Note critiche

THE ROMAN CONQUEST OF ITALY IN RECENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

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The Roman Conquest of Italy in Recent Historiography

This article reflects on the book by Nicola Terrenato *The Early Roman Expansion into Italy*: *Elite Negotiation and Family Agendas*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019.

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Thanks to the archaeologists and epigraphists we are gradually learning more and more about the non-Roman inhabitants of Iron-Age, «Pre-Roman» and Hellenistic Italy[1], but whether the historiography of Rome's rise to power in the peninsula is moving forwards or backwards is most uncertain[2]. On this occasion, in exploring some recent contributions, I will limit myself *grosso modo* to the fourth and third centuries BCE, while recognizing that the process began much earlier than Rome's decisive war against Veii and continued long after the great crisis or opportunity (which it was depended on your point of view) that was created by Hannibal's invasion.

The largest interpretive claims of recent date are certainly to be found in Nicola Terrenato's book *The Early Roman Expansion into Italy*[3]. In fact

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[1] For surveys see *The Peoples of Ancient Italy*, ed. by G.D. Farney, G. Bradley, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2018, and *The Oxford Handbook of Pre-Roman Italy*, ed. by M. Maiuro, Oxford, Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

[2] Most though not all of the recent bibliography can be found in N. Terrenato's recent book (see the next note) and/or G. Bradley, *Early Rome to 290 BC: The Beginnings of the City and the Rise of the Republic*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2020.

[3] *The Early Roman Expansion into Italy*: *Elite Negotiation and Family Agendas*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019.

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there is some danger that this author's claims to profound originality will interfere with a balanced assessment of his arguments. An author who tells the scholarly world that he is offering «a radical new interpretation» (the blurb) is asking for trouble unless its radical newness is at least plausible[4]. The book is not attractive: it is repetitive and error-prone (the author supposes, for example, that Rome and its Italian allies engaged in a «federal decision-making process», p. 207)[5]. The book demonstrates an unacceptably high-handed attitude towards the textual sources, both literary and epigraphical[6]. But it may be that there is some valuable ore hidden here, so let us search for it[7]. What justifies and requires a detailed consideration of Terrenato's idiosyncratic work, however, is not its actual account of the Roman conquest, which is unlikely to convince many, but the fact that he implicitly raises the whole question of the emergence of the Roman state and its nature in mid-republican times. That question has many ramifications.

1. *An unconventional theory*. Terrenato's central contention is that Rome did not come to dominate central and southern Italy by means of military

[4] Some characteristic phrases: «The reconstruction presented here flies squarely in the face of key assumptions that have stood virtually unchallenged for centuries» (p. XV); it is «an experimental new reading […] challenging a received wisdom that has been with us since the time of Cicero» (p. 30); it is «an unconventional reassessment of Roman imperialism [in general?]» (p. 112); «radically different» (p. 194). These claims are indeed justified. I am a little less sure about his claim that he is «taking down one of the most established pillars of Western ideology» (!) (p. 272).

[5] «Outside a few exceptions, the autonomy of the local community was not touched in any way»: p. 207. So much for the Italian allies who were required to fight in great numbers so that Rome could conquer the Mediterranean.

[6] It must be observed at once that Terrenato has a deplorable habit of referring exclusively to recent scholarship when ancient sources are urgently needed. To take one small example out of a myriad: in recounting (uncritically) the apparently strange career of L. Fulvius Curvus, consul in 322 (pp. 186-187), he refers to a recent American book but to no ancient source, not even the one that he most needs, which is Pliny, *NH* 7.136. This in a book that «is aimed, among others, at students and the educated general public» (p. XIV). It is part of a pattern that includes his neglect of one of the two most important sources for such a study, Polybius. Terrenato's truly remarkable disdain for the textual sources for the mentalities of third-century Romans and Italians leads him to ignore Ennius, Naevius, Plautus and Accius.

[7] I will also refer occasionally to other accounts published in the last quinquennium, none of which, however, apart from J. Tan, *Power and Public Finance at Rome, 264-49 BCE*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017 – which mainly concerns later periods –, presents substantial novelties.

force, but via an alliance between its leading families («lineages» in his vocabulary) and the leading families of other communities. What has been missing from the existing historiography is «the broader context in which the conquest [of Italy or of the Roman Empire as a whole?] took place», meaning «the role and behavior of non-Romans» (p. 29). The conquest of Italy was not in the main a conquest at all, but a «heterogeneous process of negotiation» (p. 250) involving landed aristocratic «lineages» in all the communities concerned. Nor was it anything uniquely Roman, because cities all across the Mediterranean were starting to incorporate other major cities (p. 253); this was a simultaneous development (pp. 76, 79, 254) that cannot be explained by local factors. The common factors were «new ideas about what a state could be» (p. 103) and «several interrelated processes in the socioeconomic sphere» (p. 105). Thus «many» central Mediterranean states attempted to build empires (p. 103), but few succeeded and in the long run only Rome. Five test cases are examined that are supposed to provide a «cross-section» (p. 109) of the ensuing conflicts that Rome engaged in in central and southern Italy: Veii, Caere, Capua, the Samnites and Arretium. Another chapter attempts to fill out the claim that it was by pursuing advantages for their «lineages», regardless of ethnic identities, that Rome, or rather an inter-state agglomeration of «lineages», gained power. A final chapter attempts to minimize the economic and political effects of what the author calls the «unification» of Italy prior to the Social War.

2. *A dubious claim to Italianness*. Terrenato throughout claims that he is more attentive to the non-Roman actors in these events than other scholars. A glance at his own bibliography will remind the reader that, while textbooks may well be insufficiently attentive to the non-Romans involved, no such charge can properly be levelled at the scholarly community from Mommsen to the present. It is enough to read Gabba, Frederiksen, Torelli, Crawford, Bispham, Bourdin, Santangelo, or any of a hundred others. Not to mention those who have mainly written about Magna Graecia. But Rome is where the «literary» sources focus most of their attention, understandably, and without the textual sources there could be no real history of Rome's expansion. We know in some detail how the Romans behaved, and we can argue fruitfully about their motives; for the populations of other states, even the best known – Capua perhaps or Syracuse[8] – we are never very

[8] M.W. Frederiksen, *Campania*, ed. by N. Purcell, London, British School at Rome, 1984;

well informed. Yet scholars have done their best with the Campanians, Etruscans, Samnites and Italian Greeks; and with Ennius, Naevius and Plautus – Romans of non-Roman origin.

Terrenato himself is remarkably silent about a number of central and southern Italian populations: Picentes, Umbrians, Marsi, Paeligni, Vestini, Marrucini, Frentani, Apuli, Daunii, Iapyges, Lucani, Bruttii etc. – none of these rate a mention. And any idea that the reader might have that Terrenato is going to stand up for Italians against Rome, in the honorable tradition of Giuseppe Micali (1768-1844), is doomed[9]; we hear virtually nothing in this book about the cultural differences that are very likely to have made some of the inhabitants of the peninsula reluctant to make way for Rome. And to be blunt about it, Terrenato seems in fact singularly insensitive to the sufferings the Romans inflicted on Italians from one end of the peninsula to the other. In his opinion, Rome achieved power in central and southern Italy «without excessive conflict» (p. 139), a memorable phrase[10]. A shame that the peoples of «the highlands and the Po plain» were «unruly» (p. 270).

3. *Roman policy favoured local elites.* There is a rather well-known fact at the root of Terrenato's interpretation, and indeed his whole central thesis can be seen as a vast exaggeration of a fact that has long been familiar to interested historians. In central and southern Italy, as later in many other places outside Italy, the leaders of the Roman state sometimes entered into informal alliances with members of local landowning elites, to their mutual benefit[11]. This understanding was fairly widespread by the 1960s[12], and can indeed be traced back at least to 1920. I once contributed to this interpretation by pointing out its special importance in Etruria, where on

Siracusa: immagine e storia di una città, a cura di C. Ampolo, Pisa, Edizioni della Normale, 2011.

[9] Micali stood up mainly for the Etruscans. For the context in which he wrote see A. De Francesco, *The Antiquity of the Italian Nation: The Cultural Origins of a Political Myth in Modern Italy, 1796-1943*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013.

[10] Almost equally chilling is the expression of G. Bradley, J. Hall, *The Roman Conquest of Italy*, in *The Peoples of Ancient Italy*, cit., p. 210: «a firm application of military might».

[11] As far as we know these alliances were always informal, but that may be a consequence of the limitations of the sources.

[12] See the works cited in W.V. Harris, *Rome in Etruria and Umbria*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 130 note 1, also F. Càssola, *I gruppi politici romani nel III secolo a.C.*, Roma, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1962, pp. 122-125, on Campania. Cfr. A. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1975, p. 42.

the one hand there is particularly strong evidence for the sort of social tension that made local men of power look to Rome for support, and on the other hand there was less Roman or Latin colonization in the immediate aftermath of the Roman conquest than might have been expected[13]. We know from Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*AR* 2.11) that every Italian city had its patron at Rome[14]; these patrons will generally have been senators or perhaps knights, and it is to be presumed that they sometimes did favours for their protégé communities.

All the standard history books, in any case, notice Rome's preference for oligarchies over democracies[15]. The best-known consequence in Italy prior to the Second Punic War is perhaps the violent repression by Rome of the rebellion of the so-called «serfs» at Volsinii/Orvieto in the years leading up to 265-264[16]. We can say that, on the one side, it was natural for the aristocratic rulers of the Roman state to look to their counterparts in other Italian states as possible allies; and on the other that the rulers of other states (aristocrats, landowners, oligarchs, as the case might be) sometimes found it very useful or indeed vital to have friends at Rome, most often, probably, in order to mitigate unpleasant treaty obligations[17]. Livy himself comments on this pro-propertied-classes Roman tendency, in the context of the Hannibalic War, when the Italian masses, in his account, favoured the invaders (Livy 24.2.8)[18].

It is to be noted here that with one questionable exception the Italians from outside Latium who turned to Rome for help were, as far as we know, not «lineages» but whole social formations such as the slave-owners (or former slave-owners) at Volsinii and the «optimates» referred to by Livy. The

[13] Harris, *Rome in Etruria*, cit., esp. pp. 143-144.

[14] «Every colony of Rome and every city that had joined in alliance and friendship with her and also every city conquered in war had such protectors and patrons among the Romans as they wished. And the Senate has often referred the controversies of these cities and nations to their Roman patrons and regarded their decisions as binding».

[15] S.P. Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI-X*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997-2005, vol. 2, pp. 557-558, with references.

[16] The precise character of the social division at Volsinii has been extensively discussed; for a general account of Etruscan social structure see P. Amann, *Society*, in *Etruscology*, ed. by A. Naso, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2015, pp. 179-193.

[17] W.V. Harris, *The Italians and the Empire*, in *The Imperialism of Mid-Republican Rome*, ed. by W.V. Harris, Rome, American Academy in Rome, 1984, pp. 89-109: 93-95.

[18] «unus velut morbus invaserat omnes Italiae civitates ut plebes ab optimatibus dissentirent, senatus Romanis faveret, plebs ad Poenos rem traheret».

Lucanians assisted by Rome in 296 were once again simply the *optimates* (Livy 10.18.8). The solitary exception, the Cilnii of Arretium, may well be fictitious (see below)[19].

4. *The emergence of the Roman State*. Terrenato seeks throughout his study to eliminate the role of ancient states in favour of ill-defined «lineages». These sometimes seem to be powerful families (his prevailing usage), sometimes *gentes*, sometimes ill-defined larger groups. Sometimes they are «kin groups» (p. 60) – which *gentes* were not in historical times; sometimes they included «relatively large numbers of people» (p. 52), whatever that means; sometimes they seem, between them, to monopolize all the land, to the exclusion of free peasants (p. 71)[20].

It is apparent that Roman historians such as Livy anachronistically read conditions of their own period back into the political history of archaic Rome, but Terrenato makes the same mistake in reverse: he reads the conditions that hypothetically existed in archaic times, when clans may have been the dominant social formation, into the history of the fourth and third centuries[21]. This habit involves him in a massive evasion, for, surprising as it may seem, there is no passage in this book in which its author faces up to the reality of the Roman state in the latter period. The nearest I can find is the following:

> For centuries, the central Mediterranean had been home to myriad lineages […]. Between the ninth and the sixth century BCE, neighboring elites came together to form large state communities […]. The lineages themselves were not dissolved in the new entity […] but simply ceded some of their power to the state in some specific public contexts (p. 251).

This will not do.

It must be emphasized yet again that there is little or no evidence for private Roman armies after 400, still less for private wars[22]. It is perfectly possible,

[19] Terrenato might also have cited the case of P. Cornelius Rufinus, cos. II 277, who was invited to Croton by his «friends» during the Pyrrhic War (Zonaras 8.6), but this was not in the context of a social conflict (as far as we know).

[20] The confusion of meanings is fully on display at pp. 48-50.

[21] Yet he is not entirely consistent: thus the archaic Roman state is sometimes seen as an actor long before 400 (Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., pp. 73-74).

[22] Terrenato knows (p. 55) that the fatal expedition of the Fabii to the Cremera, dated by the tradition to 478 BCE, was the only such event attested under the Roman Republic. Its historicity is of course highly dubious.

indeed probable, that there was plenty of unofficial raiding and violence in frontier zones, but wars were now exclusively or at least for the most part conducted by the Roman state.

Whether Rome in the fourth century can reasonably be regarded as a state or *Staat* has recently been discussed in painful detail[23], but unless one wishes to exclude all pre-modern polities – which would be absurd – mid-republican Rome satisfies the requirements. To take refuge in the term *Staatlichkeit* (state-ishness rather than statehood) is merely a turn into a cul-de-sac[24]. We do not need to suppose that the Roman state had a complete «monopoly of force» in the middle Republic, but by pre-modern standards it came remarkably close. Walter Scheidel has pointed out, in a thorough discussion of the use of the concept «state» in pre-modern history, that Max Weber's famous definition of the state does not in any case require a *complete* monopoly of force, but «the monopoly of legitimate physical coercion *in the implementation of its order*» (my italics)[25]. Fourth-century Rome also possessed, in a stable fashion, state officers, territorial control, public finances[26].

Two limitations on the purview of the Roman state have sometimes been cited (though Terrenato does not cite them). In the first place, *patria potestas* may in the fourth century have legitimated a degree of non-state physical coercion – the famous «power of life and death». But if it really did so[27], actual cases were exceedingly rare – and one of the lessons of the

[23] *Staatlichkeit in Rom? Diskurse und Praxis (in) der römischen Republik*, Hrsg. v. C. Lundgreen, Stuttgart, Steiner, 2014; see also W. Eder, *Der Bürger und sein Staat – Der Staat und seine Bürger*, in *Staat und Staatlichkeit in der frühen römischen Republik*, Hrsg. v. W. Eder, Stuttgart, Steiner, 1990, pp. 12-32.

[24] C. Lundgreen, *Staatsdiskurse in Rom? Staatlichkeit als analytischer Kategorie für die römische Republik*, in *Staatlichkeit in Rom?*, cit., pp. 13-61. The whole argument is philosophically and linguistically naïve. As Lundgreen observes (p. 21), Anglo-Saxon scholars have a more uninhibited («unbefangene(re)») way of using the term «state».

[25] W. Scheidel, *Studying the State*, in *The Oxford Handbook of the State in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean*, ed. by P.F. Bang, W. Scheidel, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 5-57: 5. Nothing in that paper lends any comfort to the notion that the Roman state was not a true state in the fourth century BCE. See also Tan, *Power and Public Finance*, cit., pp. XX-XXV.

[26] These conditions also existed of course in a number of other Italian communities. Terrenato takes the famous *elogia* of Velthur Spurinna and Aulus Spurinna (M. Torelli, *Elogia Tarquiniensia*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1975) to refer to a «lineage» (Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. 100), but these two acted as officials.

[27] There is no secure case in which a Roman put his son to death in virtue of *patria potestas*

tradition was that the ideal magistrate does his official duty whatever the personal cost[28].

Naval warfare is another possibly relevant matter. I have argued elsewhere that some of Rome's earliest naval activity, in the fourth century, was in private hands[29], and this tradition still had some life in it as late as the First Punic War (Zonaras 8.16, 247 BCE). But (contrary to Polybius 1.20) it can also be shown that Rome as a state had had some naval experience by 338 at the latest, and that this interest intensified after 314[30]. In short, when naval power became important to Romans, the state took it over.

As to warfare on land: however we date the beginning of army pay at Rome[31], we have to recognize that Rome's fourth-century land wars would have been entirely impossible without the use of *tributum*, which was a tax exacted by the Roman state and put to use by its officials[32]. It may indeed be the case that Roman traditions about Camillus and his generation were

prior to 63 BCE and had his right to do so accepted: W.V. Harris, *The Roman Father's Power of Life and Death*, in *Studies in Roman Law in Memory of A. Arthur Schiller*, ed. by R.S. Bagnall, W.V. Harris, Leiden, Brill, 1986 («Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition», 13), pp. 81-95. The most likely case is that of M. Fabius Buteo, the censor of 241, who (while out of office) put his son to death on a charge of theft, according to Orosius 4.13.18.

[28] Harris, *The Roman Father's Power*, cit., p. 90; Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI-X*, cit., vol. 2, p. 439.

[29] W.V. Harris, *Roman Warfare in the Economic and Social Context of the 4th Century BC*, in *Staat und Staatlichkeit*, cit., pp. 494-510: 500-501; Id., *Rome at Sea: The Beginnings of Roman Naval Power*, in «Greece and Rome», LXIV, 2017, 1, pp. 14-26: 17. I apologize to the reader for these repeated self-citations.

[30] W.V. Harris, *Quando e come l'Italia divenne per la prima volta Italia? Un saggio sulla politica dell'identità*, in «Studi Storici», XLVIII, 2007, 2, pp. 301-322: 312-313.

[31] Livy's supposition (4.59.11) that infantry pay was instituted during the siege of Veii is generally disbelieved. But Adalberto Giovannini's suggestion that payment may originally have been in salt not coins (cf. Pliny, *NH* 31.89, an obscure passage) (comment in *Staat und Staatlichkeit*, cit., p. 551) is attractive. Rome already controlled *salinae* at the mouth of the Tiber and the crushing of Veii extended its control to those on the right bank (A. Giovannini, *Le sel et la fortune de Rome*, in «Athenaeum», LXIII, 1985, pp. 373-387: 382-383). But the most likely period for the introduction of army pay is in the last two decades of the fourth century: so, more or less confidently, M. Humm, *Appius Claudius Caecus*, Rome, École française de Rome, 2005, pp. 378-380, and J.W. Rich, *Warfare and the Army in Early Rome*, in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, ed. by P. Erdkamp, Chichester, Blackwell, 2007, pp. 7-23: 18. J. Armstrong, *War and Society in Early Rome: from Warlords to Generals*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016, pp. 211-214, has argued in favour of the Livian date.

[32] Tan, *Power and Public Finance*, cit., pp. XX and *passim*. See also P. Erdkamp, *War and State Formation in the Early Republic*, in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, cit., pp. 96-113.

heavily fictionalized, but in the mid-fourth century the principal political-military actors in Italy and indeed in the whole central Mediterranean were all states.

It is important to underline that Terrenato's implied near-elimination of the state entails throwing out not only the whole historical tradition for that period, but crucial elements of the archaeological record as well[33]. We cannot suppose that the complete destruction of a relatively large and powerful city such as Veii – and that is an archaeological fact – was the achievement of a «lineage». Again, it would be absurd to suppose that work carried out on a project as immense as the so-called Servian Wall in and after 378 (whatever we may think about the chronology of the *cappellaccio* sections) was the work of a «lineage» not of a state[34].

The religion of Rome in the early Republic (a subject that Terrenato rather neglects) was in good part the religion of a city state. The main religious offices, many Roman festivals and the triumph ritual are all obviously both archaic and civic. We are also told that there was gentilicial justice (p. 60)[35], but no evidence is adduced and the two references to modern works that are offered instead are irrelevant. Not a word about the Laws of the Twelve Tables (it can readily be admitted that they were the subject of considerable myth-making and periodic revision before we get to the era of the first-century jurists, but a scholar who wants to deny their significance must argue his or her case) or about the growth of criminal law.

The theory that «lineages» were dominant and civic identity insignificant in fourth and third century Italy seems to rest on a simple mistake – on the supposition, that is, that the pursuit of their own interests on the part of powerful families or individuals is incompatible with the existence of a state that requires a high degree of loyalty. Terrenato has clearly not

[33] Here I have to mention Terrenato's implausible interpretation of the frieze in the François Tomb (Vulci, late fourth century BCE). In the famous killing scene (visible in its entirety in F. Buranelli, *La Tomba François di Vulci*, Roma, Quasar, 1987), each of the four men who are being killed is identified as coming from a city other than Vulci (Volsinii, «Sveama», illegible, and Rome). The warriors doing the killing are presumably local heroes of Vulci. For Terrenato (*The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. 68) these scenes «evoke a world of coups, political assassinations and private wars». This cannot be proved wrong, but it seems more likely that the killings reflect real or mythical wars with the cities concerned. Speculation about the meaning of this material continues unabated.

[34] This structure is unmentioned. On the chronology of the wall see now J.N. Hopkins, *The Genesis of Roman Architecture*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2016, pp. 92-96.

[35] But it is possible that here he is alluding to *patria potestas*, for which see above.

been following American politics! There have to be limits of course, and individualism (not «lineage» politics) notoriously was a major factor in precipitating the final crisis of the Republic. What is most striking, by contrast, about the middle Republic is that even in the time of Scipio Africanus the leaders of the state respected the fundamental rules[36]. I have not changed my mind about the competition for glory since I wrote *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome*, but it was a competition that took place within the framework of a state, a competition for recognition by the citizen body in its various manifestations.

More debatable, or at least more debated, has been the question whether, in this period, specific «foreign-policy» objectives can be identified with specific leading Roman families[37]. It is not by any means impossible, and the lack of solid evidence may simply result from our inevitable ignorance about senatorial and other Roman debates in the period in question. The question is not in itself very important.

5. *The «lineages» and land*. Terrenato's «lineages», whatever they are exactly, are by definition wealthy. Yet our author regularly asserts that large estates were rare the in the centuries concerned, and also that it was only in the first century (!) that wealthy Romans presided over masses of farm slaves (p. 213). It is impossible to combine these assertions with the well-known facts, the predominance of a landed aristocracy throughout the middle Republic and above all with the extensive enslavements that took place from the time of the Italian wars outside Latium onwards. We are faced with a breath-taking unwillingness to consider the textual evidence; Terrenato's book never mentions Cato's *De agri cultura*. The basis for his argument is apparently uncritical and in fact outdated trust in the ability of survey archaeology to reveal social structure (p. 217)[38].

[36] It is instructive to consider the known occasions when infringements occurred or seemed imminent: thus the *Manliana seditio* ended with the execution of the ex-consul in 385 or 384, while the highly mysterious crisis that centred around C. Maenius, dictator in 314, even if it really was a crisis (cfr. Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI-X*, cit., vol. 3, p. 306), seems to have had no grave or lasting effects. Scipio's authoritarian conduct (see especially Polybius 23.14), which never threatened the constitutional order, led to virtual exile, as is well known.

[37] Brief discussion with references in Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. 169.

[38] It is enough here to refer to R. Hodges' review of *The Changing Landscapes of Rome's Northern Hinterland*, ed. by H. Patterson *et al.*, in «Bryn Mawr Classical Review», 24 March 2021.

6. *The alleged mobility of «lineages»*. Another large exaggeration is that «lineages» often moved from one city to another, and in particular that the Roman senatorial class was by the end of the fourth century largely made up of outsiders. «Old Romans, namely elite families that were attested in Rome before the conquest [i.e. before the siege of Veii], were quickly and vastly outnumbered by newcomers» (p. 192; cfr. p. 252). Here Terrenato echoes an apparently forgotten book of 1982[39]. Yet he has only three definite examples of such newcomer «lineages», two of which are from within Latium (the Plautii and Fulvii), while the other is fallacious (the Licinii; see below). It makes no sense at all to say that the Plautii, who began to hold the highest offices in 358, were «not even Roman» (p. 177). Meanwhile, members of approximately *forty-two* other *gentes* reached either the military tribunate with consular power or the consulship or the dictatorship in the course of the fourth century.

Given the rising power and wealth of Rome during that century, it is a priori very likely that some individuals and families at all social levels moved from Latin towns to Rome. There may even have been a myth as early as this that Rome had always been, within limits, open to outsiders. But Terrenato's overall picture of migrating lineages from further afield is highly implausible, quite apart from the scantiness of the evidence in its favour, because political families depended for the most part on their lands, which could not be moved[40]. How did a family of immigrants acquire landed estates? In isolated cases by marriage perhaps, but we have no reason to think that it was common for elite Roman families to seek marriage partners further afield than Latium or Caere. The notion that «lineages» «could easily move from one state to another» (p. 104) simply does not hold water.

Terrenato's theory that many of the leading families of fourth-century Rome «came from» other places rests on the work and prestige of Friedrich Münzer, who propounded it in full in his book of 1920. In 1926 this part

[39] G. Brizzi, *I sistemi informativi dei romani*, Wiesbaden, Steiner, 1982 («Historia Einzelschriften», 39), pp. 36-37, according to whom mid-republican Rome was ruled by a sort of «"multinazionale aristocratica", o almeno [un] organismo sovrannazionale che riunisce in sé insigni esponenti del mondo etrusco, campano, forse persino italiota».

[40] As to the extent of non-elite migration from outside Latium to Rome in these centuries see S. Bourdin, *Les Peuples de l'Italie préromaine*, Rome, École française de Rome, 2012, pp. 551-589 (to be used with some caution).

of Münzer's work was largely demolished by Karl Julius Beloch[41], and nowadays many standard accounts more or less ignore it[42]. The assertion that «the Licinii» were of Etruscan origin[43] rests on a misunderstanding of late-Etruscan onomastic practice: somewhere in Etruria not far from Montepulciano, long after the Roman Licinii became famous, there existed an Etruscan family with the name *Lecne*, and one of its members, seeking in the normal way for a regular Latin *nomen* to use in a bilingual context, settled on Licinius[44]. That the well-connected Roman Licinii of 400 and later were even remotely connected to this Lecne is improbable[45]. The other possible cases of «lineage» immigration are said, without argument, to be «many», with «the Curii from Sabina», «the Decii from Campania» and «the Otacilii from Samnium» listed as «possible» cases (pp. 175 note 69, 185)[46]. Of these families the Otacilii and only the Otacilii have a good chance of being a genuine case[47]. And if so, they were thoroughly atypical

[41] K.J. Beloch, *Römische Geschichte bis zum Beginn der punischen Kriege*, Berlin-Leipzig, De Gruyter, 1926.

[42] E.g. T.J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome*, London, Routledge, 1995; Humm, *Appius Claudius Caecus*, cit.

[43] So too F. Münzer, *Römische Adelsparteien und Adelsfamilien*, Stuttgart, J.B. Metzler, 1920, p. 56: «ohne Frage etruskischer Ursprungs». But his fullest statement is in A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, *s.v*. *Licinius*, XIII, 1, Stuttgart, J.B. Metzler, 1926, cols. 214-215).

[44] H. Rix, G. Meiser, *Etruskische Texte*, Zahna-Elster, Baar, 2014, AS 1.318-331 (vol. 2, p. 601).

[45] More interesting perhaps is the text Cr 3.18 (Rix, Meiser, *Etruskische Texte*, cit., vol. 2, p. 441), where the name «Licinesi» appears on a Caeritan alabastron in the Metropolitan Museum datable to 600-575.

[46] M'. Curius Dentatus: «Sabinis oriundus videtur» according to Schol.Bob. on Cicero, *Sull.* 23 (p. 80 Stangl), but that is fairly obviously a mistaken guess, as at one time Münzer himself recognized (in A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, *s.v. Curius* [9], IV, 2, Stuttgart, J.B. Metzler, 1901, col. 1841; and see Beloch, *Römische Geschichte*, cit., p. 484, G. Forni, *Manio Curio Dentato, uomo democratico*, in «Athenaeum», XXXI, 1953, pp. 170-240: 183-185). The notion that the Roman Decii «came from» Campania rests exclusively (Münzer, *Römische Adelsparteien*, cit., p. 45) on the fact that «Dekis» is a fairly common *praenomen* in Campania (the evidence is listed in M.H. Crawford *et al.*, *Imagines Italicae: A Corpus of Italic Inscriptions*, London, Institute of Classical Studies, 2011, III, p. 1603). But the Campanians seem to have used *nomina gentilia* (as to when they began to do so see D.F. Maras, *Epigraphy and Nomenclature*, in *The Peoples of Ancient Italy*, cit., pp. 74-78), and as far as we know Decius was not one of them (the Campanian Decius mentioned in Polybius 1.7 was «Decius Vibellius», Livy, *Per.* 12).

[47] The Otacilii are a mystery: two Roman antiquarians explained the use of the *praenomen* Numerius by some of the Fabii by reference to the supposed marriage of a Fabius (the one Fabius who survived the disaster at the Cremera) to a daughter of a certain Otacilius of

of the dominant Samnite families, most of whom were still bitter enemies of Rome 200 years later. This shortage of actual evidence does not prevent Terrenato from claiming that «scores of Italian families» came to command the Roman army in the centuries in question (p. 192).
It can certainly be admitted that it might just be the scantiness of relevant evidence that prevents us from knowing the external origins of more leading families, also that Beloch's explanation of the rise to power of plebeian *gentes* in the fourth century is probably anachronistic (they had become wealthy «from trade and commerce»)[48]. The fact remains that the evidence Terrenato alludes to – he does not trouble to mention it, except for the Lecne/Licinius bilingual – is very thin indeed. There is no such thing in our period as «the well-known significant presence of families of non-Roman origin among the generals and the senators at Rome» (p. 265) (where he is referring to central and southern Italy as a whole, not merely Latium). It was not until after the Hannibalic War that a significant number of non-Latian families began to find roles in Roman political life, and the flood came only after the rebellion of 91.

7. *The «case study» approach*. As already mentioned, Terrenato selects five Italian polities in order to generalize about more than 200, claiming that they are «broadly representative of the spectrum of different possible scenarios» (p. 111)[49]. Now, anyone who studies the ancient Mediterranean or the Roman Empire as a whole may be compelled by the sheer volume of evidence to concentrate on a small number of exemplary places, as Horden and Purcell

Maleventum. This Otacilius agreed to the marriage on condition that the Fabii made use of his distinctive *praenomen* (*De praenominibus* 6 – this anonymous text is to be found in standard editions of Valerius Maximus – and Festus p. 174 Lindsay). That is probably a fiction, and what lies behind it is unclear. The name Numerius is commonly thought to be the equivalent of the Campanian and Samnite name Niumsis (Crawford *et al.*, *Imagines Italicae*, cit., III, p. 1612), but no equivalent of Otacilius is known in Oscan Italy. It is possible that a mid-fourth-century Fabius married the daughter of an Otacilius of Maleventum and that some of his wealthy in-laws moved to Rome and became Romans. The first Otacilii known at Rome were M'. and T. Otacilius Crassus, brothers who were consuls in 263 and 261. G.D. Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition in Republican Rome*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 184, noted that if they were really Italic, their success was unique in this period, as far as is known.

[48] Beloch, *Römische Geschichte*, cit., p. 338.

[49] Strictly speaking, they are, but they are also intended by Terrenato to be a «sample» illustrating «common trends» (Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. 112). Yet none of these cases except that of the Samnites illustrates common patterns.

did in one part of *The Corrupting Sea*. But the history of republican Italy, though complicated enough, is not on that scale. And what Terrenato does in his crucial Chapter 4 is to load the dice with cases that are each certainly atypical of the whole process (four out of the five at least).

The strangest of these five «case studies» concerns Veii. We are in a new age of euphemism if the destruction of one city by another and the enslavement of the survivors can be referred to as «the fusing of two major polities» (p. 114); «some leaders in both states must have realized that a fusion would create an urban agglomeration in Italy that would have no rivals», «a fusion of the two states may be a better descriptor of what happened than the simple eradication of an entire community» (p. 115). (The fact that Veii was entirely destroyed suggests in fact bitter Roman hatred, accentuated perhaps by the deep cultural divide – scarcely reduced by centuries of interaction – and perhaps by the sheer length of the siege, not ten years long as the tradition maintained but quite probably very protracted). As for the aftermath, the survivors were sold into slavery (Livy 5.22.1). Livy first says (5.30.8) that Rome divided Veian territory among its own existing citizens, but then (6.4.4, 6.5.8) that four new Roman territorial tribes were created «for the new citizens», who were the deserters from Veii, Capena and Falerii who had joined the Roman side during the war. Four tribes in addition to the existing twenty-one. Now some of this account could be incorrect, though the tribes that Livy names were indeed situated in formerly Veian territory. But what we cannot say is that «quite a few [of the enslaved Veians] […] would have been able to redeem themselves (perhaps with help of friends and relatives in other cities) and thus eventually acquire Roman citizenship» (p. 116). Since the prisoners had lost all their assets that is a travesty. This author supposes that in the aftermath there were even Roman aristocrats who came from Veii (p. 118)!

Neither Veii nor Caere nor Capua was a typical Roman victim. For that reason and for reasons of space I will say very little here about Caere or Capua. But they raise some important issues. Our historical Candide gives a thoroughly misleading account of Rome's third-century relations with Caere, which involved the confiscation of half of the latter's land (Dio Cassius fr. 33) and the foundation of as many as four coastal colonies in its territory, from Fregenae to Castrum Novum[50]. This, we are told, was merely renegotiation (p. 121)[51].

[50] Harris, *Rome in Etruria*, cit., pp. 148-149.

[51] It is very unlikely that Caere received full Roman citizenship in the mid-third century

As for the Samnites, Terrenato's central contention is that they resisted Rome for a relatively long period because their leading families did not have the personal ties with members of the Roman elite that characterized, in his opinion, so much of the rest of the peninsula (pp. 138-139). That is an interesting idea. But the obvious explanation of the prolonged resistance of the Samnites is that most of them inhabited a territory that was topographically easier to defend than many other parts of Italy, as Liguria was later on; furthermore the Samnites were more numerous than the Marsi and other upland peoples of central Italy, and they clearly had their own military traditions and strengths.

Finally, the case of Arretium. Terrenato eliminates from his account violent conflict between Roman and Arretine forces, but that is unconvincing in view of the fact that, twice at least, Rome and Arretium made truces (*indutiae*: not to be translated as «treaty») (Livy 9.37.12, 10.37.4), which implies prior armed conflict[52]. It is possible that Arretium was more amenable to Roman control than most Etruscan cities, both because of its exposure to hostile Gauls and because of its especially conflictual internal politics. What attracts Terrenato to the case is that in 302 Rome intervened to assist the wealthy and dominant *gens* of the Cilnii – the supposed ancestors of Maecenas – against the local commoners in arms (Livy 10.3.2, 10.5.13). One might easily suppose that this entire story about the friendliness of the Cilnii towards Rome was an invention or distortion owed to none other than Maecenas. After the great Battle of Sentinum in 295, in any case, the Arretines, along with Volsinii and Perusia, asked Rome for peace, made heavy indemnity payments, and obtained a truce. If the Cilnii were still in command at Arretium (which is not known), they had apparently not succeeded in keeping their town outside the anti-Roman coalition[53]. As for what happened after 292, we are without Livy and hence very much in the dark. Overall, we have ample evidence that it was by violent force exercised

(Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. 120), in view of Livy 28.45.15. The notion derives from a somewhat confused speculation by Mario Torelli: M. Torelli, *Cerveteri et Rome*, in *Les Étrusques et la Méditerranée: la cité de Cerveteri*, éd. par F. Gaultier *et al.*, Paris, Somogy, 2013, pp. 268-272: 271.

[52] It is admittedly not certain how Romans of this period understood this concept. For discussion see Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI-X*, cit., vol. 3, pp. 538-539.

[53] For a reconstruction of Arretine history in this period see D.H. Steinbauer, *Zur Grabinschrift der Larthi Cilnei aus Aritim/Arretium/Arezzo*, in «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», CXXI, 1998, pp. 263-281.

over the whole period from 311 to about 280 or a little later that Rome imposed its power over the whole of central and northern Etruria, killing large numbers of the inhabitants, destroying the federal religious sanctuary Fanum Voltumnae, and imposing punitive treaties.
Far from being «representative», these case studies tend to obscure what was typical and characteristic of the Roman conquest of Italy, namely armed conflict, land confiscation, and unequal treaties that imposed military service on the «allies».

8. *A very prolonged succession of wars*. In order to make room for his «negotiation» fable, Terrenato has to play down Rome's entire succession of Italian wars, both the first phase (let us say from 338 to 264) and the second one beyond the Arno and the Aesis. No one will deny that some gains were achieved without fighting. The reactions of individual states and peoples, all over the peninsula, to the advance of Roman power ranged across the board – from fighting-to-the-death (Veii, the Boii in the 190s) to peaceful submission (most of the Veneti, it seems). The latter reaction naturally became commoner as time went on and Roman power became harder to resist. But between the late fifth century and the mid-second century Rome gained control over the whole peninsula by means of war, or the explicit or implicit threat of war. A very small number of communities in central and southern Italy are known to have had «equal treaties» with Rome (this was a political not a juridical description)[54], and the reasons why they obtained this rare advantage are in each case reasonably clear[55]. Umbrian Camerinum and probably Ocriculum are two such cases: they submitted rapidly, for the former was in danger from Senonian Gauls to the north, the latter was too close to Roman territory (and too far from potential Umbrian allies) to be able to resist[56]. The existence of such treaties, and the opportunistic politics

[54] E. Bispham, *From Asculum to Actium: The Municipalization of Italy from the Social War to Augustus*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 35 note 140.
[55] Harris, *Rome in Etruria*, cit., pp. 101-105.
[56] Heraclea, situated on the instep of Italy, was another case, «prope singulare», according to Cicero, *Balb.* 50; in 278 it had clearly exploited the crisis brought on by the invasion of Pyrrhus. It looks from *Balb*. 21 as if Naples was on much the same footing as Heraclea, and various possible explanations are to hand, but in this case the equality was certainly not equal, for Naples was required to supply Rome with ships (Livy 35.16.3, 36.42.1, 42.48.9). The Picentes are sometimes seen as another case, but in the long term that is improbable in view of the events of 269-268. There were not «quite a few treaties» of this type in central and southern Italy, as Terrenato p. 206 maintains (without naming them).

that lay behind them, do nothing whatsoever to palliate Rome's prolonged aggressiveness. Throughout this period Roman armies fought wars almost every year, normally in territory that did not belong to them. Beginning in 326, Roman commanders celebrated more than 80 historically secure triumphs over Italian states and peoples[57], which indicates a good deal of bloodshed. And the Romans held on to what they won, by means of a set of «organizational techniques» (the useful phrase of Michael Mann).

The devotion of the mid-republican Romans to war remains fundamental. It seems to have increased significantly in the fourth century, over the course of about a generation, for reasons that can be more or less discerned, just as it gradually faded away in the late Republic, for reasons that can be discerned somewhat more clearly. It is a prime error to dismiss this phenomenon as simply another example of a «warrior ethos», supposedly shared by all central Italian peoples «from the beginning»[58]. No ancient state could survive without soldiers or without valuing its military leaders and men at arms – that is obvious. But few if any ancient states, it has to be repeated, were as militarized as mid-republican Rome, and none compiled a similarly long record of bellicosity. Polybius famously remarked, in the context of the First Punic War, that the Romans used *bia*, violent force, for all purposes (1.37.7), and it would be absurd to deny it. The practice of «combat-by-champions» illustrates this aspect of the Roman aristocratic mentality very vividly[59]. How can one reconcile the fact that high-ranking Roman officers, serving in Roman not private armies, regularly risked and quite often lost their lives in battle with the theory that they «car[ed] little for the destiny» of Rome (p. 192)?

There was also a massive confiscation of Italian land for the benefit of Roman citizens and the supporters of Rome. By the time of the extra confiscations after the Hannibalic War, «over one third of peninsular Italy had become Roman *ager publicus*»[60]. Many tens, probably hundreds, of thousands of Italians lost their means of livelihood. Between 338 and 263, five or six citizen colonies and, more importantly, some nineteen Latin

[57] Listed by Bourdin, *Les Peuples*, cit., pp. 1089-1091. For the discrepancies in the records of fourth-century triumphs see Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI-X*, cit., vol. 4, pp. 487-489.

[58] Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. 37, referring to Iron Age grave-goods.

[59] See S.P. Oakley, *Single Combat in the Roman Republic*, in «Classical Quarterly», XXXV, 1985, 2, pp. 392-410.

[60] Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI-X*, cit., vol. 2, p. 396; see also vol. 4, p. 568.

colonies were established in Italy; after another century the grand total was about fifty. Some areas were more afflicted than others, but Terrenato is grossly misleading when he asserts that the main concentration was «close to Rome», in the areas «that put up the least resistance against the expansion» (219). Strange optics indeed. Let's call the area from say Sutri to the upper Liris valley «close to Rome»; it included some twelve of the fifty communities in question. As for resistance, better ask the Marsi and the Samnites.

It is a fundamental fault that Terrenato's account is to a great extent chronologically undifferentiated. Polybius describes, on the whole convincingly, how Roman behaviour and ambitions developed from the early fourth century onwards[61]. It is reasonably clear in any case that Rome grew more belligerent from the 330s onwards and more aggressive still from about 314, showing a much stronger interest in naval power and in attacking communities such as those on Italy's eastern seaboard with which it had no inevitable conflicts[62]. This phase culminated in Rome's formal friendship with Rhodes about the year 306, another sign of spreading ambitions. Much later, starting in the last quarter of the second century, the role of warfare in the lives of Roman senators began to change again.

Terrenato avoids talking much about the last phase in the conquest of Italy, the wars against the populations of northern Italy, and his theory does not fit that area at all well. The relatively swiftness of the Roman conquest of the entire area, with the important exception of Liguria, was obviously not owed for the most part to friendly local oligarchs but was rather a matter of topography, technology and organization. The Ligurians, by contrast, were helped by their rugged terrain (I say «helped», but one could argue that they would have looked after their interests better if they had surrendered promptly).

9. *Supposedly synchronic imperialisms.* Whether Rome conquered or not (and on this score Terrenato veers backwards and forwards), many other states attempted to do so, and all, he claims, at the same period. Now it is true that large-scale aggression probably increased in the central Mediterranean region in the first millennium, an unsurprising result of a combination of

[61] W.V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327-70 BC*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1979 (corrected ed., 1985), pp. 107-117.
[62] Harris, *Quando e come*, cit., p. 313.

factors, chiefly the consolidation of states (both monarchies and republics) that allowed them to field more effective military forces (naval and terrestrial), and improvements in military technology that helped certain states to overcome their weaker neighbours.

But Terrenato's «simultaneity» and «synchronicity» are to a great extent a mirage. The Etruscans and Sparta had aggressively expanded their power in the sixth century (not to mention Persia or Polycrates), Athens in the fifth. It is certainly of interest that the great period of Syracusan expansion and more arguably the first period of Carthaginian imperialism both occurred between the last years of the fifth century and death of Dionysius I in 367. But the significance of this is quite uncertain. (I leave aside the problems raised by the chronology of the Carthaginian imperialism; a very thorough recent discussion reaches the conclusion that it was only between 400 and 350 that Carthage, already powerful in North Africa, «was able to gain imperial control over multiple polities in Sicily and Sardinia»)[63]. What these two states and Rome had in common was not, I think, «new ideas about what a state could be» (p. 103) – there were a number of forerunners. What Carthage and Syracuse had in common in these years was, first, superior naval technology and resources, and, second, the financial ability to make heavy use of mercenaries[64].

Further fantasies. This catalogue of implausibilities cannot continue for ever, but one more needs to be mentioned. The great trunk roads of mid-republican Italy – another very large expenditure by the state – were not built for military purposes, for the «geometry of the network does not seem to be consistent» with such a purpose (p. 232). Yet the Via Appia (312 BCE) led from Rome to the threshold of Samnite territory, the Via Valeria (307) led into the heartland of the central Italian peoples, and the Via Flaminia (220) led to the north-east coast just at the time when Transappennine wars were getting going. The Via Aurelia, republican but undated, fits the same pattern[65]. Connecting Rome with colonies was another function that

[63] Some see sixth-century events as crucial. For this and other views see now N. Pilkington, *The Carthaginian Empire, 550-202 BCE*, Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield, 2019, pp. XI-XII. His own conclusion: p. 181.

[64] For the mercenaries of Carthage in this period see for the time being A.C. Fariselli, *I mercenari di Cartagine*, La Spezia, Agorà, 2002. For the importance of mercenaries to Dionysius I see S. Péré-Noguès, *Mercenaires et mercenariat d'Occident: réflexions sur le développement du mercenariat en Sicile*, in «Pallas», LI, 1999, pp. 105-127: 112-117.

[65] Terrenato offers a misleading account of the topography: the «overall geometry [of these

has very often been remarked on, and Roman officials may have felt some concern for the colonies' economic well-being as well as for their security. Rejecting the military explanation leads Terrenato to the bizarre assertion that they were built to ease the travel of «central and southern Italian aristocrats» (p. 235).

10. *The causes of the Social War.* Terrenato's doctrines make it extremely difficult to explain why Rome succeeded in establishing and maintaining its Italian power and why the whole peninsula ended up by speaking Latin and worshipping mainly Roman gods[66]. The relentless advance of an «abstraction» (pp. 169-170) makes no sense. And Roman power should have fragmented, at the latest under the extreme pressure of the first two wars against Carthage. More importantly still, these doctrines render the great Italic rebellion of 91-89 unintelligible. The rebellion did not, according to this view, «aim at breaking the alliance [*sic*] apart» (p. 266), but at obtaining Roman citizenship. To prove this, Terrenato cites four modern works, two of which – and much the best two[67] – argued in detail exactly the opposite! So much for the short-lived state of Viteliu (Italia), which mobilized such large forces that the well-informed Diodorus Siculus called it the greatest war in history because of the numbers involved (37.1-2). In my view the rebels and their sympathizers had both aims, in varying degrees, but that need not be argued here; the fierce hostility of the rebels cannot in any case reasonably be doubted. No wonder that Terrenato stops short of discussing the war in any detail.

11. *Terminology.* A historian who mistreats language is doomed. «I use interchangeably the terms conquest, expansion, unification, empire-building and imperialism»[68]. No, there can be conquest and expansion without imperialism, as in archaic Latium. Plenty of conquest is not unification; and so on. Again, «elite and aristocracy are used here as

roads] is clearly aimed primarily at the urbanized and thickly populated areas of western central Italy» (Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. 235).

[66] Our author's lack of interest in Italic and Etruscan religion is quite notable, but that was also a defect of Harris, *Rome in Etruria*, cit.

[67] H. Mouritsen, *Italian Unification: A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography*, London, Institute of Classical Studies, 1998; F. Santangelo, *The Social War*, in *The Peoples of Ancient Italy*, cit., pp. 231-253: 235-240.

[68] Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion*, cit., p. XVI.

interchangeable terms»[69]. That may be an Americanism, for in that language «aristocracy» has apparently lost its long-established connection with inherited power, more's the pity. All this may seem fairly inconsequential, but the language eventually exacts revenge. You may think that when one city-state physically destroys another, enslaves the inhabitants who resist, leaves the site uninhabited, and seizes the land of the defeated, as in the case of Rome and Veii in the 390s, that is military conquest. It simply cannot be called a «fusion».

12. *Conclusion.* We can perhaps excuse Mommsen for finding Rome's violent unification of Italy just and right, because for him the contemporary unification of Germany was obviously just and right. But Terrenato has no such excuse (unless the book was intended to be a subliminal advertisement for Italian unity). Towards the end he claims, contradicting the whole tendency of his text up to that point, that he does not wish to «sanitize» the Roman conquest of Italy (p. 260), but that is in effect a meaningless genuflection in the direction of the historical evidence[70].

[69] P. 45.

[70] I list here some of the errors in this volume that I have not had cause to mention before. P. 163: centurions were the equivalents of NCOs. P. 174: Roman laws were passed by the Senate. P. 213: there were no Roman slave revolts until the first century BCE.