

State formation and the Social War

Introduction

In 43 BC an 80-year-old man named Statius was proscribed by the triumvirate. Knowing he was doomed, he threw open his house to all comers to help themselves to his property. The man was a senator, and according to Appian had ‘had great influence with the Samnites during the Social War’.¹ Statius was probably a member of a wealthy Samnite family, the Statii, known from their sponsorship of major building projects before the Social War, such as a temple at Pietrabbondante. After an important but unspecified role in the Social War, he became a citizen and rose to high office in the Roman state.² This anecdote reveals how much the lives of such Italian individuals had been transformed by the Social War.

There are many important questions still to answer about the Social War. Modern historiography seems to be growing at a considerable rate, attesting the vitality of scholarly interest in this pivotal conflict.³ Much recent debate has focused on the sources for the war and the motives of the allies, questioning whether Roman citizenship was ever their goal.⁴ These studies have usefully critiqued monolithic earlier explanations, and reinvigorated the debate over the diversity of reasons why the war was joined. Most scholars have accepted the consensus in the ancient sources that a desire for citizenship is evident amongst the allies in the second century BC, but some dispute whether a collective desire for citizenship was adhered to during the war.⁵ We need to consider a wide range of reasons to understand why the allies took part in the Social War; not only desire for citizenship, but also protection against agrarian reforms, interest in imperial exploitation, *provocatio* as defence against abuse, and ultimately a wish for independence from or co-existence with or the destruction of Rome.⁶ The issue is far from settled in modern scholarship,

¹ Appian 4.25.

² E. S. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1974, 204 n. 171; C. J. Dart, *The Social War, 91 to 88 BCE. A History of the Italian Insurgency against the Roman Republic*, Surrey – Burlington 2014, 232, thinks he was pro-Roman in the Social War, but this seems unlikely from Appian’s characterisation of him.

³ As is clear from Cappelletti’s online site on Italian constitutions:
<https://www.arcait.it/en/bibliografia/social-war/>. See H. Mouritsen, *Italian Unification. A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography*, London 1998; M. Pobjoy, ‘The First Italia’, in K. Lomas and E. Herring (eds), *The Emergence of State Identities in Italy in the First Millennium BC*, London, 2000, 187–211; S. Kendall, *The Struggle for Roman Citizenship. Romans, Allies, and the Wars of 91–77 BCE*, Piscataway NJ 2013; Dart 2014. Important overviews: E. Bispham, ‘The Social War’, in: A.E. Cooley (ed.), *A Companion to Roman Italy*, Malden 2016, 76–89; F. Santangelo, ‘The Social War’, in Farney, G.D. and G.J. Bradley (eds.) *The Peoples of Ancient Italy*. Berlin/New York: De Grutyer, 2017, 231–253.

⁴ Mouritsen 1998; Pobjoy 2000.

⁵ Dart 2014 has recently restated the arguments for the traditional view.

⁶ Well summarised by Patterson, J.R. 2012 ‘Contact, Co-operation, and Conflict in Pre-Social War Italy’, in S. Roselaar (ed.) *Processes of Integration and Identity Formation in the Roman Republic*, Leiden. 215–226.

with recent work highlighting the paradox of the allies fighting against the very state into which they hoped to be incorporated.⁷

Less plausible are recent arguments that there was little allied interest at all in Roman citizenship. We have near contemporary sources that contradict this: Cicero records an eye witness account of the meeting between Cn Pompeius and Vettius Scato, and reports that ‘the allies were aiming, not to rob us of our state, but to be received as members of it’.⁸ Allied interest in citizenship is also presupposed by events in the half century before the war, with the enfranchisements of Marius, the citizenship proposals of Fulvius Flaccus, and the expulsion of Italians from Rome enforced by the *lex Licinia Mucia*. It is true that a contemporary speech preserved in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* suggests that the allies wanted to conquer and destroy Rome. But it is important to note the rhetorical context of this speech, an attack under the Lex Varia on those thought to have favoured the allies. It is effectively anti-allied propaganda, and makes some implausible claims (such as the idea that the allies were underprepared). In addition, we should not overestimate the value of the allies’ ‘independence’ in the second century BC. Although allied states had nominal autonomy, in practice they had to reckon with what Fronda terms ‘a steeply unipolar hierarchy of Italian states’ behind Rome.⁹ This is particularly true for the independent but small-scale communities found in areas of the central Appennines such as Umbria, whose freedom of action in this period needs to be seen in a realistic light.

Another important area of recent research has focused on the relationship between Romanisation and the Social War. Brunt highlighted these links in his seminal article on the ‘Aims of the allies at the time of the Social War’, arguing that adoption by the allies of Roman cultural traits showed that they were also keen to ‘become Roman’ by gaining citizenship.¹⁰ This hypothesis has been undermined in modern scholarship on the grounds that it reflects 19th century nationalist ideas about cultural identity and because identity cannot be assumed to be an unambiguous reflection of citizenship, culture or language.¹¹ The lack of connection between cultural change and stance in the Social War is in any case evident from contradictory scholarly arguments. Some have argued that a lack of cultural Romanisation shows that allies such as the Samnites were eager to resist Rome in the war, whereas others have argued that the Romanisation of allies such as the Marsi shows that they were eager to fight to become Roman citizens.¹² This is because rebellion and Romanisation do not closely align, with both Romanised Marsi and less Romanised Samnites forming

⁷ Mouritsen 1998; Pobjoy 2000, 187-211.

⁸ Cicero, *Philippics* 12.27; see H. Galsterer, ‘Rom und Italien vom Bundesgenossenkrieg bis zu Augustus’ in M. Jehne, R. Pfeilschifter, *Herrschaft ohne Integration? Rom und Italien in republikanischer Zeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 2006), 293-308.

⁹ M.P. Fronda, *Between Rome and Carthage: Southern Italy during the Second Punic War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 28.

¹⁰ P.A. Brunt, ‘Italian Aims at the Time of the Social War’, *JRS* 55, 1965, 90-109; revised in P.A. Brunt, *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays*, Oxford 1988, 93-143.

¹¹ See e.g. Mouritsen 1998; G. J. Bradley, *Ancient Umbria: State, Culture, and Identity in Central Italy from the Iron Age to the Social War* (Oxford, 2000), chap. 5; F. Carlà-Uhink, *The "Birth" of Italy. The Institutionalization of Italy as a Region (3rd-1st Century BCE)*, de Gruyter, Berlin 2017.

¹² Samnites resistant: E. T. Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites* (Cambridge, 1967); Marsi enthusiastic for citizenship: Brunt 1998. G. Devoto, *Gli antichi Italici*, (2nd edition: Florence, 1951) argues for two poles amongst the allies.

key players in the revolt. Allegiances also do not neatly correspond to language groups. For instance, there were a mix of Latin and non-Latin speakers on the Roman side (evident for example from sling-shots inscribed in Venetic at Asculum), while the allies probably used Latin for much of their communication. But despite these complex issues it is undoubtedly true that the extensive cultural changes in Italy in the third and second century BC must be part of the undercurrents leading to war in 91 BC.¹³

Another interesting issue concerns the course of the war, in terms of Roman imperialism and Roman and allied strategy. Despite intensive interest in Roman imperialism in recent years, we still have many important issues to address with the Social War. Why did Rome not anticipate the war, given the increasingly close links of allied and Roman elites? Was war a Roman choice, or was it forced upon them? How did they approach fighting a war against forces that had formed a critical part of their armies for the last two centuries? Equally important and difficult to resolve are the questions from the allied viewpoint. How far had the allies planned for war? What did the allies think they could gain from a war with the most formidable military force in the Hellenistic Mediterranean? Was the war intentional or accidental?¹⁴

Recent scholarship has also highlighted the great diversity of the sources making up our tradition. There is some near contemporary material, such as epigraphic texts and the testimony of Cicero and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. We have lost many crucial works that must have provided the key narratives used by later sources, such as Sisenna's history of the war written in the 70s BC, or Livy's chapters in his *Ab Urbe Condita*.¹⁵ Much of our source material dates to at least a century later, and the inevitable hindsight that this brings leads to distancing and lack of full comprehension (for example, Appian on status divisions amongst Italians), or over-generalisation (several sources claim that all the peoples of Italy rebelled). A particular challenge is the simplifying approach that most sources adopt to the ethnic groups fighting on each side, seeing it as a war between Rome and various 'peoples' of Italy. In fact, as we shall see, this misrepresents the complexity of the ethnic situation, and in what follows I will pay particular attention to the tension between centrifugal and atomising forces amongst the allies.

It is thus worth emphasising the lack of easy answers and the complexity of the situation that we are discussing. A major end product of recent scholarly debate has been as much about the realisation of the limits of our knowledge, and the dissolution of the old consensus, as about answers. A war that we thought we understood with few issues has emerged in recent years as far more complex. My paper thus focuses on some of the problems and messier issues of the Social War, and the absence of overarching single explanations.

Approaches

One predominant conclusion from much recent scholarship seems to be the avoidance of meta-narratives, and the importance of looking to more localised

¹³ Galsterer 2006; Bispham 2016, 84.

¹⁴ Some consideration of these questions in Fronda 2010, 280-330, Kendall 2013, Dart 2014.

¹⁵ Sisenna: Cornell, *FRH* I 308; Santangelo 2017 emphasises the importance of these lost accounts.

interpretations.¹⁶ Critics argue that metanarratives are problematic as they impose undue order on the unruly chaos of actual events, are created by power structures and are inherently slanted. An awareness of these issues does not undermine all grand narratives, but it does help emphasise the importance of a multiplicity of theoretical standpoints. Mouritsen makes a persuasive case that Romanisation and the unification of Italy should be treated as one such grand narrative. The Romanisation paradigm, if we can talk of that, is by no means disregarded in modern scholarship, and there is much resistance to dropping it despite heavy critique. To my mind it remains a useful concept, particularly in terms of language change for instance, although its implications for identity are questionable. Nevertheless, the weakening of the Romanisation paradigm over the past few decades has allowed space for other concepts like state formation, network theory and globalisation to be explored. Recent trends thus encourage us to problematise the grand narrative about the Social War, and it is notable that contemporary scholarship has not sought a similar over-arching explanation for the course of the Hannibalic War.¹⁷

Scheidel has recently applied the concept of state formation to Rome in the second century BC.¹⁸ Following his lead, it is also worth applying this concept more broadly in Roman Italy, in terms of allied states in the period between the conquest and the Social War.¹⁹ In Umbria, for instance, trends towards greater social complexity begin before the conquest and continue in the third and second century BC.²⁰ Growing populations are evident in many allied areas, a characteristic now mostly agreed whether scholars take a high or low count approach towards the Roman census figures, based on expanding city areas and an increasing density of sites in field survey.²¹ We also see the scale of allied cities increasing, and the associated development of more educated elites, literacy, and social differentiation. The economies of Italian allied communities were becoming more sophisticated, with the intensification of agricultural activity, short and long-distance transhumance, and increasing participation in commercial traffic abroad in the Mediterranean in places such as Africa, Asia Minor, and Delos. These types of developments are particularly evident in areas of the Appennines such as Samnium, where Gualtieri and others have argued for the quasi-urban status of sites such as Monte Vairano. In other areas, state formation may regress or reverse (coastal Etruria is perhaps a case of

¹⁶ Mouritsen has a useful discussion of H. White's work on these lines in 'Hindsight and Historiography: writing the history of Pre-Roman Italy', in M. Jehne, R. Pfeilschifter, *Herrschaft ohne Integration? Rom und Italien in republikanischer Zeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 2006), 25. Cf. A. M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006) and other recent approaches to Roman imperialism informed by theories from International Relations.

¹⁷ E.g. Fronda 2010 emphasises the importance of local conditions in understanding the course of this war.

¹⁸ W. Scheidel, 'The demography of Roman state formation in Italy', in M. Jehne & R. Pfeilschifter (eds), *Herrschaft ohne Integration? Rom und Italien in Republikanischer Zeit*, (Frankfurt, 2006), 207–26.

¹⁹ Woolf (presentation at the ICS, London, 2016) noted the criticisms levelled at state formation as a model: Yoffee argued that a diversity of experiences is characteristic rather than a unilinear development; collapses are very common, and trends are more of states coming and going. James C. Scott asserts that state formation is not a positive development for those enclosed, and people escape if possible, especially in upland areas.

²⁰ Bradley 2000.

²¹ A. Lanauro (2011) *Peasants and Slaves. The Rural Population of Roman Italy (200 BC to AD 100)* Cambridge.

this, as may be second century Lucania). We also see an increasing complexity of institutional structures across allied Italy in the second century BC: magistrates, councils, and assemblies are attested in Italic epigraphy, and new allied institutions such as the quaestorship are often borrowed from Rome. Substantial complexity and control are implied by the requirements of treaties with Rome, as I have argued for Umbria. These treaties envisage allied authorities holding records of available fighting strength and people's wealth, probably through the institution of the census. The office of censor is widely attested in the epigraphy of allied communities in the second century BC, showing that a census was regularly practiced for military purposes. Similar conclusions about political organisation can be drawn for states that issue coinage in the third century, such as Tuder and Iguvium in Umbria. Coinage was used to pay for troop contingents to the Roman army. Whilst these trends are not universal and unilinear, the diversity of allied development in the second century BC is reflected in the variegated responses to the Social War.

Another useful theoretical perspective on allied Italy in the pre-Social War period can be obtained from theories of globalisation and networks. This period sees the increasing globalisation of Italian economies to reflect Mediterranean-wide cultural trends. This is visible through Hellenistic style architecture in towns and sanctuaries, the homogenization of pottery styles, and the greater uniformity evident in burials. The key development in this period culturally is perhaps that the koine that had affected Tyrrhenian Italy in the archaic and classical period becomes peninsular-wide in the third and second centuries. The sharing of cultural ideas and practices are enhanced by increasing sea (and probably river traffic), and new roads into the Appennines, such as the via Flaminia, that connect up different regions.²²

Increasing interconnections of Italian elites with their Roman counterparts are attested in this period, in terms of hospitality, mobility and intermarriage.²³ The allies had extremely close relations with Rome by the time of the Social War. This is attested by a range of sources for the period both before and during the Social War. For example, a Roman author claims that 'not only must [the allies] have known themselves, their resources, and their manpower, but their nearness to us and their alliance with us in all affairs enabled them no less to learn and appraise the power of the Roman people in every sphere' (*Rhet. Her.* 9.11). Cicero's defence of Roscius in 80 BC shows the close relations of the Roscii with Roman elite patrons, relationships that must predate the Social War (*Pro Roscio* 6.15). Even more striking are close links between allied leaders and their Roman counterparts attested before and during the war. Vettius Scato spoke to Pompeius Strabo as a 'friend at heart but by necessity an enemy' (*Cic. Phil.* 12.27), probably referring to earlier relations of *hospitium*. Poppaeius Silo was staying with Livius Drusus in Rome before Drusus was assassinated (Plutarch, *Cato the Younger* 1-2), and knew his family.

²² Sea traffic: see shipwrecks in Wilson, A. I. (2011) "Developments in Mediterranean shipping and maritime trade from the Hellenistic period to AD 1000". In D. Robinson and A. Wilson (eds), *Maritime Archaeology and Ancient Trade in the Mediterranean*. Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology, Oxford, 33-59; for roads, see F. Coarelli, 'Colonizzazione romana e viabilità', *Dialoghi di Archeologia* III, 6 (1988), 35-48.

²³ See Lomas, K. 2012 'The Weakest Link: Elite Social Networks in Republican Italy', in S. Roselaar (ed.) *Processes of Integration and Identity Formation in the Roman Republic*, Leiden. 197-214; Patterson 2012.

Furthermore, when Marius and Vettius Scato met in battle in 90 BC, their troops preferred to fraternise rather than fight: ‘the soldiers of each army recognized many of their hosts, their comrades, and finally many of those with whom they were bound by family ties’ (Diod. 37.15). Thus, links of friendship, hospitality, and intermarriage extended beyond the elite, and amongst the masses on either side, aided by their shared military service in campaigns such as against the Cimbri and Teutones.²⁴ This helps to explain why tension could build up for such a long time before it led to rebellion, and why the allies continued to seek political solutions to their lack of status well after the revolt of Fregellae in 125 BC.

The outbreak of the Social War

The consequences of these developments are important for understanding the backdrop to the Social War. Italian allied societies had in the third and second centuries BC become more complex and more organised, with a diversity of development trends. At the same time Italian communities were increasingly interlinked with each other and with Rome. Thus, when we come to considering the Social War, we need to reckon with a different scenario from previous wars such as the Roman conquest and the Hannibalic War.

Our sources provide various lists of those who joined the rebellion when it broke out in 91 BC.²⁵ The lists drawn from Livy and Diodorus represent summaries by later epitomisers, and are unlikely to reflect the full range of rebels. Neither include any Apulian peoples, for instance. The list taken from Appian is more complete.

Appian 1.39	Livy Ep. 72	Diodorus 37.2
Marsi	Picentes	Marsi
Peligni	Vestini	Samnites
Vestini	Marsi	Asculani
Marrucini	Paeligni	Lucani
Picentines	Marrucini	Picentes
<i>Frentani</i>	Samnites	<i>Nolani</i>
<i>Hirpini</i>	Lucani	
<i>Pompeiani</i>		
<i>Venusini</i>		
<i>Iapygii</i>		
Lucanians		
Samnites		
All others below a line from the Liris to the Adriatic gulf		

Our sources essentially conceive the rebellion as made up of the peoples of particular regions, although there are some city states too (the people of Pompeii,

²⁴ Dart 2014, 126 notes that Poppea Silo’s extensive military experience recorded by Plutarch must have come in an allied contingent in the Roman army.

²⁵ Peoples not listed by the other sources are italicised. Cf. Orosius 5.18.8; Eutropius 5.31.; Florus 2.6.5.

Venusia, Asculum and Nola). These lists are likely to reflect contemporary Roman records and so give us an insight into how the rebellion was understood at the time.²⁶ But the accuracy of such a vision is questionable, and it is tempting to see the influence of conservative Roman propaganda, and perhaps even the domination of Sulla, who identified whole peoples such as the Samnites as enemies.

For all the allies there was a tension between centrifugal forces of common aims such as citizenship and the need for collective defence, and more divisive forces such as individual and community self-interest. The fragmentation of Italian aims, both between and within societies, makes understanding the war in terms of ethnic blocks problematic. The Social War was a divisive issue like the Italian peoples' defence against Rome during the conquest, or in the war with Hannibal. There were some very difficult and liminal decisions to be made. Some allied towns made the choice to rebel; others were coerced; some held out against the rebels.

Some tendencies are readily notable. The Latins were on the whole loyal. The rebellion was most tightly adhered to in the central and southern Appennine areas. The Greek cities remained aloof. But there were no dominant rules. Two Latin colonies rebelled in this period (if we include Fregellae in 125 BC) despite the risks (on which see below). Areas such as Apulia and Campania were split, with many cities in these districts only joining the rebellion as a result of coercion. Some allies joined the rebellion later on, such as the Umbrians and Etruscans. Many must have shared the aims of the rebels but will have been deterred by the steep military odds: according to Sallust 'all Italy defected in spirit' (*Histories* 1.18). In many ways the surprise is that the revolt involved so many of the allies, given the challenges they faced, and that it spread more widely in spite of the fierce fighting in 90BC.

One important factor is the influence of previous conflicts, notably the Hannibalic War. There are strong parallels with the defections against Rome in the Hannibalic War, and the influence of pre-existing interconnections is visible. Appian (1.39) says that 'when the revolt broke out all the neighbouring peoples declared war at the same time, the Marsi, the Peligni, the Vestini, the Marrucini', a group that had cooperated closely in the period of the Roman conquest. He adds that after them came 'the Picentines, the Frentani, the Hirpini, the Pompeiani, the Venusini, the Apulians, the Lucanians, and the Samnites, all of whom had been hostile to the Romans before'. Appian stresses that the stance of the rebels was influenced by their previous wars against Rome. But this is somewhat misleading, given that the Venusini were Latins who had been loyal previously, and the Picentines and the Pentri amongst the Samnites were also loyal in the Hannibalic War yet joined the Social War rebels. Fronda has recently argued that the rebels in the Social War were much more coherent and organised than in the Hannibalic War.²⁷ They were more prepared for the conflict, and we have fewer reports of internal divisions within Italian communities. But it is important to bear in mind the very different nature of our source material, which probably conceals greater complexity. The detailed narrative of Livy and Polybius for the Second Punic War provides much more nuance on such divisions than Appian and other sources for the Social War.

²⁶ E. T. Salmon, 'Notes on the Social War', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 89 (1958), 159-184, at 162.

²⁷ Fronda 2010, 329.

Another important issue is the role of ethnic or league structures of Italian groups. Although they are commonly assumed to have been dismembered systematically by Rome, Bourdin (this volume)²⁸ has argued for a greater continuity of ethnic leagues after the conquest, highlighting the evidence for the continuity of federal sanctuaries such as the Villa Fidelia for the Umbrians, and the Fanum Voltumnae, perhaps the Campo della Fiera at Orvieto, for the Etruscans. He suggests that these leagues were the basis for the levying of ethnic contingents of troops that served in the Roman army, an organisation visible in Fabius Pictor's summary of Roman forces in 225 BC. Censorial types of magistrates, such as the Oscan *kenzur*, were needed for this levy and hence crop up in Italic epigraphy. Rome thus worked with leagues, rather than against them. The implications for the Social War are very intriguing, as it implies greater continuity with pre-conquest structures, and that ethnic leagues provide the basis for allied armies. Allied armies in the Social War would thus naturally fall into coherent ethnic blocks.

Ethnically based contingents in the allied armies are clearly attested in our ancient sources. But the role of leagues in recruitment for the Social War is uncertain, and the idea that the allies fought as ethnic 'peoples' is an over-simplification. Many cities are likely to have had individual treaties with Rome, indicating their own troop-raising powers.²⁹ Continuity in sanctuary life is not clear evidence for political structures, which may have been viewed with suspicion by Rome. Furthermore, in most cases 'ethnic armies' will generally have only included a portion of the centres within a particular region. Many Etruscan and Umbrian centres are likely to have remained loyal. Amongst the Samnites, the Hirpini were probably a partial exception. It is also striking that the named rebels in our sources include cities as well as peoples, such as the Pompeiani and the Venusini. For what it's worth, the epigraphic and numismatic evidence from the allies does not suggest a strong ethnic adherence. The slingshots found at Asculum tend to name 'Italians' or the cities the participants belonged to (Asculum, Firmum, Opitergium), rather than ethnic groupings.³⁰ The coinage emphasises *Italia* (in Latin) or its Oscan equivalent *Vitelium*, although one issue does name the Samnites (*Safinim*). Remaining ethnic leagues would thus not always have had the adherence of all the people within that group.

It is also important to consider the course of the war. We tend to think of it in terms of peoples. But any attempt to map the war shows the simplistic nature of this vision, and armies and battles are unlikely to have respected the neat territorial boundaries marked on maps.³¹ At the opening of the war allied forces immediately besiege loyal centres. The narrative of the war records a few set piece battles between large armies, many sieges, and various small skirmishes – the latter two types of battle were likely to be predominant, and add to the complexity of the picture. In a few cases such as Pinna and Asculum we hear about internal splits between pro- and anti-Roman factions in these towns. However, the distribution of Roman citizenship and the mixing of populations in many areas of Italy in the second century BC make this likely on a wide scale. We have the key example of Minatius Magius, a loyal individual from a rebel community (discussed below), examples of betrayals of cities

²⁸ **Editors, please check.**

²⁹ For Umbria, see Bradley 2000, 118-128.

³⁰ Glande: *ILLRP* 1089-1102; Warmington, *Remains of Old Latin*, 213; Carlà-Uhink 2017, 380.

³¹ For one attempt, see Cornell, T., and Matthews, J. F., *Atlas of the Roman World* (London, 1982).

such as Nola, and can see the town by town progress of the war, particularly in Campania. There only the Pompeiani are listed initially as rebels by Appian. In 90 BC Nola was pro-Roman but captured by Papius Mutilus. Papius then used the Nolani and the Romans who joined his side (these proved to be the soldiers rather than officers), and went on to capture Stabiae, Surrentum and Salernum (Appian 1.42). Unlike in the Hannibalic War, Capua remained loyal (Cic. *Leg.* 2.3.3). In the following year, 89 BC, Sulla besieged and captured Herculaneum and Pompeii. He destroyed Stabiae, defeated the allied general Cluentius before Nola and besieged that city. Nola was still holding out when Sulla marched on Rome in 88 BC. Changes of side and changes of allegiance of the inhabitants and garrisons present indicate the difficulty they had in negotiating the pressures on them: few will have been able to make unconstrained decisions purely on the basis of principles.

The position of the Latins in the Social War is also very intriguing. If we consider the Gracchan period too, it is notable that two Latin colonies, Fregellae and Venusia, rebel against Rome, in contrast to their loyalty in the Hannibalic War (leaving aside rejection of manpower demands). Both disloyal colonies have been explained in terms of their unusually mixed populations, with substantial Oscan speaking elements due to immigration, but I doubt that either are particularly unique in this. Narnia in Umbria and Puteoli in Campania experienced similar immigration, which must have been common for many colonies in the second century BC.³² Fregellae must have expected more support from other Latin cities, which was not forthcoming. The rebellion of Venusia may be connected with its position deep in allied southern Italy, and its distance from Roman retaliation. It is also possible that the Latins may have delayed enthusiastic participation in the war until the passage of *lex Julia* in late 90.³³

But most Latin colonies do play an important role as strongholds and as refuges for Roman forces in the early part of the war. Their desire for Roman citizenship and dissatisfaction with its refusal by Rome seems evident from the fact that some colonies did rebel, but they faced difficult choices. Hence the varied responses by different colonies, and it is unclear to what extent they acted as a coherent block. It is ironic that Roman strategy comes to depend on colonies founded (on the whole) two centuries earlier or more. This is often taken as proof of some Roman strategic genius and the foresight of their ancestors (so Cicero *Agr.* 2.73).³⁴ In fact, without hindsight it is implausible that Rome could have predicted anything like the Social War in the period around 300 BC. The fact that Rome made these colonies Latin rather than Roman, and thus prone to the same fears as the other allies, demonstrates this quite clearly.³⁵ There is also evidence that the Senate was alarmed by the prospect of a wider Latin rebellion occurring. Soon after the start of the war, the Senate instructed Julius Caesar, the consul of 90 BC, to restore the temple of Juno Sospita (Cic. *Div.* 1.4; 1.54; *Obsequens* 55). This was a Latin cult

³² G. J. Bradley, 'Colonization and identity in Republican Italy', in G. J. Bradley, J.-P. Wilson (eds), *Greek and Roman Colonization: Origins, Ideologies and Interactions* (Swansea, 2006) 161-87, at 174.

³³ Mouritsen 1998; Kendall 2013.

³⁴ G. J. Bradley, 'The nature of Roman strategy in Mid-Republican colonization and road building' in T. Stek, J. Pelgrom (eds), *Roman Republican Colonization: New Perspectives from Archaeology and Ancient History*, Papers of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome 62 (2014) 60-72.

³⁵ For Latin as well as allied vulnerability to Roman abuses, see Diod. 37.12.

worshipped collectively by Rome and Lanuvium, in an arrangement that dated back to at least 338 BC (Livy 8.14). The action may have been in response to an omen that Cicero describes as ‘the sign considered by the soothsayers the most ominous of all—the shields at Lanuvium were gnawed by mice’. This omen occurred ‘at the outbreak of the Marsian War’, and suggests that the Romans were experiencing considerable anxiety about their relationship with the Latins.³⁶

There is also the issue of whether support for the rebellion was clearly divided according to class lines. It is likely that there is a class outlook, with the elite favouring Rome and the masses the insurgents, given that similar divisions had occurred in the Hannibalic War, and the insurgents sometimes freed or treated leniently the popular element in the cities they captured.³⁷ But there is no evidence that this is a determining factor; it is implausible that the allied elite opposed gaining the citizenship as too much benefit was entailed. The attitude of the masses is more difficult to ascertain. The allied soldiery is unlikely to have served in such a difficult war without some form of commitment to the allied side beyond monetary reward. In fact, the story of the Cretan on the Roman side disdaining the offer of citizenship emphasises the motivation of ideals rather than mercenary rewards for most allied soldiers.³⁸ But are also other cases: Magius’ Hirpinian legion fights for Rome, and the troops of Marius and his opponent fraternise, implying more a shared than divided outlook.

The Realist perspective recently pioneered by Eckstein is also useful here its emphasis on the unpredictability of war.³⁹ Many wars are not predicted by their participants, and the Social War was clearly a surprise to Rome. The allies were more prepared than in the Hannibalic War, but war breaks out inopportune for them through the massacre of Romans at Asculum and death of Drusus. Understanding the participants’ choices is extremely difficult in these circumstances. The allies may have envisaged withdrawal and armed negotiations rather than outright war.⁴⁰ Poppaeus was trying to negotiate a political solution to the allied desire for citizenship before the outbreak of war, when staying at Drusus’ house. He must have known that they could not win a straight fight against Rome. Even after Asculum the allies sent an embassy to Rome, to see if a peaceful resolution was still possible. This raises the question of whether the allies had different long-term outcomes in mind, and were not planning to win a long attritional war against Roman forces. Alternatively, perhaps the allies rebelled as they expected support from all non-citizen communities in Italy, support which was not fully forthcoming. Thus the outcome may well be irrespective of the plans of either side.

From a rational perspective the military chances of success for the allies might appear negligible. Why then revolt? This is worth questioning, but it is notable how often honour, shame, and religious probity come up in stories about Roman abuses

³⁶ Schultz, C. (2006) ‘Juno Sospita and Roman insecurity in the Social War’, in C. Schultz & P. Harvey (eds), *Religion in Republican Italy*, Cambridge, 207-227; E. Orlin, *Foreign Cults in Rome. Creating a Roman Empire* (Oxford University Press; Oxford 2010), 188-89.

³⁷ E.g. Appian 1.42 (Vidacilius in Apulia).

³⁸ Diod. 37.18; Bispham 2016, 83.

³⁹ Eckstein 2006, 186-190.

⁴⁰ Dart 2014, 127.

in the second century, and the powerful role they play in ancient thinking.⁴¹ Allied decisions need to be understood on their own terms. The famous description in Velleius of the justification of the allied cause, echoed in Appian, may reflect allied grievances as expressed by sympathetic Roman patrons in Roman political settings.⁴² The importance of political equality to the allied elite is also evident in Appian's account.⁴³ The allies knew that Rome had been open to outsiders for much of its past, a fact advertised in mythical and historical stories about Rome's past. These stories were widely shared amongst Italian communities, for instance the wolf and twins on the Etruscan mirror from Bolsena, the many representations of Hercules, and the Greek histories discussing the wandering founders of cities along the Tyrrhenian seaboard. All of this shared cultural heritage emphasised interconnections and Roman openness to outsiders, which must have stimulated allied ambition.⁴⁴

Velleius' text could reflect demands made to the Senate in late 91, if Kendall's reconstruction of the allied embassy to Rome at this point is correct. It is worth emphasising the complexity on the Roman side too. The 'Senate' as a unified actor was as ever a generalisation in Roman politics. The allies must have been aware of fissures in Rome and perhaps thought a short-term conflict might work. The passing of the lex Julia, conceding citizenship even in a limited form, shows that some in the Roman Senate regarded the allied demands as justified. So the allies made the right calculation, but probably underestimated the desperate ends to which they would be forced. A catastrophic war was therefore unlikely to have been the intended outcome of either party.

Etruria and Umbria

I now want to look more in more detail at the role of the Umbrians and Etruscans. Etruria and Umbria are an interesting case study, particularly in terms of why they did not join the revolt earlier. There are a range of issues as to why they became involved and why they were different from other allies. For instance, does the course of conflict here reflect more intense links with the Roman aristocracy? Fronda notes the Roscii have relations of *hospitium* with the Metelli, Servilii and Scipiones which must date to before the Social War.⁴⁵ Such links were likely to be widespread in Umbria. But there is no particular reason why Umbria should be unique in this. Many of the allied leadership, such as Poppaedius Silo and Vettius Scato, are attested as having links of *hospitium* with Roman nobles; the Latin-speaking Marsi will also have been closely linked to Rome through the via Valeria. Are the Umbrians and

⁴¹ Cf. on similar considerations about imperial strategy, S. P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy. Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley, CA, 1999), ch. 5.

⁴² Velleius Paterculus 2.15: *Quorum ut fortuna atrox, ita causa fuit iustissima: petebant enim eam civitatem, cuius imperium armis tuebantur: per omnis annos atque omnia bella duplice numero se milium equitumque fungi neque in eius civitatis ius recipi, quae per eos in id ipsum pervenisset fastigium, per quod homines eiusdem et gentis et sanguinis ut externos alienosque fastidire posset.* The fortune of the Italians was as cruel as their cause was just; for they were seeking citizenship in the state whose power they were defending by their arms; every year and in every war they were furnishing a double number of men, both of cavalry and of infantry, and yet were not admitted to the rights of citizens in the state which, through their efforts, had reached so high a position that it could look down upon men of the same race and blood as foreigners and aliens. Cf. Appian BC 1.39.

⁴³ Bispham 2016, 82.

⁴⁴ Florus 2.17 with this argument; Dart 2014, 31.

⁴⁵ Fronda 2010, 317.

Etruscans restrained by various factors or is there a lack of enthusiasm for the citizenship? It would be odd if they had wholly different aims from the other rebels – why would they join the revolt at all in that case? In fact, the evidence quite clearly confirms that citizenship was an issue for them alongside landholding rights.

The first we hear of them in relation to the crisis is that they are called to Rome by the consul to oppose Drusus. Appian says that they ‘had the same fears as the Italians’, which was ‘because they thought that the Roman public domain (which was still undivided and which they were cultivating, some by force and others clandestinely) would at once be taken away from them, and that in many cases they might even be disturbed in their private holdings’ (*Civil Wars* 1.36). Thus Appian does not say that they were opposed to Drusus’ enfranchisement schemes; and he implies that other Italians were equally concerned about the threat of his agrarian legislation.⁴⁶ Late in the following year, 90 BC, Appian describes the inhabitants of Umbria, Etruria and other ‘neighbouring peoples on the other side of Rome’ as being moved to revolt (*Civil Wars* 1.49). This seems to imply the potential involvement of the Faliscans, Ligurians and perhaps also Cisalpine Gauls.⁴⁷ The Senate in response took two actions, garrisoning the coast with freedmen due to the scarcity of recruits, and passing legislation to ensure that loyal allies would be enfranchised. Appian says that ‘this was welcomed in Etruria’, implying that citizenship was an issue for the Etruscans, although he does not specify the Umbrians too.

Joining the rebellion is a curious decision for the (or better, some) Etruscans and Umbrians to take at this stage in the light of the course of the war. The initial assault by allied forces had failed to overcome Rome, and the allies were starting to suffer reverses. The terrible consequences of the war were becoming increasingly evident. This suggests that the draw of rebellion was strong for some Umbrians and Etruscans, and that they shared the main aims of the rebels. They perhaps also knew that considerable support would be forthcoming and that they would not be alone in joining the rebellion at this point. This also seems to have been a major point of crisis from a Roman perspective, given that the recruitment of ex-slaves was contrary to custom, especially at a point shortly after the Second Sicilian Slave War, and given that they were effectively conceding the main point of principle over which they had forced the war a year before.

The surviving elements of the Livian tradition provide a different emphasis to Appian. Livy (Epit. 74) records that the Umbrians and Etruscans did rebel, and that they were subdued by Aulus Plotius, a *legatus*, and Lucius Porcius Cato, a praetor (or pro-praetor). Florus and Orosius take a similar line, stressing the destruction and labour entailed by the rebellion.⁴⁸ There are also a few towns mentioned by Sisenna in his history of the war, indicating they were involved in some way.⁴⁹ Appian is of course a very summary account. It is dangerous to assume that Etruria and Umbria were not

⁴⁶ Cf. L. Cappelletti, ‘Etruschi ed Umbri nella guerra sociale’, in H. Heftner – K. Tomaschitz (eds.), *Ad Fontes. Festschrift für G. Dobesch* (Wien, 2004), 229–236, at 234.

⁴⁷ Appian *BC* 1.49: ‘While these events were transpiring on the Adriatic side of Italy, the inhabitants of Etruria and Umbria and other neighbouring peoples on the other side of Rome heard of them and all were roused to revolt.’ Bispham 2016, 87, suggests that Appian may here mean the ‘culturally’ close Latins, which fits the severity of the situation, but strains the meaning of the text.

⁴⁸ Orosius 5.18.7; Florus 2.6.

⁴⁹ 62, 78, 84 Cornell,

involved in the rebellion on the grounds that he does not clearly mention a revolt there. Similar methodological concerns apply to the other sources, in the Livian tradition, but their positive indications of rebellion and serious fighting should be taken seriously.

Modern scholars have tended to place considerable weight on the absence of information about the Umbrian and Etruscan revolt in Appian, and have often speculated about which cities were involved, usually on the basis of those mentioned in Florus and Sisenna. For instance, Heurgon argued that the revolt concerned inland Etruria, an area of prosperous landowners, and Tiberine Umbria.⁵⁰ These two districts, he believed, shared economic interests and social structures. Harris suggests there was a revolt, but that it only involved a few towns, probably Iguvium and Tuder, mentioned in the fragments of Sisenna.⁵¹ Sisani says there was little extent to the revolt, and it was confined to the subaltern classes with the elite opposing the extension of citizenship (see above on the class dimension to such decisions).⁵² Amann takes a more qualified position, suggesting that landholding was more decisive than citizenship, and that the close links between the two peoples effectively conjoined them in their decision.⁵³

Kendall and Dart have recently discussed the question in some detail.⁵⁴ They take Orosius' comment about very great cost in blood and difficult task of reducing the Etruscans and Umbrians as a sign of a tough but brief campaign, probably lasting from summer to autumn 90 BC. They point out that southern Umbria was vulnerable to Roman forces and was divided by formidable barriers from other allies; nevertheless, we do not know if the rebellion involved northern Umbrians on the far side of the Apennines, who would be readily accessible from Picenum.

If the fighting was limited to just a few towns in the Tiber valley this would explain the pattern in the sources, with Appian equivocal and others identifying fighting clearly. But the evidence is easily readable as substantial, and in fact there is no reason to accept that only the towns mentioned by Sisenna were involved. The references to towns in Sisenna were cited by Nonius for their grammatical interest, and there may have been many more towns listed. Florus' mention of the destruction of Ocriculum is plausible, and may have affected the recently discovered settlement alongside the Tiber as well as the fortified area under the modern town.⁵⁵

Etruscan and Umbrian towns were bound together in the decision. There is plenty of historical precedent for this tradition of cooperation, such as in the Sentinum campaign, and in the joint frequentation of federal sanctuaries at the Villa Fidelia in

⁵⁰ J. Heurgon, 'L'Ombrie à l'époque des Gracques et de Sylla', in *Problemi di storia e archeologia dell'Umbria*. Atti del Convegno di Studi Umbri, Gubbio, 26-31 maggio 1963, (Perugia 1964), 113-131.

⁵¹ W. V. Harris, *Rome in Etruria and Umbria* (Oxford, 1971), 217.

⁵² Sisani S., *Fenomenologia della conquista. La romanizzazione dell'Umbria tra il IV sec. a.C. e la guerra sociale* (Rome, 2007) 62ff.

⁵³ P. Amann, *Die antiken Umbrer zwischen Tiber und Apennin unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Einflüsse aus Etrurien*, (Wien 2011), 172ff.

⁵⁴ Kendall 2013, 342-353; Dart 2014, 143-146.

⁵⁵ Bradley 2000, 218; S. Hay, S. Keay and M. Millet, *Ocriculum (Otricoli, Umbria): An Archaeological Survey of the Roman Town* (Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome 22 (London: 2013), ch. 6 for recent archaeological investigations.

Umbria and the Fanum Voltumnae in Etruria.⁵⁶ This political collaboration is particularly striking in the light of the alleged Roman policy of divide and rule. Economic interests might be shared, but in fact there is little evidence to suggest that the Umbrians shared the supposedly peculiar social structure of Etruria (which is itself I think based on rather thin foundations, especially for this late date). There is still less reason to argue that they were disinterested in the citizenship. Landholding is probably important to them, but there is no evidence that it is the dominant issue, and holding the citizenship would go a long way towards enabling them to resist further Roman proposals to distribute any *ager publicus* they were occupying.

A substantial if brief rebellion is likely therefore to have taken place in Etruria and Umbria. The full extent of their rebellion cannot be fully understood given the nature of our sources, but it may well have involved more than those cities that happen to be mentioned in the sources, and (if only potentially) the support of peoples outside these regions. But it is very unlikely that all Umbrians and all Etruscans were involved, despite the naming of these entire peoples by our sources. The conquest of both regions had left a patchwork of different status groups living alongside one another (undoubtedly another cause of allied stupefaction at the Roman Senate's intransigence). Both regions were split between allies, Latins and Romans. In Umbria the spread of citizenship before the war is attested through the actions of Marius, who enfranchised two cohorts from allied Camerinum and individuals from allied Iguvium and Latin Spoletium.⁵⁷ In fact, a similar pattern is already evident much earlier during the Roman conquest, where cities like Camerinum probably stood apart from the conflict because they already had a favourable treaty with Rome. Determining which Etruscan cities were involved in the Social War is particularly difficult. Fiesole is mentioned by Florus as a city destroyed, so presumably it had joined the insurgency. Volaterrae is another likely participant given its anti-Sullan stance. The Tiber valley towns close to Umbria were identified as insurgents by Heurgon: Perusia would seem highly likely, and perhaps also Arretium and Cortona. Southern Etruscan towns like Caere and Tarquinia seem unlikely to have been involved, as Rome was very close by, and in the case of Caere, the inhabitants already had Roman citizenship.

The example of the Hirpini in Samnium makes for an illuminating parallel.⁵⁸ In the Second Punic War most of the Hirpini had supported Hannibal. One group, the Mopsii of Compsa, had not and were protected by the Romans.⁵⁹ In the Social War the Magii from Aeclanum provide another example of internal splits. Their choice was probably influenced by the family's tradition of pro-Roman service in the Hannibalic War. Minutius Magius raised a legion of Hirpini (so not just elite, but masses too) and assisted in Sulla's sieges of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and the occupation of Compsa. In 89 Sulla attacked and burnt the wooden walls of Aeclanum, which had joined the *socii*, and both Compsa and Aeclanum were

⁵⁶ F. Coarelli, 'Il rescritto di Spello e il santuario "etnico" degli Umbri', in *Umbria Cristiana. Dalla Diffusione del culto al culto dei santi* (secc. iv-x). Atti del xv Congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto medioevo, Spoleto 23-28 ottobre 2000, (Spoleto, 2001), 737-747.

⁵⁷ Bradley 2000, 197.

⁵⁸ E. Isayev, 'Italian perspectives from Hirpinia in the period of Gracchan land reforms and the Social War', in Gardner A, Herring E, Lomas K (eds) *Creating ethnicities and identities in the Roman world.*, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, (London, 2013), 9-32.

⁵⁹ Livy 23.1.1-3

destroyed. Magius seems to have profited from the situation, with his two sons rising to the praetorship, and a Magius later becoming prefect of Egypt. Isayev has pointed out that these pro-Roman and anti-Roman opponents would be indistinguishable in archaeological record, and must have shared the same Hirpinian identity. Crucially we know about this complex situation only because Velleius had ancestors from here whose loyalty to Rome he celebrated. In fact, divisions similar to Aeclanum are also likely to have existed within many Umbrian and Etruscan towns.

Our understanding of second century and Social War developments thus depends on sources who generally rationalise this complex situation in ethnic terms, a rationalisation often adopted in modern accounts. We are not dealing with all 'Umbrians' and 'Etruscans', but some of them; they should not be understood as unified ethnic actors, although ethnicity is a factor in their difficult choices.

Overall perspective

There is no doubt that the ethnic identities of the Italian allies, developed over many centuries during the first millennium BC, were important in determining the shape and course of the Social War. Many allied communities acted in concert with others of the same ethnic groupings. Rebel military forces seem to have been organised in ethnic contingents, although there are also cases of leaders having different ethnicity from the troops they commanded.⁶⁰ The historic links between Italian ethnic groups from the conquest and the Hannibalic War also played a significant role in the Social War. Some Etruscan and Umbrian cities collaborated together, as did the (or most) Marsi and other central Appennine peoples, and the (or most) Samnites and Lucanians (grouped together in Appian's list). Clearly ethnicity was a useful mobilising tool in some circumstances, such as in the appeal to *Safinim* (probably Samnium) on some allied coin issues.

But this should not be pushed too far, and the nature of the rebellion is not one purely of territorial blocks. We should not, for instance, see the revolt in terms of an Oscan and a Latin-speaking block, or an Umbro-Etruscan block, or in terms of 'national groups' against Rome.⁶¹ The allied choices were determined at a range of different levels: pan-regional (*Italia/víteliú*); regional or ethnic ('The Samnites'); cities; and intra-community. Tension often existed between these priorities, such as at Pinna where a faction favoured remaining loyal to Rome despite the allegiance of other Vestini to the rebellion with their neighbours amongst the Marsi, Paeligni and Marrucini. Ethnic identities were not as decisive a factor in preferences that they might initially seem to be. The result is a fragmented patchwork, more like a series of mini-civil wars rather than a straightforward conflict between Rome and external allies.

Strategy for the allies was thus very difficult. Hence the importance for them of creating rallying cries through various means, such as the designation of various successive capitals, the unifying concept of *Italia*, and the legends on coinage.⁶²

⁶⁰ Dart 2014, 111-115.

⁶¹ Salmon 1958, with the critique of E. Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men. Greek, Roman, and Modern Perceptions of Peoples from the Central Apennines* (Oxford, 1995), 212.

⁶² A. Giardina, 'L'identità incompiuta dell'*Italia romana*', in *L'Italie d'Auguste à Dioclétien* (Rome, 1994) 1-89, 57 n. 209; Carlà-Uhink 2017, 372-85.

Ironically, as is well known, these symbols of Italian unity drew much of their inspiration from Roman models. This includes the weight, denomination and many of the motifs on the coinage; the nature of the allied counter-Rome at Corfinium, if Diodorus is right in his description;⁶³ the use of the Latin language on coinage and very likely in allied military and diplomatic communication; probably also the idea of the Italian allies as an identifiable confederation, stimulated by their participation in Roman wars such as against the Cimbri and Teutones in 104-100 BC. Romanisation thus facilitated rebellion against Rome.

Inspiration also came from the allies' own mythical and historic past. The allies, for instance, may have performed a Sacred Spring during the war, as this ritual is discussed by Sisenna in book four of his history of the war.⁶⁴ The Sacred Spring was an origin myth for many of the allied participants in the war, and instituting another at this point must have emphasised the interconnections of the Samnites, Lucanians and other central Appennine peoples. It is also evident in the reference to the bull on allied coinage and on sling-shots, the totemic animal of the Samnites which they are said to have followed in a Sacred Spring.⁶⁵ The reference to Bacchus on allied coinage may be another reference to their mythical past, given that this was a deity whose worship was forbidden to allied (and Roman) communities by the Senate in 186 BC.⁶⁶

The intention of such rallying points is presumably to act against the type of atomising and disuniting forces of self-interest and historical enmities that Fronda identifies as erupting in southern Italy in the Hannibalic War after Cannae. Fronda regards the situation as different in the Social War, when a further century of Roman hegemony after the defeat of Carthage at Zama has smoothed over the sharp contrasts between Italian allies. But I would argue that it is also helpful to start thinking of the Social War more in terms of a city by city and community by community approach. This certainly seems true of Etruria, Umbria, Apulia and Campania, and there is a case for seeing the Latins too in more individualised terms. When our sources talk of 'the Picentes' in the revolt they are essentially referring only to the community of the Asculani. It is less clearly attested in our sources for the Samnites and the peoples of the central Appennines such as the Marsi and Paeligni. But it is notable that in unusual cases where the sources shed some light on internal affairs, such as Aeclanum or Pinna, a similarly fraught and complex situation is revealed. This perhaps helps to explain one of the apparent paradoxes of the Social War: that loyalty to Rome and Romanization do not neatly align. Splits in individual communities make it clear that joining the rebellion is a complex decision with a variety of motives at work.

The Legacy of the Social War

The legacy of the war has always been appreciated in studies of ancient Italy. But it is often lost in narratives of the late Republic, as the Social War is just one brief war

⁶³ C. J. Dart, 'The 'Italian Constitution' in the Social War: a reassessment (91 to 88 BCE)', *Historia* 58.2, 2009, 215-224 for doubts.

⁶⁴ Sisenna 99, 119 Cornell; Dench 1995, 215; Pobjoy 2000, 209 n. 48.

⁶⁵ *ILLRP* 1100 (*T*)aurum vo(re)s malo. *Ta(m)en evomes omnem* - Swallow the bull and go to hell! / But you'll vomit up the lot (translation Warmington). Cf. *ILLRP* 1099.

⁶⁶ Pobjoy 2000, 203; cf. also Dart 2014, 130 for the idea that Bacchus links to freedom.

amongst many, which transforms into the Sullan/Marian conflict, and is less well attested than the civil wars of the 40s or 30s BC. This has begun to be remedied in more recent work, giving this pivotal war its rightful place in the history of late Republican Italy and Rome.⁶⁷

The legacy of the war is apparent in various ways. It created huge political and institutional issues which took a long time to address. These included the challenges of integrating the enormous numbers of new citizens within Roman political structures, creating a new military corps based on all Italy, and crafting new local government constitutions for the towns, now Roman *municipia*, of the ex-allies. It is also apparent in the need to reconstruct Roman citizenship, following principles which until now had been resisted by conservative elements in Senate. A political struggle erupted over the tribal assignations of ex-allies in 88 BC. The citizenship conceded in the war was limited, with legal rights but little voting relevance: the allies were initially to be enrolled in a very limited number of new tribes, probably eight or ten, who would vote after the existing tribes.⁶⁸ This was addressed by the Marian forces in the civil wars of the 80s, probably in 87 BC, and the former allies were to be distributed amongst the existing 35 tribes. This rapid reversal was the product of the instability of Roman politics in this era.⁶⁹ The practical incorporation of the ex-allies into the state was delayed by the repeated problems with the census, and it was not until the census of 70 BC that much of the full population of Italy was properly included. The next census would only be completed under Augustus in 28 BC. In the generation after the Social War relatively few new men from ex-allied areas made it into the Senate, but this process accelerated rapidly under Caesar from 49-44 BC and in the Triumviral period from 44-31 BC.⁷⁰

The problematic legacy of the Social War for the relationship between Rome and Italy is also apparent in terms of culture and identity. This is clear from the shifting perspectives in our sources about how to understand the war, either as a conquest of a foreign enemy or as a civil war against other members of the same 'nation'.⁷¹ Whilst the Social War was still winding down in 89 BC, Pompeius Strabo celebrated a triumph over the Picentes Asculani (*de Asculaneis Picentibus*), presenting his victory as one over a foreign enemy. Ventidius Bassus and Marius Aurius from Larinum in Samnium were among those captured in Asculum, and Bassus was displayed as a prisoner of war in that triumph. Bassus would go on to hold the praetorship and triumph on his own accord; Aurius was less fortunate, languishing in Picenum in the slave-prison of Quintus Sergius, a Roman Senator.⁷² The irony that members of the allies who aspired to citizenship were led in triumph and then went on to hold a triumph themselves was not lost on our sources. A similar ideological

⁶⁷ E.g. in H. I. Flower, *Roman Republics* (Princeton, 2010); C. Steel, *The End of the Roman Republic 146 to 44 BC: Conquest and Crisis* (Edinburgh, 2013).

⁶⁸ Appian BC 1.49; Velleius 2.20; Dart 2014, 185-87.

⁶⁹ Flower 2010 chapter 5 argues for a complete rupture between Republics in this era.

⁷⁰ T. P. Wiseman, *New Men in the Roman Senate 139 B.C.-A.D. 14* (Oxford, 1971); G. D. Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition in Republican Rome* (Cambridge, 2007) chapter 5.

⁷¹ As do Velleius 2.25.2 and Florus 2.18; for this as reflecting contemporary views rather than a later imperial reinterpretation see E. Dench, *Romulus' Asylum. Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian* (Oxford, 2005), 129, and Bispham 2016, 83.

⁷² Bassus: Valerius Maximus 6.6.9-10; Aulus Gellius 15.4; Dio 43.51; Juvenal 7.199; Pliny NH 7.43. Aurius: Cicero, *Pro Cluentio* 23-24.

attitude is evident from the designation of the war in the first century BC by the names of the defeated peoples, the Bellum Marsicum, the war against the Marsi, or the Bellum Italicum, the war against the Italici.⁷³ But this harsh line had been ‘forgotten’ and reversed by Augustus’ time. The later designation, Bellum Sociale, ‘the war against the allies’, found in sources from the first century AD, emphasises the prior status of the insurgents as supporters of Rome.⁷⁴

A more conciliatory tone is evident in a Roman Republican coin illustrating the partnership of Roma and Italia.⁷⁵ The reverse has the personification Roma, with her foot on the globe, clasping hands with Italia, who holds a cornucopia (a symbol of plenty) and a caduceus (a symbol of peace and reconciliation). The date is insecure, but it seems reasonable to link it to 70 BC, the first holding of the census that properly enumerated the new Italian citizens, and the consulship of Pompey. The obverse has Honos and Virtus, virtues which may relate to contemporary temple projects, or to an ancestor of the moneyer, but which are also relevant to the resolution of the Social War. Despite this positive tone, the need for reconciliation and the dominant position of Rome shows an awareness of the tension in this renewed partnership.⁷⁶

By the age of Augustus, there is an evident concern to emphasize the support of *tota Italia* for the new regime. The earlier view of the war as a victory over a foreign enemy did not fit with this new agenda. Many men from former allied areas were promoted to positions of power by Augustus, such as Statilius Taurus, Agrippa, and Maecenas. Augustan poetry regularly reflected on notions of Italy and of local identity, which are particularly evident in the poetry of Propertius, Virgil, and Ovid. The latter refers to his Paelignian ancestry and its role in the Social War in *Amores* 3.14.8-10:

Mantua takes joy in Virgil, Verona in Catullus; I shall be called the glory of the Paelignians, people whose their love of freedom compelled to honourable arms (*Paelignae dicar gloria gentis ego, quam sua libertas ad honesta coegerat arma*) when anxious Rome was in fear of the allied bands.⁷⁷

Amongst late Republican members of the Roman elite, newly acquired cognomina reflected allied myths and claims: the cognomina of Titus Statilius Taurus and Sextus Pacuvius Taurus echo the role of the bull in Social War imagery and in the Sacred

⁷³ Sources collected in Domaszewski, *Bellum Marsicum*, trans. L. Cappelletti, 1993, 9-14. See also C. Ando, ‘Vergil’s Italy: Ethnography and Politics in First-Century Rome,’ in *Clio and the Poets: Augustan Poetry and the Traditions of Ancient Historiography*, ed. D. S. Levene and D. P. Nelis, 123–42 (Leiden 2002), 129; Santangelo 2017, 226.

⁷⁴ Florus 2.18: ‘we call this a war against allies in order to lessen the odium of it’.

⁷⁵ Crawford, *RRC* 1974, 403.

⁷⁶ Dench 2005, 188-89; Bispham 2016, 101. Another representation of Italia, although whether in the form of a personification or map is uncertain, occurs in the Temple of Tellus. This temple was founded in 268 BC, and restored by Cicero in 56-54 BC (Roth, R. (2007) ‘Varrò’s pieta Italia (RR I. ii. 1) and the odology of Roman Italy’ *Hermes*, 135(3), 286-300, at 287 n. 3).

⁷⁷ See E. Bispham, *From Asculum to Actium. The Municipalization of Italy from the Social War to Augustus*. Oxford Classical Monographs (Oxford, 2007), 443. Cf. Ando 2002 on Horace’s unsympathetic portrayal of the Marsi, particularly in *Odes* 1.2 (‘the fierce expression of the Marsian foot soldier as he glares at his bleeding foe’ [Loeb translation]); however, the term Marsi is emended from Mauri here, incorrectly according to M. C. Sloan. (2016) ‘Mauri versus Marsi in Horace’s *Odes* 1.2.39’, *Illinois Classical Studies*, 41(1), 41-58.

Spring.⁷⁸ Similarly, some families chose to use ‘historic names’ (as Syme termed them), indicating pride in their Social War ancestors amongst their descendants, such as Vettius Scato, Poppeus Silo (legate c. 45 BC), Papius Mutilus (consul in AD 9), and Herius Asinius (son of Asinius Pollio, consul in 40 BC).⁷⁹ This sort of positive reappraisal of the Social War is evident in writers of an Italic descent, such as Velleius Paterculus.⁸⁰

Conclusion

Recent revisionist readings of the war have usefully stimulated historical debate on the topic, and asked some important questions about the nature of our sources and the unidirectional explanation they provide of the allies’ rebellion. Many questions still remain to be resolved, given the multiplicity of actors and mentalities to recover. We should probably abandon the search for universalising explanations, and look to more local motivations – microhistories in place of metanarratives, to borrow modern historical terminology. The current trend of reading the evidence against grand narratives provides a more nuanced reading of the Social War, just as Fronda has done for the Hannibalic War. It is thus helpful to move beyond Romanisation and the unification of Italy as a unidirectional grand trend, not necessarily to abandon it, but to explore alternative perspectives, particularly Italian ones. We need a multiplicity of different approaches to the Social War and a fuller understanding of the local contexts in which it took place.

[10874 words]

⁷⁸ Farney 2007, 221.

⁷⁹ Farney 2007, 222.

⁸⁰ Farney 2007, 223; a similar point might be ventured for Diodorus Siculus.