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Troops and commanders: *auxilia externa* under the Roman Republic*

I. Introduction

During the last two centuries of the Roman Republic, the Roman state made use of troops from outside of Italy, i.e. from peoples not included in the *formula togatorum*, and who were not part of the *socii ac nomen Latini*. These soldiers can be classified under the semi-formal designation of *auxilia externa*, although the term is used with little regularity, and they are more usually described by our sources in diverse ways (typically by ethnic, e.g. 'Aetolians', and/or type of soldier, e.g. *funditores*); frequently their presence can only be inferred or guessed at.¹ The evidence exists to suggest that the use of these troops was extensive, but their existence is rarely acknowledged in modern discussions of the Roman army, and there is to date no systematic collection or analysis of the material as a whole.²

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¹ The key texts are: Fest. 16 L: *Auxiliares dicuntur in bello socii Romanorum exterarum nationum ...*; Varro *ling.* V 90: *auxilium appellatum ab auctu, cum accesserant ei qui adiumento essent alienigenae*; Liv. XXII 37, 7-8 (a view attributed to Hieron II in early 216 BC): *Milite atque equite scire nisi Romano Latinique nominis non uti populum Romanum; levium armorum auxilia etiam externa vidisse in castris Romanis; itaque misisse mille sagittariorum ac funditorum, aptam manum adversus Baliares ac Mauros pugnacesque alias missili telo gentes.*

² Of note are: A. Afzelius, *Die römische Kriegsmacht während der Auseinandersetzung mit den hellenistischen Grossmächten*, Aarhus 1944, 90-98 reviews the Livian evidence for 200-167 BC; C. Hamdoune, *Les auxilia externa africains des armées romaines, IIIe siècle av. J.-C. - IVe siècle ap. J.-C.*, Montpellier 1999, 7-104 discusses the Numidian evidence in detail; F. Cadiou, *Hibera in terra miles. Les armées romaines et la conquête de l'Hispanie sous la République (218-45 av. J.-C.)*, Madrid 2008, 611-84 discusses the Spanish evidence in detail; J.B. McCall, *The Cavalry of the Roman Republic*, London 2002, 100-113 on cavalry auxiliaries. The best overviews of the place of Republican auxiliaries can be found in G.L. Cheesman, *The Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Army*, Oxford 1914, 7-11, and V. Ilari, *Gli Italici nelle strutture militari romane*, Milan 1974, 25 n. 1. By contrast, J. Harmand, *L'Armée et le Soldat à Rome de 107 à 50 avant notre ère*, Paris 1967, 41-51 largely repeats the misleading generalisations of Passerini, Marquardt and others.



This study will take the existence and use of such *auxilia* in the Republican period for granted, and instead focuses on the question of who commanded the units of *auxilia*. In existing studies the specific question of who commanded these troops is rarely addressed. Modern scholarship either emphasises our lack of knowledge, or notes the (limited) presence of native commanders, or suggests that things became more regularised over time (although how this took place is generally unclear). Most observations are restricted to the civil war period (i.e. post-49 BC), in which period Roman commanders are common; this is part of a more general tendency only to examine *auxilia* from 49 BC onwards.³ The nearest thing to a discussion of relevance is to be found in Suolahti's *Junior Officers of the Roman Army*; Suolahti's focus was not, however, the foreign *auxilia* and his study did not go below the level of *praefectus*.⁴ For practical reasons, the discussion which follows will be restricted to land forces only, looking firstly at the evidence for Romans in command of *auxilia* – broadly, but not wholly, equivalent to the upper levels of command – and secondly at the evidence for non-Romans commanding *auxilia* – generally, but not entirely, equivalent to the level of individual unit commanders. This latter section will incorporate some discussion of the problem of classification of *auxilia* (allies, auxiliaries, or mercenaries?), since it is relevant to the level of autonomy with which they were entrusted. This will be followed by a brief consideration of the value of “native” commanders and the Roman recognition of this, through *clientela* and mechanisms of reward and civic incorporation. By way of conclusion, I shall speculate briefly on some possible patterns of development that might be discernible. The material cited throughout is intended to be *exempli gratia*, rather than exhaustive.

II.i Romans commanding auxiliaries

It follows from the simple existence of auxiliary forces that senior Roman commanders frequently commanded a mixed force, which included units of foreign auxiliary soldiers. Below the level of overall command however, several ranks of Roman officer can be discerned in command of these bodies of auxiliary soldiers. Perhaps the most striking are those occasions when, typically, Roman *legati* command reasonably substantial numbers of auxiliaries, often in autonomous actions, and often without any Roman or Italian troops in attendance.⁵ *Legati* are

³ See especially D.B. Saddington, *The Development of the Roman Auxiliary Forces from Caesar to Vespasian (49 B.C. - A.D. 79)*, Harare 1982, on imperial *auxilia*. T. Yoshimura, *Die Auxiliärtruppen und die Provinzialklientel in der römischen Republik*, «Historia» X (1961), 473-495 has relevant comments on *auxilia* and *clientela*.

⁴ J. Suolahti, *The Junior Officers of the Roman Army in the Republican period. A Study on Social Structure*, Helsinki 1955, esp. 203-204 (although the passages there cited do not always support the claims in the text).

⁵ Liv. XXX 42, 3 (Greece, 203-201 BC, activities of M. Aurelius, cf. XXX 26, 4, XXXI 3, 4-6); Liv. XXXV 39 and 50 (Greece, 192 BC, activities of T. Quinctius and L. Villius); Liv. XLII 56, 3-4 (Greece, 171 BC, activities of P. Lentulus with Boeotians); Liv. *Per.* L (Macedonia, 150 BC, *legati*



also to be found commanding the various units of auxiliary troops in the battle line.⁶ However, if instances involving *legati* appear to predominate, it is nonetheless true that both quaestors and military tribunes are also to be found fulfilling broadly similar roles.⁷ *Praefecti* can also be found in this sort of position, but at this point the situation becomes much less clear-cut – partly because the evidence is limited, and partly because, in contrast to the pre-Social War organisation of the Italian allies who were placed under the command of the *praefecti sociorum*, the organisation of the foreign auxiliaries seems to have been much more fluid.⁸ On the rare occasions when we explicitly find Roman *praefecti* commanding *auxilia*, these can either be in overall command of multiple units as in many of the cases noted above, or else in the rather varied and dynamic situations of local garrisons, or, most frequently in the available evidence, in the specific role of cavalry commander.⁹

However, two points need to be made concerning the examples cited so far. Firstly, almost all of these Roman commanders, whatever their rank, were commanding multiple units, often of varying sorts. In general, when a Roman

commanding Achaean auxiliaries, cf. Cic. *prov.* 5); *BE* 1963, 220 (Asia, 129 BC, actions of Q. Servilius Caepio); Caes. *Gall.* II 11 (Gaul, 57 BC, *legati* sent out with cavalry), III 11 (Gaul, 56 BC, *legatus* sent out with cavalry), V 17 cf. V 5 (Britain, 54 BC, C. Trebonius leads Gallic cavalry with legionary support).

⁶ Liv. XLII 58, 11-14 (Greece, 171 BC); Sall. *Ing.* 100, 2-4 (Africa, 107 BC); Cic. *fam.* XV 4, 8 (Cilicia, 51/50 BC).

⁷ Liv. XXI 49, 7 (Sicily, 218 BC, *legati* and *tr. mil.* commanding local forces); Liv. XXII 21,4 (Spain, 217 BC, anonymous *tr. mil.*); Plut. *Aem.* 15, 3 (Greece, 168 BC, Scipio Nasica as *tr. mil.*); Sall. *Ing.* 105, 1-2 (Africa, 107 BC, Sulla as quaestor, leading cavalry, Balearic *funditores*, *sagittari*, and a *cohors Paeligna*); *Syll.*³ 700 (Lete, Macedonia, 118 BC, actions of a quaestor with what may well have been local auxiliaries); *CIL* X 7258 (= I² 843 = *ILLRP* 446) and *IG* XIV 282 record Sicilian garrison forces at Eryx under the overall command of a quaestor, as probably does *P. Ryl.* 473, 1 (fragment of Sallust, on which see C.F. Konrad, *Marius at Eryx*, «*Historia*» XLVI (1997), 28-64). Note also the interesting case of Pol. X 17, 9-10, when Scipio Africanus puts a quaestor in charge of 2000 Iberian *δημόσιοι* at New Carthage in 210 BC.

⁸ *Contra* Suolahti, *Junior Officers*, cit., 204 who simply states that, «The infantry detachments from the provinces, apart from their own officers also had Roman prefects who shared the command». He cites five passages from Caesar (*Gall.* I 39, 2; III 7, 3; III 11, 1; VI 29, 4; *Bell. Afr.* 86, 3) in support of this claim, none of which however demonstrate the point explicitly, and only the latter three of which actually refer to Roman *praefecti* commanding auxiliaries, in all three cases cavalry, not infantry. On *praefecti sociorum* and the Italians, see Ilari, *Gli Italici*, cit., 127-132.

⁹ Liv. XXIV 40, 7-17 (Q. Naevius Crista, *praef. soc.*, 214 BC, commanding Italian allies but also local troops at Apollonia); Liv. XLIII 18, 5-11 (a similar role played by *praefecti praesidii*, with Roman and local troops, Illyria, 170/169 BC); Sall. *Ing.* 77, 4 (108/7 BC, four cohorts of Ligurians under a *praefectus*); Sall. *Ing.* 46, 7 (Africa, 109 BC, *auxiliiarii equites* distributed among the *tr. mil.* and the *praef. cohortium*); Caes. *Gall.* VIII 28 (Gaul, 51 BC, Q. Atius Varus, *praefectus equitum*). M. Antonius appears to have been Gabinius' *praefectus equitum*, 57-55 BC, commanding Germans, Gauls, and various local forces (see Plut. *Ant.* 3, Caes. *civ.* III 4, and Ios. *ant. Iud.* XIV 84 with *bell. Iud.* I 162). A problem of terminology also arises, as in e.g. Caes. *Gall.* I 52, where P. Crassus is described as *qui equitatu praerant* (Gaul, 58 BC), but in subsequent years he appears to be a *legatus*, not a *praefectus*; it is not clear that the verb *praeesse* necessarily equates to *praefectus esse*. On *praefecti*, see esp. G. Tibilotti, *Governatori romani in città provinciali*, «*RIL*» LXXXVI (1953), 64-100; T. Naco del Hoyo, *Gadès et les précédents des attributions politiques des praefecti praesidii républicains*, «*DHA*» XXXV (2009), 1-19.



commander is named, the subordinate commanders of individual units or peoples are omitted in our sources (an inevitable consequence of the Romano-centric nature of most of our evidence), although examples to the contrary certainly exist and we shall consider such (normally native) commanders below.¹⁰ Secondly, just because we know of Roman commanders, it does not follow that the commanders above the level of the individual units were always Roman. Quite apart from the many ambiguous cases, there are, as we shall see in the next section, reasonably clear cases of non-Romans higher up the hierarchy, especially once we get onto the looser structures associated with “allies”.¹¹ Lastly, one should keep in mind the variety created by non-typical areas of operation, such as the occasional mentions of Roman specialists (usually centurions) working with non-Romans, for example the unnamed centurion helping the Cyzicenes with mining operations when their city was besieged by Mithridates, c. 73 BC.¹²

Actual Roman commanders of individual units of auxiliaries at the lowest level are, unsurprisingly perhaps, very hard to find. The only certain examples of which I am aware belong to the period after the Social War: a cavalry *decurio* under Caesar in the Gallic War called L. Aemilius, and a cavalry *decurio* under Pompeius in the Mithridatic War (the uncle of Pompeius Trogus).¹³ While we cannot say anything more about the case of L. Aemilius, that of Pompeius Trogus’ uncle opens up a further consideration, namely that the principal context in which we find local troops under the immediate command of a Roman citizen is likely to be in a situation where a member of the local élite has been enfranchised (and so not necessarily holding the post *because* they were Roman citizens). Something similar would seem to be implied by the case of one Piso Aquitanus, whose death Caesar describes in the context of a cavalry action led by *praefecti equitum*.¹⁴ The cavalry

¹⁰ Liv. XLIV 30, 13 (Illyria, 168 BC, local cavalry and infantry commanders of the Parthini, supplementing the existing *auxilia* of Anicius); *SEG* XV 254 (Achaean honouring their own στρατηγός, after service under a consul Domitius; transl. in R.K. Sherk, *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus*, Cambridge 1984, no. 11; discussion with earlier bibliography in R.M. Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to Empire*, Berkeley 1995, 352-353). There are also occasions when we cannot know the exact structure, as e.g. the *tribunus militum* sent out *cum expeditis auxiliis* in 217 BC, who may or may not have had subordinate commanders (Liv. XXII 21, 4).

¹¹ E.g. the ἵππαρχος Biesios leading Spanish cavalry in 153 BC, who may or may not be Roman (App. *Ib.* 47): J.S. Richardson, *Wars of the Romans in Iberia*, Warminster 2000, 144 suggests the text is corrupt as the name is unknown; see however, J.S. Traill, *Persons of Ancient Athens*, IV, no. 265590 and W. Schulze, *Zur Geschichte lateinischer Eigennamen*, Berlin 1904, 587 *add.* 133; Suolahti, *Junior Officers*, cit., 282 suggests that he was a *Hispanus* by birth, «the prefect of his national cavalry contingent», and he is the only non-Italian example included in his study (but Suolahti subsequently lists him as an *Italus* (no. 52) in his main list).

¹² Diod. XXXVII 22b; cf. Liv. XXIV 48, 2-13 for Q. Statorius, a *legatus*, training troops for Syphax of Numidia, 213 BC.

¹³ Caes. *Gall.* I 23, Iust. XLIII 5, 11-12; note also *CIL* I² 1860 = *ILLRP* 500, although it may be of civil war date.

¹⁴ Caes. *Gall.* IV 12: *vir fortissimus Piso Aquitanus, amplissimo genere natus, cuius avus in civitate sua regnum obtinuerat, amicus ab senatu nostro appellatus*; cf. the case of C. Valerius Procillus, serving Caesar and fluent in Gallic, whose father «had been presented with the citizenship by C. Valerius Flaccus» (Caes. *Gall.* I 47).



were certainly Gallic, but Piso's precise rank and relationship to them is left unstated, although he is described as grandson of the tribal *rex* and a formal *amicus* of the Roman people. In any case, his name as given by Caesar surely implies an enfranchised Gaul.¹⁵ At the same time, it is clear that at least some of Caesar's *praefecti equitum* were unenfranchised natives, not Romans, as in the case of Vertiscus, the *princeps civitatis* of the Remi, described explicitly as a *praefectus equitum*, in command of his own cavalry as a part of Caesar's army, but whose name suggests that he was not enfranchised.¹⁶ Alongside the occasional enfranchisement of native commanders this latter example illustrates the way in which Roman titles came to be applied to non-Roman commanders. Both of these aspects will be addressed further below. As regards command structures, we are therefore left with glimpses of a very fluid organisation, in which some of the individual unit commanders were Romans, rather than natives, while some of those at the level of *praefectus*, or equivalent, were non-Romans.

II.ii Non-Romans commanding auxiliaries

Notwithstanding the partial counter-examples noted at the end of the previous section, the general rule can be proposed that the *auxilia* were, in all periods of the Republic, led by their own native commanders (under some overall Roman command). This reflects the situation reported for the Italian *socii* by Polybius, but we lack an equivalent explicit statement for the non-Italian allies, even if a passing observation by Cicero concerning the provision of naval forces by all Rome's *socii*, both Italian and provincial, certainly implies such a situation in its reference to local *nauarchi*.¹⁷ The command of individual units by their local leaders is indeed well-attested and would seem to be unproblematic.¹⁸

¹⁵ Cf. App. *Ib.* 66 (Spain, 143 BC), C. Marcius, a Spaniard (ἄνδρα Ἰβηρα), sent out on multiple occasions from Italica against Viriathus by the Roman commander.

¹⁶ Caes. *Gall.* VIII 12: *amisso Vertisco, principe civitatis, praefecto equitum.*

¹⁷ Pol. VI 21, 5; Cic. *II Verr.* V 60: *Sumptum omnem in classem frumento stipendio ceterisque rebus quaeque nauarcho civitas semper dare solebat. [...] Erat hoc, ut dico, factitatum semper, nec solum in Sicilia sed in omnibus provinciis, etiam in sociorum et Latinorum stipendio ac sumptu, tum cum illorum auxiliis uti solebamus.* («All expenditure on the fleet, for grain, pay and everything else, each city has always entrusted to its own navarch, as a matter of habit. [...] This was done, as I say, repeatedly and always, not only in Sicily, but in all the provinces, and likewise for the pay and expenses of the allies and Latins, at the time when we were accustomed to employ *auxilia* from them.») Much of the rest of the speech concerns Verres' treatment of various Sicilian nauarchs. On this passage and the question of pay, see esp. C. Nicolet, *Le stipendium des alliés italiens avant la guerre sociale*, «PBSR» XLVI (1978), 1-11 (repr. in *Censeurs et publicains*, Paris 2000, 93-105).

¹⁸ A few examples from many: the diverse units with their own leaders that joined Flaminius against Philip V in 197 BC (Liv. XXXIII 3, 7-10); Thurrus, the Spanish chieftain who supported Ti. Sempronius, Spain 179 BC (Liv. XL 49, 5-7); Catmelus, with 3000 Galli, supporting C. Manlius Volso, in Istria, 178 BC (Liv. XLI 1, 8); Gallic cavalry under Cassignatus, *dux Gallorum*, engaged the cavalry of Perseus, 171 BC (Liv. XLII 57, 5-7); the praetor Anicius supplemented his forces with Parthian auxiliaries under their own commanders, Illyria 168 BC (Liv. XLIV 30, 8-



Furthermore, these *auxilia* could be entrusted with autonomous action, whether in the case of Vertiscus and the Remi under Caesar, already cited, or Muttines and his Numidians serving as the advance guard for L. Cornelius Scipio's march through Thrace in 190 BC, or in the appointment by a Roman *legatus* of local forces (under their own commander) to garrison duty in the war against Aristonicus.¹⁹

However, the common presence of native commanders and their potential for autonomous action raises the difficult question of classification: to what extent should one distinguish between different categories of auxiliary troops in the Roman army? There have been several attempts to do so, but although these schemes overlap, there is little uniformity.²⁰ Leaving aside for a moment the thorny problem of mercenaries, it is at least tempting to suggest that the principal difference would seem to be between Rome's major allies (including, but not restricted to "client-kings") and *ad hoc* levies from provincial/subject peoples. However, it is very hard to insist upon any formal classification of Rome's "allies" in this regard, not least since the category of ally (*socius*) itself appears relatively flexible (certainly not dependent, for instance, upon the existence of a written *foedus*).²¹ Nonetheless, forces provided by those such as the Attalids, the Achaeans, the Aetolians, and the Rhodians in the early second century BC, or even Deiotarus in the mid-first century BC, clearly have a rather different status compared to the smaller units of civic and tribal peoples levied by Roman commanders in the field. This is best demonstrated by the presence of non-Roman commanders at Roman *consilia*, or those instances when they hold substantial positions of command on the battlefield.²² Given the apparent lack of strictly applied formal categories of ally, the decisive factor may be the much more practical and realistic one of the proportion of participation/size of force and therefore the more intangible factor

13); Achaeans who served under a consul Domitius honour their own *strategos* (*SEG* XV 254); Mauretanian auxiliaries under their commander Gomon in the Second Slave War, Sicily, c.104 BC (*Diod.* XXXVI 5, 4).

¹⁹ Muttines (himself a Roman citizen by this date, *Liv.* XXVII 5, 7), *Liv.* XXXVIII 41, 12-14; local troops honour their commander Hephastion son of Alkaios of Sardis, appointed by the Roman *legatus* Q. Servilius Caepio to a garrison command in Maeonia, E. Lydia, c.129 BC (*BE* 1963, 220 = *TAM* V 1, 528). See also, e.g., the Chaeronaeans assisting Sulla, 86 BC (*Plut. Sulla* 17, 6-7); or the Poemaneni ordered by the Roman proconsul to send a garrison, under their own commander Nikander son of Menophilos, to Ilion in 80/79 BC (*OGIS* 443 = *IGR* IV 196 = *I.Ilion* 73).

²⁰ Four different schemes in P.A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, Oxford 1987, 169; Ilari, *Gli Italici*, cit., 25-27 n. 1; Yoshimura, *Die Auxiliartruppen*, cit., 479; Cheesman, *The Auxilia*, cit., 8.

²¹ See e.g. Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to Empire*, cit., 195 and note the pairing in *Cic. Balb.* 49, ... *qui sociis, qui foederatis in defendenda re publica nostra spem praemiorum eripi vellet?* For recent discussion of Roman treaties see J.W. Rich, *Treaties, allies and the Roman conquest of Italy*, in P. de Souza - J. France (Eds.), *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History*, Cambridge 2008, 51-75.

²² Participation at *consilia*: *Liv.* XXXIV 26, 4-6 (*principes Graeciae at consilium* of Flamininus, 195 BC), cf. XXXIV 33, 5 (*sociorum etiam principibus adhibitis habuit consilium*); *Liv.* XLIV 36, 8 (Macedonia, Pydna, 168 BC, *legati circa imperatorem ducesque externi erant...*). Major positions of command, e.g. *App. Syr.* 31 (Eumenes commands the left wing at Magnesia). Note the Athenian perspective on service at Pydna under Rome and the Attalids (Moretti, *ISE* I 35, transl. in Sherck, *Rome and the Greek East*, cit., no. 23): Kalliphanes «campaigned with the Romans and with King Eumenes' brothers Attalus and Athenaios».



of authority. In Rome's early campaigns in Greece, the allies frequently provided at least half of the military force – an explicit recognition of this situation is to be found in the treaty of c.211 BC with the Aetolians, which included clauses for the division of booty.²³ Throughout this period, Roman commanders commonly appear alongside foreign commanders, whether Attalid kings, Achaean generals, or Rhodian navarchs.²⁴ Although this sort of situation would appear to become less common over time, as both Rome's allies diminished in power and Rome's own forces and reach increased – so, for instance, Iugurtha's position at Numantia in 134/3 BC is clearly subordinate to Scipio and Rome – nonetheless such a situation never entirely disappeared, as Cicero's relationship with Deiotarus in 51 BC makes clear:²⁵ context and basic relations of power would therefore seem to be the defining factors.

At the opposite end of the scale it is no easier to distinguish the status of the smaller, often specialised, units of foreign troops regularly employed by Rome, or their commanders. There is little agreement among modern authors over whether Rome did, or did not, employ mercenaries among its *auxilia*.²⁶ Ideologically it was an important part of Roman self-presentation that they did not employ mercenaries, and the occasional explicit mention of their use in the third century is frequently treated both as exceptional and with moralising intent by our sources.²⁷ All the same, mercenaries certainly serve under Rome at one

²³ Roman-Aetolian treaty: Moretti, *ISE* II 87 = Sherk, *Rome and the Greek East*, cit., no. 2 (cf. Liv. XXVI 24, 11; Pol. IX 39, 1-3; XVIII 38, 5-9); joint campaigning and command, e.g. Pol. IX 42, 1-4, Liv. XXVI 26, 1-3, XXVII 30, 1-3.

²⁴ Liv. XXXI 44-46 (Romans with Attalus and others); Pol. XVIII 1, 3-4 (Achaean, Aetolians, and Rhodians at Nicaea with Flamininus); Pol. XXI 20, 3-21, 4 cf. XXX 1, 2 (general account of Attalid participation); Liv. XXX 33, 2 (Massinissa at Zama holding comparable position to Laelius). Note the negative perspective on such co-operation expressed in the Senate in Liv. XXXVIII 45, 9 (concerning Manlius Glabrio and Attalus, 189/8 BC). Foreign commanders occupy substantial roles in the Third Macedonian War also, as in Liv. XLII 58, 11-14 or XLII 65, 12-14.

²⁵ Iugurtha at Numantia: App. *Ib.* 89, Sall. *Iug.* 7-9, Vell. II 9, 4 (but compare already Liv. XXXVIII 20-23 for the treatment of the young Attalus, suggesting that this is as much about status of a prince in contrast to a king); Deiotarus in Cilicia: Cic. *Att.* VI 1, 14, *fam.* XV 4, 5.

²⁶ There is no adequate treatment of this problem. Cheesman, *The Auxilia*, cit., 8 perhaps comes closest in his simple observation that the Romans «... could imitate their opponents and raise mercenaries, although they might save their pride by including such contingents as "allies"». G.T. Griffith, *The Mercenaries of the Hellenistic World*, Cambridge 1935, devotes a mere two pages (234-235) to the question of mercenaries in the service of Rome, but while arguing for a distinction between mercenaries and auxiliaries, his list of examples rapidly loses sight of that distinction. Vice versa, L. Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army, from Republic to Empire*, London 1984, 23 appears to imply that all Roman auxiliaries were mercenaries (cf. Afzelius, *Die römische Kriegsmacht*, cit., 98). Neither J.A. Krasilnikoff, *Mercenary Soldiering in the West and the Development of the Army of Rome*, «ARID» XXIII (1996), 7-20 nor Hamdoune, *Les auxilia externa africains*, cit., 20-30 significantly advance the discussion. Contrast the rather different perspective offered by E. Gabba, *Il declino della milizia cittadina e l'arruolamento dei proletari*, in G. Clemente - F. Coarelli - E. Gabba (a cura di), *Storia di Roma*, II.1, Torino 1990, 691-695 at 692, that Roman auxiliary service replaced earlier local traditions of mercenary service.

²⁷ The *locus classicus* is the hiring of Celtiberians by the elder Scipiones in Spain, in 213-212 BC (principally Liv. XXIV 49, 7-8 (213 BC), and XXV 33 (212 BC)), with Livy's comments



remove (i.e. in the employ of a Roman ally, such as Hieron II or the Attalids), while the status, for instance, of Cretans serving Rome in the second century is very unclear indeed.²⁸ Crete was hardly under direct Roman control for most of this period, and yet the contribution of troops was not merely requested, but apparently “ordered”. Whether these troops served for pay, or merely in the expectation of booty and in order to keep the regional “superpower” favourable is unknown: in the most notorious case (171 BC), Livy employs both the verbs *rogare* and *imperare* of the Roman request for troops, and the Senate alludes to official friendship with the Roman People (the Cretans were however serving on both sides).²⁹ However, for the purposes of this discussion, it is not clear from the evidence that it made much, if any, difference to command structures. Smaller units of auxiliaries, whether local levies or mercenary units, almost universally come with their own commanders, who are in turn under the orders of the senior Roman commanders, either directly or at one remove.³⁰

One notable feature of these native commanders of *auxilia*, visible in Roman armies of the mid- to late Republic, is that they often appear to hold positions with Roman titles, despite their clearly non-Roman status. Examples from within literary texts of this practice are inevitably problematic, since they may simply reflect the indiscriminate use by Roman authors of what, for them, was standard vocabulary. However, Caesar’s use of the term *praefectus* for some of his Gallic cavalry commanders would seem to belong in a different category from

including the advice to Roman generals never to allow auxiliaries to outnumber Roman forces (XXV 33, 6; subsequent Roman campaigns in the East show little sign of heeding such advice). For the discourse over the use of mercenaries by Rome, e.g. Pol. III 109, 6-7, VI 52, Diod. XXIX 6, 1. See e.g. A.M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War and the Rise of Rome*, Berkeley 2006, 154 n. 158 for the wider currency in antiquity of the negative view of mercenaries in relation to a citizen army. Hamdoune, *Les auxilia externa africains*, cit., 20-30 explores the relationship between mercenaries and deserters (from the non-Roman side); by no means every instance of mercenary service under Rome can be so explained, but the theme is important, ideologically at least: note e.g. Liv. XXXIV 19, 3-9 (Spain, 195 BC), where the consul offers to buy the service of the Turditani, or Diod. XXXVII 18 (Italy, 90 BC) when the consul’s initial offer of citizenship to a Cretan is met by laughter and is followed by the more material offer of 1000 *drachmai*.

²⁸ Pol. III 75, 7 (Cretans provided by Hieron II, 216 BC); Liv. XXVIII 7, 4-6 (Attalids employing Cretans when fighting alongside Rome, 207 BC); Liv. XXXII 40, 4 (600 Cretans supplied to Flamininus by Nabis of Sparta); Liv. XXXVII 39, 10 (Cretans on the right flank at Magnesia, subsequently, XXXVII 41, 9-12, shown to be under Eumenes’ command); Liv. XXXVIII 13, 3 (Cretans amongst the Attalid forces which join Manlius Glabrio); Plut. *Aem.* 15-16, cf. Pol. XXIX 15, 1 (Cretans with Aemilius Paullus in 168 BC); Val. Max. IX 3, 7 (Cretans in Spain, 141 BC); Plut. *C. Gracchus* 16, 3 (Cretans in Rome, 121 BC); Diod. XL 1, 1-2 (Cretans in Rome, 69 BC, defending their record of service); Caes. *Gall.* II 7 (in Gaul, 57 BC).

²⁹ Liv. XLII 35, 6-7 (171 BC levy for Macedonian War), Cretan archers requested (*incertus numerus, quantum rogati Cretenses misissent*), and *legati* are sent to make the request; yet in Liv. XLIII 7, 1-4 (170 BC) Cretan envoys in Rome report that they sent as many as were ordered (*quantum sibi imperatum*). The same passage contains acknowledgement of Cretans serving Perseus also (cf. XLII 51, 7, XLII 58, 6). The Cretans are then told to demonstrate their friendship with the Roman People by recalling those serving on the Macedonian side.

³⁰ Cretan commanders are mentioned at Plut. *Aem.* 15, 4 (Harpalus); Liv. XXXV 28, 8 and 29, 1 (Telemnastus); Liv. XXXVIII 13, 3 (Leusus).



examples of such usage in say Livy or Cicero, since in the former case it is actually a Roman commander reporting on his own troops and consciously choosing to use such language. At the same time, Cicero's professed outrage at the idea of a Syracusan being placed in command of a Romano-Sicilian fleet in 71 BC, which Cicero claims would ordinarily have been commanded by a legatus, quaestor, or praetor (or even a *praefectus* or *tribunus militum*), in fact rather implies that such appointment of a non-Roman was by no means unknown, even if the title which Cleomenes of Syracuse either used, or was granted, remains obscure (although *praefectus* seems most likely).³¹ Moreover, epigraphic sources suggest that the practice visible in Caesar is not simply careless use of language. Two clear examples come from Sicily, where native Sicilians acting as the commanders of a special Sicilian garrison based at the sanctuary of Venus Erycina at Eryx in western Sicily are described as χιλίαρχοι (i.e. *tribuni militum*).³² A third example is the Thracian Amatokos, son of Teres, honoured at Chaeronea for his service under Sulla as a χιλίαρχος ἰππέων.³³ The title, which lacks a direct parallel, is most easily explained as a variation upon the normal Greek for *praefectus equitum*, rather than signifying the non-existent title of *tribunus equitum*. Both Sicilian and Thracian examples illustrate a process of "Romanisation" which has clear parallels in military, civic, and juridical contexts, namely the gradual adoption of Roman forms and terms.³⁴ Mommsen aptly commented on the Sicilian examples that, [*Videtur*] *dux pro tribuno fuisse, quod deinde Graeci ore rotundo ut solebant paullo inflatus extulerunt*.³⁵ The fact that Iugurtha learned Latin while serving in the camp of Scipio at Numantia is another illustration of the general processes involved, as well as offering one very simple explanation for the adoption of Roman titles, namely translation into a common tongue.³⁶ These instances are important indicators of the ways in which the military service of *auxilia* acted as a potential channel for integration in much the same way as Italian service in the Roman army is often

³¹ Cic. *II Verr.* V 82ff. Cleomenes is variously called *dux*, *praefectus*, and *imperator* by Cicero (V 89-91, 94); the last of these at least is patently ironic; the individual Sicilian ships' captains are also variously called *praefecti navium* (V 91) and *navarchi* (V 102), which pairing certainly implies little more than translation.

³² IG XIV 282 (Segesta, Greek *chiliarch* under Roman quaestor), 355 (Halaesa, Greek *chiliarch*); cf. CIL X 7258 (Eryx, fragmentary Latin text recording both *quaestor propraetore* and a *tribunus militum*, names lost).

³³ M. Holleaux, *Décret de Chéronée relatif à la première guerre de Mithradates*, in *Études d'épigraphie et d'histoire grecques*, Paris 1938, I, 143-159, with comments at 150.

³⁴ An apparent early example of the uncertainties of translation in the unusual choice of ἐπιμελητής for *praefectus* in Entella B1, Sicily (see M. Corsaro, *La presenza romana ad Entella: una nota su Tiberio Claudio di Anzio*, «ASNP» ser. 3, XII 3 (1982), 993-1032). Obvious examples of the general phenomenon include the *Lex osca Tabulae Bantinae* (M.H. Crawford, *Roman Statutes*, London 1996, I, no. 13) or the *Tabula Contrebiensis* (J.S. Richardson, *The Tabula Contrebiensis: Roman Law in Spain in the Early First Century B.C.*, «JRS» LXXIII (1983), 33-41).

³⁵ Comment *ad* CIL X 7258.

³⁶ Sall. *Iug.* 101, 6.



presumed to have done so.³⁷ The fact that commanders, who were in turn the local élite, offer the principal illustrations of this process should come as no surprise.

III. Rewards, citizenship, and *clientela*

There is no doubt that the native commanders of auxiliary units occupied a pivotal role, not simply in the chain of command, but in ensuring the loyalty, or otherwise, of such troops, as well as indirectly in the potential acculturation of such forces. Individuals can be found in close intimacy with Roman commanders, virtually their *contubernales* – whether Eumenes' brother Attalus in the Third Macedonian War, Iugurtha with Scipio Aemilianus at Numantia, or the Scythian Olcaba with Lucullus in the Mithridatic Wars.³⁸ Such proximity and trust entailed risk also. As already noted, Livy used the most famous case of such betrayal (by the Celtiberians of the elder Scipiones in Spain in 212 BC) to make precisely this point, but there are other examples, such as the use by the Italians of one of Iugurtha's sons to encourage the desertion of the Numidians serving under Sex. Caesar in the Social War in 90 BC, or the attempt by Olcaba to murder Lucullus.³⁹ The military service of 40 Spanish nobles under Tiberius Gracchus in 179 BC, to ensure the loyalty of their home community, is a good demonstration of the issues involved, combining hostage-taking with the more constructive – and potentially rewarding – role of military service.⁴⁰ The risks of desertion and betrayal highlight the importance of the local *princeps* for levying, leading, and maintaining, or winning over, the loyalty of these troops, and in turn the importance of the relationship to Rome of that local *princeps*.⁴¹

As already noted, one means by which that relationship could be reinforced was through the granting of citizenship (although, as the laughter of a Cretan soldier at the very idea illustrates, this was hardly a sufficient incentive in all cases).⁴² Whether Rome paid any of its *auxilia* or not (see above, nn. 17, 26, 27),

³⁷ For a recent discussion, see R. Pfeilschifter, *The allies in the Republican army and the Romanization of Italy*, in R.E. Roth - J. Keller (Eds.), *Roman by Integration: dimensions of group identity in material culture and text*, JRA Suppl. LXVI, Portsmouth RI 2007, 27-42, who adopts a deliberately negative assessment of the extent to which this might be true (acknowledged on p. 35).

³⁸ Attalus, Pol. XXX 1, 2; Iugurtha, Sall. *Ing.* 7-9; Olcaba, App. *Mith.* 79; cf. Cic. *Balb.* 40 for the general principle, and Dio XXVI fr. 89, 4 for the expectation.

³⁹ Iugurtha's son in the Social War, App. *civ.* I 42; Olcaba, App. *Mith.* 79.

⁴⁰ Liv. XL 47, 10.

⁴¹ See especially Yoshimura, *Die Auxiliartruppen*, cit. on this particular theme. Caes. *Gall.* V 5-7 well illustrates the concerns (but compare already the Gallic chieftain Contionatus described in Diod. XXXIV/XXXV 36). The case of Polybius is exemplary, beginning with his service as *hipparch* of the Achaeans (Pol. XXVIII 6, 9), negotiating demands of military service from Roman generals in the Third Macedonian War (Pol. XXVIII 13, XXIX 24), his subsequent transportation to Rome as a hostage (Pol. XXX 13, 8-11, XXX 32, cf. Paus. VII 10, 11, Liv. XLV 31, 9), his later service at Carthage alongside Scipio (Pol. XXXVIII 19-22 and esp. Amm. XXIV 2, 16-17), and his role in the reorganisation of Greece after 146 BC (Pol. XXXIX 3, XXXIX 8, 1, Paus. VIII 30, 8-9 and 37, 2).

⁴² Diod. XXXVII 18 (Italy, 90 BC).



it is certain that Rome frequently rewarded the *auxilia*, and in particular the leaders of those *auxilia*: such practice was an important part of encouraging and maintaining loyalty, as well as developing personal loyalty and friendship between Roman and native leaders. Most obviously, and as detailed extensively by Cicero in the *Pro Balbo*, such soldiers, and especially their commanders, could receive citizenship *virtutis causa*. The best known examples are the various African and mercenary commanders who transferred their loyalty from Carthage to Rome in the Punic Wars, such as Muttines and Moericus.⁴³ Cicero in the *Pro Balbo* lists a greater number of examples from the first century, but this need not be more than a reflection of his normal tendency to use *exempla* from the preceding two generations where possible. The famous bronze inscription from Asculum appears somewhat unusual, in that here we see an entire unit receiving citizenship, rather than the commanders alone – for which the unusual circumstances of the Social War might provide sufficient explanation on this occasion.⁴⁴ However, apart from the relatively limited use of *civitas virtutis causa*, it is important to emphasise (because it has been denied) that auxiliaries could also be rewarded in the “normal” fashion with *dona militaria*, *in contione*, as after the battle near Sycurium in Greece in 171 BC, when the disgraced Aetolian *duces* were sent to Rome for punishment, whereas «The Thessalians were praised before an assembly (*pro contione laudati*), and their leaders (*duces*) were also awarded presents for valour (*virtutis causa donati*)».⁴⁵ It is however true that there is, so far as I know, no evidence for auxiliaries participating in a triumph and distribution of booty at Rome, in contrast to the Italian allies.⁴⁶ Material rewards could also include substantial benefits such as land, as in the grants of land in Sicily made to various of those who had assisted Marcellus in 211 BC, or to the Gaetulians who had served under Marius (lands in

⁴³ Cic. *Balb. passim*, but esp. 5-6, 22-24, 26, and the list of individuals at 50-51. For Muttines, Liv. XXVII 5, 6-7, cf. *Syll.*³ 585 ll. 86-7; Moericus the Iberian, Liv. XXVI 21, 9-13. Compare the material collected in A. O'Brien-Moore, *M. Tullius Cratippus, Priest of Rome*, «YCS» VIII (1942), 25-49 at 38ff and in E. Badian, *Foreign Clientelae*, Oxford 1958, 302-308.

⁴⁴ ILS 8888 = CIL I² 709 = ILLRP 515, on which see N. Criniti, *L'Epigrafe di Asculum di Gn. Pompeo Strabone*, Milan 1970, esp. 43-48, 188-192; G.H. Stevenson, *Gn. Pompeius Strabo and the Franchise Question*, «JRS» IX (1919), 95-101 at 98-100. Earlier block enfranchisements of Italians *virtutis causa* are attested however, e.g. Marius and the Camerinum cohorts (Cic. *Balb.* 46, Val. Max. V 2, 8, Plut. *Mar.* 28, 3), or Campanian *equites* in 338 BC (Liv. VIII 11, 15-16) and 215 BC (Liv. XXIII 31, 10-11).

⁴⁵ Liv. XLII 60, 8-10. Compare, e.g. Liv. XXIX 35, 3 (rewards granted to Massinissa, his officers and troops after Zama), XXXVIII 23, 11 (praise of Attalus *in contione* by Manlius Vulso); Cic. *II Verr.* III 185-187 (military rewards *in contione* for *Siculos praeterea potentissimos nobilissimosque* in 71 BC). For further examples of rewards in the Republican period, see also V.A. Maxfield, *The Military Decorations of the Roman Army*, London, 126-127. C.S. Mackay, *Sulla and the Monuments: Studies in his Public Persona*, «Historia» XLIX (2000), 161-210 at 169 n. 27 asserts that such rewards are only attested jointly with citizenship, as in the Asculum inscription, but this ignores the literary evidence which contradicts that claim, and his discussion is limited to the problematic restoration of *Syll.*³ 744, which records uncertain honours for an Aetolian in the service of Sulla (which could be either material and/or citizenship).

⁴⁶ On Italian participation see Ilari, *Gli Italici*, cit., 140-142, and Pfeilschifter, *The allies in the Republican army*, cit., 31, 36-38.



North Africa, c. 103 BC).⁴⁷ Again, the point to be highlighted is that in the majority of these cases, it is the leaders of the *auxilia* who are singled out. This pattern is then repeated in the local honours which we can see granted to the individuals who organise and lead such units, a process which emphasises the important interaction between Roman treatment and local standing, and the crucial role in binding centre and periphery together played by the auxiliaries' own commanders.⁴⁸

IV. Conclusions

Although the evidence for *auxilia externa* under the Republic is surprisingly plentiful, it is probably not sufficient to identify significant trends over time, particularly in relation to specific practices such as structures of command. With that caveat in place, it is nonetheless tempting to speculate on possible changes in practice and developments in the later Republic, and in particular possible changes in practice after the Social War when the Italian *socii* no longer constituted a distinct part of the Roman army, with the result that the *auxilia* now constituted the principal secondary branch of the Roman army.⁴⁹ There are some grounds for suggesting that two particular phenomena appear to be more visible in the post-Social War period, and might therefore reflect an increasing incorporation and regularisation of *auxilia externa* in the structure of the Roman army of the late Republic. Firstly, the only securely identifiable examples of individual unit commanders holding Roman citizenship, noted above (§ II.i), belong to the post-Social War period. Secondly the only secure examples of native commanders using Roman titles likewise appear to belong to the post-Social War period. If these are genuine trends – and not, for instance, simply a function of the increasing quantity of evidence in the late Republic –, then they do provide some grounds for assuming increased integration and “Romanisation” of the *auxilia* over time. The granting of citizenship as a reward in particular to local elites, and the (continued) service of these men in command of non-citizen units is a very logical

⁴⁷ Liv. XXVI 21, 9-13; *Bell. Afr.* 56. For rewards to an individual, cf. also Liv XLIV 16, 4-7 (Onesimus, son of Pytho, a Macedonian *nobilis*, granted *ager publicus* in the territory of Tarentum in 169 BC). Zonar. VIII 15 has a story that Carthaginian allies (or mercenaries) deserted to Rome in exchange for land in Sicily in 250 BC. Note the demand for land in return for military service made by the Cimbri, Teutones and Tigurini in 109 BC, rejected by the Senate (Florus I 38, 1-3).

⁴⁸ E.g. *Syll.*³ 744 (cited above) records honours from Sulla within an honorific erected by the Aetolian league; *SEG* XV 254 (cited above); Moretti, *ISE* I 35 (cited above); *SEG* XLIV 867 and *BE* 1963, 220 from the war against Aristonicus in Asia Minor; *IG* XIV 282 and 355 for local commanders in a Sicilian garrison (cited above).

⁴⁹ Cf. McCall, *The Cavalry*, cit., 100-113 for the suggestion that the final transition from citizen to auxiliary cavalry was effected at the time of the Social War.



development and an obvious precursor to the later Imperial practice of granting the *auxilia* citizenship at the end of their service.⁵⁰

Such a conclusion is appealing, even if speculative. The more fundamental point that should be emphasised, however, is the simple fact of the widespread presence of local elites in a (subordinate) position of command, at the head of their own fellow soldiers, within most, if not all, Roman armies across the later Republican empire. The existence of such a situation should not come as a surprise, and is very much in line with the sort of flexible, adaptive, and frequently integrative (but of course also exploitative) imperialism that is so familiar in the Republican empire; but its significance for understanding processes of Romanisation and imperial control in the mid- to late Republic has almost certainly been greatly understated and deserves considerably more attention in future.

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⁵⁰ Cf. A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, Oxford 1973², 245-246, linking the practice of granting virgane citizenship, especially *virtutis causa*, with stages in the expansion of Roman power.