

Spoils and the Roman Republic

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I Spoils and Warfare

Warfare was a common occurrence in the Ancient World and the Roman Republic was no exception in this regard. Rome was, however, exceptionally successful in its military endeavours, which led to the conquest of the Italian Peninsula and culminated in the historically unique creation of a Mediterranean empire. The origins and motifs behind this remarkable expansion of Roman power were complex and many-faceted, but there can be little doubt that the material rewards of military aggression played a central role in driving and maintaining annual warfare.

The fascinating story of T. Manlius Torquatus can serve as an instructive example for the importance of spoils. According to the literary sources, the young patrician was part of a Roman force that confronted a Celtic host across the Anio in the year 361 BCE.¹ When a Celtic champion stepped onto the contested bridge to challenge the Romans to single combat, T. Manlius responded and won the subsequent duel. He then took his slain opponent's golden *torquis* for himself, which earned him and his descendants the cognomen 'Torquatus'. The bloody deed thus brought Titus Manlius lasting fame, but it also yielded concrete rewards in the form of the plundered torc and the consul's grant of a *corona aurea*.² Irrespective of the historicity of this *exemplum*, its broad reception by ancient authors – including an identical episode featuring M. Valerius Corvus – nevertheless provides us with some insights into Roman concepts and expectations regarding the taking of spoils.³

Later authors saw spoils as a central component and objective of Roman warfare, a perception that was probably reinforced by the various ways that plundered goods

1 All dates BCE unless otherwise noted. It should be noted that this volume avoids the term 'booty' due to the modern connotations of this term.

2 Note that Plb. 6.39 also stresses the importance of decorations, cf. Milne (2019) 145–149.

3 The most detailed account is provided by Liv. 7.9.6–10.14. The episode is widely referred to by other sources as well, see Oakley (1998) 113–148. On the significance of taking the torc from the fallen Celtic opponent see Östenberg (2009) 108–111.

were displayed in Rome. The growing urban landscape of the *urbs Roma* came to reflect a positive appreciation of spoils from the fourth century onwards: captured weapons, statues, inscriptions, and paintings that referred to the military campaigns and their rich bounties came to adorn the central places of the city, while numerous new public and private buildings were constructed and financed by victorious generals.⁴ Termed a ‘theatre of power’ by Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp,⁵ the complicated memorial landscape of Rome produced one particularly blunt message: the Republic’s wars brought wealth and power. Public rituals like the elaborate Roman *pompae* interacted with, updated, and reinforced this positive attitude towards warfare on a regular basis. Both the *pompa triumphalis* with its vivid display of the realities of warfare through the presentation of prisoners, weapons and paintings, and the *pompa funebris* and its praise of ancestors and their victories, emphasized the material benefits of annual warfare and thus encouraged the continuation of the practice.⁶ This message was not limited to the urban population, since participation in the triumph or occasional attendance in the assemblies made sure that those dwelling farther away from Rome, who often owed their plots of land to the violent expansion of the *ager Romanus* in the first place, were also exposed to this monumental landscape of victory and plunder. In addition, *municipia* and allied cities also received plundered art, participated in the spoils, and benefitted from roadbuilding or the deduction of colonies. Spoils were ubiquitous in Roman society and their meticulous compilation as well as public and private display attest to the widespread appreciation of Roman warfare’s material benefits.⁷

It is no coincidence that spoils also imprinted heavily on Roman collective memory and identity.⁸ The foundation legend of the city of Rome, for example, emphasized the importance of spoils and the virtues of rapine. Romulus and Remus were not only the

4 Spoils played an important role in embellishing the city with temples and in improving its infrastructure, see Davies (2017) 29–32, 61–65, 110–130; Hölcher (2019) 241–249.

5 Hölkeskamp (2011a).

6 A succinct overview on the Roman *pompae* is provided by Beck (2005b), cf. Flower (1996) 91–127, for the *pompa funebris*. A considerable amount of literature has been published on the Roman triumph, e. g. Beard (2003); Itgenshorst (2005); Östenberg (2009); Lange & Vervaeke (2014); Hölkeskamp (2017) 209–221. On the interdependencies between public displays of spoils, Roman political culture and annual warfare see Harris (1979) 105–130; Hölkeskamp (1993); Raaflaub (1996) 287–299; Östenberg (2009) 6–14, 262–292; Rich (2014) 240–243. For the ideological function of triumphs, see De Jong & Versluys (2023).

7 Hölkeskamp (2016) 175–181. The best-known case is the detailed listing of all the spoils that the consul C. Duilius had taken in his campaign against the Carthaginians in the year 260, CIL I², 25; cf. the praise of military deeds in the epitaph of L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus in the family tomb of the Cornelii Scipiones, CIL VI, 1285. Further examples are provided by the First Punic War and the Macedonian War, where spoils were instrumental in convincing the reluctant *comitia centuriata* to support a declaration of war. For additional examples see Burton (2019) 19–22.

8 For a discussion of Roman *memoria* see Walter (2004) 26–41, 139–143; cf. Hölkeskamp (2017) 237–310, who stresses that the majority of monuments that carried this “web of histories” referred to military exploits. In this context, the ‘anti-imperialist’ speeches by Roman historians are intriguing, since they focus on the negative sides of Roman warfare, Burton (2019) 30–39.

sons of Mars, but were also suckled by the she-wolf, an animal associated with cunning and ferociousness. These predatory qualities also characterized the motley collection of shepherds, outlaws, and exiles that formed the basis for the Roman community, whose existence was ultimately secured by the abduction of the Sabine women. The attribution of the first *spolia opima* and the expansion of the *ager Romanus* to Romulus rounds off this picture and emphasizes that the very existence of the Roman people was intertwined with warfare and its potential rewards. This connection was reinforced by multiple *exempla* that include the slightly less legendary ‘second Romulus’ and conqueror of Veii, M. Furius Camillus, and many others like T. Manlius Torquatus, M. Curius Dentatus, C. Duilius, and C. Flaminius – to name just a few.⁹

II Views in Recent Scholarship

Modern research has duly acknowledged the intricate relation between the rise of Rome and the economic gains generated by its annual military campaigns. In contrast to earlier scholarship’s adherence to the Roman narrative of a defensive imperialism, encapsulated in the idea of having fought *bella iusta*, the publication of Harris’ *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327–70 B. C.* in 1979 explicitly stressed that Roman warfare served a variety of economic interests, which in turn guaranteed a continuation of military aggression. Consequently, the motifs for engaging in permanent warfare moved to centre stage, which Harris identified as both the Roman elite’s and citizens’ attraction with and increasing dependence on resource extortion. Although some of Harris’ arguments, for example the exceptional bellicosity of Rome, have been dismissed, the importance of resource reallocation through military means has been generally acknowledged.¹⁰ In this context, Hölkeskamp has further shed light on the political implications of predatory warfare by emphasizing the interplay between *Conquest, Competition and Consensus* (1993) that led to the emergence of the Roman nobility in the early Republican period. The importance and consequences of military resource reallocation are discussed in detail in the contributions of the edited volume *Money and Power in the Roman Republic* (2016) by Beck, Jehne, and Serrati, that discuss how the plundered riches of the Mediterranean were absorbed by and integral to the functioning of Roman society in the Middle and Late Roman Republic. Besides their importance for the political system and political culture of the *res publica*, scholarship has also acknowledged the importance of joint military campaigns for the establishment and stabilization of

9 See Beck (2005a) 167–393, for the respective biographies. Linke (2017) 393–395, discusses the complicated reception of M. Furius Camillus in the context of Roman republican ideals.

10 Although Harris’ arguments on Roman imperialism have not gone unchallenged (e.g. North 1981), the role and importance of spoils for the working of the political system remain relevant. For an excellent discussion see Burton (2019) 39–73.

Roman rule in Italy. Participation in Rome's wars not only gave the allies a chance to share in the spoils, but also provided avenues of communication and integration.¹¹

The prevalent focus on the economic aspects of spoils has, however, reduced them to a mere social and political currency that had the potential to stabilize or alter power balances and relations in various ways. In part, this narrow interpretation of spoils is a reflection of the great attention that our literary sources devote to the correct and often controversial use and distribution of captured goods; an issue that is further complicated by the unclear definition and correlation of the terms *praeda* and *manubiae*.¹² Although this particular debate has largely ended in aporia, it nevertheless reflects the overall tendency in scholarship to interpret spoils in the context of a positive-sum-game that allowed for the diffusion of social problems and for the stabilization of the Roman political system through the distribution of surplus resources.¹³ This interpretation tends to overlook that spoils regularly caused unrest and dissatisfaction, which suggests a more complex impact on Roman politics and Roman society. This blind spot might be due to the particular focus of studies on the Roman economy, which mainly interpret spoils under the aspect of economic value creation and have attempted to calculate war costs and profits, as well as the effect that an increased input in monetary liquidity had on Roman Italy.¹⁴ In this context, scholarship has stressed that Roman warfare generally operated at a loss that had to be covered by the *tributum*. The classical treatment by Frank and its conclusion that revenues were vastly exceeded by war costs has been revisited by Rosenstein and Taylor, who have upheld the initial argument.¹⁵ However, recent studies have also stressed the indirect effects and benefits of the conquest of Italy and subsequent warfare in the Mediterranean, which "resulted in real per capita economic growth in the Italian peninsula" and provided further economic boosts to both Rome and its Italian allies.¹⁶ As Rosenstein's and Taylor's contributions in this volume demonstrate, an overall verdict of the cost-benefit analysis of Roman warfare poses a formidable problem, since our sources mainly mention spoils and indemnities that were centrally registered and deposited in the treasury, whilst those

11 Cornell (1995) 347–368; Jehne (2006) 245–249; Armstrong (2016a) 280–289; Helm (2017) 216–220.

12 It is generally thought that *praeda* belonged to the individual soldiers and general, while *manubiae* were intended for the Roman *aerarium*. Even if this was the case, the general was still able to dispose of spoils in whatever way he saw fit, for example by distributing it to the soldiers on site or at the triumph or sending it to the *aerarium*. Shatzman (1972) 63 argues that *manubiae* were the spoils that the general could keep for himself, and use for any purpose he desired. Churchill (1999) countered that *manubiae* were meant for the public treasury; cf. Aberson (1994) 54–101. Tarpin (2009) 81–82, provides a brief overview of the debate and stresses that *manubiae* cannot be treated as a separate object and have to be analyzed in conjunction with *praeda* and *spolia*. For a categorization see Tarpin (2000) 366–368, cf. Rich in this volume and Bleckmann (2016) 84.

13 Frank (1933); Rosenstein (2016); Taylor (2017).

14 For a brief overview see Kay (2014) 1–7.

15 *Contra* Bleckmann (2016) 91–96.

16 Kay (2014) 6; see also Roselaar (2019) 61–119.

spoils that were not mentioned in the official record usually elude us.¹⁷ The negligence of these ‘individual’ spoils might also be ascribed to modern perceptions of plundering and marauding, which changed significantly with the emergence of modern national states and national armies; individual plundering was henceforth considered to be dysfunctional and dangerous to discipline. In contrast, communities with lower degrees of statehood, like frontier societies, display a greater level of everyday violence, in which plunder and spoils were a central component of the economies of war and violence.¹⁸

Past scholarship’s focus on official records thus reflects the modern attitude towards spoils and occludes the various ways in which diverse groups benefited from Roman warfare and its forcible extraction of resources. This is of particular relevance in regard to recent arguments on Roman statehood, for example by Tan, who argues that Roman government structures were deliberately kept slim by the senatorial elite to avoid interference in the various opportunities for self-enrichment opened up by Roman expansion in the Mediterranean.¹⁹ This opportunity was, however, not exclusively restricted to the *nobiles* but also exploited by individuals like the *publicani*.²⁰ The importance of such private enterprise for the Roman war effort led Bleckmann to criticize a “simple model of income and expenditure” based on the extant numbers provided by the ancient authors.²¹ According to him, “only exceptionally do we glimpse at the numerous raids made by marauding soldiers on their own initiative, who neither surrendered their plunder to the *aerarium* nor made it available for the provisioning of the troops”; the same holds true for private entrepreneurs.²² The close entanglement of private and official actions is probably most apparent in the building of the last Roman fleet in the First Punic War, which clearly indicates that various agents besides those of the Roman state benefitted from the Republic’s wars.²³ In this context, Coudry and Humm (2009) have taken a different path to exploring *praeda* that puts “le butin de guerre au centre de l’enquête” and analyses the manifold ways in which spoils were obtained and distributed. Tracing the development of the various practices of sharing plunder, Coudry stresses that spoils were distributed at several points during a campaign. Similarly, Tarpin draws attention to the fact that when a general seized certain spoils for the state, this did not necessarily mean that soldiers would come away empty-handed. In combination, these two contributions emphasize that the official sums reported by

17 Bleckmann (2016) 91–96. There is a general consensus that official records existed for the deposits made to the treasury, since the literary sources display enormous accuracy in this regard; Coudry (2009b) 60–62; Östenberg (2009) 15–17.

18 Carl & Bömelburg (2011) 15–20.

19 Tan (2017). See also Eder (1990) and Lundgreen (2014) on Roman statehood.

20 Badian (1972); Malmendier (2002); García-Morcillo in this volume.

21 Bleckmann (2016) 83.

22 Bleckmann (2016) 85.

23 Bleckmann (2002) 209–214.

the ancient authors represent only a part of the total amount of spoils.²⁴ The proposed focus on the spoils themselves thus allows for a less rigid analysis of their specific quantity and quality, and of the situational historical context, bypassing the narrow limits imposed by the debates regarding the economic balance sheet of Roman warfare and the authority over the distribution of plundered resources.

III Aims and Approach

The present volume follows up on these earlier observations by zooming in on the acquisition and distribution of spoils with the aim of identifying and connecting the various groups that were involved in these processes. While acknowledging the central role of Roman “state” authorities, that is elected officials as well as the Senate, one of the main objectives of the project is to go beyond the level of the state, to explore how and by whom the enforced extraction of surplus resources from the periphery was executed, and how the permanent distribution of externally acquired resources affected Roman society.²⁵ Following the arguments of Harriet Flower, any study of the Roman Republic has to take its evolving conditions and varying frameworks into account that meant that both the spoils, in regard to quality and quantity, as well as the agents involved in acquiring them, varied significantly over the course of the republican period.²⁶ The taking of spoils was not a uniform practice but produced a variety of results – land distributions, triumphs, the enslavement of large numbers of people, the creation of provinces, or the building of roads – that benefitted different social groups at different points in time and space.

We have therefore defined “spoils” in very broad terms as any investment or transfer of forcefully exacted resources into areas under Roman dominion. Obviously, items taken from the enemy during wars are considered spoils, such as money, moveable objects, the enslaved, et cetera, but we also consider regular methods of exploitation, such as indemnities and taxation, as more organized components of Roman resource extraction, that is enforced movement of goods, resources and people. Even the cohesion of the *ager Romanus* and the Italian alliance fall within this broader definition of spoils of war, since the former had been created from confiscated land, while the latter was maintained by the joint campaigning and plundering of Roman and Italian troops.²⁷ In order to maintain the coherence of the volume, we have focused on

24 Coudry (2009b) 50; Tarpin (2009) 94–100.

25 For example, in regard to an evolving perception of Roman superiority due to its military successes, see Loar, MacDonald & Padilla Peralta (2018) and Padilla Peralta & Bernard (2022) 1–12.

26 Flower (2010). See the recent argument for greater attention to the specific settings and shifting connectivities of various periods in Roman Republican history: Padilla Peralta & Bernard (2022).

27 Speitkamp (2017) 27: “Gewaltgemeinschaften beziehen ihre Identität aus der gemeinschaftlichen Ausübung von Gewalt oder sie nutzen Gewalt, um Beute zu erlangen und ihren Lebensunterhalt

the modes of acquisition and distribution and the effects of resource (re-)allocation, which are necessarily interconnected. It quickly became clear that differentiation was necessary between moveable and ephemeral spoils on the one hand, and the structural spoils of captured land and provinces on the other hand, since the latter created long-term effects. Collective and individual profits could differ significantly in this regard, and the same holds true on a spatial level, since the city of Rome benefited disproportionately from spoils in comparison to the Roman countryside or other urban spaces in Italy.

Taking these multiple layers and effects of spoils into account is crucial to our understanding of Roman Republican history. Various agents that receive little attention in the sources were not only responsible for the logistics of Roman armies on campaign but also for processing the military plunder on site. In the long term, the enforced Roman resource re-allocation also impacted the whole Mediterranean and especially Italy, where road- and port-building served both military and economic interests. Immediate and long-term effects could therefore vary widely and were not necessarily connected.²⁸ Furthermore, Linke has pointed out that even successful military campaigns could produce unpredictable outcomes, since large victories regularly led to fierce disputes.²⁹ While regular distributions of medium-sized amounts of *præda*, which would have resulted in minor changes in the overall distribution of wealth, were accepted even if the allocation formula was unbalanced, the presence and public display of extraordinary quantities of spoils regularly triggered debates and political conflicts in Rome.³⁰ The triumph of Aemilius Paullus in 167 is an instructive example in this regard, since the discontented soldiers had been rewarded handsomely but were nevertheless of the opinion that their share gave reason to protest when compared to the total amount of spoils taken.³¹ Without a doubt, spoils had a direct economic benefit, but they also have to be placed in the wider socio-political context of the *urbs*

sicherzustellen. Gewalt ist dabei zugleich Teil und Ausdruck der Kultur der Gruppe, sie entscheidet über Status und Prestige sowie über Hierarchie und Führung innerhalb der Gruppe." ("Violent communities derive their identity from the communal exercise of violence or they use violence to obtain booty and to secure their livelihoods. Violence is at the same time part of and an expression of the group's culture; it determines status and prestige as well as hierarchy and leadership within the group.") It was not until the late Republic that this mutually beneficial arrangement broke down; see Roselaar (2019).

28 Cf. Bradley (2014) on Roman roadbuilding and colonization.

29 Linke (2014).

30 This phenomenon can be explained with the arguments on the social basis of obedience and revolt by the sociologist Barrington Moore. According to Moore (1978), inequality and injustice are usually inevitable for the average person and therefore accepted by most, unless a clearly perceived imbalance creates an opening for coordinated protest and a reasonable chance for changing the status quo.

31 Liv. 45.35–40; see also Linke (2017) 401–402.

Roma, the *ager Romanus*, and Roman Italy, where they could produce very different effects and reactions.³²

IV Structure of the Volume

The papers of the volume follow a chronological order to emphasize and track the changes in the quantity and quality of spoils as well as in Roman practices in acquiring and distributing these resources over time. Beginning with the Early Republic, our chronological span is from the fourth to second century. Although some papers reach into the Late Republic, we are of the opinion that the abolition of the *tributum*, escalating political conflicts in the second half of the second century, and the disruptions of the Social War massively changed Roman practices, as described by Bradley Jordan's paper. This approach thus acknowledges the very different realities faced by the *res publica Romana* over the centuries.³³

Hans Beck and Nathan Rosenstein introduce the volume by discussing the multifaceted nature of spoils in the Roman Republic. Where Beck discusses the communicative culture of spoils and their reception in Rome, Rosenstein outlines the military and financial effect of spoils. The following comparative section on the reception and perception of spoils in the Greek World, necessarily limited to two case studies, serves to sharpen Roman idiosyncrasies. The emergence of a particular 'Roman' way to acquire and deal with spoils is discussed in the section on the Early Republic, which features four papers on the beginning of Roman expansion and the development of large-scale annual warfare. These observations prepare the ground for the discussion of the value and impact of spoils in the Middle Republic that consists of eleven contributions arranged into three subsections. The papers of the first subsection present the changing quality and nature of spoils in the context of overseas expansion. The second subsection explores the emergence of new modes of extraction in the Mid-Republican period, especially in regard to private enterprise and the first provinces. These discussions naturally lead to the third subsection, whose three papers focus on the long-term effects of constant resource reallocation on Roman Italy. The final section of the volume intermeshes with the previous topics by emphasizing the symbolic dimension of spoils in various circumstances.

Looking at the papers in more depth, the two introductory contributions by Hans Beck and Nathan Rosenstein examine the abstract as well as concrete qualities of spoils. Beck demonstrates how spoils created a dialectic between the city of Rome and

32 Carl & Bömelburg (2011) 25–26; Speitkamp (2017) 29–31. See Kay (2014) 102–105, on the limited evidence for inflation and its consequences in the wake of Roman second-century expansion. Cf. Jordan in this volume for the connection between domestic political issues and the provincialization of the kingdom of Pergamon.

33 Flower (2010).

the conquered areas. Displaying spoils of every kind from all over the Mediterranean in Rome created an imagined global realm with the *urbs* at its centre. As is well known from literary evidence on triumphs, the display of exotic animals – for example the notoriously popular elephants – was well received in Rome and seen as proof of Roman domination. In contrast to this communicative culture of spoils, Rosenstein focuses on the hard currency of spoils and their effects on the Roman and Italian economy. Drawing attention to the pattern of privatized and individual profits and the limited share of the state, Rosenstein compares the significant amounts of cash brought back by soldiers, merchants, and others to a huge demand-side economic stimulus. Spoils were thus an important motif, one might say kick-start, for military operations whose profits eventually found their way into the wider Roman economy, and thus benefitted the tax-paying *assidui* as well.

The comparative second section sheds light on the question whether Rome was unique in its strategy of acquiring and distributing spoils. Stefan Fraß investigates the role and reception of spoils in the Homeric works. Although spoils constituted an important source of prestige and wealth, there still existed a tension between private raiding and the community's desire to avoid retributory attacks. The case of Odysseus serves as an example for the ambivalent description of spoils, since no individual or family succeeded in increasing their social standing or wealth through raiding. Instead, the narrative depicts the quest for spoils as a bane to the community. Greek discourse on warfare and its spoils thus differed markedly from Rome, where no such ambivalence can be detected.

The second comparative paper by Michael Kleu discusses the differences between Roman practices and those of the Macedonian kingdom under Philip II. Both Macedonia and early Rome experienced a comparable expansion during the fourth century BCE. The strategies employed in both cases are surprisingly similar, such as the expansion of territory through colonies and resettlements. However, the utilization of spoils by the Hellenistic kings contrasts starkly with the rather haphazard Roman practices of distribution. Unlike the precarious *aerarium*, Philip took care to amass a substantial war chest and also displayed a coherent strategy characterized by investments of spoils into the army, administration, and economy, which were in turn designed to create profits from future military efforts.

The third section focuses on the Early Roman Republic and the origins of annual warfare and the Roman "Beutegemeinschaft".³⁴ The first paper by Jeremy Armstrong presents shifts in Roman practices regarding spoils of war during the fifth century. Outlining the extremely difficult evidence for this period, Armstrong argues that some broad developments can nevertheless be traced through the anomalies in the otherwise largely generic or formulaic presentation of spoils in the literary sources. Spoils

34 Carl & Bömelburg (2011) 14–26.

remained largely portable throughout the fifth century, but treaties regulating spoils indicate that the importance and authority of the community increased over time. A major shift occurred with the introduction of the *tributum* and *stipendium*, which are likely to have further increased state control and also coincided with a shift to territorial expansion. The paper thus provides an instructive insight into the genesis of the Roman military system, which suggests that the initial disposition towards plundering merged with the specific interests of the community that funded the *stipendium*.

The growing importance and consequences of capturing land is further discussed by Peter VanDerPuy, who addresses the consolidation of the Roman elite in connection with the distribution of land and its effect on Roman farmers. VanDerPuy argues that the character of land distributions throughout this period produced a perilous agricultural regime. Land spoliation risked the continuity of farms, necessitating further conquests that solidified the control of an elite specialized in warfare. These pressures lessened with the landmark settlement of 338 BCE which added several communities with full or partial Roman citizenship, thus easing the burden of the *tributum*, and Latin colonization. VanDerPuy's paper highlights the difficulties involved in settling Romans on conquered land, a drawn-out process that created its own demands on the community.

Audrey Bertrand continues the discussion of the specific practices, difficulties, and expectations regarding captured land in her analysis of the decision-making processes in regard to land distributions and colonial foundations. Bertrand's paper follows up on Armstrong's argument and argues that individual decisions and actions still played a decisive role in the fourth century. Especially colonial foundations reveal meaningful choices in the selection of the *triumviri coloniae deducendae*. These were often former *imperium*-holders that had been active in the region and were given a prominent part in the distribution of confiscated land to colonists. Although no systematic pattern of collective aristocratic participation emerges, it nevertheless becomes clear that a number of options were available for a time-delayed participation in the distribution and exploitation of conquered land. This also ensured that the commander responsible for dictating the peace terms could not exclusively lay claim to the conquest and settlement of the new territory, which was usually the result of several campaigns. In this way, the practice regarding colonial foundations reveals several mechanisms of involving both the individual general and the wider Roman elite in the distribution of conquered land.

The section on the Early Roman Republic is concluded by Marian Helm's discussion of the increasing appreciation and display of spoils in Rome in the fourth century, which in turn affected Roman warfare and expectations. It is argued that the Samnite Wars initiated an intensification in Roman war efforts that was neither phased down in 304 nor in 290 BCE. This early phase of annual warfare on a grand scale went hand in hand with a boom in public building programs and an increasing visibility of spoils in the city. These developments are seen as an indication of a growing Roman awareness that prosperity and stability depended on permanent military aggression. Conse-

quently, the passionate and successful appeal of Appius Claudius Caecus against the peace offered by Pyrrhus is interpreted as the successful entrenchment of this mentality for the remainder of the Republic. In combination, the papers in this section show how individual and collective ambitions merged in the fifth and fourth century to encourage and ultimately perpetuate constant annual warfare in the Early Republic. The continued success of this strategy created pressures of its own to keep the ball rolling, which is also demonstrated by Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp's paper later in the volume.

The following section focuses on the value and impacts of spoils in the Middle Republic and consists of three subsections. The first of these discusses the changing quality and nature of spoils in the context of growing overseas expansion. Saskia Roselaar explores the ways in which the confiscation of land, as a spoil of war, impacted Roman politics and society. This paper investigates in more detail the role of colonies founded on *ager publicus* confiscated from defeated enemies. Some important changes took place in the way that land taken as spoils was used in the later fourth century, as compared to the earlier period. This may have been the result of a general change in Roman strategy after the Latin War (341–338), when the Roman state created more coherent policies with regard to colonization. However, these policies only crystallized after a period of experimentation in the third century. And although the Roman state devised fairly systematic methods of land distribution between the fifth and third century – in contrast to the very few rules regarding the distribution of other types of spoils –, this did not prevent conflicts about the distribution of *ager publicus*.

Similar to these experiments in land distribution, Marleen Termeer discusses the puzzling inertia in the development of Roman coinage and its connection to warfare. She argues that the earliest phase of Roman coinage shows little evidence for a direct link, despite the increased complexity as well as material gains of Roman warfare, which would have made coinage an ideal instrument for financing war costs and for redistributing spoils. Drawing attention to the different patterns of distribution as well as uses that coinage was put to by Rome as well as its allies, Termeer argues that coinage can have made up only a small part of the financial transactions surrounding warfare. She instead proposes that the early production of coinage should be seen as a series of experiments and might have constituted only one option for the distribution of spoils, especially bullion. Therefore, the early coinage displays few links to Roman war finances and might have primarily been used as a distinct vehicle for communication with and between the various groups involved in the Roman war effort.

The question of Roman war-financing is further investigated by Michael Taylor's paper on the role of the *tributum* in the context of mid-republican warfare. The traditional model for interpreting the *tributum*, set forth by Nicolet,³⁵ suggests that it was essentially a loan by the citizen body to the state, which provided start-up capital for Rome's

35 Nicolet (1980) 149–169; cf. Rosenstein (2016b).

wars and was to be refunded if sufficient loot was taken on the campaign. Taylor argues that the massive amounts of spoils flowing into the Roman treasury insufficiently covered the military expenditures, so that *tributum* remained an essential resource for the financing of ongoing military and naval deployments and was rarely refunded. According to Taylor, *tributum* was mainly designed to spur military participation, but it also constituted the community's claim to a share of the spoils, which might have been addressed by the manubial buildings of victorious generals.

The financial balance sheet of Rome's wars is also examined by John Rich's detailed account and analysis of the scope of wealth reallocation to Roman Italy in the period from 218 to 167 BCE. Rich meticulously lists the spoils and donatives from this period and emphasizes the regional differences in the return of spoils. Especially the wars in northern Italy at the beginning of the second century BCE operated at a significant loss, which might have been offset by the founding of numerous large colonies. Yet even the profitable wars in the East, while yielding very substantial revenues, did not cover the costs of the wars. The new riches did, however, result in some changes, like the double payout to soldiers: they received a share of the spoils after the victory in the field, and another one in the form of the donative paid at the triumph. Thus, the (relatively light) burden of *tributum* remained stable for the majority of the population after the Second Punic War, while the benefits for those involved in the wars – commanders, legionaries, private entrepreneurs – increased considerably.

The second sub-section explores the modes of extraction and the Roman approach towards exploiting overseas territories organized into provinces. The role of private entrepreneurs has been somewhat underappreciated in the literature, despite the fact that they were crucial in regard to military campaigns as well as tax-farming. These commercial interests and the agents involved in them are discussed in detail by Marta García Morcillo with special emphasis on their role in the commercialization of the spoils of war. While a part of the spoils, including prisoners, eventually ended up in Rome, the sources often attest the sale of spoils on the battlefield, which benefited both the Roman *aerarium*, the general, and his soldiers. In the majority of cases, the spoils were sold en bloc to traders who accompanied the army. The paper reconstructs the structures, actors, and institutions that shaped the markets responsible for processing spoils and discusses markets both as institutions and as places of economic exchange. Overall, a considerable sector of the civilian economy benefitted from warfare and was also instrumental in providing an adaptable redistribution system and effective structures for the optimization of war profits.

These observations are especially interesting in comparison with the following paper by Toni Nāco del Hoyo and Gerard Cabezas-Guzmán on the development of the provincial administration on the Iberian Peninsula. They show that Roman activities in Hispania were mostly limited to the military actions of the republican armies and their commanders between 218 and c. 100 BCE. During the first half of the second century, Roman armies seem to have sustained themselves from local supplies that

aimed to make the wars in the region self-sufficient. Due to the volatility of the politico-military situation, the acquisition of these supplies may have differed little from pillaging or requisitioning in an irregular fashion. Commanders in Hispania did not follow long-term strategies of provincialization after the Second Punic War, but rather short-term goals of obtaining spoils, army wages, and supplies from their provincial commands. The authors argue that this irregular, but reasonably sufficient organization and extraction of resources worked well until the outbreak of the great Lusitanian and Celtiberian Wars in the second half of the century, which required larger troop deployments and a more sustainable policy in regard to the administration of the Hispanic provinces.

A similarly idiosyncratic development can be attested for the province of Asia, whose early history is presented by Bradley Jordan. His reappraisal of the evidence raises serious questions in regard to the paradigm of a strict organization of the provincial administration based on principles of revenue maximization. He instead argues that the Roman takeover did not dramatically alter the existing structures, a situation that only changed in the course of the Mithridatic War, which saw a massive growth in the exploitation of the province and the institution of regular and substantial extractions by Rome. The dramatic realignment of Roman provincial policies thus mainly resulted from specific situational demands, such as Sulla's desperate need for cash to fight both Mithridates and his enemies in Rome. On a more general basis, the paper not only demonstrates that political instability in Rome affected the administration of the provinces, but it also shows that this was a reciprocal relation as demonstrated by the unrest caused by the Pergamene inheritance in the context of the Gracchan reforms.

The third subsection focuses on the long-term value and impact of spoils on Roman Italy in the Middle Republic. Simon Lentzsch opens the section with a discussion on the reignition of warfare and raiding in Roman Italy during the Second Punic War. In many respects, this phenomenon resembled a return to the 'anarchy' of the previous century, especially once the conflict turned into a lengthy war of attrition. The bankruptcy of the Roman treasury created problems as well as opportunities for Romans, Carthaginians, and also Italians, as a large part of the military operations was located in allied territory after 216 BCE. In the context of the volume, it is noteworthy that the reversion of the (former) allies to small-scale raiding and plundering suggests that the expectation of acquiring spoils had not disappeared in the wake of the Roman conquest but had been channelled into military operations under Roman leadership. Lentzsch also stresses that the devastation and plundering of major cities, like Capua and Tarentum, resulted in a massive redistribution of wealth and power that firmly established Roman dominance in Italy.

A more indirect utilization of spoils in the restructuring of Italy is presented by John Patterson. Tracing the history of Roman road- and aqueduct-building projects, Patterson argues that the colossal sums required drew on the spoils brought in by successful wars, like M'. Curius Dentatus' campaign against the Samnites and the building of the

Aqua Marcia after the capture of both Carthage and Corinth. The building enterprises played a crucial role in distributing wealth and served to transform ephemeral spoils into permanent profits by improving Italy's infrastructure. Therefore, the building of roads and aqueducts had significant economic and political consequences beyond the small circle of military personnel and the city of Rome. Whether financed directly or indirectly by spoils, these enterprises provided sources of employment, distributed the wealth derived from Rome's conquests to citizens and allies, and reinforced the patronage networks of the Roman elite.

Katharina Huemoeller's paper focuses on the human spoils of the Roman conquest. Applying a wider lens to this topic, the paper stresses the agency of war captives and differentiates between groups of captured people in a qualitative rather than quantitative approach. Huemoeller emphasizes that captives could be used in variable modes to extract profits and long-term benefits. For example, the ransom or release of captives placed them in debt and obedience to the general responsible. This again emphasizes the different options and benefits available to the commanding general, which were in turn determined by the situation on site. Moreover, the specific handling of different groups of captives demonstrates that all captives were exploited as human spoils of war, but this did not happen in a uniform way. Seen from this perspective, captives met Roman demands for slave labour, but also more refined requirements for specialists who in turn left their own imprint on Roman society.

The final paper of the section examines the potential profits that an ordinary legionary could expect. François Gauthier suggests that military service in the Middle Republic was not as profitable for Rome's *assidui* as is often claimed. After all, nothing could guarantee soldiers a specific sum in donatives, because the amount was left to the general's discretion. Here, Gauthier stresses the randomness involved in the soldier's share of plunder. In contrast to the material rewards, military service reliably conveyed prestige and social standing through an elaborate system of rewards and gifts designed to entice young men to show bravery. Furthermore, conflicts like the Pyrrhic War and the Second Punic War were also about defending the *ager Romanus* from foreign depredations, indicating that the motives driving Rome and its citizens to go to war were complex and not solely limited to material gains.

The last section of the volume investigates the symbolic dimension of spoils, specifically their role as vehicles for communication and markers of prestige for the Roman elite. Naturally, the image of superiority and prosperity was a constant phenomenon inherent in the celebrations of Roman victories, which was conveyed in the taking and distribution of spoils. Even when the economic benefits derived from constant warfare increased in value and wealth, the basic message that the taking of spoils implied stayed the same.

The first paper of this section returns to the appropriation of spoils by the emerging patricio-plebeian elite in the fourth and third century. Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp examines the self-fashioning of the new elite and the way in which it utilized the dis-

play of spoils to enhance its status. Captured armour and works of art were displayed in the urban landscape of Rome, while the material spoils funded monumental buildings, themselves adorned with treasures. The growing quantity and diversity of Roman spoils drove the development of new multimedia-based strategies of self-presentation, thus establishing new practices in the competition between the *nobiles*. As in the case of provincial extractions, the changing nature of spoils rather than changes in Roman warfare or political strategies seem to have provided opportunities which were seized by the competitive-minded *nobiles*. In the context of this competition, spoils provided both building blocks as well as novelties to the Roman aristocrats' memorial web.

The symbolic value and communication that spoils provided are further illustrated by Laura Pfuntner. Exploring the relationship between Rome and the cities of Sicily, her paper shows how Sicilian communities were able to deploy the symbolic power of spoils in their political communication with Rome. The island provides a particularly rich area of investigation due to three major events that picked the ancient authors' interest: the conquest of Syracuse by Marcellus in 212, the Third Carthaginian War, and Verres' governorship. In the first case, the city suffered considerably from the storming and plundering of the city, yet a group of Syracusans afterwards managed to gain Marcellus' patronage. Later, the normalization of relations was expressed by the return of statues previously taken by Carthage in the aftermath of Scipio Aemilianus' capture of the city in 146. In the Verres episode, the removal of spoils was seen as a serious slight against the Sicilian towns, not just because of their economic value, but especially because of their symbolic connotations. In this case, spoils supported civic identities that had undergone tremendous upheaval and could also be deployed as argumentative vehicles in the provincials' communication with Rome.

The symbolic communication that spoils created is further explored in the concluding paper of this section. Michael Fronda considers the logistics and implications of the massive in-flow of spoils into Roman Italy in the age of overseas' expansion. Arguing that returning Roman armies would necessarily display spoils to a Romano-Italian audience beyond the triumphal procession, the paper looks at various ways that spoils moved from the provinces through Italy. This focus on the Italian reception of spoils is supported by a synoptic view on manubial constructions in communities throughout the peninsula. Less obvious, but potentially discernible in the archaeological and epigraphic record, are local Italian monumental constructions funded by war spoils, which indicate the adoption of similar manubial practices by Roman and local elites. Furthermore, the return of victorious and spoils-laden armies might have created a feeling of community and reinforced Rome's claim to leadership of Italy through the distribution and display of the material benefits of joint warfare.