, though it seems at least as logical as the converse.' I prefer the argument for a later Latin translation made in *FRHist*. On *kephalaiodos* see RICH 2018a.

<sup>124</sup> Inclusive Cato: *FRHist*. I. 211-13; JEFFERSON 2012. Italy: RUSSO 2012; cf. POBJOY 2000.

<sup>125</sup> TAYLOR 1934; RUSSO 2008; SCHEID 1995 for the amalgamation of different rites.

Apollo uti tibi in illis libris scriptum est cuiusq. rei ergo quodq. meli[us] siet p. R. Q. u[er]u[m] t[ibi] novem libis n[on] ovem popanis n[on] ovem p[ro]hib. sacrum fiat te quaso pre[cor]que uti tu [im]perium maiestat[em]que p. R. Q. [d]uelli domique auxis utiquae semper Latinus optemperassit cetera [ut supra].

The last part of the prayer referred to in cetera ut supra can be restored from the prayer to Juno Regina, the end of which is as follows: utique semper Latinu[s] optemperassit tribuasq. aeternam victoriam valetudinem] p. R. Q. legionibus[que] p. R. Q. remque publicam p. R. Q. salvam serve[s] incolumemq.?] faxis sisque volens propitia p. [R. Q. XVviris s. f. nobis domibus familiis].

<sup>126</sup> BERNARD 2018c; PARRY, BLOCK 1989.

<sup>127</sup> Note the different behaviours but equal success of Papirius Cursor in 293 BC who uses his war booty to complete and adorn the temple of Quirinus begun by his father, and the newcomer Spurius Carvilius who donates his war booty to the soldiers; Livy 10.46.

or the exaltation of family success. What Terrenato has called the grand bargain is also the triumph of a particular conception of politics and history; the state captures the elite as much as the elite captures the state.<sup>128</sup>

There are many different ways of telling this story, and I will give just two examples. Chris Wickham described the emergence of the balance of elite and commons in twelfth century Milan, Pisa, and Rome as ‘sleepwalking into a new world.’<sup>129</sup> Wickham’s emphasis on how things are made up as one goes along is important because it fits exactly with the sense of rules and exceptions, half-steps, incompleteness and experimentation which occasionally emerges but was largely occluded by a later homogenizing tradition. It is at least worth wondering whether some of the apparent doublets or anticipations of laws come precisely from multiple attempts to resolve issues which are incompletely recorded.

Another story might be closer to Koselleck’s idea of critique and crisis, which holds together ‘a Schmittian conception of an essentially political society in permanent conflict, and a normative notion of how such conflicts were to be contained.’<sup>130</sup> It is interesting that Koselleck combines his notion of critique and crisis with the emergence of new forms of historical thinking, and all through this essay we have suggested something similar for the middle Republic, the emergence of new ways of telling the story of Rome responded to new exigencies and provoked new critiques.

The critical step forward which we hope is represented by these two volumes, and by the increasing amount of innovative Middle Republican scholarship which I have tried albeit incompletely to reflect here, and which we hope emerges also from these volumes, is that we have the evidence to warrant a renewed attention on two hundred years critical to the history of central Italy before the end of the Second Punic War. The wealth of material brought together here, itself only a partial account of the whole, shows convincingly that we need new and focused archaeological research strategies across the region, and new kinds of narratives, to address some of the questions which our historical tradition cannot answer directly. It is our hope that these volumes will contribute to these new attempts to write the middle Republic.

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