



JOHN R. PATTERSON

# LANDSCAPES & CITIES

*Rural Settlement and Civic Transformation  
in Early Imperial Italy*

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*For Emily*

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## Abbreviations

### General

AE	<i>L'Année Épigraphique</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> , ed. W. Haase and H. Temporini (1972– ) (Berlin: de Gruyter)
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
FGrH	F. Jacoby (ed.), <i>Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> (1923– )
HS	Sesterces
ILLRP	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae</i> , ed. A. Degrassi (1963–5) (Florence: La Nuova Italia)
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , ed. H. Dessau (1892–1916) (Berlin: Weidmann)
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
LTUR	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i> , ed. E. M. Steinby, 5 vols. (1993–9) (Rome: Quasar)
MAAR	<i>Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome</i>
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome: antiquité</i>
PBSR	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
RE	<i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

### Ancient authors

References to ancient authors are in the form used by the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn. (1996), with some minor amendments.

App.	B.Civ.	Appian, <i>Bella civilia</i>
Apul.	Apol.	Apuleius, <i>Apologia</i>
	Met.	Apuleius, <i>Metamorphoses</i>

Asc.		Asconius (ed. A. Clark, 1907)
Auson.		Ausonius
Caes.	<i>B.Civ.</i>	Caesar, <i>Bellum civile</i>
Cass. Dio		Cassius Dio
Cic.	<i>Att.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad Atticum</i>
	<i>Fam.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad Familiares</i>
	<i>Leg. agr.</i>	Cicero, <i>De lege agraria</i>
	<i>Off.</i>	Cicero, <i>De officiis</i>
	<i>Rep.</i>	Cicero, <i>De republica</i>
	<i>Sest.</i>	Cicero, <i>Pro Sestio</i>
	<i>Cael.</i>	Cicero, <i>Pro Caelio</i>
<i>Dig.</i>		<i>Digesta</i>
Dion. Hal.		Dionysius of Halicarnassus
Flor.		Florus
Fronto	<i>Princip. histor.</i>	Fronto, <i>Principia historiae</i>
<i>Gloss. Lat.</i>		W. M. Lindsay (ed.) <i>Glossaria Latina</i>
Hdn.		Herodian
Hor.	<i>Epist.</i>	Horace, <i>Epistulae</i>
	<i>Sat.</i>	Horace, <i>Sermones</i>
Juv.	<i>Sat.</i>	Juvenal, <i>Saturae</i>
<i>Lib. Colon.</i>		<i>Liber Coloniarum</i>
Livy	<i>Per.</i>	Livy, <i>Periochae</i>
Mart.		Martial
Mart.	<i>Spect.</i>	Martial, <i>Spectacula</i>
Ovid	<i>Met.</i>	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i>
Petron.	<i>Sat.</i>	Petronius, <i>Satyricon</i>
Plin.	<i>HN</i>	Pliny (the Elder), <i>Historia Naturalis</i>
	<i>Ep.</i>	Pliny (the Younger), <i>Epistulae</i>
	<i>Pan.</i>	Pliny (the Younger), <i>Panegyricus</i>
Plut.	<i>Crass.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Crassus</i>
	<i>Num.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Numa</i>
Polyb.		Polybius

Procopius	<i>Goth.</i>	<i>De bello Gothico</i>
Prop.		Propertius
RG		Augustus, <i>Res Gestae</i>
Sall.	<i>Cat.</i>	Sallust, <i>Bellum Catilinae</i>
SHA		<i>Scriptores Historiae Augustae</i>
	<i>Alex. Sev.</i>	<i>Alexander Severus</i>
	<i>Ant.</i>	<i>Antoninus Pius</i>
	<i>Hadr.</i>	<i>Hadrian</i>
	<i>Marc.</i>	<i>Marcus Aurelius</i>
	<i>Pert.</i>	<i>Pertinax</i>
Sen.	<i>Ep.</i>	Seneca (the Younger), <i>Epistulae</i>
Silius	<i>Pun.</i>	<i>Punica</i>
Stat.	<i>Silv.</i>	Statius, <i>Silvae</i>
Strab.		Strabo
Suet.	<i>Aug.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Augustus</i>
	<i>Calig.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Gaius Caligula</i>
	<i>Dom.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Domitian</i>
	<i>Iul.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Divus Iulius</i>
	<i>Ner.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Nero</i>
	<i>Tib.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Tiberius</i>
	<i>Tit.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Divus Titus</i>
	<i>Vesp.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Vespasian</i>
<i>Tab. Herac.</i>		<i>Tabula Heracleensis</i>
Tac.	<i>Agr.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Agricola</i>
	<i>Ann.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Annales</i>
	<i>Hist.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Historiae</i>
Val. Max.		Valerius Maximus
Varro	<i>Rust.</i>	<i>De re rustica</i>
Vitr.	<i>De Arch.</i>	<i>De architectura</i>

## Introduction

‘Sono passati molti anni, pieni di guerra, e di quello che si usa chiamare la Storia.’

(Carlo Levi, *Cristo si è fermato ad Eboli*)

‘Italy under the Empire has no history’. Thus Fergus Millar, provocatively but correctly, in that between the principate of Augustus and the invasions of late antiquity, it is indeed difficult to construct a narrative history of the peninsula and its inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> This ‘lack of history’ in the early years of the Empire—by contrast with the upheavals which preceded and followed them—may of course have been no bad thing for the population of Italy. As Cagianò de Azevedo observed of ancient Aquinum, the town was ‘un abitato dedito alla agricoltura e alle industrie, privo di storia, quindi felice’. His study was published in 1949, only five years after Aquino, its modern successor, had been totally destroyed during the course of fighting which ravaged the valley of the Liri during and after the Battle of Monte Cassino.<sup>2</sup> As Millar himself goes on to observe, ‘a country, or region, with several million inhabitants cannot, in any important sense, have had no history’; and there is a wealth of archaeological, epigraphic, and literary data which the historian can use to write the social and economic history of the peninsula, if not a political narrative.

This book is therefore a contribution to such a history of imperial Italy. The vast abundance of ancient documents and the constant discovery of new archaeological data from both urban and rural settlements makes any pretence at completeness a vain one; what

<sup>1</sup> Millar 1986, at 295.

<sup>2</sup> Cagianò de Azevedo 1949: 16; 6.



follows is simply a sketch of several interrelated phenomena bearing on the history of the peninsula, with a particular focus on the first and second centuries AD. A recurrent theme is the methodological difficulties which emerge from the study of the archaeological and epigraphic record; the focus is primarily on the situation in the centre and south of the peninsula, rather than on the Po valley, with its rather different history. The great cities of the north and their territories do, however, provide parallels and contrasts with those further south, to which I shall refer from time to time.

The history of Italy in the high Empire presents a paradox. On the one hand, the 'golden age' of the Antonines is seen as a time of unparalleled peace within the Roman Empire, and the greatest flourishing of Roman rule; at the same time, historians have pointed to declining numbers of rural farmsteads, a contraction in the production of wine for export, increased intervention by the imperial authorities in the affairs of the cities of Italy, and a falling off of public building and benefaction in the towns of Italy, as indicators of decline and even crisis. The privileged status of Italy, too, tends to disappear, as the attention of emperors is diverted away from the heartland of Roman tradition to the provinces, which are now increasingly important centres of agricultural production, as well as producing a preponderance of senators from the third century AD onwards. The concept of 'crisis' is a problematic one in this context, as recent analyses have stressed; although I would argue against a generalized decline in Italy in the first and second centuries AD, it is clear that significant economic and social changes did take place in that period, with effects which, as we will see, fell disproportionately on some of the cities and regions of Italy.<sup>3</sup>

The book engages with these issues in a variety of different contexts, seeking to understand the changing relationships of town and country in the first two centuries AD. The opening chapter outlines the main trends emerging from the wealth of evidence for rural settlement which has been collected in the course of systematic archaeological field survey in Italy over the past forty years, and explores some possible explanatory frameworks for the varying situations

<sup>3</sup> Patterson, J. R. 1987; Vera 1994: 239–40; Vera 1995: 195; Giardina 1997: 233–64; Schiavone 2000.

which emerge from this fieldwork, focusing on several regions of particular interest.

Beginning with a series of case studies of urban decline and prosperity in Italy, Chapter 2 focuses on the changing appearance of the cities of Italy, examining patterns of public building in the first and second centuries, the types of monument preferred by the cities of Italy and their benefactors in that period, and the extent to which declining overall levels of public building are compensated for by new forms of benefaction such as the provision of banquets and distributions of money and food to the citizens. The picture that emerges is of a gradual transformation in the nature of civic life in this period, as several indicators reveal that formal political activity tends to give way to a greater emphasis on what we might term 'sociability' within the urban context.

Chapter 3 discusses the resources of the cities, and the cities' relationship with benefactors, in the context of the phenomenon of social mobility in the cities of Italy, both below and above the local *ordo* or city council, as members of the local aristocracies advance into the equestrian order and the senate, and are in turn replaced in civic life by the upwardly mobile from lower social echelons. The increasing importance of the *Augustales* and the *collegia*, popular associations, are related to these general trends.

The concluding chapter interrelates developments in city and countryside revealed by the previous discussions, returning to the areas investigated in Chapter 1 for particular comment.

The discussion is pitched at a general level, with references to a wide variety of sites and regions within Italy, but a central theme is the multiplicity of local situations contributing to the overall picture.<sup>4</sup> In some ways a synthesis such as that attempted here represents a rash endeavour, given the vast complexity of situations in the different cities and territories that made up Roman Italy from Bruttium to the valley of the Po.<sup>5</sup> Any attempt at a general discussion, though, must of necessity include several models rather than a single one; the challenge is to strike an appropriate level of generality

<sup>4</sup> For complementary studies with a more specifically local focus, see Patterson, J. R. 2004a, b.

<sup>5</sup> Foraboschi 1994; Vera 1994: 241.

between the micro-history of individual communities and their territories and excessively broad general pictures which can themselves be misleading. Detailed study of the archaeological and epigraphic evidence tends in any case to highlight local situations, and emphasize the variation and diversity to be found within Italy. Nevertheless, the exercise is potentially a useful one, even if only to provide some working hypotheses which can then be tested by new fieldwork or by careful analysis of the epigraphic texts.

# The Rural Landscapes of Imperial Italy

## INTRODUCTION: THE DIVERSITY OF THE ITALIAN LANDSCAPE

One of the most important recent developments in our understanding of the history of Italy in the imperial period has been a greater knowledge of patterns of settlement in the Italian countryside, and an increasing awareness of the diversity of those patterns (see Fig. 1.1). This picture derives largely from archaeological field survey work, which has taken place over the last forty years. That there is significant variation across Italy is hardly surprising, perhaps, given the physical distances involved—nearly 500 miles between the Po valley and the Salento peninsula, for example—and the contrasting landscapes of (to take just three examples) coastal Etruria, the Apennine uplands, and the arid plains of Apulia. Roman Italy was a complex patchwork of local geographical, climatic, cultural, and political realities, and so it is natural to suppose that patterns of settlement would to a significant extent reflect these differing local characteristics. Nevertheless, the degree of variation between some regions is striking, and deserves to be underlined; likewise, the extent to which similar patterns can be detected in areas very different from each other in terms of natural resources and political histories. The importance of land-ownership to virtually all central concerns of Roman life, in particular the status, prestige, and stability of the ruling classes, and the well-being or otherwise of the communities which provided the social and administrative framework for Italy in this period, mean that an awareness of these patterns is an essential background to an understanding of the history of Roman Italy more generally.



Figure 1.1. The regions of Italy

During the first and second centuries AD, the prevailing pattern identified is one of declining numbers of rural sites. The severity of the decline in the areas affected, however, is most apparent in coastal areas with ready access to Rome: in the territory of Cosa, on the Etruscan coast, and further north, around Luni; in northern Campania, especially the Ager Falernus, famous for its wine; and around Brundisium in Apulia. All of these regions show a distinct falling-off in rural settlement from the first century AD onwards. From the second century, many more areas begin to be affected. The territories of Heba and Saturnia, inland from Cosa; the Sabina, around Reate and in the territory controlled by the mediaeval monastery of Farfa; the northern part of Bruttium, what is now Calabria; the land around

Oria, inland from Brundisium, and the mountains of Samnium: all display an increasingly pronounced pattern of decline in this period. A less dramatic, but essentially similar, pattern emerges in some parts of southern Etruria (around Caere and Tuscania), in the territory of Venusia in northern Apulia, and in nearby Daunia; this pattern of decline can be seen to continue into the third century and beyond. A wide range of different types of landscape is affected: coastal areas with good access to ports and the city of Rome; the mountains of the central Apennines and their foothills; and intermediate regions such as inland Etruria, northern Apulia, and Daunia, set between the mountains and the Adriatic.

In some other regions of Italy, by contrast, we find districts where site numbers remain roughly constant through the first and second centuries AD, and sometimes into the third: around Veii and in the Ager Faliscus in southern Etruria; around Cures, in Sabine territory on the east side of the Tiber valley; on the coast of Etruria north of Cosa, in the territories of Volaterrae and Pisa, and between Pisa and Luni; and within Lucania to the south, in the valley of the Bradano and around Volceii. Again a diversity of geographical contexts display similar patterns: districts close to Rome itself, inland areas of Lucania, and territories along the coast of northern Etruria.

A third pattern, in which site numbers increase in the second century AD, can be detected in two strikingly different zones: one is in South Etruria, in the territories of Capena and Sutrium, and to the west and south-west of the latter town. The other is in Lucania, where a growth in the number of sites is apparent in the Basentello valley, and around San Giovanni di Ruoti, Gravina, Roccagloriosa, and Metapontum.

Even within quite limited geographical areas, significantly different patterns of settlement history can thus be detected, for example between the Ager Cosanus, the territories of Heba and Saturnia further inland, and that of Volaterrae further to the north; or within the middle valley of the Liris (in Latium) where all three patterns—decline, continuity, and increase in site numbers—have been noted within a small geographical area.

This schematic outline hardly does justice to the complexity of the data—set out in more detail in the Appendix to this chapter—and the sophistication with which those responsible present the

arguments and interpretations which are summarized here. But it does highlight some of the key archaeological and historical issues they raise. How should these individual patterns of continuity, or of declining or increasing site numbers, be interpreted? How should we explain the range of patterns identified in different regions of Italy, and, in particular, the predominant tendency towards a decline in the numbers of rural sites?

Solely geographical explanations are unlikely to be convincing, given the diversity revealed by areas which at first sight appear to have much in common, and equally the parallels which emerge between territories which are very different in terms of their geographical characteristics but nevertheless reveal similar patterns of settlement. Instead, this complex pattern also needs to be set alongside the varying social, political, and economic histories of the Italian regions and their communities, and against the broader background of the history of the Roman Empire. A wide variety of causatory factors may lie behind these diverse patterns, as the parallel analysis of contemporary settlement trends in Roman Greece suggests. Here a significant (and widespread) decline in site numbers can be identified between the third and second centuries BC and the third and fourth centuries AD, when new growth in rural settlement becomes apparent.<sup>1</sup> Continuity might appear to need less explanation than change, but continuity where change predominates elsewhere, and in those areas where change otherwise seems to be the prevailing pattern, does need some investigation. Likewise the comparatively few regions where an increase in site numbers has been recorded, against the prevailing pattern, are clearly of particular interest.

There are several possible lines of explanation. The patterns observed on the ground may relate essentially to the process of archaeological site formation and recovery, allowing little in the way of broader historical conclusions to be drawn from them. They may reflect broader demographic changes, including an increase or decline in the population of Italy as a whole. Equally, they may represent patterns of physical mobility, as the inhabitants migrate from one part of the peninsula to another. Such mobility may in turn be

<sup>1</sup> Alcock 1993: 48.

related to the changing forms of rural exploitation that can be traced in this period. Localized political or cultural factors must also have played a part. The discussion that follows explores the implications of these different types of explanation, and then assesses their usefulness in explaining the trends revealed by survey, before setting out a range of possible models for rural change in this period. These focus on four areas of particular interest: coastal Etruria and northern Campania, which are characterized by the most acute pattern of declining site numbers; southern Etruria, in the hinterland of Rome, with its pattern of continuity and (in some areas) increasing site numbers; and the mountains of Samnium and Lucania, which reveal rather different settlement histories despite their geographical similarities. We then turn to the cities of Italy, which form the main focus of the latter part of the book, before returning to the relationship of the towns with their rural hinterlands in the concluding chapter.

First, however, the technique of archaeological field survey, which has been crucial in identifying this wealth of information about the Italian countryside, needs to be discussed in some detail, drawing attention to possible difficulties involved in dealing with the evidence it provides, as well as underlining its value to the reconstruction of the ancient landscape.

## FIELD SURVEY IN ITALY

The development of the technique of field survey as at present practised in Italy is often attributed to J. B. Ward-Perkins, Director of the British School at Rome from 1946 to 1974,<sup>2</sup> but he too was working in a tradition of landscape archaeology which can be traced back to the topographical researches of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries associated with the names of Lanciani, Tomassetti<sup>3</sup> and—in particular—Ashby, and to the traditions of landscape

<sup>2</sup> For his career, see Wilkes 1983; Wiseman 1990*a*: 19–21; Potter and Stoddart 2001: 10–16; Wallace-Hadrill 2001: 100–17.

<sup>3</sup> Lanciani 1909; Tomassetti 1979–80, with Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 27.



archaeology in Britain.<sup>4</sup> Ashby's work focused especially on a series of studies of the network of roads spreading out from Rome, and in the process he recorded numerous rural buildings, in particular in the south-eastern part of the Roman Campagna.<sup>5</sup> Ward-Perkins's researches in southern Etruria were at first also concerned primarily with the identification of Roman roads in that area,<sup>6</sup> but he soon became aware that the increasing agricultural exploitation of previously little-used land, and suburban development in the periphery of the city of Rome, was creating a situation which seriously threatened the archaeological record of an area of exceptional historical importance; at the same time it allowed unprecedented (if temporary) access to that very record, just as it was being destroyed.<sup>7</sup> His researches were therefore widened to encompass a more general approach, an investigation of the ancient landscape as much more broadly defined. A combination of techniques were employed, from the recording of standing remains (in the tradition of Ashby) to the systematic collection of worked flint, pottery, tile and other artefacts from sites which had been disturbed by ploughing. These sites were then identified and dated (largely on the basis of pottery finds, especially fineware, but also from the presence of amphorae, coins, and other datable artefacts, and masonry techniques) and mapped to create a record of human activity in the landscape from prehistory to the Middle Ages. The study of different zones within an area which came to extend up to 50 km from Rome itself, and included the territories of the ancient cities of Veii, Capena, Falerii, Sutrium, and Eretum, was entrusted to several scholars associated with the British School, and reports on their individual researches appeared in the *Papers* of that institution; but it was not until the publication of T. W. Potter's *The Changing Landscape of South Etruria* in 1979 that an overall synthesis was available, and the broader implications of the

<sup>4</sup> Barker 1986: 7–14; 1989a: 62; 1991a; 1995a: 5–9; Whitehouse 1987, which includes a bibliography on the South Etruria survey. On Ashby's career, see now Hodges 2000; and Potter and Stoddart 2001: 6–9.

<sup>5</sup> Ashby 1902; 1906; 1907; 1910, summarized in Ashby 1927. See also Martinelli and Scott 1986.

<sup>6</sup> Frederiksen and Ward-Perkins 1957; Ward-Perkins, J. B. 1962.

<sup>7</sup> Ward-Perkins, J. B. 1955: 44 with Potter 1991b: 173–4; Potter 1992: 637–8; Rendeli 1993: 27; Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 33–6.

project for our understanding of the Italian landscapes became clearer.<sup>8</sup> At about the same time, the value of the new technique of survey in the study of the Greek landscape was also becoming increasingly apparent, following the publication of the results obtained by the pioneering University of Minnesota Messenia Expedition, like the South Etruria survey an initiative of the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>9</sup>

During the 1970s and 1980s a number of other projects within the tradition of the South Etruria survey were initiated, many by British scholars, but also by research groups from the United States, Canada, Holland, and elsewhere; a series of conferences was held at which the results and methodologies of these projects were discussed.<sup>10</sup>

It would be highly misleading, however, in any way to give the impression that an interest in the rural landscape of ancient Italy is a preserve of scholars from the English-speaking world. On the contrary, numerous major recent projects and smaller-scale initiatives in the tradition of the South Etruria survey have been undertaken by Italian archaeologists from a variety of schools and traditions, for example the survey of the Ager Cosanus and Albegna valley, and work in the territories of Pisa and Volaterrae. There has also been a long and valuable tradition of topographical research in Italy, represented in particular by the *Forma Italiae* series. Originating in the 1880s, this project was given added impetus by Lanciani in 1919, and the first volume in the series, by G. Lugli on the Ager Pomptinus, appeared in

<sup>8</sup> See Wallace-Hadrill 2000*b*: pp. xi–xii. Note also Frederiksen 1970–1: 342–7 for a pioneering use of survey data in a historical context.

<sup>9</sup> McDonald and Rapp 1972; the increasing importance of field survey in the archaeology of Greece is reviewed (e.g.) by Snodgrass 1987, esp. 99–131, and Alcock 1993: 33–49.

<sup>10</sup> See Blake, Potter, and Whitehouse 1978; Barker and Hodges 1981; Keller and Rupp 1983; Malone and Stoddart 1985; Macready and Thompson 1985; Noyé 1988; Barker and Lloyd 1991, including Lloyd 1991*b*; for overviews of the role of the achievement of survey archaeology in Italy, see also Dyson 1982; Greene 1986: 98–109; Rendeli 1993: 24–87; and Cambi and Terrenato 1994. See also Barker 1996; Potter and Stoddart 2001: 16–20; the five volumes arising out of the ‘Populus Project’, published under the general title of *The Archaeology of the Mediterranean Landscape*: Bintliff and Sbonias 1999; Gillings, Mattingly, and van Dalen 1999; Leveau, Trément, Walsh, and Barker 1999; Francovitch, Patterson, and Barker 2000; Pasquinucci and Trément 2000; Attema *et al.* 2002; and (most recently) Alcock and Cherry 2004.

1926.<sup>11</sup> The aim was to provide a detailed compendium of archaeological sites in Italy as a contribution to the larger project of mapping the Roman Empire entitled *Forma Romani Imperii*, each volume covering one or more squares of the maps of Italy produced by the Istituto Geografico Militare (IGM) at a scale of 1:25,000 or 1:50,000.<sup>12</sup> So far, 42 volumes have been produced, with a concentration of coverage in Latium and Campania. Another influential tradition is that associated with P. Fraccaro and the University of Pavia, with a particular focus on agrarian history, centuriation, and the landscape of the Po valley.<sup>13</sup> Besides, there has been a vast amount of topographical research undertaken by individual researchers, by archaeological or topographical departments in universities, by the officers of the Soprintendenze in charge of the archaeology of the Italian regions, and by volunteer members of local archaeological groups, all of which has collectively been of major importance in contributing to our knowledge of the rural landscape of Italy.<sup>14</sup> Even in the past decade there has been a striking increase in the number of survey projects published, and publications exploiting the data derived from survey in the Mediterranean region: some thirty projects already published relate to Etruria and adjacent territories alone.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the beginning of the third millennium provides a good opportunity for reviewing the achievements of survey: the definitive final reports of several important and influential surveys have been published in the past decade,<sup>16</sup> and a series of valuable publications has recently appeared, arising out of the ‘Populus’ research project of the mid 1990s, which sought to establish a common series of research goals for Mediterranean survey.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Lugli 1926; see Rendeli 1993: 26; Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 25–7.

<sup>12</sup> Lugli 1926: pp. ii–vii. For the *Forma Romani Imperii*, a precursor of the *Tabula Imperii Romani*, see Talbert 1992: 15–17.

<sup>13</sup> Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 28–33. See *Athenaeum* 37 (1959), pp. xxii–xli for a bibliography of Fraccaro’s work.

<sup>14</sup> For a survey of work in central and southern Italy in the 1980s and early 1990s, see Curti, Dench, and Patterson 1996, esp. 175–81.

<sup>15</sup> See Alcock and Cherry 2004, fig. 1.1 for the overall picture; Witcher forthcoming for the data from Etruria.

<sup>16</sup> e.g. Hayes and Martini 1994; Small and Buck 1994; Barker 1995a; 1995b; Carandini *et al.* 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Barker and Mattingly 1999.

FIELD SURVEY: PROBLEMS, METHODOLOGIES,  
AND POTENTIAL

Are the changes in the organization of the landscape revealed by field survey more apparent than real, due in whole or part to factors within the archaeological record rather than reflecting real trends within the settlement system? This is a fundamental question if survey data is to be deployed in support of historical models, and has been a topic of extensive debate among survey archaeologists as well as historians.<sup>18</sup> Some survey areas—the Casentino, Gubbio basin, and the hinterland of Siena, for example, all to be found in inland Umbria and Etruria—seem to show such a drastic decline in site numbers for the imperial period that the question has to be asked whether this pattern is really a reflection of settlement trends, as opposed to being the result of (for example) geomorphological factors, ancient or modern farming practices, or limited access in the imperial period to imported fineware pottery. The relationship between surface scatters in the modern landscape and patterns of rural settlement in antiquity is clearly a complex one, and increasingly sophisticated methodologies have been proposed, tested, and adopted by practitioners in order to clarify that relationship.<sup>19</sup> The key issues at stake are: (1) how accurately does the material collected in the course of surface survey reflect the reality of ancient settlement in an area? (2) what is the potential impact of patterns of pottery manufacture and distribution on the survey record? and (3) how far is it possible to compare (and draw general conclusions from) the now substantial body of evidence derived from Italian field surveys?

<sup>18</sup> For a sceptical view of the ability of survey to contribute significantly to answering historical problems, see Rathbone 1993.

<sup>19</sup> Virtually all accounts of survey projects now contain a detailed discussion of the methodologies used. In particular, see Barker 1986; 1988; Cambi and Fentress 1988; Barker 1991a; Coccia and Mattingly 1992b; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 43–7; and (for a particularly valuable example from the Greek world) Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991: 13–35. For accounts of ‘how to do survey’, see M. Celuzza and E. Regoli in Carandini 1981a: 301–16; Cambi and Terrenato 1994. Many of the papers in Pasquinucci and Menchelli 1989a and Bernardi 1992 are concerned with issues relating to survey methodology in the Italian context; as are many of those in the *Populus* project volumes, in particular Francovitch, Patterson, and Barker 2000.

## Survey Data and Ancient Realities

The extent to which there is a significant correlation between the surface remains detected by survey and the original reality of ancient settlement in the district under investigation is of crucial importance for our understanding of the data. Hence there has been considerable interest among archaeologists in the processes by which 'sites' are formed, and then identified by workers in the field. This approach to the process of site formation is closely related to the geomorphological analysis of the landscape which is now a standard part of many surveys, tying in the distribution of ancient artefacts both to the different types of soil available, and to the 'post-depositional' factors—erosion, terracing, stone-removal, for example—which affect the subsequent visibility or otherwise of the material.<sup>20</sup> However, it seems unlikely that any general geomorphological trend has particularly affected the visibility of material of imperial date in particular, by contrast with that from earlier and later periods; indeed, imperial artefacts tend to be more, rather than less, visible than their predecessors.

A related issue is the extent to which specific ancient sites are visible to walkers in the field, which in turn reflects the extent of vegetation cover, the nature of land use in the territory in question, and other conditions affecting visibility.<sup>21</sup> It is clear, for example, that sites producing Roman fineware pottery in ploughsoil are much more visible after rain than at other times,<sup>22</sup> and that extremes of heat and bright light, and the other conditions under which the work is carried out, also affect the ability of surveyors to identify sites accurately.<sup>23</sup> The experience and expertise of the fieldwalkers may also have an effect on the type of material recovered.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, the distinctiveness of Roman ceramic types of this period means that Roman pottery is identifiable with comparative ease even by those with limited expertise, by contrast (for example) with

<sup>20</sup> Barker 1986; see also Taylor 2000; van Dommelen 2000.

<sup>21</sup> For recent work on the problem of site visibility, see Terrenato 1992; Barker 1995c; Terrenato and Ammerman 1996; Terrenato 2000b.

<sup>22</sup> Arnoldus-Huyzendveld *et al.* 1995: 53.

<sup>23</sup> Barker 1991a: 4–5; 1995a: 48–51.

<sup>24</sup> Di Gennaro and Stoddart 1982: 13–14; Rendeli 1993: 60.

many prehistoric artefacts.<sup>25</sup> Several experiments have been carried out to check the extent to which survey is a repeatable exercise; when sites in the Biferno valley, around Montarrenti, and in the Liri valley were resurveyed some time after the original investigation of the area, some were not rediscovered, while some new ones were found; but it was largely the smaller sites that were subject to this variability, whereas the larger ones were more reliably reidentified. In a resurvey in 1978 of an area of the Biferno valley investigated in 1974, 75 per cent of the sites were found to correspond to those discovered four years previously.<sup>26</sup> The general trends identified by the original survey tended to be confirmed, although individual sites might appear or disappear on different occasions.<sup>27</sup> Over the longer term, however, intensive ploughing may mean that smaller sites are likely to disappear from the archaeological record altogether, as suggested by resurvey in 2000–1 of an area in the territory of Metapontum originally investigated in the early 1980s;<sup>28</sup> similarly, in the territory of Cures Sabini, less than half the sites originally identified in the 1970s were rediscovered by a resurvey carried out in 2000.<sup>29</sup>

Some surveys have also included excavation of sites discovered during the course of fieldwork, in part as a check on the relationship between surface remains and the archaeological levels below the ploughsoil: for example, the Monte Forco farmhouse in the Ager Capenas was identified through survey (soon after being ploughed for the first time) as a ‘well-defined nucleus’,<sup>30</sup> and there proved to be a close correlation between the surface remains and those revealed by excavation.<sup>31</sup> Similarly encouraging results emerged from excavation of site 9 near Luni,<sup>32</sup> and the Giardino Vecchio farmhouse in the

<sup>25</sup> Witcher forthcoming.

<sup>26</sup> Lloyd and Barker 1981: 290.

<sup>27</sup> Biferno valley: Barker 1991a: 5; 1995a: 49–51; Liri valley: Hayes and Martini 1994: 4; Montarrenti: Barker and Symonds 1984: 287.

<sup>28</sup> Thompson, S. 2004: 80–3.

<sup>29</sup> Di Giuseppe *et al.* 2002: 109.

<sup>30</sup> Jones, G. D. B. 1962: 172–3.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* 1963a: 147–58.

<sup>32</sup> Ward-Perkins, B. *et al.* 1986: 109–18 esp. 116: ‘the impression from field-survey that these [i.e. this and other nearby farmsteads] were comparatively humble settlements is confirmed by excavation’.

territory of Cosa.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, it remains very likely that the poorest rural settlements are unlikely to be identified successfully by means of survey; those sites identified through survey and successfully excavated tend on the whole to be comparatively well-built and substantial structures.<sup>34</sup> In a similar way, the use of geophysical techniques at a major villa site in the territory of Rieti tends to confirm the data obtained through survey; though here too the substantial scale on which the villa was originally built is reflected in the quality of the surviving evidence.<sup>35</sup>

An intensive field survey is so demanding of labour and resources, both in terms of the exploration itself and the analysis and study of the material during the course of the survey, that often only a small proportion of the landscape under investigation can be studied in detail;<sup>36</sup> and in any case, large portions of any given territory are in practice likely to be unavailable for survey either temporarily or permanently due to building, woodland, or agriculture. Hence an appropriate sampling strategy has to be devised, so that so far as possible statistically valid extrapolations can be made from the area actually investigated to the territory as a whole, or an identifiable part of it. There has been considerable debate about the merits of such strategies (especially as opposed to the alternative approach of covering the whole territory extensively).<sup>37</sup> As a result, most recent surveys have included both a judgemental element (looking for sites where they expect to find them, or in an attempt to provide answers to specific questions of a historical nature), together with a probabilistic element (typically in the form of a grid or a series of transects), to act as a check on the typicality or otherwise of the other data.<sup>38</sup> A sampling strategy often takes account of the different types

<sup>33</sup> Attolini *et al.* 1982: 383–5; Attolini *et al.* 1983: 462–4; M. Celuzza in Carandini 1985*b*: 106–7; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 142–3, esp. fig. 53.

<sup>34</sup> Garnsey and Saller 1987: 76; see also Scheidel in Garnsey 1998: 131; Foxhall 1990: 108; Barker 1991*a*: 5 (whose experiences in the Montarrenti area encourage caution).

<sup>35</sup> Coccia and Mattingly 1992*b*: 248–51; Mattingly and Coccia 1995; Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 126–8.

<sup>36</sup> For recent discussion of these issues—and the problems of balancing resource issues within a research design—see Alcock 2000: 3; Mattingly 2000: 6.

<sup>37</sup> See e.g. Cambi 1986; Cambi and Fentress 1988: 169–78; Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 144–51; Terrenato 1996; 2000*a*; Fentress 2000; Blanton 2001; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 39–42.

<sup>38</sup> At Tuscania, for example: Barker and Rasmussen 1988; Rasmussen 1991.

of landscape within the target area, defined in terms either of geology or of land use, or both;<sup>39</sup> while the need to cover at least some substantial contiguous areas of territory, in order to identify specific features of the landscape such as nucleated centres, roads, and centuriation grids—which might well escape notice in a random sample of the landscape—has also been noted.<sup>40</sup>

### Pottery Supply and its Implications

Does the material recovered by means of field survey reflect changing patterns of pottery distribution rather than changing patterns of settlement?

The problem of pottery supply and its implications for the interpretation of survey data has rightly attracted considerable discussion over the last few years.<sup>41</sup> Pottery is crucial to the interpretation of survey data in a variety of different ways: finewares in particular are used for dating sites, identifying their function, and showing the extent to which they are integrated into the regional or broader economy.<sup>42</sup> The implicit assumption of many surveys in the past has been that the supply of different types of pottery—especially the key diagnostic types, black-gloss ware, *terra sigillata*, and African Red Slip—was more-or-less constant, and therefore a decline in the number of fragments of a particular period reflected a decline in the number of settlements, or of people on the land. A number of studies have now demonstrated, however, that the distribution of pottery in antiquity was a function of a combination of factors, which might include varying levels of production, varying patterns of distribution, and varying degrees of access (e.g. a dramatic increase in price might mean that the pottery was beyond the means of sectors in society which were formerly able to afford it). Fentress and Perkins showed in 1988 that the production of African Red Slip was characterized by dramatic fluctuations across time, reflecting the

<sup>39</sup> As at Rieti and Gubbio, for example: Coccia and Mattingly 1992*b*: 222–5; Malone and Stoddart 1994: 4–5.

<sup>40</sup> Terrenato 1996: 220.

<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Millett 1991*a, b*; 2000.

<sup>42</sup> MacDonald 1995.



overall situation within the economy of North Africa, and the western Mediterranean area more broadly; there seems to have been an appreciable drop in production in the later third century AD, and this is reflected in the archaeological record within Italy.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, the pattern of distribution can be seen to vary significantly between different areas of the peninsula.<sup>44</sup> However, the way in which a pattern of decline in the number of sites occupied under the Empire can be traced in so many, and so diverse, areas of Italy (in Apulia, and in the central Apennines, as well as on the Tyrrhenian coast, for example), while there are contrasting patterns elsewhere, suggests that there may indeed be a 'real' underlying trend here; likewise the fact that site numbers appear to increase (or remain constant) in some of the apparently more marginal and inaccessible areas of southern Italy (e.g. S. Giovanni di Ruoti) which we might expect to have *least* access to pottery from overseas. Indeed, the work around S. Giovanni involved particularly sophisticated analysis of the pottery data.<sup>45</sup> Besides, the mechanisms for the supply of African Red Slip to Italy are not entirely clear—Whittaker, for instance, has linked the supply of pottery of this kind with the ownership of estates in Africa by wealthy senators, in which case the presence of African Red Slip might be an indicator of the estates of such men, or those with access to them.<sup>46</sup> Others have associated the trade with small-scale *cabotage* or with the ships which transported the *annona*. If the latter were the case, the epicentre of the distribution pattern would be Rome itself, though since African Red Slip also appears to be particularly prevalent on the coast of Italy and in regions accessible from the coast, local *cabotage* may have had a part to play here too.<sup>47</sup> The implication of changing patterns of fine pottery production and distribution under the high Empire may perhaps be that numbers of sites for certain periods have been systematically under-represented in the

<sup>43</sup> Fentress and Perkins 1988; Cambi and Fentress 1991 for a discussion of the implications of this in the context of the survey of the Ager Cosanus. See also Moreland 1993: 95–6. The data is re-examined and updated in the light of more recent fieldwork in Africa and elsewhere in Fentress *et al.* 2004, esp. 149–51.

<sup>44</sup> Fontana 1991.

<sup>45</sup> Roberto, Plambeck, and Small 1985.

<sup>46</sup> Whittaker 1985: 67–8.

<sup>47</sup> Fulford 1983: 11; Fentress *et al.* 2004: 157–8.

archaeological record, especially in areas with limited access to African Red Slip. This pattern has been noted in Samnium and Lucania in particular,<sup>48</sup> and decline in numbers of rural sites in those areas, by comparison with previous periods, may therefore have been exaggerated. Equally, numbers of sites from periods characterized by pottery from more accessible Italian sources, such as black-gloss ware or *terra sigillata*, may in some areas be inflated by comparison with those dating to the high Empire. The crucial point to stress is that site numbers reflect minimum figures of site occupations, which can potentially be revised upwards.

Several ways of compensating for the effect of these patterns have been suggested, for example by weighting the importance of a sample of pottery according to the length of period in which it was manufactured and distributed; in this way, trends can be identified, although actual numbers of sites are less secure.<sup>49</sup> In the long term, improved knowledge of Italian coarsewares is likely to reduce our reliance on finewares for dating and interpretation, and reduce the difficulty caused in the interpretation of surveys by the (sometimes high) percentage of survey sites which produce only coarsewares. Some projects, notably those at Tuscania and in the Sangro valley, have devoted particular attention to recording and analysis of coarsewares with these concerns specifically in mind;<sup>50</sup> indeed, recent work has shown that certain types of coarseware artefacts, notably *testa* and *clibani* (used for baking), can be dated with some precision.<sup>51</sup>

Despite these important studies, and other valuable ongoing work, it is only gradually that we are becoming able to trace patterns of supply and distribution for different types of pottery in different regions of Italy across long periods. It will take considerable time and effort before a sufficiently detailed picture of distribution patterns becomes available, and in the meantime (as Alcock has argued in the Greek context) a 'purely artificial "massaging" of the presently available data hardly seems warranted'.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Lloyd, Christie, and Lock 1997: 21–2; Fracchia and Gualtieri 1998–9: 332.

<sup>49</sup> Roberto, Plambeck, and Small 1985.

<sup>50</sup> MacDonald 1995: 27–8; Lloyd, Christie, and Lock 1997: 21–3.

<sup>51</sup> Cubberley, Lloyd, and Roberts 1988.

<sup>52</sup> Alcock 1993: 51.

## Comparability of Surveys

Is it possible reliably to compare data between different surveys?

Significant differences have been noted in particular between the methodologies employed by the *Forma Italiae* project and those surveys following what might be termed the 'South Etruria' tradition, descended from Ward-Perkins's work in that area in the 1960s. This has generated a debate parallel to that between the advocates of 'extensive' and 'intensive' survey in the Greek context.<sup>53</sup> However, in recent years there have been welcome indications of a convergence of approach between what are here schematically identified as separate traditions.<sup>54</sup>

*Forma Italiae* surveys have traditionally been carried out by an individual or by a small group of researchers, and have typically had a particular emphasis on the recording of standing remains (though substantial pottery scatters too may be noted). The aim is to cover the whole of an area, with a view to recording all the archaeological presences within the map-sheet or sheets under investigation. A major concern of the project is to identify ancient sites so they can be legally safeguarded, and the need to cover the whole of an often substantial area of the landscape necessarily implies an extensive approach; the ultimate aim of the project is to cover the whole of Italian territory. The original aims of the South Etruria projects were not dissimilar: there was an overt concern to rescue the archaeology of the region in the face of agricultural and urban development. The intention was (so far as possible) to cover the study area fully: standing remains and roads were noted as well as scatters of pottery, and there was a particular interest in the classical period.<sup>55</sup> By contrast, subsequent surveys in the South Etruria tradition have typically adopted a more intensive technique than Ward-Perkins and his colleagues, or the earlier *Forma Italiae* surveys did, combined with a more overt sampling strategy. Substantial teams of fieldwalkers operate close together (typically ten metres from each other)

<sup>53</sup> See Hope Simpson 1983 and Cherry, J. F. 1983; also the debate between the two scholars in *Journal of Field Archaeology* 11 (1984), 115–20.

<sup>54</sup> Terrenato 1996; 2000a.

<sup>55</sup> Terrenato 1996: 218–19.

allowing territory in the designated transect to be covered more thoroughly, and enabling proportionally more sites to be discovered, especially smaller ones.<sup>56</sup> A comparison can be made between the data retrieved in the territory of Tuscania during intensive survey in the 1980s, and the *Forma Italiae* survey which had taken place twenty years earlier: in the areas covered by the later survey most of the larger sites had already been identified by the earlier project, but a number of smaller sites were identified for the first time by intensive methods.<sup>57</sup>

A further, related issue is that of the comparability of data from different intensive surveys. Since the technique has been developing since the mid 1950s, with continual changes in methodology, some caution is appropriate in comparing earlier and later projects. In particular, significant advances in the study of the key types of fineware have taken place since the practice of survey began, with the publication of major studies such as Morel's on republican black glaze pottery,<sup>58</sup> Goudineau's and the *Conspectus formarum terrae sigillatae italico modo confectae* on Italian-made 'Arretine ware',<sup>59</sup> Medri's on later Italian *terra sigillata*,<sup>60</sup> and Hayes's *Late Roman Pottery*;<sup>61</sup> so a much greater precision in dating pottery is often possible now than was feasible in the 1950s. On the other hand, some of the researchers in South Etruria were able to examine sites previously undisturbed and recover better-preserved fragments of pottery than many later surveys, which have often produced very abraded and damaged sherds of which only the roughest dating is possible.<sup>62</sup> Re-examination in the 1980s and 1990s of some areas originally studied during the course of the South Etruria survey

<sup>56</sup> See Cherry, J. F. 1983: 390–4 for a comparison of results obtained through extensive and intensive survey methods; also Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 123–4, 136–44.

<sup>57</sup> Quilici Gigli 1970; Barker and Rasmussen 1988: 34; Rasmussen 1991: 107–9. Similarly the surveys published by De Felice 1994 (in the *Forma Italiae* series) and Barker 1995*a, b*, both cover in part the area around Larinum, but employing rather different strategies.

<sup>58</sup> Morel 1981.

<sup>59</sup> Goudineau 1968; Ettliger *et al.* 1990.

<sup>60</sup> Medri 1992.

<sup>61</sup> Hayes, J. W. 1972; 1980; NB also Carandini 1981*b*; Baldassare 1985.

<sup>62</sup> King 1993: 119.

suggested that although material from some chronological periods had been systematically under-recorded,<sup>63</sup> and some individual Roman sites had been missed, the general pattern of Roman settlement emerging from later resurvey of the area was much the same as that recorded by the original researchers.<sup>64</sup> It is clear that there has been a systematic underestimate of the level of late antique and early mediaeval settlement; by contrast, the picture of the early imperial period emerging from the current restudy of the Tiber valley pottery has been comparatively little affected by the developments in knowledge of the material culture that have taken place since the 1960s.<sup>65</sup> Even within the surveys carried out subsequent to the South Etruria project, variations can be noted in the techniques adopted: some surveys involved large teams working over long periods (e.g. the Biferno valley project),<sup>66</sup> while others were smaller-scale operations (e.g. Arthur's work in Campania).<sup>67</sup> Further issues of comparability have been generated by the different practices within different surveys in identifying scatters of material as 'villas', 'farmsteads', and so on, for purposes of analysis; this causes difficulties as often a scatter of material which justifies the appellation of 'villa' in one part of Italy might be classified only as a 'farm' in a wealthier area; and the use of the term 'villa' in any case brings with it a body of assumptions, justified or not, about the type of activities which took place there. A welcome initiative introduced in the late 1980s was to standardize procedures for collection and recording of material in the context of surveys undertaken under the auspices of the British School (e.g. Montarrenti, Farfa, Tuscania) in order to build up a body of data which could usefully be compared on a cross-regional basis;<sup>68</sup> while

<sup>63</sup> Di Gennaro and Stoddart 1982.

<sup>64</sup> Camilli and Vitali Rosati 1995; further re-examination of the landscape of S. Etruria has been carried out for the area around Nepi: see Potter 1992: 664; Edwards, Malone, and Stoddart 1995. There are more pessimistic assessments in Macready and Thompson 1985: 4 (by G. D. B. Jones), and in King 1993. The restudy of the pottery recovered during the course of the South Etruria survey is a major focus of the British School at Rome's current Tiber Valley Project: see Patterson, H., and Millett 1998: 8–9; Patterson, H., *et al.* 2000: 397; Patterson, H. 2004: 1–8.

<sup>65</sup> Patterson, H., and Millett 1998: 9; Patterson, H., Di Giuseppe, and Witcher 2004: 17.

<sup>66</sup> Barker 1995*a, b*.

<sup>67</sup> Arthur 1991*b*.

<sup>68</sup> Barker and Rasmussen 1988: 33.

the Fregellae and Liri valley surveys employed a single methodological approach in adjacent areas of Southern Lazio earlier in that decade.<sup>69</sup>

It would be imprudent, then, to rely too heavily on the assumption that the distribution of sites identified through survey need have a direct correlation with the situation in a particular area in antiquity; maps of survey results can misleadingly imply a greater degree of precision than is really the case, as site distribution patterns reflect variations in the pattern of modern land use and data collection, and differential rates of survival of sites, as well as variation in patterns of supply and distribution of key artefact types. Although details of individual site histories should be treated with caution, the more general trends identified have much greater validity, the more so where large areas have been surveyed. The degree of success achieved in the resurveying of sites is particularly encouraging in this respect, and inspires a 'cautious optimism' in dealing with survey results.<sup>70</sup> Although in some areas of Italy particularly characterized by intensive agriculture and suburban building, notably close to Rome, the hope of obtaining useful results by means of survey is now meagre,<sup>71</sup> nevertheless, valuable information is still emerging from fieldwork in other areas, for example in Lucania and in Samnium.<sup>72</sup>

A vast amount of data is now available for the reconstruction of the landscape history of Roman Italy, from a wide variety of geographical and topographical contexts—coastal plains, inland valleys, and high mountains—ranging from the valley of the Po to the south of the peninsula. The technique of field survey has an especially valuable contribution to make to the understanding of the classical period, largely because the traces of Roman settlement are of a nature which can be most effectively retrieved by survey methodology.<sup>73</sup> Dispersed settlement was characteristic of the Italian landscape in the Roman period, and was mostly located in comparatively low-lying

<sup>69</sup> Crawford, M. H., *et al.* 1986: 42.

<sup>70</sup> Barker 1991a: 5.

<sup>71</sup> King 1993; see also Carandini *et al.* 2002: 47 for the situation in the Ager Cosanus.

<sup>72</sup> e.g. Fracchia and Gualtieri 1998–9; Lloyd, Christie, and Lock 1997; Faustoferri and Lloyd 1998.

<sup>73</sup> Barker 1991a: 2.

territory which is now often exploited for arable farming. By contrast, sites from periods when settlement was typically located on hilltops (e.g. in the early mediaeval period), or where nucleated settlement predominated, are much more difficult to identify effectively through survey. Similarly, the types of pottery typically used to identify Roman-period sites were well made and decorated with brightly coloured slips, and continue to be comparatively visible in the ploughsoil (by contrast, for example, with those of the prehistoric and early mediaeval periods).

The pottery chronology for the early- and mid-imperial period in Italy is now well defined, so it is perhaps for this era that a general synthesis of the results generated by survey may be most confidently attempted. Many surveys have now been finally published, or detailed interim reports made available; and there has been a convergence of methodologies between the *Forma Italiae* and South Etruria survey traditions, with *presenze sporadiche* now a focus of interest in the former as well as the latter.<sup>74</sup> In some areas, the data from survey and/or excavation of associated urban centres is available to complement the data from surface survey, as in the Liri and Biferno valleys, at Fregellae, at Oria in the territory of Brindisi, and in the Ager Cosanus and Albegna valley;<sup>75</sup> while there is an increasing body of data from excavated rural sites to complement the evidence generated by field survey. To be sure, there continue to be serious methodological issues to be faced, but now, if ever, it should be possible to use the evidence of survey to work towards writing the history of the Italian landscape in the early imperial period—though tentatively and cautiously, with an awareness of the risks of asking inappropriate questions of the survey data and ‘disappointment arising from unreasonable expectations’.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Terrenato 1996: 221. The striking rise in the numbers of sites identified in the most recent projects is likely to reflect the increasingly intensive fieldwork involved: see Mattingly and Witcher 2004: 179.

<sup>75</sup> See Curti, Dench, and Patterson, J. R. 1996: 189. Bintliff and Snodgrass 1988*b* illustrate in a Greek context the interesting results which can be obtained through the combination of surface survey in both city and countryside.

<sup>76</sup> Alcock 2000: 2.

## THE POPULATION OF ITALY

How far is the changing pattern of sites in the countryside due to a significant overall increase or decrease in the population of Italy as a whole?

The population of Italy in the imperial period has in itself been a focus of extensive recent debate. The traditionally accepted view is that of Brunt (based on Beloch's calculations), that the population of Italy at the time of Augustus was of the order of 6–7 million.<sup>77</sup> Recently, however, Lo Cascio, building on earlier arguments put forward by Frank and Jones, has argued forcefully that the population of Italy at this time was in fact substantially greater, of the order of 14–16 million.<sup>78</sup> Brunt's figure is based on the argument that the census figures for the Augustan age, preserved in Augustus' *Res Gestae* (4,063,000 in 28 BC, rising to 4,937,000 in AD 14: *RG* 8), indicate not just the number of adult male citizens, as had been the case for the figure deriving from the last census held under the Republic, in 70–69 BC (when the figure recorded was 900,000 or 910,000 citizens: *Livy Per.* 98; *Phlegon FGrH* 257. 12. 6), but *all* Roman citizens, women and children (other than infants) as well as adult males, thus explaining the otherwise very striking increase in numbers.<sup>79</sup> Lo Cascio questions Brunt's view that there was a substantial change in recording practice between the census of 70–69 BC and the time of Augustus, and instead believes that the Augustan figures reflect not only a more thorough registration of citizens after the end of the Republic, but also a real increase in the population of Italy in that period. Brunt is sceptical about the possibility of coming to any meaningful conclusions with regard to the level of population in Italy in the imperial period.<sup>80</sup> Lo Cascio, by contrast, noting Tacitus' report that 5,984,072 Roman citizens were counted in the census of AD 48 (*Tac. Ann.* 11. 25), has argued that the citizen population continued to increase in the early Empire, reaching

<sup>77</sup> Brunt 1987: 12.

<sup>78</sup> Lo Cascio 1994a, b; 1999.

<sup>79</sup> Brunt 1987: 113–20.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* 1987: 718.



some 20 million in the reign of Claudius, both within and beyond Italy, and grew still further thereafter.<sup>81</sup> The increase in settlement density in some areas of Italy, and the exploitation of sites not previously occupied during the first and second centuries—in the territories of Sutrium and Capena, for example—could then be explained in terms of pressure on existing land resources leading to the occupation of marginal lands, and perhaps also the clearance of woodland.<sup>82</sup> This exceptionally high level of population within Italy—at the limit of the carrying capacity of Italy's landscape at that time—would have been catastrophically reduced, however, according to Lo Cascio's reconstruction, by the effects of the 'Antonine plague', an epidemic which struck the Roman Empire in AD 166–7 and, according to literary accounts, had devastating effects not only on Rome and Italy, but on many of the provinces too.<sup>83</sup> This, together with subsequent epidemics, would have contributed to the striking drop in site numbers identified in many areas of Italy in the second and third centuries AD, as the dense population was drastically reduced.<sup>84</sup>

Clearly the whole issue of the population of Italy is an extremely important one for our understanding of the history and archaeology of the peninsula in the imperial period, as it is for the late Republic.<sup>85</sup> The topic, however, is a highly controversial one: the reconstructions of Brunt and of Lo Cascio each present their own difficulties. Brunt's figure involves assuming a radical change of procedure in the Roman census for which no explicit evidence has survived; Lo Cascio's analysis requires a population density in the imperial period at a level not again reached until the nineteenth century, and an exceptionally high level of population in Italy in comparison with other areas of the Roman Empire. Equally, evidence which would allow us confidently to adopt an intermediate estimate is lacking.<sup>86</sup> The issue

<sup>81</sup> Lo Cascio 1994a: 116.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* 112–14, 119.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* 123; Duncan-Jones 1996: 118–20.

<sup>84</sup> Lo Cascio 1994a: 125.

<sup>85</sup> For exploration of the possible implications of the 'high' population figure for the history of the late Republic, see Lo Cascio 1999; Morley 2001; Rosenstein 2004.

<sup>86</sup> Morley 1996: 46–50; Scheidel 1996: 167–8; Frier 2000: 811–16; Scheidel 2001a: 52–7; Scheidel 2004: 2–9.

of the impact of the 'Antonine plague' has also been extensively debated, the question being whether the indicators used to argue for the severity of the epidemic are necessarily related to the plague or potentially due to other factors; though even those doubtful about the way in which this evidence has been deployed accept that the plague may in reality have had a serious impact.<sup>87</sup>

Given that the particular value of survey is the opportunity it provides for investigating change in the landscape over the medium and long term,<sup>88</sup> its potential for resolving questions of historical demography—estimating populations, the carrying capacity of a territory, changes of population across time or across an area under investigation—should be apparent.<sup>89</sup> Unfortunately in practice the relationship between survey data and population history tends to be a somewhat problematic one. This is particularly true where attempts are being made to establish absolute figures for population: all the methodological issues associated with survey, and in particular patterns of site visibility and recovery, are relevant here, together with difficulties associated with estimating the number of inhabitants occupying a particular site.<sup>90</sup> Survey is arguably better suited to establishing *relatively* sparse or dense patterns of habitation than to reconstructing the total population of an area, but here too problems have to be noted. The chief difficulty in assessing whether the changes in rural site numbers should be taken as symptomatic of a general increase or decrease in population in a region is that there are several other ways in which the survey data could potentially be interpreted. A general decline in site numbers might, for example, be indicative of changing forms of rural exploitation, rather than the result of long-term population decline or a disastrous epidemic;

<sup>87</sup> Duncan-Jones 1996; Scheidel 2002; Greenberg 2003; Bruun 2003.

<sup>88</sup> For the relationship of survey to Braudel's classification of historical time, see Bintliff 1991; Knapp 1992; the subtitle of Barker 1995*a* ('Landscape Archaeology and *Annales* History in the Biferno Valley') is indicative of the general approach, building on Barker 1991*b*. For a recent wide-ranging study of the Mediterranean in the same tradition, see Horden and Purcell 2000, but note their critique of Braudel at pp. 36–43. The authors lay particular emphasis on the value of survey data for their own work and for the history of landscape in general: pp. 176–7.

<sup>89</sup> For discussion of both the potential of using survey data to answer questions of this sort, and the methodological difficulties encountered, see Sbonias 1999.

<sup>90</sup> Osborne 2004.

increasing numbers of sites in specific areas of Italy might reflect localized responses to lucrative new markets for agricultural products, or a developing elite preference for rural rather than urban residence, rather than undue population pressure. The chronology provided by survey data is seldom precise enough to link settlement change closely to specific events or short-term trends.<sup>91</sup> In any case, the diversity of the patterns identified across Italy tends to argue against broad trends of population increase or decline: if the whole population of the peninsula was increasing, we might expect to see the phenomenon of increasing site numbers manifested more broadly across Italy. Instead we find increasing numbers of sites in some parts of Lucania in the second century AD (for example), but decreasing numbers of sites in Samnium around the same time.

It is possible, on the basis of the increase in citizen numbers between the reigns of Augustus and Claudius reported by Tacitus, to suggest that given the absence of warfare and other constraints, the population of Italy was growing and had reached a historically high level overall in the early imperial period, without necessarily accepting that it was at the exceptionally high level in relation to the peninsula's carrying capacity suggested by Lo Cascio's reconstruction. Indeed, several indicators tend to suggest that the pattern of population growth or decline may well have varied significantly across Italy, for a variety of reasons. In particular, the impact of epidemics could be highly regionalized, and it may be that the Antonine plague did contribute significantly to reducing population levels in those areas of Italy which were most severely stricken. Rome was, we are told, seriously affected by this plague, and a later outbreak in AD 189 which led the emperor Commodus to flee the city for what were perceived as healthier surroundings at Laurentum (Hdn. 1. 12. 1–2). Otherwise, we might imagine that those areas of Italy most likely to have been affected by the plague were on the coast and/or connected with the capital and other parts of the Empire by regularly frequented travel and trade routes.<sup>92</sup> If so, those places most likely to have had access to African Red Slip and the broader

<sup>91</sup> Cambi 1999: 115.

<sup>92</sup> Duncan-Jones 1996: 134–6.

Mediterranean economy, via Rome or directly, would also have been those most exposed to the plague.

Other factors contributed to localized patterns of population growth or decline within different areas of Italy. The city of Rome itself, with about a million inhabitants in this period,<sup>93</sup> would, to judge by other pre-industrial metropolises, have certainly had very high mortality levels. Fire, floods, collapses, and other disasters were a potential threat to life and limb;<sup>94</sup> the poor nutrition of the majority of Rome's inhabitants,<sup>95</sup> and the densely packed housing, with poor sanitation leading to a high level of contamination of food and drinking water, allowed disease to spread easily,<sup>96</sup> while the size of the population, and the city's position at the centre of the Empire, caused illnesses occasional elsewhere to become endemic in the city.<sup>97</sup> Christian tomb-inscriptions from the Roman catacombs (which record precisely the deceased's age at death) reveal a peak in death-rates in late summer and early autumn, indicative not only of a society with very high rates of mortality in general, but suggesting also a predominance of deaths caused by pulmonary disease and gastro-intestinal problems, aggravated by malaria.<sup>98</sup>

Different patterns of mortality have been identified between the north and south of Italy, on the basis of inscriptions;<sup>99</sup> some parts of the peninsula were both regarded in antiquity, and were in reality, less healthy than others.<sup>100</sup> The coast of Etruria had a particularly bad reputation: the colony founded at Graviscae in 181 BC was so named, according to Cato, because the air was *gravis* (unhealthy);<sup>101</sup> Minturnae, on the coast of northern Campania, was similarly described by Ovid as *graves* (*Met.* 15. 716). By contrast, the Apennines were perceived as much healthier. Pliny warmly describes his estate at

<sup>93</sup> Hopkins 1978: 96–8; Morley 1996: 33–9; Lo Cascio 2000a, esp. 39–43.

<sup>94</sup> Purcell 1994: 650.

<sup>95</sup> Cherry, D. 1993.

<sup>96</sup> Brunt 1987: 385–8; Scobie 1986; Morley 1996: 39–44; Frier 2000: 792–3.

<sup>97</sup> Morley 1996: 42–3 with Manchester 1992; Sallares 2002: 276–7; Scheidel 2003: 171.

<sup>98</sup> Scheidel 1994b; Shaw 1996; Sallares 2002: 201–34; Scheidel 2003: 165–6.

<sup>99</sup> Shaw 1996: 125–7.

<sup>100</sup> Scheidel 2001b: 15–18.

<sup>101</sup> Cato, *Origines* fr. 46, quoted in Servius on Virgil, *Aeneid* 10. 184, with Sallares 2002: 192–6.

Tifernum Tiberinum, in the upper valley of the Tiber, to his friend Domitius Apollinaris, who has evidently expressed concern that Pliny is about to set off for a hazardous region (as parts of Etruria clearly were):<sup>102</sup>

I was pleased by your care and concern when you heard that I was going to my Tuscan estates in the summer, and tried to persuade me not to, because you thought them unhealthy. The strip that lies along the coast of Etruria is indeed unhealthy and pestilential, but my estates are far from the sea; indeed they lie at the very foot of the Apennines, the healthiest of mountains.

(Plin. *Ep.* 5. 6. 1–2)

Later in the same letter, he notes that ‘my slaves too have been healthier here than anywhere else; in fact so far I have lost none of those I brought with me’ (5. 6. 46).

Horace too comments on the attraction of leaving the city of Rome and retreating to his Sabine farm in the mountains to avoid ‘unhealthy autumn, pitiless Libitina’s gains’ (Hor. *Sat.* 2. 6. 19); late summer was, as we have seen, the peak season for mortality in the city.<sup>103</sup>

Swamps and land close to rivers were seen as particularly unhealthy. Varro’s *De Re Rustica* warns against building a villa near to such undesirable areas. One interlocutor in the discussion, when asked what should be done if he were to inherit a farm in such an unhealthy location, is advised to sell it or even abandon it altogether, or (less drastically) to rebuild the villa in a higher position away from the water (*Rust.* 1. 12). Varro further recommends that unhealthy land should be worked by hired labourers rather than one’s own slaves, presumably in case the slaves contract a debilitating, or even fatal, disease (*Rust.* 1. 17. 3).

These and other passages have convincingly been shown to indicate that malaria was a serious problem in certain areas of Italy in both the republican and imperial periods.<sup>104</sup> Malaria is spread by

<sup>102</sup> Sallares 2002: 197.

<sup>103</sup> Compare also Hor. *Epist.* 1. 16. 5–16.

<sup>104</sup> Brunt 1987: 611–24; Sallares 2002; Scheidel 2003. I am very grateful to Filippo Cavassini for discussion of malaria in ancient Italy, and for access to his Cambridge M.Phil. thesis, *Malaria, Land-Use and Drainage in Roman Italy: Ancient Evidence and Modern Ideology* (1998).

some *anopheles* mosquitoes, so settlements close to places where the mosquitoes might breed—not only swamps, but any shallow and stagnant pools of water, for example those left over after flooding, road-building, or drainage works—were likely to be most seriously affected.<sup>105</sup> That endemic malaria was a contributing factor to the high levels of mortality in the city of Rome, if not necessarily a primary cause of death itself, is suggested by the seasonal pattern of deaths mentioned earlier, which was characteristic of fatal infection with *plasmodium falciparum*, the most dangerous form of the disease.<sup>106</sup> Coastal areas, and lowlands close to bodies of open water, would also have been affected, and malaria undoubtedly contributed to higher mortality rates in these areas than in parts of Italy where the disease was not endemic; even in these latter regions, periodic epidemics could have disastrous consequences, as appears to have happened in the fifth century AD at Lugnano in Teverina, where the burial of forty-seven children, all but one of them aged less than six months, has been explained by an outbreak of malaria.<sup>107</sup> Mountainous areas were less affected by malaria than the lowlands, since the lower temperatures and the prevalence of winds made it impossible for the mosquitoes to thrive and breed. As a result there must have been a significant discrepancy in average life-expectancy between (healthy) uplands and (unhealthy) lowlands: in the 1840s the life-expectancy at birth in Grosseto (in a highly malarial area of Tuscany) was 20 years, while that recorded at Treppio, an Apennine hill-town free from the disease, was 37.<sup>108</sup> It is interesting in this context that Pliny the Younger comments on the large numbers of elderly people to be found at Tifernum (Plin. *Ep.* 5. 6. 6). The Elder Pliny similarly reports that the census held in AD 74 recorded eleven people over the age of 110 years living at Veleia, in the Apennines south of Piacenza, one of whom was supposedly 150 years old (Plin. *HN* 7. 163). Though doubt has (quite reasonably) been expressed about the literal accuracy of these figures,<sup>109</sup> the perception of long life associated

<sup>105</sup> Sallares 2002: 55–89.

<sup>106</sup> Scheidel 1994*b*; Shaw 1996: 133; Sallares 2002: 9–22, 201–34.

<sup>107</sup> Soren and Soren 1995; 1999: 520–3; Sallares 2002: 66–8.

<sup>108</sup> Sallares 2002: 2–3.

<sup>109</sup> e.g. by Parkin 1999: 155–7.

with the Apennine communities may be significant. Longevity continues to be associated with mountain communities: a sign displayed until recently at the entrance to the town of Colle Sannita (Benevento), 729 m above sea level, read: 'a Colle Sannita si prolunga la vita'.

The effect on the health of the local population in malarial areas may have been less apparent when indigenous peasants were farming the land, as local people would have been able to build up some resistance to the disease. Slaves, tenants, or temporary workers brought in from outside would have been more severely affected, however, and it is thus possible that local conditions may have contributed to the comparatively early stage at which the decline in numbers of rural sites can be identified in some lowland and coastal areas. Agricultural production could successfully take place even in areas which were malarial, but it was at a high cost in human lives.<sup>110</sup>

Demographic factors, then, may potentially have been of major significance in determining the history of settlement in Italy in the imperial period. However, we should bear in mind not only that there would have been significant diversities in demographic patterns across the peninsula,<sup>111</sup> but also that it is seldom possible to establish clear and definite links between a particular demographic scenario on the one hand and the pattern of site distributions on the land on the other; instead, large-scale or local demographic factors must be considered as contributing elements to the way the landscape changed, but alongside other possibilities. For example a substantial increase or decrease in population levels would have contributed to changing patterns of agricultural exploitation in the countryside, and both directly and indirectly would have had an impact on changing rural settlement patterns. Increasing levels of population could have been a stimulus to more intensive agricultural practices, in order to feed the increasing number of mouths; a decrease might have tended by contrast to lead to less intensive farming, and perhaps the abandonment of marginal land too.

<sup>110</sup> Sallares 2002: 254–6.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* 283.

## MIGRATION AND POPULATION MOVEMENT

Whatever view is taken of the possibility of an overall increase or decrease in population numbers in Italy—and the arguments against the ‘high’ estimate seem on balance stronger than those against the lower figure<sup>112</sup>—localized increase or decline in population as a result of people moving within, or out of, a region is clearly a possible explanation for the decreasing site numbers in some areas of Italy revealed by the archaeological record. Country dwellers living on scattered farms may have moved to local villages, towns in their own region or beyond, to the city of Rome, or even away from the peninsula altogether; likewise, increasing site numbers might reflect the movement of city dwellers into the countryside, or of country dwellers from one part of Italy to another. This section discusses possible scenarios for emigration and immigration within Italy in the imperial period, and the implications for patterns of rural settlement.

In archaic Italy, migration was a frequent phenomenon. This was reflected in the tradition associated with the Samnites and other Oscan-speaking peoples of central Italy of the *ver sacrum* (‘Sacred Spring’) according to which all the young men born in a particular year were dedicated to a deity; instead of being sacrificed, however, those so designated would leave their homeland and set out to found a new community elsewhere. As Salmon observed, ‘it is obvious that the real motive for any Sacred Spring was overpopulation’,<sup>113</sup> Given the generally healthier living conditions in the Apennines by contrast with the lowland regions of Italy, and the limited quantity of cultivable land available for the mountain peoples, it is not implausible that the Samnites and their neighbours might have devised such a mechanism for relieving pressure on local resources, even if its main importance in the historical period was in contributing to the collective identity of the Samnites (and Roman perceptions of them). The fifth century BC in particular was characterized by large-scale population movements from the mountains to the plains, as Samnites invaded Campania,<sup>114</sup> Lucanians occupied coastal cities such as

<sup>112</sup> Scheidel 2004: 5–9.

<sup>113</sup> Salmon 1967: 35–6; Dench 1995: 185–6; Tagliamonte 1996: 17–21.

<sup>114</sup> Frederiksen 1984: 136–7; McKay 2004.



Poseidonia,<sup>115</sup> and the area around Rome came under pressure from the Aequi and Volsci.<sup>116</sup> Polybius' account of Italian manpower in 225 BC reveals strikingly different population densities for the different Italian peoples, which may well reflect the variation in demographic patterns and cultivable land in the different regions of Italy: in this analysis, the 'Samnites' were particularly populous, though the extent of the territory understood by Polybius to fall under this category is controversial.<sup>117</sup>

Again in the early second century BC, population movements within Italy had become a concern both to the Roman authorities and to Rome's Italian allies. The Romans were concerned that Latins and Italians were usurping the privileges of citizenship, and the Italians because no account was taken of such migration when the military obligations of the allied and Latin communities were being calculated. In 187 BC, indeed, the Latins sent a delegation to Rome to complain that many of their citizens had migrated to the city (Livy 39. 3. 4–6). Despite the fact that in response to this protest 12,000 Latins were expelled from Rome, more problems are attested in 177 BC, when the Latin communities reported that more of their citizens had migrated to Rome.<sup>118</sup> Besides, the Samnites and Paelignians complained that 4,000 families from those communities had migrated to Fregellae.<sup>119</sup> The restructuring of houses identified by recent excavations at the site of Fregellae, and the creation of several *fullonicae* there in the second century BC, have been associated with this influx of migrants.<sup>120</sup> The two episodes are symptomatic both of the continuing trend of migration to Rome, and pressure on the resources of the central Apennines. In 126 BC, a new piece of legislation again expelled immigrants from the city, and migration continued to be a controversial issue in the years that followed.<sup>121</sup>

Also during the mid and later second century, we find Italians from the central Apennines, as well as those from Latium, Campania,

<sup>115</sup> Pedley 1990: 97.

<sup>116</sup> Cornell 1995: 305–6.

<sup>117</sup> Polyb. 2. 24; see Brunt 1987: 44–60; La Regina 1970–1: 450; Lo Cascio 1999: 166–9. For a sceptical approach to Polybius' figures, see now Scheidel 2004: 3–4.

<sup>118</sup> Broadhead 2001: 88–9.

<sup>119</sup> Livy 41. 8. 6–8, with Gabba 1989: 217–18.

<sup>120</sup> Coarelli 1991: 179–81; Coarelli and Monti 1998: 35–6.

<sup>121</sup> Cic. *Off.* 3. 47; see Husband 1916; Mouritsen 1998b: 111.

and Etruria, taking a leading role in trading activities in the ports of the Aegean, notably Delos, and also in Asia Minor and in Africa; like their Roman counterparts, some fell victim to attacks by Jugurtha and Mithradates.<sup>122</sup> There also seem to have been significant levels of migration from peninsular Italy to Cisalpine Gaul in the latter part of the second century BC.<sup>123</sup> Although the traders in the east and some of the migrants to north Italy are likely to have been of comparatively high status, poorer country dwellers too may have moved north to exploit the rich and underpopulated landscape of the Po valley;<sup>124</sup> likewise, we may imagine that many of those who left their communities to migrate to Fregellae or to Rome were from the poorer elements in society, seeking to improve their economic situation. In the first century BC, as well as the upheavals in the countryside brought about by the Social and Civil Wars, the provision of subsidized and then free grain must have provided an added incentive for Italians, now Roman citizens, to move to Rome; as Sallust put it, 'the young men who had endured their poverty by working in the fields, were attracted by private and public distributions, and had come to prefer leisure in the city to their thankless labour'.<sup>125</sup>

Although less well attested in the literary sources than under the Republic, migration to Rome must have continued to be of importance under the Empire too.<sup>126</sup> The high mortality rate within the city meant that Rome needed a constant influx of immigrants simply to maintain its population: other, better documented, pre-industrial metropolises had death-rates which were significantly higher than birth-rates.<sup>127</sup> For this reason, thousands of people would have had to migrate to the city each year if the urban population was to be maintained. The numbers of migrants involved have been debated recently, as has the impact of migration on the population of Italy as

<sup>122</sup> See Wilson, A. J. N. 1966: 105–11, 152–5 for the provenance of Italians attested in the East; also Gabba 1989: 224–5, and Rauh 1993: 30–3.

<sup>123</sup> Wiseman 1985: 108–9.

<sup>124</sup> Broadhead 2000, esp. 165.

<sup>125</sup> Sall. *Cat.* 37. 7; see Brunt 1987: 380–1; Garnsey 1988: 198–217; Scheidel 2004: 14.

<sup>126</sup> Morley 2003.

<sup>127</sup> For a more 'optimistic' reading of the comparative evidence, and assessment of demographic conditions at Rome, see Lo Cascio 2000a: 43–56, who stresses the provision of state grain and water supplies at Rome.

a whole, but the picture of Rome as an ‘urban graveyard’ remains overall a persuasive one.<sup>128</sup> Many migrants would have continued to come from Italy under the Empire, though an increasing proportion will have originated from outside the peninsula.<sup>129</sup> The attractions of the city of Rome to potential immigrants would have varied according to the status of the individual concerned, but (for those of higher status) included the opportunities offered by the largest market for goods and services in the Empire, and (for the less well off) the perception of a more reliable food supply and the possibility of obtaining casual employment, typically at the docks or in the building industry.<sup>130</sup> In any case we might envisage that migrants, in many cases without acquired immunity to diseases such as malaria, would have suffered disproportionately from the unhealthy and hazardous conditions in the city, leading to yet further immigration in due course.<sup>131</sup>

Entering on a long-term military career was one way in which the country dwellers might seek to escape the Italian countryside, but in the imperial period, this was in most cases tantamount to migrating to the city of Rome.<sup>132</sup> Few Italians now served in the legions posted on Rome’s frontiers (except in positions of command),<sup>133</sup> and the majority instead joined the Praetorian Guard, based in, or close to, the city, which provided higher wages and more prestige than service in the frontier legions, and was predominantly recruited from Italy up to the reign of Septimius Severus.<sup>134</sup> The Urban Cohorts, too, were based in the city, from AD 23 in the same camp as the Praetorians, and predominantly recruited from Italians.<sup>135</sup> If they survived to the end of their term, these soldiers might return to their home town; some took up municipal office after a career in the Guard.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Morley 1996: 49–54 with Lo Cascio 2001: 113–19; Scheidel 2001*a*: 28; Jongman 2003: 106–9; Scheidel 2004: 15–17.

<sup>129</sup> For migrants from overseas, see Noy 2000.

<sup>130</sup> Brunt 1980: 93–4; DeLaine 2000: 135–6; Mattingly and Aldrete 2000: 154–5; Noy 2000: 88–90.

<sup>131</sup> Lo Cascio 2000*a*: 44.

<sup>132</sup> For the military presence at Rome, see Noy 2000: 19–22; Coulston 2000.

<sup>133</sup> Forni 1953: 65–75; Forni 1974: 362–85.

<sup>134</sup> *Tac. Ann.* 4. 5; Passerini 1939: 148–69; Durry 1968: 239–57; Keppie 1996: 117–18.

<sup>135</sup> Freis 1967: 53–7.

<sup>136</sup> Passerini 1939: 166–7.

However, protection duties close to the emperor, and living in the unhealthy conditions provided by the Guard's urban camp, seem to have made service as a Praetorian as risky as a stint on the frontiers, if not more so.<sup>137</sup>

Migration to the city of Rome was not necessarily a one-way process, then, despite the hazards of life in the capital.<sup>138</sup> In particular, many of those who served in the ranks of the *apparitores*, as scribes, lictors, heralds, and messengers, originated in the area around the periphery of Rome;<sup>139</sup> other members of the imperial household took up residence in the periphery, in South Etruria in particular, perhaps attracted by the possibility of living close to the city, if not because of responsibilities connected with imperial properties in the area.<sup>140</sup> This pattern contributed to the cultural and political integration of Rome's *suburbium* with the city itself: no doubt this was also a factor which contributed to the dense pattern of settlement identified in South Etruria, and other areas in the periphery of Rome, in the early imperial period.

Was there a significant migration of the Italian peasantry from the countryside to other towns of Italy, and not just to the city of Rome?<sup>141</sup> An important question, but it is not easy as yet to provide clear answers. In early modern Europe, and Britain in the nineteenth century, it has been argued that 'stepwise' migration was the norm, with migrants travelling comparatively short distances to nearby towns at first, and eventually reaching the capital by stages.<sup>142</sup> If the same were true for imperial Italy, the growth of Rome would have been paralleled by the expansion of other towns in Italy. An alternative pattern is that identified in Latin America in the late twentieth century, by which peasants tend to migrate direct to the 'primate city', in the absence of a hierarchy of subordinate cities.<sup>143</sup> Under this scenario, Rome itself could have expanded substantially without the process of migration having had much impact on other Italian towns. In order to choose one of these alternatives over the other,

<sup>137</sup> Scheidel 1996: 128–9.

<sup>138</sup> Purcell 1994: 654–6.

<sup>139</sup> Purcell 1983: 161–7.

<sup>140</sup> Papi 2000: 113.

<sup>141</sup> Morley 1996: 174–80.

<sup>142</sup> Grigg 1977; De Vries 1984: 201.

<sup>143</sup> Roberts 1995: 107–8.

we need not only a rough assessment of the population resident in the towns of Italy in the imperial period, but also a sense of whether that urban population was increasing or decreasing. Neither of these pieces of information is easily recoverable, unfortunately. Various attempts have been made to assess the size of populations of ancient cities using, for example, the area enclosed within the city walls, the number of seats in the theatre or amphitheatre, or the quantity of water supplied to the city, but none of these methods is especially convincing, as it is quite feasible that the size of the wall circuit, the scale of public monuments, or the number of aqueducts, owe more to the generosity of the town's benefactors and their assessment of (or ambitions for) the town's prestige than they do to the number of people actually living within the urban centre. Besides, some residents of the city may well have lived outside the city walls.<sup>144</sup> Duncan-Jones has more persuasively computed the size of urban populations by calculating the number of recipients of distributions of cash or food implied by foundations, but even here alternative calculations are possible, depending on how generous we suppose the benefactors to have been, and what level of return could be expected from the sum set aside for the foundation. The inscriptions recording these schemes are frequently not explicit about the number of beneficiaries envisaged.<sup>145</sup> A text found at Saturnia, probably but not certainly dated to AD 234, commemorates a fund set up to finance an annual distribution to the *Augustales* and *plebs* of the town.<sup>146</sup> On the basis of this inscription, Duncan-Jones has estimated that the town's total population was roughly between 1,200 and 2,200 people, whereas Jacques, by suggesting a lower rate of return for the fund, and more generous provision for the recipients, has argued that the population was in fact more of the order of 500–1,000.<sup>147</sup> The lower figure is more in line with the limited archaeological data available, which suggests that Saturnia in the third century was a very small community.<sup>148</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear from Duncan-Jones' calcula-

<sup>144</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 260–2. See also La Regina 1970–1: 452–4, and Lo Cascio 1999: 164–6, for estimates of urban population in Italy.

<sup>145</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 262–77.

<sup>146</sup> *CIL* 11. 2650.

<sup>147</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 272–3; Jacques 1993.

<sup>148</sup> Fentress in Lenoir 1994: 250; Fentress 1996: 87; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 243.

tions that the scale of towns in Italy varied substantially, in some cases by a factor of twenty or more, suggesting that there was indeed a significant hierarchy of size, with numerous small cities, but also a significant number of more substantial regional centres.<sup>149</sup> On the basis of Duncan-Jones' calculations, and the comments on whether towns were flourishing or not in Strabo's *Geography*, Morley has compiled one possible list of communities likely to have had substantial urban populations.<sup>150</sup> Strabo's observations refer to the Augustan age at latest and may provide better information about the situation in earlier periods, when the authors he used as sources were compiling their material;<sup>151</sup> nevertheless, given the importance of resources such as landed property to the long-term well-being of the communities, those towns which were prosperous under the Republic were usually also prosperous under the Empire, as we will see. Among the centres discussed by Duncan-Jones, both Spolegium and Pisaurum seem to have had substantial populations (estimated as 23,000 and 12,600–23,800 respectively);<sup>152</sup> estimates of the population of Pompeii vary between 7,000 and 20,000, with a figure of around 10,000 most generally accepted.<sup>153</sup> The most substantial urban centres, outside Rome itself, Puteoli, and Ostia, are likely to have been port cities (e.g. Brundisium, Rhegium), towns particularly engaged in supplying the capital, centres historically of regional importance (e.g. Capua), those occupying important nodal positions on the road-network (e.g. Beneventum), and others where substantial manufacturing operations (e.g. wool-working at Canusium) or markets took place. In most cases it is simply impossible to guess at a population for these cities, but clearly they were important centres, and can be assumed to be larger than the majority of Italian towns. Lo Cascio concludes that even adopting a cautious figure for population density within urban centres, there were a significant number of towns with populations over 10,000 in imperial Italy.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 275; Scheidel 2004: 15.

<sup>150</sup> Morley 1996: 182.

<sup>151</sup> Pédech 1971; on Strabo's *Geography* see recently Clarke 1999.

<sup>152</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 273.

<sup>153</sup> Jongman 1988: 108–12; Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 95–103.

<sup>154</sup> Lo Cascio 1999: 165.

Another possible strategy for assessing the changing size of cities and their populations is by means of archaeological investigation. The difficulty here is that traditionally excavation in the cities of Roman Italy has tended to concentrate on their monuments and public spaces. This may provide some indirect indication of the resources available to the community as a whole, and some sense of the well-being of civic structures and institutions (see Chapter 2), but these need not necessarily have any correlation with the size of the city's population. A potentially more helpful technique is that of urban archaeological field survey, as Alcock has successfully shown in the Greek context.<sup>155</sup> In cases where the ancient urban centre can be surveyed using the same methodology employed for the recovery of rural sites, namely the systematic collection of pottery, tile, and other diagnostic artefacts from across the sites, information of exceptional value can potentially be obtained, allowing us to reconstruct the ways in which an urban site fluctuated in size across time, whether there was continuity or discontinuity of settlement, and whether the focus of urban activity moved or remained in a constant location. Where the residential and peripheral areas of the city (where we might imagine that a substantial proportion of migrants might reside) can be subjected to particular investigation, we might potentially expect interesting data about patterns of migration to emerge. In those (few) cases in which this exercise has been carried out in Italy, however, indications are that the residential population of the cities in question declined during the imperial period. Cosa and Interamna so far provide the best examples (see below, Chapter 2, for further discussion): at Cosa, however, survey and excavation seems to suggest very limited levels of population there beyond the mid second century AD, despite attempts at reviving the centre in the third century, and a significant shrinking of the urban centre can also be noted at Interamna. Similarly, there was a notable decline in the size of the urban centre at Heba in the second half of the second century AD, although here too there were efforts to revive the town in the following century, again with limited success.<sup>156</sup> At Oria there was

<sup>155</sup> Bintliff and Snodgrass 1988; Alcock 1993: 96–9.

<sup>156</sup> See Fentress in Lenoir 1994: 250; Fentress 1996: 87–8; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 244–5.

little sign of occupation after 90 BC in the part of the urban area which has been surveyed, though there had been habitation here in the preceding Hellenistic period.<sup>157</sup> At the site of Capena a gradual decline in material from the first century AD onwards has also been noted.<sup>158</sup>

The sites available for intensive survey in this way were (by definition) not ones where settlement was maintained in the long term, and thus not necessarily typical of Italian towns more broadly.<sup>159</sup> However, if any generalized conclusion can be derived from what is as yet a limited sample of sites from different areas of Italy, the evidence tends to suggest that the smaller towns of Italy were unlikely to have received substantial permanent populations of migrants under the Empire.<sup>160</sup> The view of C. A. Smith, that since pre-industrial administrative centres require low levels of labour, they tend to grow by natural increase rather than immigration (if at all) may thus provide a potential model for the smaller Italian *municipia*, many of which have been seen as 'artificial creations', primarily serving as administrative centres.<sup>161</sup> That position is perfectly compatible, though, with believing that the more substantial urban centres were the destination of migrants; in fact for many reasons these larger centres would have been much more attractive destinations than their smaller counterparts. Many were important market centres or ports, so much more casual employment was likely to be available; the larger the town, the more diverse economic activity there would have been, allowing opportunities for both unskilled labour and more specialist services. In this way they would have surpassed the critical mass needed to provide a significant quantity of jobs for migrants.<sup>162</sup> Although smaller towns are unlikely to have had the range of employment available which would attract migrants to them

<sup>157</sup> Yntema 1993: 215–16.

<sup>158</sup> Camilli and Vitali Rosati 1995: 410–12.

<sup>159</sup> See Keay *et al.* 2004: 224 for a similar point.

<sup>160</sup> In Patterson, J. R. 1987: 143, on the basis of somewhat limited evidence, I argued for a rather more widespread population growth in the urban centres of central Italy than I would now wish to suggest. Not all towns were similarly prosperous and populous in the first and second centuries AD, though I remain sceptical about the idea of an overall decline.

<sup>161</sup> Smith 1990: 35–6 with Gabba 1994: 98–9.

<sup>162</sup> Morley 1996: 176–7.



(at least, on anything but a temporary basis), the regional centres may well have done, and this would arguably have contributed to a higher (and increasing) level of population by comparison with the rank-and-file of Italian towns. As Alcock puts it, 'the bigger a town became, the bigger it could become'.<sup>163</sup> Some of these centres might even have attracted migrants who were formerly resident in smaller towns themselves, contributing still further to the depopulation which some of them suffered in the imperial period (see Chapter 2 for further discussion); the loss of civic rights and privileges which might be seen as a discouragement to such a move are unlikely, perhaps, to have been a significant element in the decision-making process for the poorest town dwellers.<sup>164</sup> As yet, however, the archaeological evidence which could definitively be used to prove the hypothesis of substantial population growth in selected larger centres during the imperial period is lacking.

A recent study has examined the phenomenon of migration to and from Lucania in the imperial period, and demonstrates some of the difficulties involved in reconstructing patterns of population movement in Italy at this time.<sup>165</sup> It is potentially of particular interest, not only given the traditionally high level of migration away from Lucania in modern times, but also in the light of the apparent increase in the number of rural sites in that region revealed by field survey. The data provided by literary texts and inscriptions is skewed towards the comparatively wealthy (who were able to afford a funerary inscription sufficiently informative to give some clue as to their travels and activities after they left the region) and to soldiers. Auxiliaries, in particular, left behind them military *diplomata*, which confirmed their acquisition of Roman citizenship, and may provide some clues as to their careers both during their military service and their subsequent lives as civilians. Likewise a poem by Statius allows us to reconstruct the movements of the poet's father, who moved from his home town of Velia to Neapolis in order to teach there; his son subsequently moved to Rome, in a form of stepwise migration, although the intellectual milieu in which father and son moved,

<sup>163</sup> Alcock 1993: 116.

<sup>164</sup> Morley 1996: 174–6.

<sup>165</sup> Simelon 1992.

both on the Bay of Naples and in Rome, was clearly very different from that of the majority of migrants from southern Italy.<sup>166</sup> The cosmopolitan Neapolis was a home for people from all around the Mediterranean, as well as a destination for migrants of more local origin.<sup>167</sup> Most of those who are recorded as having migrated from Lucania, however, did so in order to join the army, and some subsequently returned to their home town, either alive or for burial. Similarly, many of those recorded as having come to live in the region from outside it did so after service with the fleet at Misenum, and some were evidently settled in the veteran colony established by Vespasian at Paestum, although, interestingly, all of these seem subsequently to have moved elsewhere, to judge by the findspots of their *diplomata*. Two went back to their homelands, in Dacia and Thrace respectively, one to Corsica, and one to nearby Pompeii, though whether the latter was living there permanently or just visiting at the time of the eruption of AD 79 is unclear.<sup>168</sup> Of migrating peasants, either leaving the region or entering it, there is little sign, though this is more likely to be a reflection of their poverty and invisibility in the evidence we have, rather than an indication that such migration did not occur. The discovery at Metapontum of a group of poor graves of similar type, containing eastern *sigillata* pottery, which have been dated to the latter part of the first or the early second century AD, has, however, been interpreted as an immigrant cemetery.<sup>169</sup> Given the dramatic increase in site numbers identified in the territory of Metapontum at around this time, it is tempting to see these finds as indications of new labour being brought in from overseas to work what may well have been a dangerously malarial area, and hints at the possibility of migration into the Italian countryside from overseas.<sup>170</sup>

A further possibility is that declining numbers of rural sites may reflect short-distance migration on the part of those who had

<sup>166</sup> Stat. *Silv.* 5. 3; see Simelon 1992: 705; D'Arms 1970: 144, 218–19. I take *Silv.* 5. 3. 176–7 to imply that the young men of Rome travelled to Naples in order to study with Staius' father, not that Staius' father travelled to Rome to teach them; but both interpretations are, I think, feasible.

<sup>167</sup> Lomas 1993: 165; D'Arms 1970: 162.

<sup>168</sup> Simelon 1992: 695–704; Keppie 1984: 101–2.

<sup>169</sup> Bottini 1986: 469.

<sup>170</sup> On the territory of Metapontum and its agricultural production see Carter 1994. The area was a malarial one: see Sallares 2002: 103–5.

previously lived in scattered settlements, to small nucleated centres of habitation, often known as *vici*, which lacked the formal civic status of *municipium* or *colonia*. These villages might be attached to villas as a base for their labourforce, as administrative centres for imperial estates, or as stations on a major road, providing services for travellers. Alternatively they might have a more-or-less independent existence in the countryside.<sup>171</sup>

Unfortunately, our knowledge of these centres remains somewhat sketchy, except in the central Apennines, where a wealth of inscriptions from the first century BC has provided valuable detail on the administrative functions of village-type settlements. Livy and Festus note that the Samnites and their mountain neighbours typically lived in villages (Livy 9. 13. 7; *Gloss. Lat.* 502L.), and these were particularly appropriate in the context of the Apennine landscape, with its small but fertile upland plains. The communities had sacred and secular public buildings, they acquired magistracies and councils modelled on urban institutions, and served as markets and as centres of activity for aspirational local elites. Sometimes they continued to be important even after the development during the late Republic and under Augustus of a network of municipal centres which controlled the territory.<sup>172</sup> Beyond the Apennines, small nucleated settlements of this kind provided a rational way of exploiting the widely scattered blocks of territory of which a large landholding frequently consisted, and would have had the added advantage of allowing a more effective imposition of rural patronage on the country dwellers, with benefits for landowners and peasants alike.<sup>173</sup>

A number of factors may lie behind the comparative lack of information about these villages, particularly in relation to the archaeological record. First, just as urban excavation has traditionally tended to focus on the public monuments of a town, so rural excavations have largely been concerned with villas—either concentrating on the mosaics and decoration of the *pars urbana*, or alter-

<sup>171</sup> On village settlement, see esp. now Capogrossi Colognesi 2002 and Tarpin 2002. Imperial estates: Small, Volterra, and Hancock 2003: 185–93.

<sup>172</sup> Laffi 1973; Frederiksen 1976: 342–3, 350–2; Patterson, J. R. 1991*b*: 153; Capogrossi Colognesi 2002; Tarpin 2002. On the epigraphic evidence, see Calbi, Donati, and Poma 1993.

<sup>173</sup> Garnsey and Woolf 1989; Foxhall 1990.

natively aiming to reconstruct the productive capacity of an estate by investigating wine and olive presses, and other agricultural installations. The often less imposing physical remains of rural villages have received comparatively little attention. Even field surveys, which have made it their aim to reconstruct the rural landscape in its entirety, have until recently tended to neglect village settlement. This may in part be because where a transect-based methodology, or one involving the coverage of random samples of territory, is adopted, it is quite feasible for a nucleated site to escape notice altogether, unless complementary 'extensive' exploration of the territory is included in the project strategy too. This is what has been termed the 'Teotihuacán problem' whereby a survey strategy aimed at reconstructing a landscape of scattered settlement may allow an individual site, even one of exceptional importance, to be missed altogether.<sup>174</sup> Another difficulty is that it is often difficult to distinguish a village from a villa on the basis of surface remains, except on grounds of size, given that such a settlement may—but need not—contain comparatively wealthy buildings as well as poorer accommodation, depending on the type of village.<sup>175</sup>

Recently, however, there are signs that more attention is being paid to the role of such sites, both in upland and in lowland contexts. Investigations since the 1970s at the Marsic site of Colle d'Amplero, to the south of the Fucine Lake, have revealed a complex of related sites which include a hillfort, a sanctuary, and an area of habitation which continued to be occupied into the first century AD.<sup>176</sup> Similarly, excavations at the site of Monte Pallano in the Sangro valley have revealed the remains of a public building which survived into the second century AD.<sup>177</sup> Although there was little sign of activity in the imperial period at the village sites investigated in the upper Biferno valley, several substantial sites were discovered further down the valley. One of these (site B102), perhaps to be identified with ancient Uscosium, was 16 hectares in extent, larger than some *municipia* in the central Apennines.<sup>178</sup> Excavation here revealed the

<sup>174</sup> Flannery 1976: 131–6.

<sup>175</sup> Volpe 1996: 189 n. 131.

<sup>176</sup> Letta 1975; Amplero 1989.

<sup>177</sup> Faustoferri and Lloyd 1998: 8–11.

<sup>178</sup> La Regina 1970–1: 453.

remains of a substantial cistern of imperial date; interestingly, a mid second century AD inscription suggests that a cistern in the area, perhaps part of the same nucleus, was restored by *pagani*.<sup>179</sup> If so, site B102 would appear to be the central place of a *pagus* (rural district). Many of the lowland villages continued to be occupied into late antiquity, by contrast with their counterparts in the upper valley. The evidence from the central Apennines, therefore, suggests that villages did maintain some importance, either in terms of the presence of monumental buildings or as areas of habitation, into the imperial period, but the examples from the lower valley of the Biferno demonstrate the greatest continuity of occupation.

Several inscriptions demonstrate that the centres of *pagi* were embellished as a result of acts of generosity by individuals, such as C. Safronius Secundus, decurion of Beneventum and curator of the Pagus Vetanus of that town, who provided *triclinia* (dining rooms) and then entertained the *pagani* to a banquet, in AD 167.<sup>180</sup> In the territory of Saturnia, the curator of the Pagus Lucretius was similarly honoured with a statue by the *pagani*.<sup>181</sup> The discovery of villages of imperial date is reported in the territory of Volaterrae,<sup>182</sup> in the Albegna valley survey area (where they are typically found on marginal land distant from urban centres, but also along the coast)<sup>183</sup> and around Capena.<sup>184</sup> A considerable number have also been noted in Lucania<sup>185</sup> and in Apulia.<sup>186</sup> The excavated site at S. Giorgio (close to the Via Appia, near Brindisi), like the presumed site of Uscosium in Samnium, had a large cistern at the centre of the community, and appears to have been established as the centre of a large rural estate in the third century AD.<sup>187</sup> It would appear that in certain areas of Apulia, where decline in scattered rural settlement has also been

<sup>179</sup> *CIL* 9. 2828; Barker 1995a: 229–30.

<sup>180</sup> *CIL* 9. 1503 = *ILS* 6508. Examination of the stone suggests the name of the *pagus* was Vetanus, rather than Veianus, as Mommsen suggests in *CIL*, *ad loc.* See Patterson, J. R. 1988: 167; Iasiello 2001: 488–9; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 220, 369.

<sup>181</sup> *ILS* 6596.

<sup>182</sup> Terrenato and Saggin 1994: 475.

<sup>183</sup> Carandini 1994: 169–71; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 176, 182, 192, 200, 218.

<sup>184</sup> Cambi 2004: 96.

<sup>185</sup> Di Giuseppe 1996a: 242.

<sup>186</sup> Volpe 1996: 147–96.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.* 156–60.

noted, there was indeed a movement of population into village centres, as may also have happened in the lower Biferno valley. In some areas of Lucania, similarly, an important element in the increasing number of rural sites in the imperial period is due to the creation of villages, as can be seen around S. Giovanni di Ruoti, and in the valley of the Basentello.<sup>188</sup> Another interesting example is the village at Morigialdo/Celle di Bulgheria in the territory of Buxentum, recently investigated by means of survey and geophysics. This major site grew from the late Republic to the late Empire, but without producing high-status artefacts indicative of the presence of a villa.<sup>189</sup>

A final possibility in this list of explanations of declining site numbers in terms of population mobility is that people simply disappeared from the landscape altogether: dying of starvation, or eking out an existence on the margins of rural society as itinerant beggars or bandits, for example. Equally, the inhabitants may have remained in the area, but for one reason or another became less visible in the countryside, using poorer or less easily identified artefacts. Seasonal labour was one way in which the rural poor could have sought temporary employment, and is attested as a regular feature of country life both in the agricultural writers and in other sources. It was alleged—though denied by Suetonius—that the emperor Vespasian's great-grandfather was a contractor for the squads of Umbrian labourers who travelled into Sabine territory annually to help with the harvest there (Suet. *Vesp.* 1. 4). Such travelling groups of workers, no doubt living in temporary accommodation, would be largely invisible in the archaeological record. Although the state of Italy under the Empire was generally more peaceful than it had been in the latter years of the Republic, when a range of disasters—the social and civil wars, the colonial settlements which followed the Sullan victory, the rebellion of Spartacus and the incursions of pirates—caused major upheavals in the countryside and contributed to an already highly insecure situation,<sup>190</sup> we must imagine that low-level banditry continued to be a problem. Bandits have traditionally been recruited from peasant populations 'in those

<sup>188</sup> Small and Buck 1994: 21; Small 2001: 51–2.

<sup>189</sup> Fracchia 2001: 69–71.

<sup>190</sup> Brunt 1987: 285–93, 551–7; Stewart, R. 1995.

forms of rural economy or rural environment which have relatively small labour demands, or which are too poor to employ all their able-bodied men,<sup>191</sup> and the situation in the central Apennines in the early Empire, for example, fits that scenario very closely. Pliny records two cases in which people known to him set out on journeys across Italy and were never seen again (Plin. *Ep.* 6. 25). Begging, similarly, is well attested, particularly in the city of Rome.<sup>192</sup>

It does then seem likely that, together with the other possibilities already discussed, the movement of population from the countryside to the city of Rome, and to larger towns which, as regional centres, were able to cope with an increasing level of population, together with the development in some areas of rural villages, help to provide an explanatory framework for the general tendency for rural sites to decline in numbers. However, it still needs to be established why country dwellers left their rural homes in the first place. One particular area which needs investigation is whether there were significant changes in the way the countryside was exploited in this period, and what effects these might have had on the pattern of rural settlement.

## CHANGING FORMS OF RURAL EXPLOITATION

Historians have commonly believed that from the mid Empire onwards substantial tracts of the landscape of Italy became *agri deserti*, symptomatic of population decline, with the Antonine plague potentially a significant factor. However, abandonment of agricultural land might also be a consequence of less intensive patterns of agriculture;<sup>193</sup> declining site numbers could likewise be an indication of changing forms of rural exploitation, involving the abandonment of farm-buildings and villas, rather than the abandonment of agricultural land itself.<sup>194</sup> In particular, a decline in the number of

<sup>191</sup> Hobsbawm 1985: 31. For banditry in antiquity, see Shaw 1993; 2000: 382–8; 2004.

<sup>192</sup> Grey and Parkin 2003: 286–9.

<sup>193</sup> For discussion (with less gloomy assessments) see Whittaker 1976; Moreland 1993.

<sup>194</sup> Vera 1995: 335–7.

occupied rural sites may potentially be linked with the phenomenon of estate accumulation, which can be shown to be typical of many areas of Italy in the high Empire. A range of literary sources (notably the descriptions of Pliny's landholdings preserved in his *Epistulae*) and epigraphic texts such as the Trajanic alimentary tables from Ligures Baebiani and Veleia, and a document listing the holdings of a wealthy landowner from Volceii, combine to cast light on this general tendency.

Writers of the first century AD frequently express concern about the development of large estates and the extensive exploitation of the countryside. Pliny the Elder famously observed that '*latifundia* have ruined Italy and now are ruining the provinces too': the implication of the praise of Cn. Pompeius that follows this comment, for never purchasing an estate adjacent to his own, suggests that Pliny's concern is about extensive tracts of land falling under single ownership (*HN* 18. 35). Similarly, Columella advises that 'moderation is to be exercised in the acquisition of land, as in everything else'; the landowner is to avoid 'leaving estates to be trampled by herds of beasts or devastated and ravaged by wild animals, or keeping them occupied by citizens enslaved for debt and gangs of slaves' (*Rust.* 1. 3. 12). The growth of large estates, whether in this form, or as a patchwork of holdings scattered across a district, will have been a familiar scenario across Italy. As Potter put it, 'there must always have been a tendency for the more successful landowners to absorb nearby smallholdings into their own estates, with the effect upon the archaeological data of a gradual reduction in the total number of sites in occupation'.<sup>195</sup> A landowner might acquire an estate close to his own property, by inheritance, marriage, or purchase, perhaps, but choose to maintain only one of the villas as his luxury residence, and either abandon the other farmhouse, or use it for storage, as a byre for animals, or for housing tenants or slaves. This would be reflected in the archaeological record—and in particular the surface finds—by the disappearance of fineware pottery, or possibly all kinds of artefacts, depending on whether the villa continued to be occupied at a poorer level, for example by slaves or tenants of lower status than the former

<sup>195</sup> Potter 1979: 141–2.



owner, or was completely abandoned as a centre of human occupation.

The point is illustrated by several examples of excavated rural farmsteads. In the case of the San Marco villa in the territory of Gubbio, the main structure of the farm dates to the first century AD, but occupation of a later building in wood continues into the third century.<sup>196</sup> We can see a similar pattern in the case of the farmhouse excavated on the M. Forco ridge in the Ager Capenas, one of several which seem to have been established as part of a settlement of veterans in the second half of the first century BC; it was apparently converted into a barn, and continued to be used into the second century AD.<sup>197</sup> In both these cases, a period of reuse for non-residential purposes precedes the definitive abandonment of the site. By contrast, the villa at S. Giovanni di Ruoti in Lucania was abandoned c.AD 220, but continued to be maintained and roofed until it was reoccupied c.AD 350.<sup>198</sup> Another striking example of the downgrading of a rural villa comes from Fischia di Scalea, in Calabria, where at the end of the third century AD, a wine-press was installed in a room paved with a first-century BC mosaic; evidently the *pars urbana* of the villa was no longer employed as a residence, and it was reused for productive activities.<sup>199</sup>

The phenomenon of estate agglomeration can also be detected through an analysis of the evidence for landholding at Veleia (in the Apennines, south of Piacenza) and at Ligures Baebiani (some 35 km north of Benevento). We are particularly well informed on the nature of landholding in these territories because of the survival of bronze tablets giving details of the Trajanic alimentary schemes established there. The Veleia table was discovered in 1747 in what was subsequently identified as the basilica of the town, was transferred to the Academy of Fine Arts at Parma some twenty years later, and is now in the Museo Nazionale of that city.<sup>200</sup> The Ligures Baebiani table (on which I will be focusing primarily) was discovered by

<sup>196</sup> Malone and Stoddart 1994: 192–6.

<sup>197</sup> Jones, G. D. B. 1963: 147–58; Potter 1979: 124–5; Cambi 2004: 87.

<sup>198</sup> Small and Buck 1994: 60.

<sup>199</sup> Battista Sangineto 2001: 222. For other examples, see Vera 1995: 336–8.

<sup>200</sup> *CIL* 11. 1147; see De Pachtère 1920; Criniti 1991, esp. 13–61 on the history of the discovery of the Veleia alimentary table, and previous scholarship relating to it.

farmworkers at Macchia di Circello, the site of the urban centre of Ligures Baebiani, 35 km north of Benevento, in 1831; presumably it too had been displayed in a public building of some kind. It came into the possession of Giosuè de Agostini, a local landowner and antiquarian, but afterwards had a chequered career, allegedly being damaged by the visiting German scholar Heinrich Brunn, and was then fortunately saved when the de Agostini collection at Campolattaro was destroyed by brigands. In 1875 it was acquired by the Museo Kircheriano in Rome, and is now in the collections of the Museo Nazionale delle Terme. The *alimenta* were a series of schemes instituted by Nerva and subsequently Trajan to help poor children in Italy: clearly an important factor behind their establishment was a concern on the part of these emperors to demonstrate their generosity and emphasize imperial concern for Italy as a whole, but they also seem to have been concerned to target problems relating to poverty and military recruitment.<sup>201</sup>

Both documents preserve a list of landowners who pledged some or all of their properties to the alimentary scheme; in exchange for a lump-sum loan from the central government, the amount of which was calculated as a percentage of the value of the land pledged to the scheme, the landowners would be obliged in perpetuity to contribute a certain sum each year into a fund for the maintenance of poor children in the city (and presumably its territory as well).<sup>202</sup> The loans provided for the landowners of Ligures Baebiani were roughly 7 per cent of the value of the respective estates, and they seem to have paid approximately 5 per cent of this loaned amount annually into the alimentary fund. The Ligures Baebiani table does not specify how much each child received, but at Veleia the figures were: legitimate boys, 16 HS monthly; legitimate girls, 12 HS; illegitimate boys, 12 HS; illegitimate girls, 10 HS. The tables list in order the names of landowners contributing to the scheme, the names and location of the properties (*fundi*)<sup>203</sup> they have 'mortgaged' to the scheme,

<sup>201</sup> *CIL* 9. 1455; see De Agostini 1984: 67–119; Patterson, J. R. 1988; Iasiello 2001; Torelli, M. R. 2002. For the *alimenta* generally, see Patterson, J. R. 1987; Woolf 1990; and more recently Dal Cason 1997; Jongman 2002.

<sup>202</sup> For the workings of the schemes see in particular Garnsey 1968; Duncan-Jones 1982: 288–319.

<sup>203</sup> For discussion of the nature of *fundi*, see De Neeve 1984b.

identified by the *pagus* (rural district) and (sometimes) the urban territory in which they were located, the name of the owner of the neighbouring property (following the procedure for registration of land for the census, as laid out in *Dig.* 50. 15. 4), the valuation of the mortgaged estate, the amount of the loan given to the landowner, and the annual sum to be paid into the fund for the maintenance of the poor children. One entry, for example, reads as follows:

Trebonio Primo fund. Apuleiani et Cassiani et Arelliani Pag.  
Mef[l]ani adf. Marcio Rufino aest. HS C̄ in HS VIIĪ  
HS CCXXV

To Trebonius Primus, who contributed the *fundus Apuleianus et Cassianus et Arellianus* in the Pagus Mef[l]anus, adjacent to the estate of Marcius Rufinus, valued at the sum of 100,000 sesterces: loan of 9,000 sesterces. Contribution to be paid by Trebonius Primus into the Alimentary Fund annually: 225 sesterces.<sup>204</sup>

The text of the alimentary table thus provides a fascinating insight into the pattern of landholding in the territories of Ligures Baebiani and nearby Beneventum.<sup>205</sup> In particular, the document illuminates the process of estate accumulation discussed above. Trebonius Primus must have been a comparatively wealthy individual, since he is likely to have owned substantially more than the estates worth 100,000 sesterces he pledged to the alimentary scheme; landowners did not contribute all their properties.<sup>206</sup> We know that he (or a close relative) also dedicated a shrine with a portico to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, probably in the Pagus Vetanus or Pagus Mef[l]anus.<sup>207</sup> The estate mortgaged by Trebonius Primus to the alimentary scheme consisted of three properties combined into one, which had taken their names from previous owners with the names Apuleius, Cassius, and Arellius, thus apparently illustrating the process of estate agglomeration. The difficulty is to know when the *fundi* acquired their original names, and how long the process of accumulation revealed by the table took. Frederiksen, following Veyne, has suggested that

<sup>204</sup> *CIL* 9. 1455, 2. 62.

<sup>205</sup> For discussion, see Veyne 1957; 1958; Champlin 1981; Patterson, J. R. 1988; Dal Cason 1997; Iasiello 2001; Torelli, M. R. 2002.

<sup>206</sup> Champlin 1981: 250.

<sup>207</sup> *CIL* 9. 1496 with Garnsey 1968: 371; Patterson, J. R. 1988: 167; Iasiello 2001: 480 n. 31; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 362.

the definitive acquisition of names by *fundi* took place in the context of Augustus' revival of the census, and the creation of the system of *pagi* as subdivisions of the territories of cities, whether in 8 BC or AD 14.<sup>208</sup> In either of these cases Apuleius, Cassius, and Arellius would have owned the individual properties at the time of Augustus, but they had been combined together and fallen into the hands of a member of the Trebonius family by AD 101, when the details of landholding in the area were collected as part of the institution of the alimentary scheme. A post-triumviral, probably Augustan date for the formal naming of the estates is perhaps also implied by the fact that many of the *fundi* described on the table as being in the *pertica Beneventana* or *in Beneventano* are valued at 50,000 or 60,000 HS. Although the exact meaning of these terms is debated, the use of the word *pertica* (referring to the measuring rod used by surveyors to lay out a grid) implies a link with a land-distribution scheme, and the standardized values suggest the possibility that they had originally been properties distributed to veterans as part of the colonial settlement at Beneventum in 42 BC, which also affected the territory of Ligures Baebiani.<sup>209</sup> It is of course impossible to be sure.<sup>210</sup>

Another important document, the so-called Volceii Table, also illustrates the process of estate accumulation. Dating to AD 323, it has been identified as a list of properties belonging to one Turcius, probably L. Turcius Apronianus, who was urban prefect at Rome in AD 339. The properties, seventy in all, are listed as *kasae* and *fundi*, according to the *pagi* in which they are located, and their size in *millenae* (a late-antique land measure) recorded. The document illustrates how, by the fourth century AD, a substantial estate had been created by the accumulation of properties in different *pagi* across the territory of the city of Volceii.<sup>211</sup>

<sup>208</sup> Veyne 1958: 182; Frederiksen 1976: 348 n. 45.

<sup>209</sup> Keppie 1983: 159 n. 35; Iasiello 2001: 474 n. 6; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 162.

<sup>210</sup> For expressions of caution see Champlin 1981: 245–6, who rightly observes that the process of estate agglomeration may have begun long before the time of Augustus. It is, however, worth noting that the establishment of the triumviral colony would have caused major disruption in landholding patterns in a community such as Ligures Baebiani, and a new start in listing the ownership of land would have been particularly appropriate at that time, or shortly afterwards. See also Capogrossi Colognesi 2002: 24.

<sup>211</sup> *CIL* 10. 407 = *Inscriptiones Italiae* 3.3.1 no. 17; see Champlin 1980 for a discussion.

One of the texts most effectively illuminating the process of estate accumulation is a letter written by Pliny to his friend Calvisius Rufus, early in the second century AD. This discusses the potential advantages and disadvantages of purchasing a property close to his own estate near Tifernum Tiberinum in Umbria.<sup>212</sup> The benefits are seen principally in terms of what he describes as *pulchritudo iungendi*—the attractiveness of joining the estates together—but he also notes that if he bought the new property, he could visit the two estates at the same time, and it would be possible to organize them using the same *procurator* and *actores*. Besides, ‘one villa could be kept up and embellished, the other simply maintained’. Pliny’s own villa could remain as the residential centre, where he could stay when he visited the area: only one set of furniture, household staff, gardeners, workmen, and hunting equipment would be needed. The disadvantages, by contrast, would be the risks associated with maintaining all one’s landholdings in a single area, with the result that they would be excessively exposed to localized bad weather conditions and other similar disasters; in general Pliny (who also owned estates near Comum and a suburban property on the Laurentine coast) was keen to spread his holdings of rural property as widely as possible.<sup>213</sup>

This passage provides another possible confirmation of the process by which rural estates were amalgamated in this period, with one villa falling out of use, or being maintained for use by tenants or storage. It is worth noting, though, that much of Pliny’s property in the Tifernum Tiberinum area was worked by tenants who from his description seem to have been comparatively affluent: they owned their own slaves and farm equipment, at least to begin with.<sup>214</sup> So the effect of Pliny’s estate purchase on the landscape (and the archaeological record) may have been limited: presumably the tenants would have had their own villas, although no doubt more modest than Pliny’s. We might envisage that the impact of the process of amalgamation of the two estates on the ground would have resulted in the disappearance of (at most) one of the villas—and perhaps not even

<sup>212</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 3. 19. For discussion, see Duncan-Jones 1982: 23; Kehoe 1988; 1989; De Neeve 1990; Kehoe 1993; Rosafio 1993; 2002: 81–109; Vera 1995: 335–7.

<sup>213</sup> *Ep.* 4. 6. For excavations at the site of Pliny’s Tifernum villa at Colle Plinio, S. Giustino (near Città di Castello) see Braconi and Uroz Sáez 1999.

<sup>214</sup> De Neeve 1990: 383–7; Rosafio 1993; 2002: 81–109.

that, if new tenants were installed. It is clear from Pliny's account that the estate he is buying is composed of a series of smaller properties, rather than one large piece of countryside; Pliny notes that it 'runs in and out' of his own. Presumably it had been acquired piecemeal by the previous owner's family over the years, by means of inheritance, dowries, and purchase.<sup>215</sup> Pliny, however, does not allude to any attractions of 'economies of scale' in discussing whether to purchase the estate, suggesting that the exploitation of the property would have continued much as it had done in the past. Unfortunately, the limited nature of the material recovered from survey in the upper Tiber valley around Tifernum has not allowed a clear picture of the chronology of the growth of large estates in the area to be reconstructed.<sup>216</sup>

In some ways, then, the combination of estates can be seen as a natural and indeed almost inevitable process in the landscape of Italy; the wealthy can be assumed normally to have married their approximate social equals, so large estates would often have been combined in this way; likewise, where a wealthy landowner had only a single heir, his death would lead on inheritance to the combination of their estates. Equally, where there were many heirs, this would lead to a fragmentation of property, which might then be recombined with the properties in the heirs' ownership to form differently configured holdings. As we have seen in the case of Pliny, a landowner might also purchase a nearby estate if he had access to spare capital.

The extent and the manner in which these changes in ownership would be reflected in the archaeological record still presents some problems. I have suggested that the form of amalgamation envisaged by Pliny would have had a limited effect on patterns of site distribution in the area, but it is important to stress that the situation he describes at Tifernum was only one possible scenario. Just as the particular problems in the area reported by Pliny appear to result from localized weather and marketing conditions, so we should be wary of extrapolating from the land-tenure patterns Pliny describes at Tifernum to Italy more broadly. Similarly, Pliny himself may have devised his own agricultural strategy: some of the initiatives he

<sup>215</sup> Duncan-Jones 1976: 12.

<sup>216</sup> Braconi and Uroz Sáez 1999: 179–90.

introduces to improve the lot of his tenants—sharecropping for example—do appear to be his own innovations.

Conventionally, the high Empire is seen as a period in which the widespread employment of slave labour on the farms of the Italian countryside, which was particularly characteristic of the last two centuries BC, gave way to the increasing use of tenancy. This is seen in turn as a precursor to the ‘colonate’, the process by which the status and mobility of tenants appears to have been increasingly constrained during the course of the fourth century AD.<sup>217</sup> Recent scholarship has, however, tended to blur this alleged chronological distinction between slavery and tenancy,<sup>218</sup> just as the origins of a slave economy are increasingly being traced back to the fourth century BC.<sup>219</sup> Even in the second and first centuries BC, when the most substantial numbers of slaves were being brought into Italy, teams of slaves tended to be supported by casual labour from free country dwellers who lived around the slave estates.<sup>220</sup> There are indications that tenancy was already used under the late Republic and the early Empire (though whether earlier in the Republic is debated),<sup>221</sup> while conversely it has also been demonstrated that slavery continued to be important into the later Empire.<sup>222</sup> Besides, a preponderance of slave-run estates seems to have been a phenomenon which was particularly characteristic of certain specific areas of Italy, notably Latium, Campania, and coastal Etruria. There were also different ways of employing slaves: Pliny’s tenants around Tifernum used them in small numbers on their farms, but we learn from Pliny that chained slaves were not used in the area (*Ep.* 3. 19. 7). Another possibility was to establish families of slaves in isolated settlements as what became known as *servi quasi coloni*. This form of exploitation was only likely to work if the slaves stayed put and did not abscond; so arguably it may have become more prevalent where breeding the next generation of slaves within the household (rather than buying

<sup>217</sup> For a valuable summary, see Whittaker and Garnsey 1998: 287–94. On the colonate: Scheidel 1994a; Lo Cascio 1997; Rosafio 2002.

<sup>218</sup> De Neeve 1984a; Foxhall 1990; Garnsey 2000: 702–6.

<sup>219</sup> Oakley 1993; Cornell 1995: 393–4.

<sup>220</sup> Rathbone 1981.

<sup>221</sup> De Neeve 1984a: 119–20; De Ligt 2000; Rosenstein 2004: 181–2.

<sup>222</sup> Whittaker 1987; MacMullen 1987; Whittaker and Garnsey 1998.

them) was a priority. Quasi-independent slave-households could then be set up in the reasonable expectation that the slaves would prefer the company of their families to the uncertainties of escape.<sup>223</sup> Some have argued that slave estates were especially well suited to the production of particular crops, vines for example, though since it is now clear that slaves could successfully be used to produce grain too, it is difficult to be too schematic about the relation of particular crops with particular modes of production.<sup>224</sup> More important for the choice of labour was the degree to which the landowner himself was prepared to take on a direct involvement in the affairs of his estates.<sup>225</sup> The key issue in terms of the archaeological traces left by rural settlement, however, is not so much the legal status of the labourers working the land, as whether estates were organized around a single central administrative and residential nucleus, or multiple centres.

This diversity of possible forms of rural exploitation would clearly have been reflected in different ways in which settlement was organized in the countryside. Possible scenarios leading to a significant decline in site numbers may therefore include the following. Several small estates—perhaps owned by independent proprietors—might be combined together to form one property which was then exploited from a central residential and administrative nucleus by a single labourforce, whether slave or free. Most of the pre-existing farms would then be abandoned or used for storage. Alternatively, the labourforce could continue to be dispersed across the new property, but living at a lower economic level than previously. A further possibility is that they might leave their isolated settlements in order to reside in towns or villages, though continuing to work the land from their new homes. Equally, an estate might be abandoned altogether, as tenants or peasants left the countryside to seek employment elsewhere, for example in Rome or in the large towns of Italy. The possibility of abandoning an estate is suggested, apparently as a serious proposal, in the discussion on unhealthy lands in Varro mentioned earlier, but it might also be deduced from the account

<sup>223</sup> Bradley, K. R. 1987; Scheidel 1997.

<sup>224</sup> Spurr 1986: 133–43; Vera 1995: 192.

<sup>225</sup> Garnsey 2000: 702–6.



Pliny gives of the financial difficulties being suffered under the previous landowner by the tenants of the estate he was considering for purchase (*Ep.* 3. 19. 6). In this case the tenants had fallen seriously in debt, and as a result the owner had confiscated the slaves and equipment they used to work the farm in lieu of the outstanding rent. This of course meant that their position worsened still, and as a result the asking price of the property had fallen from 5 to 3 million sesterces. Pliny's solution to the problem was to invest in providing new slaves and equipment, thus saving the tenants from disaster; but with a less sympathetic landlord, and one less inclined to intervene, we could imagine that the situation might have deteriorated to such an extent that the tenants would have absconded, leaving the properties without a workforce. In this situation, if the owner was unwilling to invest further in setting up new tenants, the estates might have been abandoned altogether, or alternatively turned over to extensive agriculture, perhaps including the grazing of animals—the scenario deplored by Columella. This chain of events would result in the most pronounced decline in the number of rural sites, as not only the central villa would have been abandoned, but the houses of the tenants too.

#### MODELS OF RURAL SETTLEMENT AND EXPLOITATION

Clearly the differences apparent between different areas of Italy in terms of the fertility of the landscape, as well as access to ports, roads, and markets, makes it essential to employ a range of models in order to analyse and explain the changes in patterns of agricultural production and rural settlement across the peninsula, incorporating a range of factors, geographical, political, and economic. One way of seeing this is in terms of how the 'natural economy' of the different regions was affected from time to time by decisions of the Roman state, and by the demand generated by major markets, whether in the provinces or in the city of Rome itself.<sup>226</sup> A similar distinction has

<sup>226</sup> Paterson 1991.

recently been made between two models of villa settlement, relating to what have been termed the *villa centrale* and the *villa periferica*. The former is characterized by its position on good land, with easy access to ports, roads, and major markets, the use of intensive cultivation based on substantial capital investment, and a significant employment of slaves, with occasional assistance by casual free labour and tenants. The *villa periferica*, by contrast, is characterized by limited access to ports, roads, and markets, and located on poorer land, with less capital investment, and a more extensive type of agriculture carried out primarily by tenants (or a combination of tenants and slaves). One particular merit of this analytical scheme is that it highlights the varying forms of agricultural exploitation that might take place in different regions of Italy, moving away from the misleading notion of an all-pervasive 'villa system' in the peninsula.<sup>227</sup>

The section which follows sketches out patterns of rural settlement from different areas of Italy in order to suggest some possible ways in which the varying patterns of decline and increase in site numbers revealed by the archaeological record can be understood. Decline in numbers of rural sites appears, as we have seen, to have been the most common pattern in Roman Italy under the high Empire, and is particularly striking in the cases of coastal Etruria and northern Campania, but has also been identified in Samnium and other regions away from major markets and centres of urban population. Where numbers of sites increase, however, this phenomenon too is clearly in need of explanation. The specific circumstances of the areas in which this trend has been identified—South Etruria, the hinterland of Rome, and inland Lucania—need to be examined with particular care. In some cases, of course, very specific local factors can be seen to lie behind the pattern of settlement identified, as in the case of Luni, where the city's economy relied on the resources generated by the marble quarries rather than the agricultural production of its territory, or at Volaterrae, where the stable pattern of settlement from the late Republic through to the late Empire can (in part anyway) be explained by the success of the well-connected local

<sup>227</sup> Carandini 1994: 167–8. For discussion of the model, see Capogrossi Colognesi 1994: 213; Terrenato 2001: 62; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 11.

elites in intervening with the central authorities in Rome to fend off undesirable upheavals in the territory of the city.<sup>228</sup>

### The Landscape of Coastal Etruria and Northern Campania

Some areas of Tyrrhenian coastal Italy saw a significant decline in the number of rural settlements at a comparatively early date: in particular, the data from field survey demonstrates that settlement in the Ager Cosanus and in northern Campania was already contracting by the end of the first century AD. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that this pattern is related to the decline in the intensive production of wine which was particularly characteristic of these areas from the late Republic to the early Empire, and has emerged not only from the survey evidence, and the information provided by the excavation of villa sites such as Settefinestre in the Ager Cosanus, but also from the study of amphora typologies and stamps which allows the reconstruction of patterns of production and distribution within the wine trade.<sup>229</sup> In particular, the patterns of manufacture and distribution of Dressel 1 amphorae demonstrate that the coastal areas of Etruria, southern Latium, and northern Campania were heavily involved in the production of wine for export in the last century of the Republic. The findspots of amphorae produced in these regions suggest that much of this produce was exported to Gaul, Spain, and Britain,<sup>230</sup> while our limited knowledge of the amphorae of the city of Rome in the Republican period leaves open the possibility that significant quantities of wine from these regions were consumed there too.<sup>231</sup> This was clearly a lucrative business: members of the Roman senatorial elite, such as the Sestii and the Domitii Ahenobarbi, came to be prominent among landholders in the Ager Cosanus in the half-century following the civil war between Sulla and Marius,<sup>232</sup> and the Cornelii Lentuli and others similarly acquired lands in northern Campania.<sup>233</sup> These men possessed both the resources needed to

<sup>228</sup> Terrenato 1998.

<sup>229</sup> Tchernia 1986; Manacorda 1989.

<sup>230</sup> Tchernia 1986: 45–7; Hesnard *et al.* 1989.

<sup>231</sup> Tchernia 1986: 66–7.

<sup>232</sup> Manacorda 1981: 29–36, 44–7; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 149.

<sup>233</sup> Tchernia 1986: 116–18; Arthur 1991*a*: 155; 1991*b*: 66–9.

acquire large landholdings in the first place, and the slaves to exploit them intensively; their properties in turn contributed significantly to expanding their wealth. Major villas were constructed in the same period, most notably Settefinestre in the years around 40–30 BC.<sup>234</sup>

The sudden change from the use of the Dressel 1 type of amphorae to the more lightweight Dressel 2–4 type towards the end of the first century BC appears to signal a significant change in the nature of production in the two regions; the Dressel 2–4 type was apparently intended for shorter journeys than the heavier Dressel 1, designed for long-distance commerce.<sup>235</sup> More wine was now being produced in Rome's overseas provinces for local consumption, and this trend had a significant impact on those areas of Italy where vine-growing was the predominant agricultural activity. The end of intensive wine production for export in these areas did not of course mean the end of wine production in these or other areas of Italy, however. Demand for wine continued to be strong in Rome and elsewhere; indeed, excess production was causing concern at the time of Domitian (Suet. *Dom.* 7. 2). Wine evidently continued to be produced in coastal Etruria, as demonstrated by the discovery of the 'Spello' type amphorae at a kiln at Albinia, which had previously produced Dressel 1 and Dressel 2–4 amphorae,<sup>236</sup> while high-quality vintages from the Ager Falernus continued to be consumed at Rome too.<sup>237</sup> We have to envisage these productions taking place on a smaller scale than hitherto, though.<sup>238</sup>

It is precisely in these areas—the Ager Cosanus in Etruria, the Ager Falernus in Campania—that the earliest, and most dramatic, falling-off in rural settlement can be detected in the first century. This pattern can be seen on the one hand as a consequence of the broader trend towards the development of large estates noted above, but also of changing patterns of agricultural exploitation. As intensive exploitation of vineyards employing slave labour gave way to more extensive systems of farming, raising animals and growing grain, the medium-sized villa, allowing careful and direct supervision of

<sup>234</sup> Carandini 1985a: i. 149; Carandini *et al.* 2002: 181.

<sup>235</sup> Zevi 1989: 14–15.

<sup>236</sup> Carandini *et al.* 2002: 150, 200–1.

<sup>237</sup> Arthur 1991b: 85.

<sup>238</sup> Vera 1995: 202.

the workforce, was no longer necessarily the most appropriate way of controlling the estate. The villa at Settefinestre was restructured in the Trajanic period, after a more modest reorganization in the Julio-Claudian era, and eventually abandoned at the end of the second century.<sup>239</sup> The large landowners of the area had many properties: when large-scale intensive wine production was no longer a viable or attractive prospect, they simply diverted resources and initiatives to other estates they held elsewhere.

In Campania and coastal Etruria, therefore, the disappearance of the market for intensive wine production appears to have been reflected in a move to less intensive types of production, notably the cultivation of grain and stock-rearing. A similar pattern may also be true of Apulia (where the disappearance of the Lamboglia 2 amphora type took place, like that of the Dressel 1 type, at the end of the Republic)<sup>240</sup> and likewise in those parts of Bruttium where a similarly precipitous decline in site numbers has been noted.<sup>241</sup> However, the territories most drastically affected by these trends seem to have been quite circumscribed in extent. Villas in the territory of Saturnia, only a short distance away, show a greater continuity than their counterparts around Cosa, apparently reflecting their greater orientation towards local markets.<sup>242</sup> Similarly the territories of Pisa and of Volaterrae to the north, where rural production was both more diversified (including forestry and the manufacture of pottery) and less reliant on specific external markets, display a much greater degree of continuity in settlement than the territory of Cosa or the Ager Falernus.<sup>243</sup>

### The Suburban Landscape: South Etruria

By far the largest city in Italy, with a population estimated as approximately one million in the early first century AD, the seat of the imperial court and habitual place of residence of senators and others

<sup>239</sup> Carandini 1985*a*: i. 181–5. Carandini *et al.* 2002: 196.

<sup>240</sup> Tchernia 1986: 68–74, 148–9.

<sup>241</sup> Battista Sangineto 2001: 214–19.

<sup>242</sup> Carandini *et al.* 2002: 149–50.

<sup>243</sup> Pasquinucci and Menchelli 1999: 130–4; Terrenato 2001.

of the wealthiest men in the Empire, Rome exerted a powerful influence on the economy of its hinterland.<sup>244</sup> The effect is particularly clear in the area immediately around Rome, where a dense network of small farms produced perishable fruits and vegetables, and other speciality foods such as snails and small birds, which were known collectively as *pastiones villaticae*.<sup>245</sup> These farms exploited the labourforce available in the city as well as that of the *suburbium*, in order to supply the lucrative city market.<sup>246</sup> The continuing high density of settlement in the Ager Veientanus (the area explored by the South Etruria survey which lay closest to Rome) and the territory of Cures Sabini on the opposite side of the Tiber can perhaps be best understood in the light of this pattern.

The economic hinterland of Rome extended far beyond the city's immediate environs, however. Areas with good communications to the city, and in particular those from which Rome was accessible by water, were also affected by the pull of the Roman market, where prices were significantly higher than elsewhere in Italy.<sup>247</sup> In particular, substantial quantities of agricultural produce were brought down the river Tiber from Umbria, Etruria, and the Sabina to Rome, including that from Pliny's estates at Tifernum Tiberinum (Plin. *Ep.* 5. 6. 12).<sup>248</sup> In the late-first and second centuries AD, even after the decline of production for export in coastal Etruria and Campania (see above), and the disastrous eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79, wine from inland Etruria and Umbria continued to be shipped down the Tiber to Rome, in what Juvenal refers to as *lagonae* (flagons) (*Sat.* 7. 121). The 'Spello' amphorae (named after a kiln-site where they were produced at the Umbrian town)<sup>249</sup> which replaced the Dressel 2-4 type were smaller than their predecessors and seem to have been designed specially for river transport.<sup>250</sup> Their contents were consumed at Rome in large quantities.<sup>251</sup>

<sup>244</sup> For further discussion, see Patterson, J. R. 2004a.

<sup>245</sup> Rinkewitz 1984; Carandini 1988: 339-57; Morley 1996: 86-90.

<sup>246</sup> Ikeguchi 1999-2000: 35.

<sup>247</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 345-7.

<sup>248</sup> Le Gall 1953: 263-4.

<sup>249</sup> Tchernia 1986: 253-5; Manconi 1989; Lapadula 1997: 147-50.

<sup>250</sup> Panella 1989: 156-61; Lapadula 1997: 151-4.

<sup>251</sup> Panella 1992: 197-9; Panella and Tchernia 1994: 157.

It was not only agricultural products that were brought down the Tiber to Rome. Vast quantities of wood were needed in Rome, for heating, cremations, and building purposes, and much of this was obtained in the forests of Umbria, the Sabina, and Etruria (Strab. 5. 3. 7).<sup>252</sup> Likewise, tufa was quarried in the territory of Veii and travertine between Rome and Tivoli, and lime was produced in the vicinity of Lucus Feroniae.<sup>253</sup> Many of the brickworks which supplied the city with its predominant building material in the imperial period were located in the Tiber valley, in the vicinity of Horta, Ocriculum, and Narnia.<sup>254</sup>

Estates close to the Tiber to the north of Rome therefore presented an attractive prospect to the landowner. They were close enough to the city so as to be able to exploit its market, but without being tied into the production of perishable crops which were potentially lucrative, but particularly at the mercy of poor weather conditions. Morley notes that the economy of this area is most likely to have been influenced by the changing demand generated by the city, with possible strategies available to proprietors including new types of land use, the occupation of marginal land, and investment in new forms of production;<sup>255</sup> the evidence from the Ager Capenas, the Ager Caeretanus, and the territory of Sutrium for an expansion of settlement into marginal lands in the second century AD seems to fit that model very closely, with new land being exploited by those keen to profit from the opportunities offered by the capital's markets. The gains to be made farming Rome's hinterland, and the other attractions of the area, may also have attracted significant migration to the Tiber valley, whether from the city itself or from elsewhere in Italy—perhaps in particular from inland Etruria.<sup>256</sup> Literary and epigraphic sources demonstrate that significant tracts of land in the area were owned by senators, the villa of the Volusii Saturnini at Lucus Feroniae being one of the most impressive in the area.<sup>257</sup> The initiatives of

<sup>252</sup> Meiggs 1982: 237–8, 243–6.

<sup>253</sup> Mocchegiani Carpano 1984: 59–60; Quilici 1986: 209–11; Fontana 1995; DeLaine 1995.

<sup>254</sup> Steinby 1978: 1508; Steinby 1981: 238–9.

<sup>255</sup> Morley 1996: 108.

<sup>256</sup> Witcher forthcoming.

<sup>257</sup> Moretti and Sgubini Moretti 1977; Boatwright *et al.* 1983; Bodet 1997: 26–32; Sgubini Moretti 1998; Papi 2000: 121–3.

Trajan and Marcus Aurelius to encourage senators from overseas to invest in property in Italy further encouraged the acquisition of estates in the area (Plin. *Ep.* 6. 19. 4–6; SHA *Marc.* 11. 8): if they were reluctantly obliged to buy land in Italy, senators from outside the peninsula were most likely to want to acquire properties close to the city of Rome itself.<sup>258</sup> Eventually many of these estates came to be owned by members of the imperial family.

The economic benefits of a location with ready access by river to the city of Rome, coupled with the attractive views to be had along the banks of the Tiber, contributed to the popularity of the region for villa owners. In the light of the evidence for settlement in the area by senators, members of the imperial house, and even the emperors themselves, however, it seems at first sight surprising, given the links frequently found between the growth of large estates and abandonment of rural sites, that the archaeological record reflects such a dense pattern of settlement across the area under the high Empire. Despite the influx of wealthy outsiders, it seems there was a substantial continuity of occupation of rural sites. This may reflect the possibility that some of these villas—especially those overlooking the Tiber—were predominantly residential rather than productive in character, given their attractive setting,<sup>259</sup> but also that there was a continuing survival of independent property-owners with comparatively modest estates: the production of *pastiones villaticae*, for example, could successfully be carried out on a small scale. The existence of alternative sources of income for country dwellers in the area, with the complex interrelation of agriculture, brick production, quarrying, and other quasi-industrial activities which we know to have been characteristic of the Tiber valley, may also have been significant in allowing continuity of settlement here. DeLaine has stressed the importance of availability of local manpower to the functioning of the brick industry in this area; we might equally underline the reciprocal benefits for agriculture.<sup>260</sup> Smaller estates could be seen as repositories of labour for the manufacturing,

<sup>258</sup> Coarelli 1986: 54.

<sup>259</sup> For the area as one characterized as much by consumption as by production, see Witcher forthcoming.

<sup>260</sup> DeLaine 1995.



working, and carting of bricks and stone; and the existence of these potential sources of income outside agriculture might thus have enabled comparatively small estates to survive longer here than elsewhere in Italy. The integration of the agricultural and industrial elements of the local economy may also be suggested by the apparent link between declining numbers of rural settlements in the Tiber valley from the mid second century AD onwards, and the downturn of demand for bricks in the city of Rome during the same period.<sup>261</sup> Both these developments may have been aggravated, if not directly caused, by the effects of the Antonine plague; if the city of Rome was, as some argue, badly affected, it is likely that the Tiber valley too, in close regular contact with the metropolis, would have been struck with particular severity. The closer the land to Rome—in the Ager Veientanus, for example—the more the landowners could exploit what must have continued to be a major market into the third century AD and beyond. By contrast, the more marginal lands around Sutrium and Capena, which had been the last to be occupied, appear to have been the first to be abandoned in the second century.

### **The Landscape of the Mountains: Samnium and Lucania**

Areas further away from Rome, and those less directly engaged with production for a specific market, whether for the capital itself or consumers overseas, are themselves characterized by a variety of patterns of settlement in the imperial period. The greater continuity in settlement identified in some 'peripheral' areas must in part reflect the limited impact of the ups and downs of external markets on the local economy, by contrast with areas such as coastal Etruria or Campania which were characterized by specialist agricultural production. The growth or decline of external markets, or the growth of 'competition', would thus be less important, and traditional forms of rural exploitation of the land tend to persist longer. Production of crops for local consumption must have been a constant feature of agriculture in these regions, as everywhere in Italy, but this is not to say that areas beyond the immediate hinterland of Rome were

<sup>261</sup> Steinby 1982: 235–6.

unaffected by the demand generated by the metropolis: rather, the local economies reflected on the one hand the diverse natural resources available, and on the other the degree to which the localities were integrated into the broader economy.

Many 'peripheral' areas demonstrate a decline in the number of rural sites in the second century AD, but there are examples of continuity, too; and just as in Etruria, contrasting patterns can be identified between areas physically close and geographically similar to each other. The mountainous territories of the central and southern Apennines, in particular, present a complex picture. A pattern of decline in site numbers is most apparent in the highlands of Samnium, though in the lower valley of the Biferno this trend is less pronounced, as village-sites were either established or continued to be occupied in the mid Empire. In the interior of Lucania, by contrast, numbers of sites can be seen to remain stable in this period, or indeed increase in some areas.

That the growth in large estate holdings was a significant feature of the Samnite landscape in this period is indicated by the Ligure Baebiani alimentary table, and, as we have seen, migration was a traditional feature of life in the central Apennines. However, the development of transhumant pastoralism may have played a part in the pattern of depopulation which appears both from the archaeological and the geomorphological record to have been characteristic of the second and third centuries AD.<sup>262</sup> Pastoralism had always been a significant feature of the Apennine economy (even if at first only on a local scale), but it expanded under the peaceful and unifying conditions of the Empire, and involved the long-distance movement of flocks between Apulia and the Sabina, owned by senators and even the imperial house, as well as the local traffic of sheep and goats between hilltop and lowland pastures within Samnium.<sup>263</sup> It seems likely that the expansion of pastoralism in the high Empire was at the expense of scattered rural settlement: traces of the temporary settlements of the transhumant shepherds have been identified even at very high altitudes.<sup>264</sup> The Samnite landscape was not totally given over to

<sup>262</sup> Barker 1995a: 245.

<sup>263</sup> Gabba and Pasquinucci 1979; Garnsey 1998: 166–79; Thompson, J. 1988.

<sup>264</sup> Barker 1989b: 14; Barker and Grant 1991: 30–7; Ikeguchi 1999–2000: 20–2.

grazing, though: the villa at Matrice, as well as producing wine and other crops, also appears to have reared pigs from the early Empire onwards,<sup>265</sup> and the survival of a mixed agriculture exploiting the woodlands of the district would seem to be reflected in the greater continuity of settlement in the lower valley. Likewise, the production of wine and olive oil for wider markets can be identified on the Adriatic and Campanian boundaries of Samnium, in the lower Trigno valley, and around Venafrum respectively.<sup>266</sup>

In the same way, there are indications that the raising of pigs was a particular feature of some areas of Lucania under the Empire, even before the dramatic increase in pork production for the Roman market well known from late antiquity and exemplified in particular at S. Giovanni.<sup>267</sup> Again, the development of villages may reflect the local labourforce needed for these operations, together with the production of grain, which also appears to have been a staple of the Lucanian economy. In the Bradano valley, by contrast, grain production appears to have taken place alongside pastoralism: excavations of the villa at Masseria Ciccotti has revealed a wool-working plant including a *fullonica*,<sup>268</sup> while at nearby S. Pietro the discovery of a stamped spindle whorl is similarly indicative of large-scale wool production.<sup>269</sup> Both pastoralism and the rearing of pigs seem therefore to have been characteristic of the area, exploiting most effectively the natural resources of the landscape. The villas of the region were characterized by diverse forms of production which also included the manufacture of tiles and pottery.<sup>270</sup> Around Monte Irsi, in the valley of the Basentello, we can see that areas devoted to pastoralism under the last two centuries BC began to be exploited for agriculture again under the early Empire.<sup>271</sup> Senators, emperors, and their freedmen, who had the capital available for large-scale investment in response to changing market conditions, may have perceived the excellent financial returns to be made from the production and

<sup>265</sup> Barker 1995a: 242.

<sup>266</sup> Di Niro 1991; Patterson, J. R. 1985: 220–1; Chouquer *et al.* 1987: 141, 289–99.

<sup>267</sup> Barnish 1987; Small and Buck 1994: 35; MacKinnon 2002: 107–18.

<sup>268</sup> Fracchia and Gualtieri 1998–9: 303–4; Gualtieri 2001: 86.

<sup>269</sup> Di Giuseppe 1996b.

<sup>270</sup> Di Giuseppe 1996a: 238; Small, Volterra, and Hancock 2003: 179–85.

<sup>271</sup> Small 2001: 50–1.

working of wool and the rearing of animals such as pigs in the area, exploiting the possibilities offered by the market at Rome for these products in much the same way as they did in the valley of the Tiber. Local elites too owned property in the district. A plurality of economic interests contributed to the long-term survival of their villas, which, with their associated villages, were arguably more in tune with the 'natural economy' than other villas elsewhere in Italy.<sup>272</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the now very substantial body of evidence for settlement trends resulting from some forty years of intensive fieldwork across the Italian peninsula. Much remains to be done, and some regions are, for various reasons, less well known than others, but the complex picture that emerges from the survey results is now of central importance to our perception of the history of Italy under the Empire.

A general trend of declining numbers of rural sites in the countryside, during the second century AD in particular, has been identified across Italy, but there are also regions which emerge as exceptions to that trend, where continuity in settlement, or even an increase in the number of sites, has been identified. These cases are of course of particular interest: the identification of what is different here is of considerable importance in establishing why the more general pattern is as it is. Significant differences in the pattern of settlement have been identified even between areas very close to one another. A variety of explanations, general and specific, can be offered for both the general pattern and the exceptions. How far survey data can be relied on to construct a picture of settlement changes over time clearly depends on a variety of issues: in particular, our knowledge of the diagnostic pottery-types and the ways in which they were distributed, the comparability (or otherwise) of different surveys, and the extent to which survey has been successful

<sup>272</sup> Simelon 1993; Di Giuseppe 1996a: 237–40; Vera 1995: 334–5.

in retrieving a representative sample of ancient presences in the landscape. I have argued that although, inevitably, there are gaps in our knowledge and methodological difficulties to be faced, it does not seem justified to abandon the effort to write the history of the landscape on the basis of survey data—the most radical conclusion to be drawn from concerns about the reliability of survey and the implications of variability of pottery supply. Rather, used with appropriate caution, survey provides data of vital importance for our understanding of changes in rural settlement. The issue of the absolute (and comparative) level of the population of Italy as a whole is of great relevance too, but this, I would argue, has to be decided on the basis of the rival interpretations of the census figures preserved in literary and epigraphic records, and the demographic plausibility (or otherwise) of the various reconstructions, rather than on the basis of the survey data, which can potentially be interpreted in several different ways. All these issues will clearly be the focus of continuing research in future years. Physical mobility within Italy was evidently of considerable importance in the imperial period, with country dwellers moving to nucleated settlements locally, to towns—probably regional centres rather than the smaller communities—and to the city of Rome itself. Equally, there are indications that in some areas there was migration out of the cities too, especially in the vicinity of Rome. Migration to the cities was partly caused by ‘pull’ factors—the attractions and benefits of urban life, real and imagined—but was also encouraged by changes in patterns of exploitation in the countryside which led to the amalgamation of estates. The degree to which this development affected the settlement of the landscape depended very largely on the form that the reorganization of rural estates took, the type of labour employed—free peasants, tenants, or slaves, or a combination of all three—and the degree to which the land was exploited extensively or intensively. Most crucial was whether the workers were dispersed in the landscape or alternatively concentrated in central units. Also of importance to the changing pattern of settlement was the degree of engagement of a particular area in the broader Mediterranean economy, and the extent to which its produce could be

supplied to major markets such as that of the city of Rome. It also seems very likely that links may be identified between changing systems of agricultural exploitation, the type of crops produced—wine, grain, or stock-rearing—and the pattern of distribution of rural sites.

Of course, it is misleading to present these possible explanations of changes in settlement pattern as alternatives to each other; rather, they overlap and interrelate. Migration, for example, could be a response to changing economic conditions locally or more widely; a cause, or result, of changes in the types of crop grown or the type of labour employed. Whether we opt for a (comparatively) high or a (comparatively) low level of population in Italy clearly has implications in terms of the intensity with which the countryside had to be exploited, and whether marginal areas were brought into cultivation or abandoned. The distribution of imported pottery relates not only to variations in patterns of manufacture, but also, in part, to the existence of trade routes, and the existence (or not) of stable political conditions allowing trading, so there is an overlap between access to the markets of the Mediterranean more widely and the ability to import finewares. The impact of the Antonine plague may also have been most dramatic in those same areas which were most involved in the wider world. Just as we can distinguish between the *villa centrale* and the *villa periferica*, so we can distinguish those areas characterized by involvement in what we might term the 'central' economy and those which were more 'peripheral', without that terminology necessarily giving priority of emphasis to one or the other. Fortunes could more easily be made in areas close to the economic centre of the Empire, but beyond the constant needs of the city to provide sustenance for its population, this market was volatile. Further away from Rome, the economy was smaller in scale but less unpredictable and less affected by changing modes of exploitation, helping to explain the continuity in settlement—though it should also be stressed that even the heartlands of Lucania and Samnium did not remain unaffected by the need to supply the city of Rome.

## APPENDIX

## ‘Survey of Surveys’

This appendix presents in summary form the data for settlement patterns in the imperial period derived from a selection of surveys south of the Po valley (see Figs. 1.2–4). I have made most use of the information from surveys in the tradition of the South Etruria survey and its successors, which have been undertaken across a comparatively short span of time and employ broadly similar methodologies, whether conceptualized primarily in terms of historical enquiry or as a study of a landscape over an extensive period. They have thus generated results which are in general terms potentially comparable with each other. The approach adopted by some of the more recent volumes of the *Forma Italiae* surveys is similar, so these have also been incorporated where appropriate. However, the data from some of the older surveys have to be read with caution in the light of the methodologies then employed, and increasing subsequent knowledge of the pottery types, as we have seen. With this in mind, I have attempted to characterize each of the surveys briefly, giving details of their scales and objectives, as well as the extent of publication so far.<sup>273</sup> In addition to the systematic surveys described above, several scholars have usefully collected together published and archival data on rural settlement in different areas of Italy: several reports of this kind are to be found, for example, in the first volume of the series on *Società Romana e Produzione Schiavistica*.<sup>274</sup> These collections of material tend to focus primarily on the more substantial villas, which are more likely to have come to the attention of archaeologists than the scatters denoting smaller rural sites, and so are not entirely parallel with the data to be derived from surveys on the South Etruria or *Forma Italiae* models; on occasion I have made reference to them to complement or contrast with other sources of data. More recent syntheses of this kind—notably those by Di Giuseppe, Volpe, and Battista Sangineto on Lucania, Apulia, and Bruttium respectively—make full use of survey data too.<sup>275</sup> The material here is

<sup>273</sup> I am very grateful to Dr R. Witcher for access to his important forthcoming paper on field survey and the rural landscape of Etruria, to which the reader is referred for further discussion of the archaeological and methodological issues involved in approaching this material, as well as a thorough analysis of the data from that region and discussion of its implications. For another recent review of survey data, see Duncan-Jones 2004.

<sup>274</sup> Giardina and Schiavone 1981.

<sup>275</sup> Di Giuseppe 1996a; Volpe 1996; Battista Sangineto 1994; 2001.

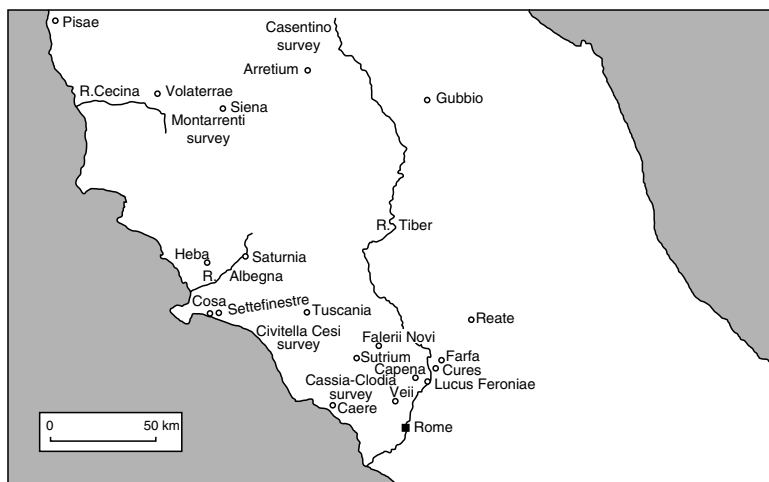


Figure 1.2. Field surveys in central Italy

thus deployed in a somewhat impressionistic way, to illustrate the *range* of patterns identifiable in the landscape, rather than attempting to provide a systematic account of all recent surveys and their results.

### Southern Etruria

The South Etruria Survey—with some 1,000 sq. km studied in detail over some twenty years—has provided both a practical and an intellectual model for the surveys carried out in Italy subsequently, and the extent of the coverage is such that we can not only contrast the situation in South Etruria<sup>276</sup> with that of other areas in Italy, but also compare developments between different areas of South Etruria itself. This is a region in which there is significant local variation in soils, geology, and relief, not to mention political and institutional history.<sup>277</sup> Since the completion of work by Ward-Perkins and his colleagues in the 1970s, a further generation of surveys has been undertaken in various parts of southern Etruria, making the region

<sup>276</sup> See also Witcher forthcoming.

<sup>277</sup> For the S. Etruria survey, in addition to the monographs and articles on individual parts of the territory noted below, see Potter 1979: 1–18; 1991*a, b*; 1992; also Patterson, H., and Millett 1998; Patterson, H., *et al.* 2000; Patterson, H. 2004. For the natural landscape, see Horden and Purcell 2000: 59–65. There are comparisons with other areas of Italy in (e.g.) Celuzza and Regoli 1982; Cambi 1993.



‘one of the most intensively studied areas in the Mediterranean’.<sup>278</sup> The area is currently being re-examined, and the material collected by Ward-Perkins and his colleagues re-evaluated in the light of up-to-date pottery chronologies, as part of the British School’s Tiber Valley Project.<sup>279</sup>

Considerable variation in settlement trends can be noted between the different areas surveyed. In the *Ager Veientanus*, the area closest to Rome, a strikingly low level of settlement is apparent in the second and first centuries BC (as indeed more widely in southern Etruria), for reasons yet to be fully understood.<sup>280</sup> However, there is a significant increase in numbers of sites from the Augustan era onwards: ‘by about AD 100 ... the countryside of south Etruria was being farmed on a scale that was quite unprecedented’.<sup>281</sup> Some sites—generally the smaller ones—disappear in the second century AD, but others appear and take their place, so there is a numerical if not a physical continuity. The high level of settlement in the area continues into the early third century AD.<sup>282</sup>

The situation in the *Ager Faliscus* to the north, the territory of *Falerii*, is in general similar to that in the territory of *Veii*. Fieldwork carried out both in the 1960s and in the 1980s revealed a growth in the number of sites in the first century BC, and thereafter continuity (or indeed increase) in levels of settlement is apparent through the first and second centuries AD.<sup>283</sup>

In the territory of *Sutrium* and in the northern part of the *Ager Capenas*, however, the same period is characterized by an expansion of settlement into areas not previously exploited, although since both of these sections of the South Etruria survey were published before Hayes’s work on later Roman pottery types became available, the chronology is at present less precisely defined here than elsewhere in the region. It seems that in the imperial period substantial areas in the northern part of the *Ager Capenas* were being cleared and settled for the first time, and in the territory of *Sutrium* the *Ciminian* forest was being likewise occupied at around the same time.<sup>284</sup> A similar pattern is found also in the western part of the area investigated by

<sup>278</sup> Patterson, H. 2004: 3. For a graphic representation of this, see fig. 2 in Patterson, H., and Millett 1998.

<sup>279</sup> Patterson, H., and Millett 1998; Patterson, H., *et al.* 2000; and the essays in Patterson, H. 2004.

<sup>280</sup> Liverani 1984: 43; Potter 1991*a*: 199–200; Patterson, H., *et al.* 2004: 13–17.

<sup>281</sup> Potter 1979: 133.

<sup>282</sup> Kahane, Threipland, and Ward-Perkins 1968: 149–52.

<sup>283</sup> Potter 1979: 132; 1992: 642–9; Camilli *et al.* 1995: 399–400; Cambi 2004: 81–94.

<sup>284</sup> *Sutri*: Duncan 1958: 95–6 with Morselli 1980: 17. *Capena*: Jones, G. D. B. 1963: 133; Camilli and Vitali Rosati 1995; Potter 1979: 132–3, 140; Cambi 2004: 88.

the Cassia-Clodia survey, that is, between Veii, Anguillara, and Cerveteri: the central and western zones of the survey area were occupied for the first time under the Empire, though these were subsequently the first to be abandoned.<sup>285</sup> In the area covered by the Civitella Cesi survey further to the north, which took place during the 1980s around the Etruscan settlement of San Giovenale between Sutrium and Tarquinia, 255 sites were identified: here the highest level of occupation was found to be in the third century AD, following a period of continuous expansion dating back to the second century BC, with an extension into hitherto unused land.<sup>286</sup>

Overall, then, the first and second centuries AD seem to constitute a period in which the countryside in South Etruria was being intensively farmed. There was a particularly striking increase in the first century AD and subsequently continuity in the level of settlement around Rome, with expansion of occupation into new land in more peripheral zones, though some smaller sites seem to have disappeared. Thereafter, in the third and/or fourth centuries, a significant decline in site numbers can be detected all over the region.<sup>287</sup>

The territory up to 15 km around Cerveteri (ancient Caere) was investigated by F. Enei between 1985 and 1992, and 1,374 sites identified, a large proportion of them dating to the Roman period. Here too the highest level of occupation was between the late first century BC and the second century AD; in the second and third centuries AD, the number of smaller sites declines, with those on marginal land gradually disappearing first, and a more drastic collapse in settlement occurring in the third century. The pattern is overall very similar to that identified in the Ager Veientanus during the course of the South Etruria survey.<sup>288</sup>

The territory around Tuscania was surveyed in 1986–91 in a project which aimed to examine the relationship of town and territory in the Etruscan period, and also the more general development across time of this part of the landscape of Etruria; here the peak in settlement seems to be in the late Republic, and there was some decline in site numbers thereafter, with fewer, larger sites surviving. The decline in site numbers into late antiquity is, however, less dramatic in extent than that identified elsewhere in South Etruria. Instead, significant numbers of sites originating in republican times continue to be occupied into the late Empire.<sup>289</sup>

<sup>285</sup> Hemphill 1975: 157.

<sup>286</sup> Hemphill 2000: 137–41.

<sup>287</sup> Potter 1979: 133, 140–1.

<sup>288</sup> Enei 1992: 81–2; Enei 1993; 1995: 74–6.

<sup>289</sup> Barker and Rasmussen 1988; Rasmussen 1991.

### Northern Coastal Etruria

Research into settlement patterns within the Ager Cosanus, and the territories of the nearby colonies of Heba and Saturnia in the Albegna valley, has been carried out since the mid 1970s, making the landscape of this area another of the best-known in ancient Italy.<sup>290</sup> In 1974–6, a survey was carried out by S. L. Dyson to reconstruct the settlement history of the territory of Cosa, the urban centre of which had been excavated by archaeologists from the American Academy in Rome during the 1950s. This noted a decline in numbers of sites from the early Empire onwards, especially in the vicinity of Cosa itself; few survived after the end of the third century AD.<sup>291</sup> A further survey project was subsequently initiated in 1977 in connection with the excavation of the villa at Settefinestre, just south of Cosa, and covered intensively some 250 sq. km within an overall area of more than 1,000 sq. km, identifying some 1,650 sites. The various interim reports and final publication have together provided a wealth of data on the methodology used and results obtained during the course of what has been one of the most influential of Italian surveys.<sup>292</sup> A useful résumé of the results of the project is given by A. Carandini (1994), who relates the different patterns found in the various areas investigated to the differing local landscapes and their earlier settlement history, such as the impact of colonial settlement. In particular, there is a distinction to be drawn between the coastal area, where wealthy villas largely predominated in the late Republic, and the territories further inland, where villas were complemented by residential villages and small farms. During the second and first centuries BC, the Valle d'Oro around Cosa itself became increasingly occupied by villas geared to wine-production. Many of these were then restructured during the first and second centuries AD; the villa of Settefinestre, known in detail from excavation, was reorganized in favour of grain-production and stock-rearing. By the end of the second century, however, some 60 per cent of these villas had disappeared altogether. The pattern of settlement identified for the republican period in the territory of Saturnia combined villas and villages: there was a less drastic but still significant drop in villa numbers of some 33 per cent during the first and second centuries, but the villages continued to exist,

<sup>290</sup> See also Witcher forthcoming.

<sup>291</sup> Dyson 1978: 260; 1981; but see Celuzza and Regoli 1982: 31–2 for a critique of the methodology employed in that survey.

<sup>292</sup> Attolini *et al.* 1982; Celuzza and Regoli 1982; Attolini *et al.* 1983; Cambi 1986; Cambi and Fentress 1988; Cambi and Fentress 1991; Attolini *et al.* 1991; Carandini *et al.* 2002.

albeit in smaller numbers. A similar pattern was found in the marginal zones of the territory of Cosa. In the territory of Heba, small farms and larger villas coexisted in the late republican period, but under the Empire many of the farms disappeared and the villas declined by 20 per cent; in the hills of the valley of the Albegna, three-quarters of the scattered farms of the later Republic had disappeared by the end of the second century AD, together with the villages.<sup>293</sup>

The picture which emerges is a complex one, reflecting the variety of political and geographical realities even within a relatively small area; in the same way, the contrast between the rapid disappearance of the villas in the Ager Cosanus during the first century AD, and the greater continuity into the high Empire revealed by survey in the Ager Veientanus and elsewhere in South Etruria, is very striking.<sup>294</sup>

Recent work in the valley of the Cecina, the ancient Ager Volaterranus, has produced results that provide interesting contrasts to those generated by work in the Ager Cosanus further to the south. A total of 100 sq. km of the territory has so far been covered, and in the coastal area nineteen villas have been identified, variously originating in the second and first centuries BC, and in the first century AD; most of them, however, continued to survive until the fourth century AD. Further inland, by contrast, there are very few villas at all. The whole territory displays a striking continuity in settlement from the late Republic (or even earlier, in cases such as that of the excavated site at S. Mario) through to late antiquity.<sup>295</sup>

Researches in the territory of nearby Pisa likewise demonstrate a significant continuity of settlement from the late Republic (when colonial land-distributions evidently had a substantial impact on the territory) through to the late Empire.<sup>296</sup>

Further north again, the area around Luni, a Latin colony and harbour town on the borders between Etruria and Liguria, was surveyed in 1978–81, in order to investigate the economic hinterland of the city, where urban excavations had already taken place. Although the wealth of building in the urban centre suggests that the town was prospering under the early Empire, the territory seems to have been strikingly poor. None of the sites identified on the hill-slopes best suited to the growing of vines and olives seem to have been occupied after the mid first century AD; site 9,

<sup>293</sup> Carandini 1994: 169–71. For full details, see Carandini *et al.* 2002, with the review by A. Wilson (2004).

<sup>294</sup> Celuzza and Regoli 1982: 54–9.

<sup>295</sup> Terrenato and Saggin 1994: 472–5; Terrenato 1998. See also Regoli 1992; Terrenato 1992; Terrenato and Ammerman 1996.

<sup>296</sup> Pasquinucci and Menchelli 1995; 1999: 134–5. See also Pasquinucci 1992.

excavated in 1979–81, seems to be typical. Constructed in the second century BC, it was abandoned in the mid first century AD.<sup>297</sup> Only two sites, on the plain, produced pottery dating to the later first and second centuries AD, and there was a notable absence of wealthy villas; settlement in the late Republic and early Empire had tended to be concentrated in the hills behind, and this largely disappears. The striking discrepancy between town and country is best explained by reference to the marble quarries just inland from Luni, which distributed their products through the harbour of that city. Thus the town centre flourished, though its hinterland lacked any significant agricultural wealth after the decline of export markets for the vines and olives for which the territory was particularly known in antiquity.<sup>298</sup> Interestingly, the southern part of the Ager Lunensis, now known as the Versilia, shows a greater continuity of settlement than the immediate environs of the city of Luni, and the situation there is thus more analogous to the settlement patterns identified in the territories of Pisa or of Volaterrae.<sup>299</sup>

### Inland Etruria and Umbria

Three survey projects took place in the interior of Umbria and Etruria<sup>300</sup> in the 1980s: in the Gubbio basin, in the Casentino, and around Montarrenti. In each of these cases, however, only a limited amount of material of imperial date was recovered. The Gubbio Project (1983–7) studied the territory around Gubbio (Iguvium), with particular reference to the Bronze Age (three major Bronze Age sites were excavated), though material from a wide range of other chronological contexts was also collected in a survey of the territory. However, many years of intensive agricultural activity in the plain meant that scatters of material were very diffuse and abraded; some sites produced black-gloss wares and comparatively substantial quantities of *terra sigillata*, but very little later material was recovered, making it hazardous to hypothesize about the development of settlement in the high Empire. This absence of material may have been due to land use patterns or geomorphological conditions, or perhaps (given that material from earlier Roman phases was successfully recovered) to the absence in the valley of ceramics (such as African Red Slip) imported from outside Italy.<sup>301</sup>

<sup>297</sup> Ward-Perkins, B., *et al.* 1986: 109–18.

<sup>298</sup> Mills 1981; Ward-Perkins, B. 1981; Ward-Perkins, B., *et al.* 1986.

<sup>299</sup> Menchelli 1990: 425–6. For an overview of the whole area, see Terrenato 2001: 61–4.

<sup>300</sup> See also Witcher forthcoming.

<sup>301</sup> Malone and Stoddart 1994: 191.

Excavation of a farmstead at S. Marco Romano revealed a phase of timber building in the third century AD after more substantial phases in the first century BC and first century AD, suggesting that the site was either impoverished or used for storage purposes.<sup>302</sup>

Investigations in the Casentino area, north of Arezzo, in 1980 and 1981 discovered twelve certain and probable sites of Roman rural settlement; none, however, produced any Roman finewares later than *terra sigillata*.<sup>303</sup> Similarly, the Montarrenti survey (1982–6), investigating the territory around the mediaeval castle at Montarrenti (south-west of Siena), identified only one major Roman site, and a few small-scale scatters which were roughly dated to the ‘classical period’ by means of coarseware or tile fragments.<sup>304</sup> This low level of imperial material was also noted by those surveying the area in the 1990s, during the compilation of the *Carta Archeologica della Provincia di Siena*. The degree of decline in sites identifiable to the imperial period varied across the territory of the province, with a particularly empty imperial landscape noted in the area around Chiusdino to the south-west of Siena (already partially explored by the Montarrenti team)<sup>305</sup> but significant decline in site numbers between the late Republic and the second century AD was also noted around Val d’Elsa (with a fall from forty-five to fifteen sites in the early imperial period), Monte Amiata, and in the Chianti Senese.<sup>306</sup> Again, factors relating to the identification and recovery of sites may be of significance, though the recovery of material of imperial date in *some* areas of the territory around Siena (but not others) may suggest that elsewhere we are seeing a very significant concentration and/or abandonment of settlement. If the population was concentrated in villages on the valley bottoms, as seems to have been the case around Monte Amiata, this may not have been identified in those areas (such as around Chiusdino) where valley bottoms were only partially surveyed.<sup>307</sup>

### Sabina

The Rieti survey (1988–92) examined the history of the landscape around ancient Reate, examining a variety of different geographical and geological contexts, which included the plain in the vicinity of the town, the nearby hills, and the mountainous territory beyond. Here Roman settlement peaked

<sup>302</sup> Ibid. 193.

<sup>303</sup> Stoddart 1981: 514–19.

<sup>304</sup> Barker and Symonds 1984: 285; Barker *et al.* 1986: 300.

<sup>305</sup> Nardini 2001: 144–5.

<sup>306</sup> Valenti 1995: 398–400; Cambi 1996: 169–71; Valenti 1999: 312–16.

<sup>307</sup> Cambi 1996: 169; Nardini 2001: 145.

in the Republic, with a substantial continuity into the early Empire, although few new sites were created. Thereafter site numbers tended to decline in the second and third centuries AD, larger settlements tending to be the survivors; but the surveyors noted that the level of decline is much less striking than (for example) in the Ager Cosanus.<sup>308</sup>

The Farfa survey (1985–6) examined an area of around 6 sq. km in the hilly area round the mediaeval abbey where excavations had been taking place in the early 1980s, investigating in particular the phenomenon of early mediaeval *incastellamento* in the immediate area; the survey area was then extended towards the Tiber. The maximum period of occupation for both villas and smaller farms was from the first century BC to the first century AD; site numbers, however, contracted in the second century AD, with smaller farms in the area disappearing, both in the Tiber valley and in the hills.<sup>309</sup> Comparatively high levels of settlement have, however, been noted around Cures Sabini, closer to Rome, in both the first and second centuries AD.<sup>310</sup>

### Samnium

The region of Samnium, in the central Apennines, has been the focus of a considerable amount of field survey in recent years, building on the work of A. La Regina and others during the 1960s and 1970s which focused on the sanctuaries and hillforts of the area.<sup>311</sup> Of particular note is the Biferno valley survey, directed by Graeme Barker, which took place between 1974 and 1978, and has been published in detail. The survey examined some 400 sq. km of territory in total, in selected areas of the valley, which leads from the central plain around ancient Bovianum (the heartland of Samnium), down to the Adriatic. Fieldwork took place primarily in the lower part of the valley between Larinum and the coast, but substantial areas were also covered in the uplands between Bovianum and Saepinum, and in the middle reaches of the valley.<sup>312</sup>

In the upper part of the valley, twenty-six sites certainly or probably dating to the early and/or mid-imperial periods were identified (this represented a reduction of 40 per cent on numbers from the previous 'Samnite' period). Excavation of one such site, the farmstead at Matrice, showed that it originated in the late third to second century BC, was enlarged in the first

<sup>308</sup> Coccia and Mattingly 1992a, *b*, esp. 269–75; 1995: 115–19.

<sup>309</sup> Leggio and Moreland 1986: 337; Moreland 1987: 413–15.

<sup>310</sup> Muzzioli 1980: 43; Di Giuseppe *et al.* 2002: 118–19.

<sup>311</sup> For a review, see Patterson, J. R. 2004*b*.

<sup>312</sup> See Barker 1995a: 41–2.



Figure 1.3. Field surveys in central-southern Italy

century BC and again in the first century AD, but began to decline from the later second century AD onwards, though it continued to be occupied into late antiquity.<sup>313</sup> Some two-thirds of all early imperial sites from the upper part of the valley failed to survive into the third century AD, and many were abandoned earlier.

In the lower and middle part of the valley, seventy-six ‘certain and probable’ sites from the early to mid Empire were identified (down from 140 in the ‘Samnite’ period); by the third century, there were only forty ‘certain and probable’ sites. Few of the smaller sites survived into the second and third centuries, though larger villas and villages did survive into late antiquity.<sup>314</sup>

A similar pattern emerges from the survey of the valley of the Sangro undertaken from 1994 by the late John Lloyd and his colleagues, which examined the area around the nucleated centre of Monte Pallano. Here sixteen sites produced *terra sigillata* and related material of the early

<sup>313</sup> For the Matrice villa, see Lloyd 1991a: 182–4; Lloyd 1991c; Barker 1995a: 224–5.

<sup>314</sup> Barker 1995a: 224–5, 227–40 for discussion of Roman period rural settlement in the valley; for earlier accounts, see also Barker, Lloyd, and Webley 1978; Lloyd and Barker 1981.



imperial period, and five African Red Slip of the mid Empire; only two or three could be dated to the fourth and fifth centuries AD.<sup>315</sup>

Survey in the territory of Ligure Baebiani in 1984–6 was on too small a scale to allow significant conclusions to be drawn; but of thirteen sites identified, only three produced material datable to the imperial period, and that was of first- and second-century date.<sup>316</sup>

A similar pattern emerges from survey of the Upper Volturno valley which was carried out by Peter Hayes in 1980–1 as part of the programme of research into the early mediaeval monastery of San Vincenzo al Volturno and its territory directed by Richard Hodges. Whereas twenty-two sites produced black-gloss ware, fifteen produced *terra sigillata*, but only nine African Red Slip ware, which was dated to the second and third centuries AD.<sup>317</sup>

We can see, then, that there seems to be a consistent pattern of decline in site numbers throughout the imperial period across Samnium, although it is important to emphasize that there are also variations in the severity of this decline, for example between the upper and lower areas of the Biferno valley, and between the area around the source of the Volturno and lower down the valley in the vicinity of Castelvecchio and Venafrum, where substantial villas have been identified both from aerial photography and on the ground.<sup>318</sup> Likewise, contrasts can be noted between the upper and the lower Biferno valley. As in Umbria and inland Etruria, however, the secure dating of imperial sites within Samnium provides some difficulties, since African Red Slip seems to have been less widely available here than elsewhere, by contrast with black-gloss ware, and *terra sigillata*; the impression that emerges from study of the pottery assemblage collected during the Sangro valley survey is that there was ‘a high degree of self-sufficiency in pottery production’.<sup>319</sup>

### Apulia, Bruttium, and Lucania

A striking variety of patterns can again be found in south Italy, where much important fieldwork has been taking place in recent years.

<sup>315</sup> Lloyd, Christie, and Lock 1997: 44–5; Faustoferri and Lloyd 1998: 17–18.

<sup>316</sup> Patterson, J. R. 1988: 163, 165–6, 170–1. I am grateful to Prof. W. Johannowsky for his comments on the pottery from these sites.

<sup>317</sup> Hayes, P. 1985; Patterson, J. R. 1985: 218–21. The pottery chronology given here, however, is the result of re-examination of the material by Paul Roberts subsequent to this preliminary report. See Baker *et al.* forthcoming.

<sup>318</sup> Volturno: Chouquer *et al.* 1987: 141, 289–94. Biferno: Barker 1995a: 251–2.

<sup>319</sup> Lloyd, Christie, and Lock 1997: 22.

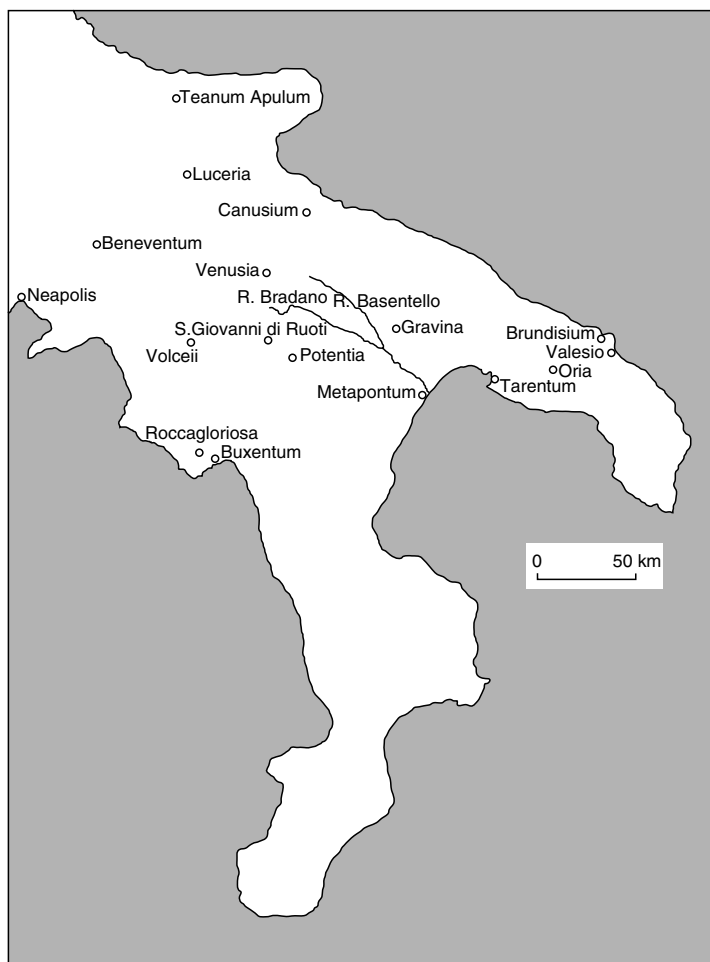


Figure 1.4. Field surveys in southern Italy

Between 1981 and 1983 a field survey undertaken by the Amsterdam Free University examined 67 sq. km of the area around the Messapian centre of Oria in Apulia (south-west of Brindisi), to relate settlement in the territory to that within the town, which continued to be a centre of habitation after the Social War, though on a smaller scale than in the Hellenistic period. Site numbers were stable in the period from the first century BC to the first century AD; however, the number of sites declined during the second century

AD, from twenty-four to fourteen, though the larger examples survived into the third or fourth centuries AD, forming substantial nuclei; the surveyors noted that large productive villas were coming into existence here at the same time as they were going out of use in other areas of Italy.<sup>320</sup> Subsequently fieldwork has taken place around Valesio, a road-station to the south of Brindisi,<sup>321</sup> on the site of four nucleated indigenous settlements which disappeared completely in the Roman period;<sup>322</sup> and on the Murge to the north of Brindisi.<sup>323</sup> Survey has also been carried out closer to Brindisi itself, with a particular focus on the kiln-sites producing the amphorae to export the oil and wine for which the area was famous in the late Republic. Excavations at the major Giancola villa site suggest that amphora production had ended by the Augustan period. This reflects the broader pattern of settlement in the territory, with between 40 and 45 per cent of sites disappearing in the first century AD, and more than half of the survivors in the century which followed.<sup>324</sup>

This familiar pattern of decline in site numbers under the high Empire is characteristic of much of Apulia, though significant differences have been noted between different areas, with a comparatively dense network of settlement—including smaller sites—noted in the vicinity of Canusium, which appears to have been a centre of some importance, and in Daunia. Survey of the area around Luceria and Teanum Apulum revealed fifteen sites of the late Republic and ten of the early Empire, of which some eight seem to have survived into late antiquity; though it is noted that in some cases sites abandoned in the high Empire are later reoccupied.<sup>325</sup>

In Bruttium (modern Calabria), a survey of published and unpublished evidence for rural settlement similarly suggests that only 30–40 per cent of the villas known (mostly located in the vicinity of the coast) survived after the second century AD,<sup>326</sup> and this figure may perhaps be too optimistic.<sup>327</sup> The most drastic decline is identified in the northern part of the region.<sup>328</sup>

In Lucania, however, the situation appears rather different: the data collected from a range of survey projects and villa excavations in Lucania as a whole tend to suggest an overall pattern of continuity in settlement,

<sup>320</sup> Yntema 1993: 19–27, 215–26.

<sup>321</sup> Boersma and Yntema 1987; Boersma 1995.

<sup>322</sup> Burgers 1998; Burgers 2001.

<sup>323</sup> Attema and van Leusen 2004: 92–4.

<sup>324</sup> Manacorda and Cambi 1994; Cambi 2001: 385–6; Manacorda 2001.

<sup>325</sup> Volpe 1996: 204–11.

<sup>326</sup> Battista Sangineto 1994: 585; Battista Sangineto 2001: 214, 218.

<sup>327</sup> Volpe 1996: 208 n. 33. See also Grelle and Volpe 1996: 135.

<sup>328</sup> Battista Sangineto 2001: 218–19.

with eighteen out of twenty-three villas founded between the mid and late Republic surviving into late antiquity.<sup>329</sup> Some areas, however, show a striking increase in the numbers of sites under the Empire: at Metapontum, for example, there is a dramatic revival of settlement from the second century AD onwards, after an almost total collapse in the late Republic and early Empire.<sup>330</sup> Likewise, in the area studied as part of the S. Giovanni di Ruoti project (1977–84), there seems to have been a significant expansion of rural settlement. Primarily concerned with the excavation of a Roman and late antique villa in the hills to the north-west of Potenza, the project involved a survey of the hinterland of the villa which extended to a radius of 6 km; altogether about 80 sq. km were investigated. Settlement seems to have been at a low level in the late Republic, but then revived early in the Principate, with twelve sites (identified as five villas and seven villages) datable to the Julio-Claudian period. The number of sites increased dramatically in the period AD 70–220, when twenty-six sites were in occupation (nineteen of them ‘villages’, which included a significant number of new foundations); the peak was in the mid second century AD, but numbers then declined throughout the third century AD. The S. Giovanni villa itself, built early in the first century AD, was abandoned c.220; but it continued to be partially maintained and roofed until reoccupied in c.350, subsequently being rebuilt around the beginning of the fifth century AD.<sup>331</sup>

In fact, field survey has been employed to explore the Lucanian countryside since the 1960s: the material from the earlier surveys, covering a total of more than 550 sq. km, has been re-examined in recent years by Alastair Small. In 1966–74, the area around Gravina di Puglia was studied by J. du Plat Taylor and others as part of a project to investigate the Iron Age settlement at Botromagno; while in 1968–79, S. P. Vinson continued these investigations in the vicinity of Venosa and along the route of the Via Herculia towards Potenza. The work around Gravina revealed an increase in sites from fourteen in the period c.30 BC–AD 70 to nineteen in the period c.AD 70–300 (parallel to the situation identified around S. Giovanni), continuing at roughly the same level into late antiquity; around Venosa (ancient Venusia), forty sites were identified for the period c.30 BC–AD 70, many associated with the triumviral colonial settlement there, and forty-one for the period AD 70–300; some smaller sites had disappeared near the town of Venusia, but other new sites were established further away from the town. Subsequently, there was a slight decline in total numbers (to thirty-four in

<sup>329</sup> Di Giuseppe 1996a: 237–40.

<sup>330</sup> Carter 1994: 192–3.

<sup>331</sup> Roberto, Plambeck, and Small 1985; Small 1991: 207–8; Small and Buck 1994: 3–5, 19–22.

the period AD 300–600).<sup>332</sup> The recent *Forma Italiae* survey of the territory of Venusia confirms the substantial impact of the triumviral settlement on the landscape, and continuity of settlement into the second century AD, but notes also that many sites tended to disappear during the course of that century. In general, the length of survival of sites tends to correspond to their size, larger sites lasting longer than smaller ones. Many new sites which did appear were noted to have been close to existing concentrations.<sup>333</sup>

Two new surveys, in the adjacent valleys of the Bradano and Basentello, to the north-east of Potenza, have recently been providing important data on settlement in the region, which can be related to the results from the earlier fieldwork. Survey in the valley of the Bradano has been taking place since 1989 in parallel with the excavation of a major villa at Masseria Ciccotti, near Oppido Lucano. Originating in the second half of the first century BC, and embellished with a bathhouse in the succeeding century, the villa underwent a major expansion in the late second or early third century, with a new bath-complex and aqueduct. Other villas excavated in the area—at S. Gilio and S. Pietro di Tolve—demonstrate a similar chronology and the survey reveals that villas and smaller sites continued to coexist in the countryside more generally from the first century BC to the third century AD.<sup>334</sup> The Basentello valley survey covers the area to the west of Gravina, in the vicinity of Botromagno and another Iron Age fortified site at Monte Irsi. Here there is very little sign of settlement in the last two centuries of the Republic, the area being explored (adjacent to a *tratturo*) perhaps being given over to forest or pasturage, but thereafter a significant growth of sites has been noted for the first two centuries AD, with at least ten villas and two villages in existence by the mid Empire.<sup>335</sup>

On the western side of Lucania, the territory around the fortified centre at Roccagloriosa (east of Velia) has been under investigation since the mid 1980s, revealing traces of dispersed settlement of the Roman period. The majority of the sites in existence in the early first century AD continue at least into the third century. Some new farmsteads seem to have been established in the lower Bussento valley in the early imperial period, and further growth in site numbers, including villages, took place in the second century AD.<sup>336</sup>

<sup>332</sup> Small 1991. Both Small and Mattingly (1993: 365), however, emphasize the comparatively unsystematic nature of the early data from Gravina and Venosa.

<sup>333</sup> Marchi and Sabbatini 1996: 104–5, 119; Sabbatini 2001: 15, 59–65.

<sup>334</sup> Fracchia and Gualtieri 1998–9: 329–32; Gualtieri 2001: 79–92.

<sup>335</sup> Small 2001; Small, A., and Small, C. 2002.

<sup>336</sup> Gualtieri and de Polignac 1991; Fracchia 2001: 69; Gualtieri and Fracchia 2001: 127–48, 173–6.

Investigation of villas in the vicinity of Volceii in 1969–72 suggested a continuity of settlement from the early Empire (eight villas identified) through to the mid and late Empire (nine villas identified); though smaller sites from the Republic tended to be abandoned in the imperial period.<sup>337</sup>

The survey results therefore suggest a complex pattern of settlement in these regions, with a more-or-less severe decline in numbers of sites noted in the first or second century AD around Brindisi and Oria, in Daunia, and in northern Calabria, but elsewhere a greater continuity in numbers (e.g. at Canusium, Volceii, and in the Bradano valley) or in some cases an increase in the number of sites (as at Metapontum, Gravina, Basentello valley, S. Giovanni). Several of the areas most affected by declining site numbers are located on the coast, and in general a significant difference in pattern can be noted between inland and coastal areas; also that many of the new imperial 'sites' can be characterized as villages rather than villas.

### Campania

In 1979–81, a survey of the Ager Falernus and the territories of the nearby ancient cities of Sinuessa and Suessa Aurunca was carried out by P. Arthur, covering an area of some 100 sq. km. Although the work was largely conducted single-handed, numerous ancient sites were identified. Complementary work, with a particular focus on the centuriation schemes of the area, was undertaken by J. P. Vallat at around the same time.<sup>338</sup> In the later republican period, the area was densely occupied by villas, and there were substantial numbers of kiln sites on the coast producing the Dressel 1 type of amphorae, used for exporting the wine for which the area was famous. In the early Empire, these kiln sites disappeared and a new type of amphora, the Dressel 2–4, began to be produced on the farms themselves; many of the kilns were in turn abandoned by the early second century AD, as indeed were substantial numbers of the farms. By the third century 71 per cent of the rural sites of the early Empire had been abandoned, the smaller ones disappearing first. Few villas have as yet been published in detail from the Ager Falernus itself, but the Posto and S. Rocco villas at Francolise in the nearby territory of Cales seem to reflect the pattern identified by Arthur and Vallat. Both of these were first constructed at the beginning of the first century BC; the Posto villa was abandoned c.AD 160 (though later

<sup>337</sup> Dyson 1983: 1–8.

<sup>338</sup> Arthur 1991a, b: 16, 84–7, 101–2; Vallat 1987. See also Fentress 1993, for a comparison of the methodologies employed by the two scholars.

reoccupied) while the San Rocco site was abandoned at the end of the second century AD.<sup>339</sup>

### Latium

Between 1978 and 1983, a programme of field survey was carried out in the lower valley of the Liri—the territories of the ancient cities of Interamna, Aquinum, and Casinum—by a Canadian team under the direction of the late E. M. Wightman. A variety of different geographical and geomorphological units were covered during the course of the survey, which took in a substantial proportion of territory in the valley, which included the river valleys, the Liri plain, dissected landscape incised by streams flowing into the Liri and other rivers, the foothills on the edge of the valley, and the uplands beyond. The development of the settlement pattern in the imperial period varied considerably between these different areas: there was an increase in the number of sites occupied in the area around Interamna during the early imperial period (perhaps to be linked to veteran settlements in the area following the civil wars of the first century BC); in the area of the Gari river, however, and in the valley of the Melfa, sites declined in number. In the second and third centuries AD the number of sites around Interamna remained steady and there was a slight increase in the Melfa area, but the number in the plain and in the foothills declined; by contrast, the number of sites in the Gari valley doubled. Subsequently there was a decline in the number of sites all over the area.<sup>340</sup>

A survey of the adjacent territory of Fregellae (subsequently attached to Fabrateria Nova, after Fregellae was destroyed in 125 BC), undertaken in 1981–4 as part of the continuing programme of research on the site of Fregellae, demonstrated a striking decline in the number of sites from the late Republic/early Empire into the second century AD: from nine sites to just two. One of these is a ruined bathhouse, which was dated by analysis of its structure rather than by the associated pottery.<sup>341</sup>

<sup>339</sup> Cotton 1979: 55–6; Cotton and Métraux 1985: 83–4, 252–63.

<sup>340</sup> Wightman 1981: 284; Hayes and Martini 1994: 38–9.

<sup>341</sup> Crawford, M. H., *et al.* 1986: 48–51. For further discussion of settlement around Fregellae, see Coarelli and Monti 1998: 88–108.

## 2

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# The Transformation of the City in Imperial Italy

### INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the evidence for changing rural settlement patterns in Italy provided by archaeological field survey, presented in the previous chapter, clearly demonstrates the complex diversity of political, social, and economic realities to be found in different areas of the peninsula in the imperial period. Within this broader picture, however, there does appear to be a general trend towards a decline in numbers of rural sites. This chapter examines the state of the cities of Italy in the first and second centuries AD, so that this picture can be set alongside that deriving from the countryside. It is now a commonplace that city and territory need to be considered together in order successfully to understand the history of Roman Italy (or indeed any other part of the ancient world)—but the point is no less true (and important) for being repeatedly stressed by historians and archaeologists alike. We have to be aware, of course, that except in those few cases where it has been possible to carry out intensive field survey both on the site of an ancient city, and within its rural territory, the type of data available from cities and countryside tends to be somewhat different in nature, and so a preliminary discussion of the evidence available for the reconstruction of the urban history of the towns of Italy will be necessary.

Just as the prevailing pattern in many areas of the countryside of rural Italy can be seen to be one of declining numbers of isolated rural settlements, so the first two centuries AD have traditionally been



seen as a time in which the general urban prosperity of the Augustan period is gradually affected by signs of the advancing problems which are generally acknowledged to have affected the cities of Italy much more severely in the third century AD. These include declining levels of public building, which is conventionally seen as a symptom of a more general lack of enthusiasm for civic activity on the part of the Italian elites, who were less keen than previously on expending their own resources on benefactions and acts of generosity for their own citizens. This trend also manifested itself, it is argued, in their lack of enthusiasm for holding local magistracies; the appointment from the early second century AD by the imperial authorities of *curatores rei publicae*, officers whose responsibility it was to oversee (in some sense) the affairs of the cities, is seen as a response from the centre to a perceived problem of financial difficulties and maladministration in the Italian cities.

This chapter aims to examine how far this picture is an accurate one, and the extent to which a general trend can be identified across the cities of Roman Italy, great and small, or whether—as seems likely—a picture of greater complexity is more appropriate, especially given the variety of situations revealed in the countryside. It investigates the phenomenon of public building in the towns of Italy in the first and second centuries, sketching the different patterns which can be identified, and seeking to identify the priorities in urban building in different chronological contexts, by examining when different types of buildings were primarily constructed. The Augustan and Julio-Claudian periods are seen as the high point of civic building in Italy, when most of the towns acquired or completed their basic urban superstructure. Although there does indeed appear to be a decline in the overall level of building from the first to the second century, it is striking that particular types of building predominate in the second century, with initiative and resources directed in particular towards the construction of bath-buildings, places of entertainment, notably amphitheatres, and *macella*, monumental public markets. The choice of these building-types—at a time when the restricted resources available for civic expenditure were apparently diminishing—can be seen to make a significant statement about priorities in urban life at that time.

The erection of buildings did not constitute the only form of benefaction in the imperial city, though: the extent to which public building projects were paralleled by, or gave way to, other types of benefaction—feasts, distributions of money and food, provision of free supplies of food and oil—is also discussed. Groups outside the traditional aristocracies of the Italian towns—notably the *Augustales*, ‘priests of the imperial cult’, and the members of popular associations such as the *collegia*—seem to have played an increasingly important part in these acts of euergetism, both as benefactors and recipients of the generosity of others; and just as the importance of the imperial cult and of the *Augustales* is reflected in the building of new temples dedicated to the emperors, so the importance of the *collegia* in particular is reflected in the increasing importance in the urban landscape of club-houses (*scholae*) and other buildings associated with these popular groups. The changing means by which urban constructions—and other forms of benefaction—were financed are also indicative of the economic situation in the towns, as expenditure of civic funds largely gave way to benefaction on the part of wealthy individual citizens and initiatives financed from outside the community, thanks to the generosity of external patrons or emperors. The role of these patrons, and their honorific treatment by the cities, is a central theme of the chapter which follows. At the same time, there are signs that villas in the countryside, in the second century AD in particular, take on some of the functions of the towns—as centres of sophisticated elite activity, of marketing, and even of the reciprocal exchange of honours and benefactions which was crucial to the relationship of elite and people in the ancient city. The changing public profile of the elites, and their patterns of residence, is reflected in changing forms of funerary commemoration too.

This chapter therefore presents a series of elements which, taken together, contribute to a rather differently nuanced account of the Italian cities in the high Empire from the gloomy picture of generalized decline often suggested. In particular, I want not only to examine the factors that led to the symptoms of urban decline in the cities, but also to investigate the extent to which these were able to deploy new resources to maintain civic institutions and identities in the face of the increasing problems they faced, and assess how far they were

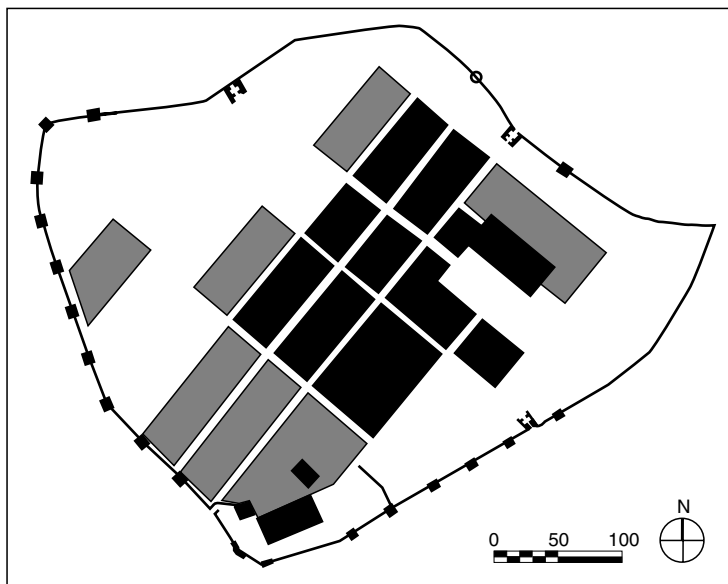
effective in maintaining civic life. This is not to deny that decline took place: indeed it is clear from the archaeological evidence (and to a certain extent from the epigraphic and literary sources) that significant contraction had indeed occurred in many towns by the mid Empire. One central theme of the analysis is to stress the *complexity* of patterns to be found within the towns of Italy in the imperial period, and to suggest possible explanatory models for situations which range from drastic decline, apparent even as early as the first century AD, to apparent continuity and vivacity of urban life into the late antique period and beyond. The next section examines three urban case studies—Cosa, Interamna, and Beneventum. All three were Latin colonies, founded in the late fourth or early third centuries BC, but their histories in the imperial period differed significantly from each other.

### THREE LATIN COLONIES

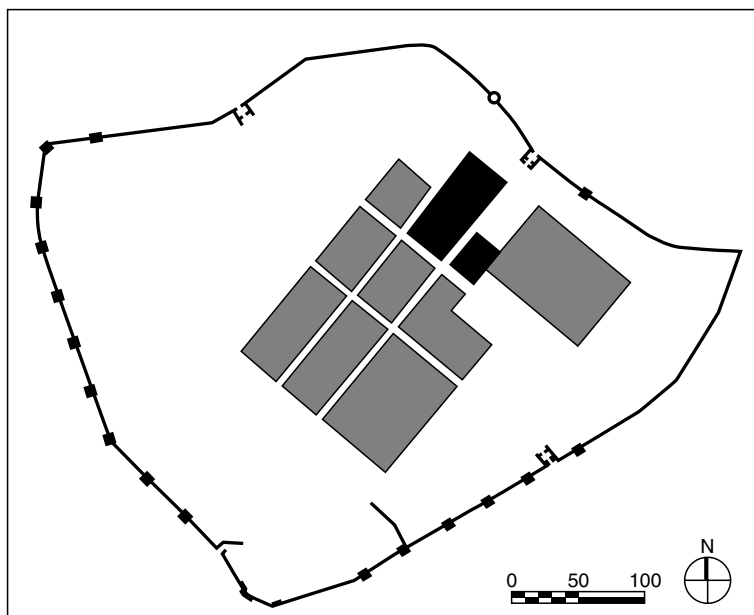
#### Cosa

Founded as a Latin colony on a rocky hill overlooking the Tyrrhenian coast of Etruria in 273 BC, Cosa (see Figs. 2.1–3) is now arguably one of the best-known of Roman cities in Italy, thanks to a series of major excavations and surveys which have taken place over the last fifty years, both in the urban centre and in its territory. Excavations have been carried out at the site of the city since 1948 by the American Academy in Rome, revealing the forum area, the temples of the *arx*, and areas of habitation within the city. These have been recorded in a series of major publications on the topography of the site and its artefacts.<sup>1</sup> This extensive knowledge extends to the territory, where not one but two major survey projects have been undertaken since the 1970s, together with the excavation of both major rural villa sites

<sup>1</sup> See esp. Brown 1980 for a synthesis. For specific aspects of the excavations, see Brown 1951; Brown, Richardson, and Richardson 1960; 1993; Bruno and Scott 1993; Fitch and Goldman 1994; Fentress 2003.



**Figure 2.1.** Cosa: Augustan settlement. In this and the following two figures black insulae are occupied during the period, grey insulae are those which are covered by midden deposits



**Figure 2.2.** Cosa: settlement AD 150–200

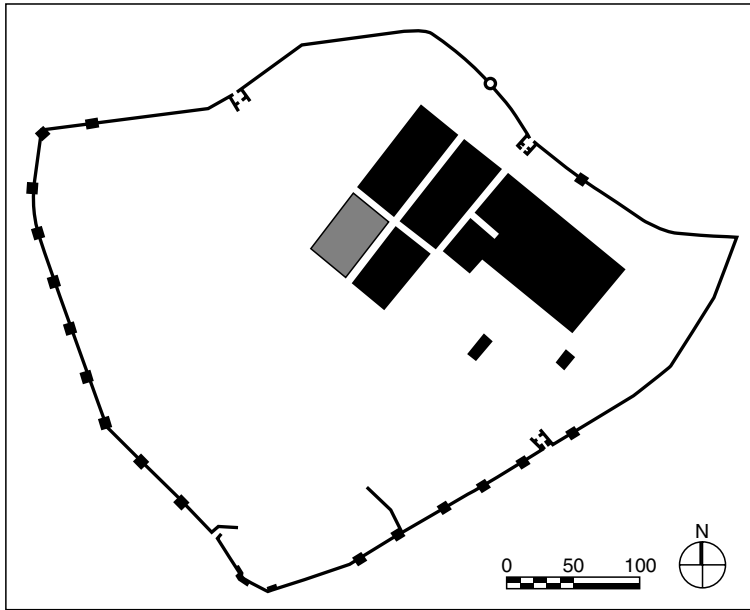


Figure 2.3. Cosa: settlement during the Severan period

(including those at Settefinestre,<sup>2</sup> Le Colonne,<sup>3</sup> and Talamone<sup>4</sup>) and smaller farmbuildings (Giardino<sup>5</sup>). Unlike the earlier investigations at Cosa, which were aimed largely at understanding the history and topography of the colony in the republican period,<sup>6</sup> much of the most recent work at the urban centre has focused on the imperial and early medieval phases at Cosa, seeking to investigate the process of decline which led to the eventual abandonment of the city by the end of the sixth century AD.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Carandini and Settis 1979; Carandini 1985*a, b*: 157–75.

<sup>3</sup> Carandini 1985*b*: 155–7; Dyson 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Carandini *et al.* 2002: 154–7.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 142–4.

<sup>6</sup> The history of the site presented in Brown (1980) in effect concludes with the disaster which apparently struck the town between 70 and 60 BC.

<sup>7</sup> Fentress *et al.* 1991: 209 (on the final abandonment); for a more general account of the town's history in the imperial period, see Fentress 1994 (which I follow closely). For a full report on the excavations, see Fentress 2003.

Just as the territory of Cosa is important in the later second and first centuries BC for the villa-based production of wine for overseas, so the town is notable for its dramatic decline in the imperial period, despite various attempts to revive the community. The destruction of houses around the forum, and the abandonment of a coin hoard in the period between 73 and 71 BC,<sup>8</sup> suggest that the city suffered some disaster in the period around 70 BC. The extent of the destruction to be inferred from this limited evidence has been questioned, and the circumstances are also obscure.<sup>9</sup> Brown suggested that an attack by pirates of the type known elsewhere on the Tyrrhenian coast in the late 70s and early 60s BC may have been responsible,<sup>10</sup> but if so it seems odd that the port of Cosa and nearby villas were apparently not affected.<sup>11</sup> Another possibility is that the damage was due to upheavals connected with the Catilinarian rising of 63 BC: Etruria was particularly affected by violence in the years following the establishment of Sullan colonies in the region, which culminated in Manlius' rising in the area in support of Catiline.<sup>12</sup> Of course to attempt too much precision in linking the destruction levels with a particular incident would be risky.<sup>13</sup> In any case, there is little sign of activity at the site until the Augustan period, when there appears to have been a concerted effort to revive the community, perhaps in the context of a small-scale settlement of veterans.<sup>14</sup> The Capitolium was restored and maintained into the third century AD, and several *insulae* were rebuilt, though the area occupied by these new houses was rather smaller than that contained within the original Republican city walls.<sup>15</sup>

Despite these initiatives, however, the town's decline continued. The basilica collapsed not long after AD 36, perhaps as a result of the earthquake attested in AD 51, and an *odeum* was built on the site by

<sup>8</sup> Buttrey 1980: 82; Brown 1980: 73.

<sup>9</sup> McCann *et al.* 1987: 28.

<sup>10</sup> Brown 1980: 74.

<sup>11</sup> McCann *et al.* 1987: 28.

<sup>12</sup> See Sall. *Cat.* 28 with Harris 1971: 251–94; Stewart, R. 1995: 68–70; Fentress 2003: 32 n. 52.

<sup>13</sup> See the cautionary remarks in Snodgrass 1987: 36–66.

<sup>14</sup> Bruno and Scott 1993: 161; Fentress 1994: 210–12, 218–19; Fentress 2003: 32–4.

<sup>15</sup> Brown 1951: 69; Brown, Richardson, and Richardson 1993: 237–8; Bruno and Scott 1993: 162; Fentress 1994: 210–12, 218–19; Fentress 2003: 33–4.

the young Nero,<sup>16</sup> but investigation of the residential areas of the city suggests that almost all these had been abandoned by the middle of the second century AD, if not earlier. There is little pottery from the late second and third century AD beyond the forum,<sup>17</sup> and the number of coins found in the imperial period declines from the first century into the second and then into the third, contrary to what might normally be expected.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, there were further attempts to revive the city in the Severan period: *insulae* near the forum were rebuilt early in the third century, the *odeum* and a portico alongside the forum were restored by Maximinus in AD 236. New shrines were set up, one dedicated to Liber Pater and the other, which was located in the *curia*, to Mithras.<sup>19</sup> Little of the city survived into the fourth and fifth centuries AD, however,<sup>20</sup> and in the sixth century the site seems to have become the location of a *mansio* for travellers.<sup>21</sup>

The epigraphic record so far available seems to parallel the data emerging from the archaeological investigation of the site, though some of the inscriptions found during the excavations are yet to be fully published, so the assessment must for the present remain provisional.<sup>22</sup> There are remarkably few documents relating to civic affairs from the first and second centuries AD, considering that this period, the second century in particular, is at many sites the richest in terms of the epigraphic record. There are, however, a number of inscriptions recording dedications to, and initiatives by, members of the imperial family of the Augustan period,<sup>23</sup> and another significant body of texts relating to the emperors of the third century AD.

<sup>16</sup> Brown, Richardson, and Richardson 1993: 241–4; Collins-Clinton 2000: 99–105; Fentress 2003: 55–8.

<sup>17</sup> Fentress 1994: 212.

<sup>18</sup> Buttrey 1980: 33–4; Brown, Richardson, and Richardson 1993: 238.

<sup>19</sup> Fentress 1994: 212–15; Fentress 2003: 63–6.

<sup>20</sup> Fentress 1994: 221–2; Fentress 2003: 69.

<sup>21</sup> Fentress *et al.* 1991: 204–5.

<sup>22</sup> For a survey of the inscriptions relating to the site and the territory, see Manacorda 1979. See also *American Journal of Archaeology* 84 (1980), 193, and Bace and Harvey forthcoming.

<sup>23</sup> L. Caesar as patron of the colony: Saladino 1977: 143–5 = *AE* 1977: 249; Drusus the younger, apparently a patron: Saladino 1977: 148–51 = *AE* 1977: 251. Augustus is honoured by *magistri augustales*: *CIL* 11. 2631 and *AE* 1979: 232.

Honorific monuments are set up to Decius, 'restitutor sacrorum et libertatis',<sup>24</sup> Caracalla, Gordian III, and Aurelian,<sup>25</sup> while another text commemorates Maximinus' restoration of the forum area.<sup>26</sup>

Although it is difficult to disentangle the complex chain of causes and consequences to provide precise explanations for the decline of the community at Cosa, it is clear that various of the elements contributing to the town's decline can be paralleled from many other towns in Italy, even though this peculiarly disastrous combination of general trends and localized events may have been specific to Cosa. Analysis of how and why the town failed therefore highlights some of the difficulties faced by towns elsewhere, and allows us to see what strategies were available (or might be adopted) to maintain urban life and civic identity in the context of the difficulties the communities faced.

Arguably the position of Cosa, on top of a steep hill above the Via Aurelia, was detrimental to its long-term survival under the Empire. Its location was ideal as a military strongpoint against raids by pirates or Carthaginians on the coast (which it had originally been created to resist or deter) but just as the hilltop communities of inland Etruria found themselves marginalized by the creation of new Roman roads,<sup>27</sup> so too under the more peaceful conditions of the Empire the site of Cosa—and in particular its lack of a water supply—was a disadvantage rather than a source of strength.<sup>28</sup> 'Cosa's colonial mission had reached its end. The colony had performed its task. It had guarded the frontier.'<sup>29</sup> There seems to have been a road-station on the Via Aurelia called Succosa, but unfortunately neither its location nor its history can convincingly be reconstructed.<sup>30</sup> Even the Aurelia itself seems to have lost something of its importance under the Empire: the itineraries preserved on the goblets found at Vicarello (on Lake Bracciano) suggest that in the second century AD

<sup>24</sup> *AE* 1973: 235; see Babcock 1962, with Rives 1999: 143.

<sup>25</sup> Brown, Richardson, and Richardson 1993: 245; Saladino 1977: 142–3 = *AE* 1977: 248; *CIL* 11. 2633 = *ILS* 6597; *CIL* 11. 2634–6.

<sup>26</sup> *AE* 1982: 325 with Scott 1981.

<sup>27</sup> Potter 1979: 109–10.

<sup>28</sup> Wilson, A. 2004: 574.

<sup>29</sup> Brown 1980: 73.

<sup>30</sup> Fentress 1994: 220.



the preferred route from Gaul to Rome followed the Via Aemilia as far as Ariminum and then the Via Flaminia southwards, rather than the Via Aurelia along the coast.<sup>31</sup>

The particular history of agriculture and settlement in the Ager Cosanus must have been of major importance in determining the history of the city. As we have seen, the territory of Cosa was in the late Republic one of the regions of Italy most geared to the production of wine for external markets; many of the large villa estates here were owned by members of the Roman aristocracy. Senators known to have possessed land in the territory of Cosa include the Sestius family (amphorae produced on their estates were used to carry locally produced wine around the Mediterranean)<sup>32</sup> and the Domitii Ahenobarbi, one of whose freedmen is commemorated by an inscription from the territory.<sup>33</sup> The port below the hill of Cosa was used to export much of this wine.<sup>34</sup> As a result, the produce (and the profits) of the estates bypassed the urban centre,<sup>35</sup> and the estates themselves were on such a large scale that it is unlikely that they would have made significant use of local markets for purchases. As Fentress underlines, the fact that Cosa was possibly abandoned in the 60s BC after its partial destruction is indicative of the lack of interest shown by the Rome-based landed proprietors of the area.<sup>36</sup> We might compare the efforts made (albeit incomplete) to restore private houses and some public buildings at Pompeii after the earthquake of AD 62<sup>37</sup> with the apparent lack of activity at Cosa until the time of Augustus. The hiatus caused by the disaster of the 60s BC, however caused, would have further weakened the relationship between the city and its territory at a time when the growing competition from producers in other lands around the Mediterranean was beginning to reduce the profitability of the estates and discouraged still further the

<sup>31</sup> *CIL* 11. 3281–4.

<sup>32</sup> *Cic. Att.* 15. 27. 1 with Shatzman 1975: 398; Manacorda 1978; 1981; also Carandini 1985a: i. 101–2 on possible links with Settefinestre.

<sup>33</sup> *CIL* 11. 2638; see also *Caes. B.Civ.* 1. 34, *Cic. Att.* 9. 6. 2, with Shatzman 1975: 339 and Carlsen 1984: 54, for the properties of the Domitii.

<sup>34</sup> McCann *et al.* 1987: 33–5.

<sup>35</sup> Fentress 1994: 222.

<sup>36</sup> For a more positive assessment of the relationship between the city and its territory, see Dyson 2002: 225–6.

<sup>37</sup> Dobbins 1994; Zanker 1998: 132–3.

participation of senatorial landowners in local affairs. More locally, the port at Cosa seems to have silted up at the end of the first century BC, and this too will have been detrimental to the economy of the region, although the Portus Herculis below nearby Monte Argentario seems to have remained silt-free.<sup>38</sup> The disappearance of the urban population, and further decline of the urban centre in the second century AD, would in turn have hastened the decline of settlement in the countryside, in that it provided no alternative outlet for produce which might previously have been exported overseas.

Despite this gloomy scenario, it is worth emphasizing that repeated efforts *did* take place to revive the city. The question remains, why the central authorities at Rome thought it worthwhile (apparently on at least two separate occasions) to revitalize a community which appeared to be of marginal relevance even to local concerns, let alone those of the capital; this, just as much as the decline of the community itself, might be seen to be a particularly striking feature of the history of the town of Cosa under the Empire. It may well be that land here was used for small-scale distribution to veterans under Augustus: no doubt there were some properties available for distribution, since it is unlikely that all the landowners in the Ager Cosanus found themselves on the right side in the civil wars. Communities which received veterans often received gifts from the imperial house, even where settlement was on a fairly small scale, as, for example, at Saepinum in Samnium, where viritane settlement was accompanied by the building of city walls by Tiberius and Drusus.<sup>39</sup> The building of the *odeum* at Cosa by the young Nero is likely to be linked to the fact that he inherited the estates of the Domitii Ahenobarbi in the area,<sup>40</sup> just as he did their properties at Rome,<sup>41</sup> as well as to a desire to support the town following the earthquake.<sup>42</sup> The activities of the third century emperors in seeking to revive the city, although in part related to the ideology of concern for Italy which seems to have been a feature of the traditional virtues

<sup>38</sup> McCann *et al.* 1987: 331.

<sup>39</sup> *CIL* 9. 2443 = *ILS* 147. Keppie 1983: 9; Matteini Chiari 1982: 51–68.

<sup>40</sup> Brown, Richardson, and Richardson 1993: 243–4; Fentress 2003: 57–8.

<sup>41</sup> Carandini 1988: 370–1; Papi 1995.

<sup>42</sup> Fentress 2003: 57–8.

of the 'good emperor',<sup>43</sup> may also reflect a more specific concern for the well-being of the area, related to the presence of extensive imperial estates in the vicinity of Cosa. Fentress suggests that the 'atrium publicum' identified in the town, one of the few buildings to survive into the late imperial period, may have been the headquarters of imperial property in the vicinity. In addition to those of the Domitii Ahenobarbi, other properties in the area around Cosa seem independently to have fallen into imperial hands, as we might expect of an area particularly characterized by estates belonging to members of the Roman aristocracy.<sup>44</sup> Vespasian's grandmother owned property here, and Suetonius tells us that the emperor frequently visited his home in the area and it was maintained as it had been when he was a child (Suet. *Vesp.* 2. 1). A fragmentary inscription from Cosa mentions him or another member of the Flavian dynasty.<sup>45</sup> Other villas too seem to have belonged to members of the imperial house, including that at Torre Tagliata, close to the port of Cosa.<sup>46</sup>

The decline of the town of Cosa was thus related not only to the inappropriateness of its location for a flourishing municipality of the imperial period, the irrelevance of its defensible position, and the increasing marginality of the route which led northwards along the Via Aurelia, but also the character of landowning in the territory, the growth of large estates in the hands of absentee landlords, and the general lack of enthusiasm of these landowners for civic activities at a local level. These factors, combined with the vulnerability of a territory where the economy was predominantly based on a single crop to the vagaries of climate, changes in the wider economy, and the development of rival areas of production outside Italy, were exacerbated by the hiatus in urban life caused by the disaster of the 60s BC. Interestingly, the history of Heba, located just to the north, was under the Empire very similar to that of Cosa. Here survey of the urban centre revealed a striking absence of pottery indicating settlement in the later second century, though with some revival in the

<sup>43</sup> See Woolf 1990: 220–7; Patterson, J. R. 2003: 98–101.

<sup>44</sup> Fentress 1994: 220–1; Fentress 2003: 68.

<sup>45</sup> *CIL* 11. 2632.

<sup>46</sup> McCann *et al.* 1987: 33; Ciampoltrini and Rendini 1990.

early third century.<sup>47</sup> Saturnia, only 30 km away to the north-west, but further inland than Heba, seems, by comparison, to have had a reasonably vibrant civic life in the early Empire.<sup>48</sup> The greater continuity at the urban centre of Saturnia reflects a similar pattern in its territory, which avoided the dramatic upheavals related to the growth and decline of the wine trade which contributed to the long-term instability of the city of Cosa.<sup>49</sup>

### Interamna Lirenas

Some other towns founded as Latin colonies in the fourth and third centuries BC seem to have become marginalized in the imperial period in much the same way that Cosa was. One such example is Interamna Lirenas (see Figs. 2.4–7), which was founded in 312 BC in the middle of the late fourth century BC struggle between Romans and Samnites known as the Second Samnite War; in 294 BC the Samnites attempted (unsuccessfully) to recapture the city (Livy 9. 28. 8; 10. 36. 16). The site chosen for the colony was on a low ridge between two streams leading down to the Liri, in the valley between the Mainarde range to the north and the Monti Aurunci to the south.<sup>50</sup> The location controlled not only the valley of the Liri, which represented the main route from Samnium and Campania to Rome, but also lay on the side road which connected the Liri valley with Minturnae on the coast across the Monti Aurunci, and had ready access to the route which led north-east to Arpinum, and then into the territory of the Marsi via Sora.<sup>51</sup> The continuing strategic importance of the area is reflected in the prolonged and bitter fighting which took place around Monte Cassino (clearly visible from the site of Interamna) during the Second World War.

Little is known of the history of the town in the imperial period, in the absence of literary references; a modest body of inscriptions has been found, but, apart from the remains of a bath-complex, few of

<sup>47</sup> Carandini *et al.* 2002: 243–5; Fentress 2003: 68.

<sup>48</sup> Fentress 1996: 90; Pollard 1998: 68.

<sup>49</sup> Carandini *et al.* 2002: 223–4.

<sup>50</sup> Cagianò de Azevedo 1947: 5; Ward-Perkins, J. B. 1964: 20–2.

<sup>51</sup> Hayes and Martini 1994: 32–3.



Figure 2.4. Interamna Lirenas: the site as it is today

the public monuments of the city have been identified.<sup>52</sup> Surface survey carried out at the site in 1980 shows that the built-up area was at its maximum extent, covering an area of some 30 ha, in the second and first centuries BC. From the first century AD onwards, however, the inhabited core of the city shrank to about 10 ha, and there is little material of the third and fourth centuries AD,<sup>53</sup> although the monumental remains of a late antique bathhouse, plausibly identified with the one known from inscriptions to have been restored in AD 408,<sup>54</sup> suggest that there was some limited survival of civic activity on the site into the fifth century, although it appears to have been completely abandoned by the sixth.

The colony, like Cales further to the south, which had been founded in 334 BC, was connected to Rome by the Via Latina,<sup>55</sup> but the evidence of milestones indicates that by 39 BC this road had been diverted away from its former route close to Interamna to take a

<sup>52</sup> Cagianò de Azevedo 1947: 9–10, 21–32.

<sup>53</sup> Hayes and Wightman 1984: 145.

<sup>54</sup> *CIL* 10. 5348 = *ILS* 5698; see also *CIL* 10. 5349.

<sup>55</sup> Coarelli 1988: 39–41.

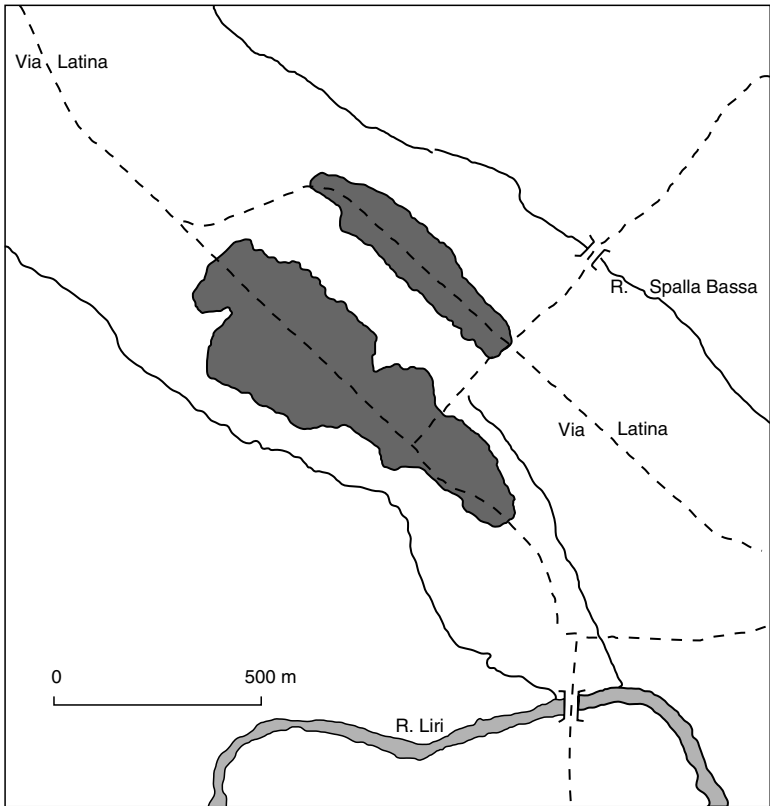
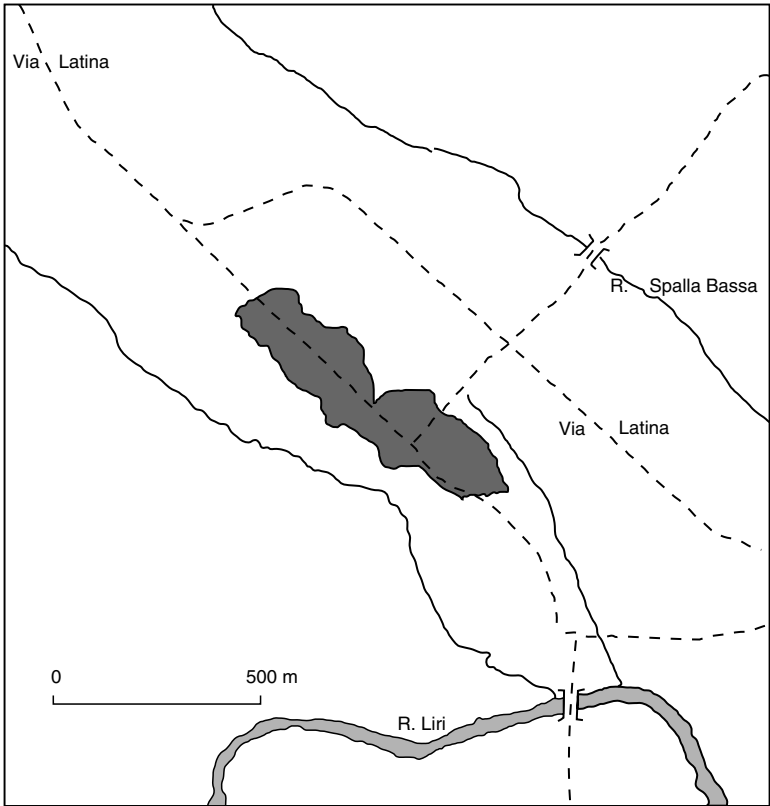


Figure 2.5. Interamna Lirenas: republican settlement

shorter and more direct line between Aquinum and Casinum, before heading southwards to Capua.<sup>56</sup> This was no doubt due in part to the reorganization of the territory around Aquinum, where a major triumviral colony had been established, and an extensive centuriation grid laid out along the valley of the Liri:<sup>57</sup> it seems to have had a

<sup>56</sup> Cagianò de Azevedo 1947: 39–41; Hayes and Martini 1994: 31–2; Radke 1973: 1491.

<sup>57</sup> Chouquer *et al.* 1987: 127–30.



**Figure 2.6.** Interamna Lirenas: early imperial settlement

disastrous effect on Interamna. The surface finds from what the surveyors termed ‘ribbon development’ along the line of the earlier Via Latina (which passed just outside the town of Interamna, apparently in order to avoid a steep incline) were republican in date, and the absence of imperial material suggests that activity in this area—whether funerary or residential—ceased with the diversion of the road.<sup>58</sup> It is also likely that Interamna, whose territory had—it

<sup>58</sup> Hayes and Wightman 1984: 140.

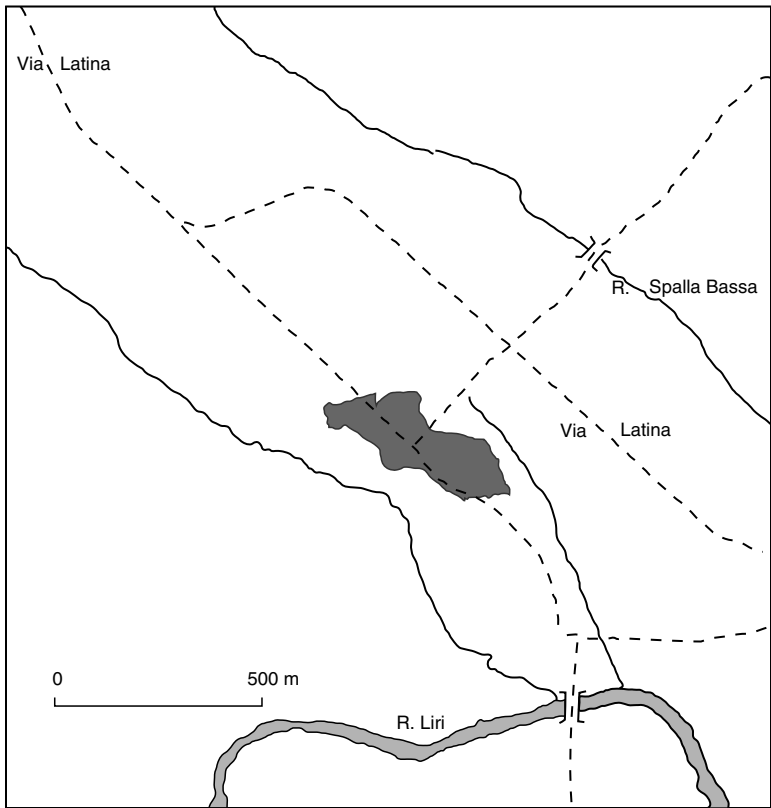


Figure 2.7. Interamna Lirenas: late imperial settlement

seems—originally been taken from the neighbouring communities of Aquinum and Casinum, may have lost part of it again to Aquinum, since the *Liber Coloniarum* attests activity on the part of the triumvirs at Interamna as well as at Aquinum (*Lib. Colon.* 229L and 234L).<sup>59</sup> The colonial settlements of the triumvirs, characteristically on a large scale, often involved the confiscation of land from neighbouring

<sup>59</sup> See Keppie 1983: 62 and Campbell 2000: 420–1. For discussion of the difficulties involved in identifying the boundaries between Aquinum, Casinum, and Interamna, see Chouquer *et al.* 1987: 263–8; Solin 1993: 370–1.



communities for distribution to the veterans. It appears that both Aquinum and Casinum were more substantial centres under the high Empire than Interamna was; the numbers of inscriptions recovered from the first two cities are substantially greater than those found at Interamna and in its territory.<sup>60</sup> Aquinum was described by Silius as *ingens* (*Pun.* 8. 403), and it had a wall-circuit which covered an area of some 85 ha. Investigations at the site suggest that habitation continued across the city until it began to decline in the early third century AD, in contrast with the much earlier contraction revealed by survey at Interamna.<sup>61</sup> Likewise Casinum seems to have been a place of some importance under the Empire, with public monuments which included the amphitheatre built by Ummidia Quadratilla late in the first century AD.<sup>62</sup>

As at Cosa, so at Interamna, a site which was highly appropriate for a mid-republican Latin colony was less attractive in the changed situation of the first century BC; the deviation of the Via Latina was seriously damaging to the well-being of the town, and the already more substantial centres of Aquinum and Casinum grew in importance at the expense of their neighbour. In the second century, the people of Interamna honoured L. Gabinius Cosmianus, *curator rei publicae* and probably *patronus*, for ‘displaying all solicitude not only in improving the public works ... he restored the vigour of the community’, reflecting the difficulties in which the town was finding itself.<sup>63</sup>

However, just as parallels for the decline of Cosa can be identified, so can contrasting cases where towns seem to derive more positive consequences from changes in the political or economic geography of the area in which they were located. One such site is Beneventum.

## Beneventum

The Latin colony of Beneventum (see Fig. 2.8) was founded in 268 BC, seven years after the Romans had fought Pyrrhus and his Samnite

<sup>60</sup> Hayes and Martini 1994: 35.

<sup>61</sup> Giuliani 1964: 44; Coarelli 1982: 211.

<sup>62</sup> *CIL* 10. 5183 = *ILS* 5628 with Plin. *Ep.* 7. 24. See Carettoni 1940: 78–82.

<sup>63</sup> *CIL* 10. 4860.

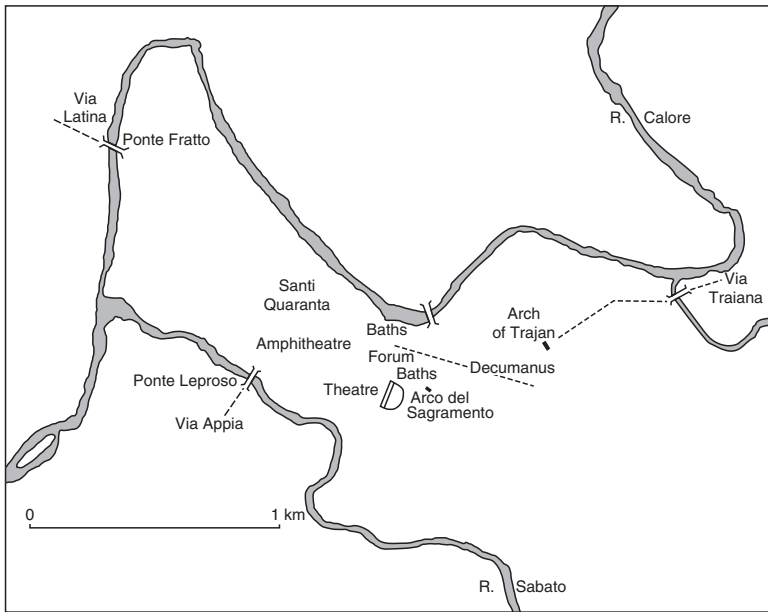


Figure 2.8. Beneventum: plan of the city

allies nearby.<sup>64</sup> Like Aesernia, to the north-west, which was founded five years later, its chief function seems to have been to control the Samnites, who, as recent events had shown, still presented a threat to Roman hegemony over southern Italy. One consequence of the establishment of the new colony was to split the Hirpini from the Pentri to the north.<sup>65</sup> Its position, on a spur of land at the confluence of the Sabato and Calore rivers, was very similar to that of Interamna, and, again like Interamna, it occupied a location of major strategic importance: the site controlled one of the few passes by which the Apennine chain could easily be crossed, and from it roads diverged in all directions.<sup>66</sup> The Via Appia, which linked Beneventum with Rome and Capua, was extended to link Venusia, Tarentum, and

<sup>64</sup> Torelli, M. R. 2002: 61–4.

<sup>65</sup> Salmon 1967: 288–9.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 20–3; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 11–12, 65.

Brundisium, which it must have reached not long after 243 BC.<sup>67</sup> The Latin colony possessed a substantial and fertile territory,<sup>68</sup> and this was further extended in 42 BC, when, as part of the establishment of a veteran colony by the triumvirs, extensive tracts of land which formerly belonged to the neighbouring cities of Caudium, Telesia, and Ligures Baebiani were instead assigned to Beneventum. Indeed, an honorary inscription dedicated to Iulia Domna, the wife of Septimius Severus, was set up by the colony of Beneventum 'in its territory which surrounds the community of the Caudini even up to its wall'; the monument was found at Arpaia, on the opposite side of the territory of Caudium from Beneventum. Evidently Caudium had lost all the territory beyond the urban centre itself.<sup>69</sup> Similarly, the discovery of inscriptions commemorating veterans of the Sixth and Thirtieth legions in territory which must originally have belonged to Caudium, Telesia, Ligures Baebiani, and possibly Aeclanum too, further tends to confirm the acquisition of land from the neighbouring cities (see Fig. 2.9).<sup>70</sup>

Reconstructing the urban history of Beneventum in the Roman period is problematic. The site has been occupied continually since antiquity: it became the seat of a Lombard duchy, and continues to be an important regional centre. It has been repeatedly devastated by earthquakes and warfare; like Cassino, the city of Benevento suffered heavy bombardments in the Second World War because of its strategic importance and nodal position on the transport network of southern Italy. As a result, surface survey of the kind carried out at Cosa and Interamna, aimed at reconstructing the extent of the inhabited areas in the city, is entirely impossible, but a programme of topographical and archaeological study in the city in recent years, undertaken by Giampaola in particular,<sup>71</sup> has complemented the work of nineteenth-century and earlier twentieth-century scholars

<sup>67</sup> Coarelli 1988: 37–8.

<sup>68</sup> Torelli, M. R. 2002: 14, 74.

<sup>69</sup> See *Lib. Colon.* 232L with Campbell 2000: 417, and *CIL* 9. 2165 = *ILS* 6488. The find of a second, related, inscription is reported by Torelli, M. R. 2002: 224.

<sup>70</sup> For the triumviral colony and the extent of its territory see Keppie 1983: 158–60 with Keppie 2000: 250–2; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 139–67. By contrast with what happened at Caudium, not all the territory of Ligures Baebiani was assigned to Beneventum: see Patterson, J. R. 1988: 141–2; Iasiello 1995: 311.

<sup>71</sup> Giampaola 1990; 1991; 1994.

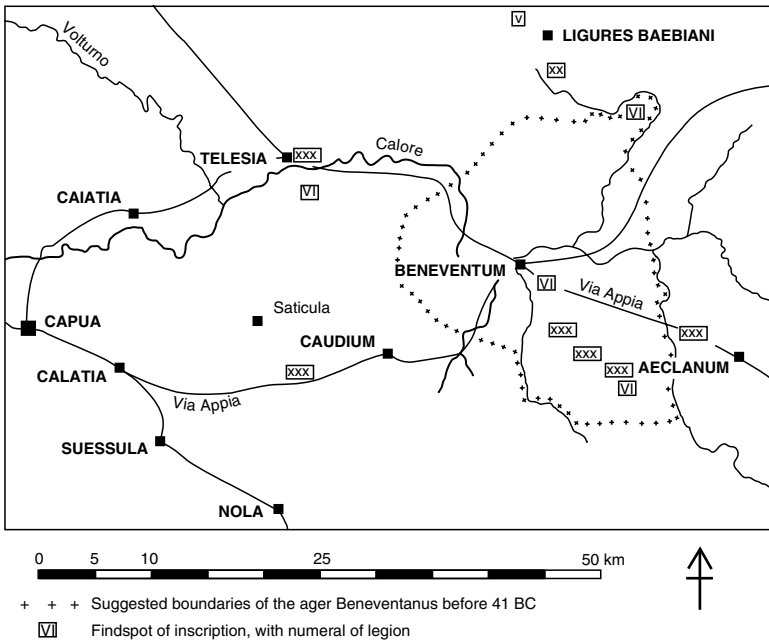


Figure 2.9. Veterans at Beneventum

such as Meomartini<sup>72</sup> and Zazo,<sup>73</sup> allowing a greater understanding of the history of the Roman phases of the city.<sup>74</sup> A major monograph on the history of the city has recently been published by M. R. Torelli.<sup>75</sup>

The picture that emerges from a study of the epigraphic and archaeological evidence from the town in the imperial period is of a very significant level of activity continuing into the second and early third century AD, reflecting the town's importance. Due to its position on the Via Appia, the town was an obligatory point of

<sup>72</sup> Meomartini 1889.

<sup>73</sup> Zazo 1985.

<sup>74</sup> For accounts of the city and its monuments, see also De Caro and Greco 1981: 185–98; Rotili 1986: 41–62.

<sup>75</sup> Torelli, M. R. 2002.

passage for emperors (and other members of the Roman elite) heading to or from south-eastern Italy in order to travel to Greece or to other eastern provinces of the Empire: indeed, some construction projects reflected the direct involvement in the city's affairs of members of the imperial house. Augustus accompanied Tiberius (who was heading for Illyricum) as far as Beneventum, shortly before his own death in AD 14 (Suet. *Aug.* 97–8); Nero visited the town in AD 64 en route to Brundisium, and attended a gladiatorial show there (Tac. *Ann.* 15. 34); on a later visit to the town a plot against him was uncovered (Suet. *Ner.* 36). Dio tells us that Vespasian and Domitian met here following the former's return to Italy in AD 70 (Cass. Dio 65. 9. 3); in 88 the temple of Isis in the town was embellished with a wealth of Egyptian sculpture, including a series of statues and obelisks associating Domitian with the deities of Egypt.<sup>76</sup>

The well-being of the town was given an additional boost with the construction of the Via Traiana from AD 109. This diverged from the Appia at Beneventum and provided a more rapid link with Brundisium than the old route of the Appia had done, passing through Herdoniae, Canusium, and Egnatia.<sup>77</sup> The celebrated Arch of Trajan was erected in AD 114 to commemorate the building of the road, as well as Trajan's *alimenta* (see Fig. 2.10)<sup>78</sup> and in the years that followed other monuments too were constructed in the city.<sup>79</sup> The theatre, probably on the site of an earlier structure, was constructed in the early second century, and perhaps by Hadrian, who was commemorated there with a statue;<sup>80</sup> it may subsequently have been expanded early in the third century.<sup>81</sup> The second century also saw an important series of monuments being constructed around the

<sup>76</sup> Müller 1971; Pirelli and Iasiello 1997; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 185–95.

<sup>77</sup> Ashby and Gardner 1916.

<sup>78</sup> There is a massive bibliography on the arch and its reliefs: see in particular Hassel 1966; Rotili 1972; Adamo Muscettola 1985; De Maria 1988: 232–5; Simon 1994, with further bibliography. For links between the *alimenta* and the arch, see Torelli, M. 1997.

<sup>79</sup> Torelli, M. R. 2002: 213–43.

<sup>80</sup> Cavuoto 1969; Giampaola 1990: 287; 1991: 129–30; 1994: 658; Tosi 2003: 201–3. For excavations at the theatre, see Giampaola and Prisco 1983.

<sup>81</sup> Rotili 1986: 51.



Figure 2.10. Beneventum: the Arch of Trajan

forum, including the Arco del Sacramento which led from the forum to the theatre,<sup>82</sup> another honorific arch,<sup>83</sup> and bath-buildings which also date to the second century, remains of which were found

<sup>82</sup> Hassel 1968; De Maria 1988: 235.

<sup>83</sup> Rotili 1986: 41–2.

adjacent to Piazza Pacca and Via Posillipo.<sup>84</sup> Which (if either) of these are the *Thermae Commodianae* known from an inscription, whose name suggests either a late second-century date or an imperial benefaction, or both, is unclear.<sup>85</sup> We do know, however, that Hadrian appointed a *curator operis thermarum* for the city (though the inscription was found at Aequum Tuticum), perhaps suggesting further acts of imperial generosity.<sup>86</sup> A massive portico, some 500 m long, which became known in mediaeval times as the *Santi Quaranta*, is dated by Johannowsky to the second or third century AD, and may well have surrounded a second forum, though the date and interpretation of the structure are controversial.<sup>87</sup> Several other monuments—the *Porticus Sagittariorum*, the *Porticus Dianae*, the *Basilica Longini*—are known only by name.<sup>88</sup> In the light of all this building activity, Rotili justifiably suggests that the second and early third centuries AD represented the period of the town's greatest flourishing, a picture borne out by the epigraphic record, and monuments continued to be restored into the third century.<sup>89</sup> Procopius refers to the city as 'strong' even in the sixth century AD (*Goth.* 3. 6. 1). A great wealth of inscriptions has been preserved from the city (over 550 published in *CIL* alone), attesting a complex variety of trades and professions there,<sup>90</sup> including a *nummularius*,<sup>91</sup> *mercatores*,<sup>92</sup> several *medici* including an *archiater*,<sup>93</sup> a *tector*,<sup>94</sup> and a *professor artis librariae*, implying a flourishing trade in the copying and sale of books, and a lively intellectual life in the city.<sup>95</sup> Even taking into account changing patterns of funerary commemoration among

<sup>84</sup> Rotili 1986: 42–3, 57–61; Giampaola 1990: 286.

<sup>85</sup> *CIL* 9. 1596 = *ILS* 5511 with Fagan 1999: 235–6, 299.

<sup>86</sup> *CIL* 9. 1419 = *ILS* 6489; see Boatwright 1989: 264; Fagan 1999: 322.

<sup>87</sup> Giampaola 1990: 286–7. Van Deman (as reported in Blake 1947: 246 n. 63) seems to have suggested a late first-century BC/early first-century AD date for the monument, but the note is very tentative. For a recent identification of the *Santi Quaranta* with the sanctuary of *Minerva Berecynthia*, see Torelli, M. 1999: 173. The various possibilities are discussed by Torelli, M. R. 2002 at 51 n. 83.

<sup>88</sup> *CIL* 9. 1596 = *ILS* 5511; see Rotili 1986: 50.

<sup>89</sup> Rotili 1986: 62–3; see also Torelli, M. R. 2002: 213.

<sup>90</sup> Galasso 1983: 88–92; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 240–3.

<sup>91</sup> *CIL* 9. 1707.

<sup>92</sup> *CIL* 9. 1710, 1713.

<sup>93</sup> *CIL* 9. 1714, 1715; *AE* 1969–70: 170; *CIL* 9. 1655 = *ILS* 6496.

<sup>94</sup> *CIL* 9. 1721 = *ILS* 7668; *CIL* 9. 1722.

<sup>95</sup> Galasso 1983: 88–9; Cavuoto 1965.

freeborn and freed members of the local elite, it appears that a significant number of freedmen reached high rank in civic life, implying the existence of a substantial, affluent, and ambitious urban population.<sup>96</sup>

The situation at Beneventum, then, is clearly quite different from that at Cosa and Interamna. The second and early third centuries appear to be a time of significant building and civic activity, revealed by both archaeology and epigraphy, as the town prospered due to its enlarged territory, its advantageous position on the Appia, the Traiana, and other roads, and the support of a series of members of the imperial house. Other towns can be seen to have flourished in similar ways. We have seen how the creation of new roads could bypass and marginalize old communities; however, those communities fortunate enough to be located on the line of major new routes could derive significant benefit from their position. Road-building schemes had their beneficiaries as well as their casualties. The building of the Via Traiana was not only accompanied by significant development at Beneventum, but also at other towns through which it passed. This seems in part to have been a result of benefactions provided by emperors for the towns, in part due to the higher profile the towns gained in terms of visibility to the Roman elite, and in part a consequence of the upsurge of economic activity brought about by the increase in through traffic and their new importance as centres of marketing. At Herdoniae, the forum was rebuilt in the second century AD with a series of new buildings surrounding it, including a *macellum*, shops, and a palaestra, as was the amphitheatre;<sup>97</sup> the town became an important road junction. The effects of the earthquake of AD 346 seem to have been disastrous, however, and the town did not recover.<sup>98</sup>

Urban decline, therefore, should not be assumed for the towns of Italy in the second century AD: a brief examination of just three towns founded in rather similar circumstances within fifty years of each other, and within the same basic institutional framework, has revealed a strikingly diverse series of urban histories. The degree to

<sup>96</sup> Garnsey 1975: 177–8; Mouritsen 1997: 74–6.

<sup>97</sup> Mertens 1995: 185–210.

<sup>98</sup> Volpe 1996: 127–32; Lomas 1997: 31–2.



which the physical location of a city, often selected many centuries before in the context of Rome's expansion into Italy, was still viable in the peaceful circumstances of the high Empire, was one important factor in determining its long-term decline or prosperity. Towns with large and rich territories, devoted to the production of varied crops, which had significant proportions of local landowners living nearby, or retaining strong links with their cities, and those fortunate enough to be situated on, or have ready access to, major communication routes, tended to flourish; the support of the emperor, too, could be of immense value, though it could seldom be reliably predicted.<sup>99</sup> By contrast, towns with small territories, or those where the people who owned land in the territory were absent or uninterested, were in a more difficult situation, especially where their economy depended on a single crop or product. A disastrous event such as an earthquake, an attack by pirates or insurgents, the removal of part of a city's territory for allocation to veterans whose loyalty was to a neighbouring, rival, city, or even a decision by the central authorities to reroute a main road, can only have made their situation worse.

Nevertheless, the combination of factors that proved so disastrous at Cosa, and those which worked to the advantage of Beneventum, can be seen as somewhat exceptional. Most cities, we must imagine, were between the extremes of the prosperous Beneventum on the one hand and the enfeebled Cosa on the other, and they devised an assortment of strategies to cope with trends which were potentially damaging to civic life. The degree to which these strategies were successful varied, of course, but it is possible to argue—as I do in Chapter 3—that in some cases at least they managed to limit the impact of general trends towards urban decline. In the following sections, however, I want to focus in particular on the phenomena of urban building and acts of generosity and examine the patterns which characterized the first, and more particularly the second, century of the Empire. Euergetism of this kind both provided practical benefits and contributed to the well-being of the civic community: at the same time, examining the changing types of buildings constructed, and the development of other forms of generosity, allows

<sup>99</sup> Patterson, J. R. 2003.

us to trace changing conceptions of, and attitudes to, the role of the city. Some cities declined, and some prospered, to be sure, but these developments take place against a background of a gradual transformation of civic life in Italy more generally.

## RECONSTRUCTING THE URBAN HISTORY OF ITALY

The affairs of the colonies and municipalities of Italy in the imperial period have left comparatively little trace in the written histories of the time; those references which can be found in Suetonius and Tacitus, Dio and the *Historia Augusta*, are largely confined to acts of generosity or other initiatives on the part of the emperor, and individual episodes, often disasters (such as the earthquake in Campania in AD 62 and the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79: Suet. *Tit.* 8. 3; Cass. Dio 66. 24. 3–4)<sup>100</sup> or other disturbances which attracted the attention of the authorities at Rome. One such was the episode in the reign of Tiberius when the inhabitants of Pollentia (south of Turin) refused to allow the body of a *primus pilus* to be taken from the forum for burial until his heirs had agreed to give gladiatorial games: the emperor sent two military units to the town, Suetonius tells us, and many of the local *decuriones* and the local populace were condemned to imprisonment as a result (Suet. *Tib.* 37. 2–3). Similarly, in the aftermath of the serious riot in the amphitheatre at Pompeii in AD 59, Nero prohibited the holding of games at the town for ten years (Tac. *Ann.* 14. 17). Individual passages from other authors do, however, cast light on the relationships between the towns of Italy and the benefactors who embellished them with gifts: Pliny refers in his letters to several donations, which included a library for the town of Comum, a temple erected at Tifernum Tiberinum, and another on his own estates near the town (Plin. *Ep.* 1. 8. 2; 3. 4. 2; 4. 1. 5; 10. 8).<sup>101</sup> As problems and legal issues arising out of the administration of the towns of Italy came to be increasingly important in the concerns of

<sup>100</sup> For imperial interventions in the aftermath of natural disasters, see Millar 1992: 423; Patterson, J. R. 2003: 91–2.

<sup>101</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 27–32.

the emperors, the legal texts generated by these cases can cast light on the history of the cities and the attitudes of their elites.<sup>102</sup> However, any analysis of the development of the towns of Roman Italy, in particular the patterns of expenditure which led to the creation of public buildings in the cities, and of other forms of benefaction such as the distribution of food and money, must primarily look to the evidence provided by urban archaeology and by inscriptions. Both of these types of data naturally present their own problems of interpretation.

### Archaeology

The archaeology of individual monuments and urban centres is clearly of major importance in our attempts to reconstruct the history of public building in Italy, but the extent of our knowledge of the centres of Italian towns in the Roman period and their individual buildings varies dramatically from one location to another, in part due to the extent to which these have been preserved, but also as a result of factors related to the different ways in which these sites have been investigated archaeologically. The archaeology of urban centres has a long history in Italy, and there is a wide variety of studies of urban topography available, such as those published by the Istituto di Topografia Antica dell'Università di Roma,<sup>103</sup> together with the volumes in the *Forma Italiae* series, which cover both urban and rural settlement. Other investigations conducted by universities or local Soprintendenze are likewise contributing to the building up of a comparative picture of urban development in different areas of Italy.

Urban field survey, recovering pottery, tile, and high-status building materials such as marble, can potentially be of major importance (where it is feasible to undertake it) in determining the settlement

<sup>102</sup> Duncan-Jones 1990: 163–70.

<sup>103</sup> Many studies of individual towns were published in the *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Topografia antica dell'Università di Roma*, which appeared between 1964 and 1988; larger-scale discussions of particular urban centres are now published in the series *Città antiche in Italia*. For a synthesis of work in this tradition, see Sommella 1988; also Cambi and Terrenato 1994: 31–2.

history of a city, providing in particular indications of changes in occupation over time. The parallel use of geophysical techniques together with survey has recently produced very striking results, for example in the case of fieldwork at the site of Falerii Novi, where magnetometer survey, combined with surface collection, has allowed the entire plan of the city, with its public monuments and residential areas, to be reconstructed.<sup>104</sup> Excavation, however, is essential if individual monuments are to be identified and dated with greater accuracy. The analysis of standing structures can also be used to provide a date for a particular monument, whether in conjunction with stratigraphic excavation or independent of it, but again difficulties present themselves, in that although the chronological sequence of building styles in the city of Rome is now well understood, thanks to the way in which extensive excavation data can be related to a wealth of detailed literary testimony for building in the city, the building styles in the regions of Italy are less securely datable. Construction types well known at Rome, such as *opus reticulatum* and *opus testaceum* (brickwork), are found predominantly in the communities both physically and in cultural and political terms closest to Rome, particularly in Latium and Campania, but much less frequently elsewhere. In the more peripheral regions these techniques seem to be employed primarily in the case of individual monuments given by members of the imperial household, or of the central Roman elite, and in cases where the impetus for the creation or development of a community has come from the central authorities at Rome, such as veteran colonies.<sup>105</sup> Elsewhere in Italy, the survival of local styles of construction, and in some cases the reuse of building materials, makes it difficult to date monuments securely on the basis of standing remains alone.<sup>106</sup>

As their fate after antiquity varied significantly from one place to another, the cities of Italy provide a variety of challenges to the archaeologist. On the one hand we have Pompeii and Herculaneum,

<sup>104</sup> Keay *et al.* 2000; 2004.

<sup>105</sup> Torelli, M. 1980; Adam 1994: 130–2 on *opus reticulatum*.

<sup>106</sup> Azzena 1987: 82; see also Adam 1994: 128 on the situation at Pompeii, where *opus incertum* masonry, incorporating reused materials, was frequently used in repairs undertaken after the earthquake of AD 62. Nielsen 1990: 41 discusses the implications for the study of bath-buildings.

buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79, and largely abandoned thereafter, although evidently some looting and attempts to rescue survivors and recover lost possessions took place after the eruption, not to mention more modern efforts to remove wall-paintings and art treasures before scholarly investigation began in earnest.<sup>107</sup> On the other, there are numerous cities where mediaeval, renaissance, and modern phases lie directly on top of the Roman levels. It might be argued that, paradoxically, we tend to know most about those sites which were ultimately unsuccessful, and so were abandoned in the late Roman or early mediaeval periods, precisely *because* those sites tend not to be occupied by later settlements, and so detailed archaeological investigations can take place with greater ease than where modern cities lie on top of the Roman remains: this arguably gives a more negative overall impression of the history of urban centres than should really be the case. Equally we often know less of those towns which were prosperous and successful into the mediaeval period, precisely because of the continuity of building on those sites.

The changing nature of urban settlement is most likely to emerge where the relationships between buildings can be reconstructed from excavation, as well as the history of individual monuments: where new buildings are located, and what they replace in the urban landscape, may be just as important in forming our view of urban development as the bare fact of their construction at a particular date. This type of approach is most feasible where large areas can be exposed by excavation, rather than investigations of small sectors taking place here and there in the city, often as part of a rescue strategy. There has inevitably to be a bias in the discussion towards sites which have been comparatively well explored, although these may not necessarily be typical of cities in Italy more broadly. Pompeii is clearly a unique case because of the circumstances and extent of its preservation, and in recent years the study of the city has increasingly been integrated with the broader urban history of Italy; however, the fact that it was completely destroyed in AD 79 of course makes its history of restricted relevance to the problems of the second century AD under discussion here, except in so far as a detailed knowledge of a well-preserved first-century city can provide preliminary indications

<sup>107</sup> Allison 1992; Cooley 2003: 51–5.

of trends which became increasingly apparent in the second century. Other cities which have been the scene of extensive fieldwork include Cosa, Alba Fucens, Volsinii, Herdoniae, Paestum, and Luni, all of which were abandoned in the post-antique period. The holistic approach to the antiquities of a city adopted by the studies in the topographical tradition, with the careful recording of ancient material in cellars and built into mediaeval walls, accompanied by the exploitation of the possibilities offered by inscriptions and aerial photography, has, however, allowed an increasingly extensive knowledge even of some of those sites where there is substantial later building and habitation.

### Epigraphy

Just as when dealing with the evidence of surface survey, or the structural analysis of architectural remains, we have so far as possible to bear in mind when using epigraphic material the particular circumstances of recovery of the inscriptions: in general we need to be aware of what a text does not tell us as much as what it can.<sup>108</sup> The epigraphic corpus from a site is the result not only of the process by which inscriptions were set up on the site in the first place, but significantly affected—among other considerations—by the subsequent history of the site, the circumstances of its rediscovery, and the extent to which epigraphic enthusiasts in the area have preserved and/or recorded the texts. All of these factors varied significantly from one place to another.

The epigraphic record of the peninsula was systematically assembled in the form of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (*CIL*) in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth,<sup>109</sup> with over 30,000 texts in total (including those from Ostia) collected. Since then, numerous inscriptions have been discovered either casually, for example as a result of agricultural work, or following archaeological surveys and excavations. Several projects

<sup>108</sup> See Bérard *et al.* 2000: 85–149 for a valuable handlist of collections of Latin inscriptions; for methodological and practical information on dealing with these texts, see Keppie 1991; Bodel 2001.

<sup>109</sup> Mommsen 1883*a, b*; Dessau 1887; Bormann 1888–1926; Wickert 1930.

to update *CIL* are in progress; in the meantime, the *Supplementa Italica* series, which was initiated in 1981, has so far published for the first time, or republished in more detail, over 2,000 texts from territories scattered all over Italy. The publication of these volumes has roughly doubled the number of texts known from the territories of the towns in question since the original publication of *CIL*. However, it has been estimated that in general, of every 1,000 inscriptions discovered, less than a hundred have ever been published;<sup>110</sup> and those that are known to modern scholarship therefore represent a very small proportion of those which originally existed.<sup>111</sup> Our knowledge of the epigraphy of Italy thus represents a highly incomplete, if gradually growing, resource.

That the epigraphic record is potentially of crucial importance for the understanding of the history of urban centres is, however, clear; indeed many inscriptions—in particular those texts displayed in the forum and other public spaces of the towns—were generated by the local administrations of these communities or by the notable citizens active within them. Potentially, then, the display of epigraphic texts can in itself provide an indication of the vigour of civic life, whether in the form of building inscriptions associated with the development or restoration of the urban fabric, or connected with civic associations such as the *Augustales* or *collegia*, whose activities take place within the ideological setting of the town, even though notionally independent of local government. The epigraphic evidence can also allow a particular focus on aspects of the institutional history of a town which may in themselves have contributed to its well-being or decline. For example, whether a town was chosen as a centre for the settlement of veterans by the triumvirs or Augustus may well have had a significant impact on its later history (as the case of Beneventum has shown) and in many cases this information is largely derived from the inscriptions found at the site. Similarly, the epigraphic record may give an indication of the personal contribution of a

<sup>110</sup> S. Panciera, quoted by Guarducci at p. 7 of the introduction to vol. i of *Supplementa Italica*.

<sup>111</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 360–2 tentatively estimates that perhaps 5 per cent of inscriptions that originally existed may have survived. Since his calculation is based on North African sites notable for the wealth of inscriptions they produced, his figure is probably on the generous side in the Italian context.

particular emperor or high-status benefactor to the urban framework of a particular city, which might otherwise be hard, if not impossible, to identify.

It is also vital to be aware of the different types of epigraphic record available from different cities. The amount—and type—of epigraphic material available may depend not only on the nature of recent research in the area, but on many other factors too—in particular the history of the site after the end of antiquity, and the history of scholarly interest in the site. Those sites where the urban centre has been the focus of systematic excavation, for example, are likely to be better provided with texts relating to municipal affairs, honours for magistrates, and other monuments which would characteristically have been displayed in the public spaces of the town. Equally, if excavation or modern development has taken place in the immediate periphery of the ancient city, where the cemeteries of the Roman period were located, the sample is likely to be skewed in the direction of funerary epigraphy. Likewise, the presence (or absence) of scholars taking an interest in local epigraphic discoveries over the centuries may well have been of crucial importance in contributing to the preservation and recording of the texts of inscriptions, even where the stones themselves may have been lost over the course of time.

Several factors contribute to how extensive a body of inscriptions a town may have had in the first place. For example, the prevailing geology would have been significant in providing (or not providing) a supply of suitable stone. The difference in the epigraphic record of north-western Britain (which has produced the preponderance of texts from the province) and that of the south-east can be explained not only in terms of the greater military presence in the highland area, but also the local availability of stone suitable for carving.<sup>112</sup> The same distinction may be noted between different areas of Italy: the contrast between southern Etruria and the Sabine territory on the eastern bank of the Tiber is particularly striking in this respect. Some towns in South Etruria, Sutrium for example, had extensive cemeteries of tombs cut into the natural tufa;<sup>113</sup> few associated inscriptions survive, though several examples of texts carved directly

<sup>112</sup> Mann 1985: 204.

<sup>113</sup> Morselli 1980: 54–77.



into the rock have been found at nearby Falerii.<sup>114</sup> It is likely that many epitaphs, now lost, were originally carved on small panels which were then slotted above the tombs.<sup>115</sup> The difference in the prevailing geology between the tufa of South Etruria and the clays, limestone, and sandstone of the Sabina may therefore have had an effect on the different types of epigraphic commemoration found in the two areas.

Changing patterns of epigraphic commemoration (otherwise known as the 'epigraphic habit' or 'epigraphic culture'), both locally and more generally within the Roman world, also inevitably had a part to play in the formation of the epigraphic record of the towns of Italy. Analysis of the number of inscriptions preserved from different periods suggests that in Italy there was a gradual increase in their use from the Republic through to a peak in the latter part of the second century; thereafter there was a steep decline to a low point in the mid third century AD.<sup>116</sup> Possible explanations for this trend include the spread of Roman citizenship, and the enthusiasm of the newly enfranchised to commemorate their new status (a particularly important factor outside Italy, although the enthusiastic adoption of funerary commemoration by ex-slaves within Italy must have been a contributory factor to the increasing use of inscriptions there too).<sup>117</sup> More generally, the enthusiasm for commemoration in stone has been seen as symptomatic of an individual's desire to make a mark for posterity in a time of potentially drastic upward (and downward) social mobility.<sup>118</sup> Analyses which seek to examine features of urban life attested by inscriptions therefore have to take account of the fact that the production of inscriptions did not take place at a constant rate, but rose and fell across time. Patterns of funerary commemoration, in particular, also changed across time, with a consequent impact on the epigraphic record. Mouritsen has noted, for example, that at Pompeii grand urban funerary epitaphs tended not to be

<sup>114</sup> Di Stefano Manzella 1981: 151–3, 159.

<sup>115</sup> Morselli 1980: 76.

<sup>116</sup> Mrozek 1973; 1988; MacMullen 1982; Duncan-Jones 1982: 351–2 for a similar analysis.

<sup>117</sup> Meyer 1990 with Cherry, D. 1995, and the discussion in Bodel 2001: 37–8.

<sup>118</sup> Woolf 1996; for social mobility and its implications for the history of imperial Italy, see further in Ch. 3.

erected by the elite after the second quarter of the first century AD, presumably reflecting a desire on their part to distinguish themselves from those freedmen who were increasingly adopting more ostentatious funerary monuments. Their own tombs were on a more modest scale.<sup>119</sup>

In the same way there are significant variations in the density of inscriptions between different areas of Italy, largely corresponding to the differing densities of urban settlement in those areas.<sup>120</sup> In general, the areas closest to the capital tended to produce more inscriptions, in a pattern analogous to that of the spread of *opus reticulatum* masonry outlined above.

Building inscriptions present their own special problems. Epigraphic commemoration may sometimes provide a very precise indication of the date and circumstances of the construction of a building; often such inscriptions were displayed on the monuments themselves, on an architrave or a tablet set in the wall, and record for contemporaries and for posterity the identity of the builder. An honorary inscription, perhaps set up together with a statue, may express the gratitude of the community for the building or restoration of a monument. Even these apparently clear records of construction have to be regarded with some circumspection, since in the competitive world of the Italian elites, where it was essential for benefactors to outdo rivals and predecessors, achievements and deeds could potentially be embellished—in particular, the degree of dilapidation of a building which had been restored could be exaggerated to play up the achievement of the person responsible for the restoration or justify their initiative. It seems unlikely that complete invention could often take place in these texts, given that the building concerned was normally clearly visible to the passer-by, but it was clearly in the interest of both the builder himself, and those honouring him, to stress the extent and impressiveness of the monument or its restoration. Lavish internal and external decoration (which has subsequently disappeared) may help, in some cases, to explain some of the apparent discrepancies between the epigraphic record and the

<sup>119</sup> Mouritsen 1997: 75; for fuller discussion, see Mouritsen 2005: 45–55. See also von Hesberg 1994: 55.

<sup>120</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 337–9; Harris 1989: 265–7; Woolf 1990: 201–4.

remains which survive.<sup>121</sup> This means both that claims of large-scale restoration may be exaggerated, but also that reference on inscriptions to monuments *vetustate dilapsa* (fallen down through age) should not necessarily be taken as literal descriptions of the abandonment of urban centres.

Dating an inscription is clearly vital in determining its historical significance. However, where a clear date for a monument is not provided on a text (for example by reference to the reigning emperor, or the consuls of the year), it is frequently necessary to use other techniques to date the stone, such as examination of the letter-forms on the inscription, and the presence or absence in the text of other features, such as *cognomina* in personal names, or particular abbreviations.<sup>122</sup> Many of these techniques, however, allow the text to be dated only to the nearest fifty or even hundred years, so it is usually necessary to look for broad trends rather than detailed sequences of monuments. The proportion of building inscriptions for which a rough date can plausibly be suggested is, encouragingly, quite high: Jouffroy was able to offer dates for some 73 per cent of the monuments in her discussion, and Fagan for some 88 per cent in his.<sup>123</sup>

Significant difficulties have to be faced, therefore, in dealing with both the epigraphic and archaeological data for urban building, and this makes attempts to present a statistically based account of Italian urbanism rather problematic, especially in terms of regional distributions of monuments, when the number of examples in each location may be quite limited. A particular difficulty involved in dealing with the inscriptions is the question of how far we can make negative assertions from the absence of texts from a particular period or site, or equally whether the presence of one or two such texts is sufficient to be able to make assertions about continuity or survival: it is essential where possible for the epigraphic data to be considered together with the evidence of urban excavation or survey within the urban centre. However, when a large enough sample of monuments can be examined, variations in terms of the different

<sup>121</sup> Thomas and Witschel 1992; Fagan 1996; 1999: 128–36.

<sup>122</sup> For the dating of inscriptions, see Calabi Limentani 1968: 171–8; Duncan-Jones 1982: 362–3; Bodel 2001: 49–52.

<sup>123</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 11; Fagan 1999: 228–9.

epigraphic histories of the different towns and regions can be assumed to have cancelled themselves out, and an overall picture does begin to emerge, albeit somewhat impressionistic in nature: while individual cases need to be treated with care, the larger pattern appears more robust. The problem is analogous to that faced by those dealing with survey data: the situation is not entirely satisfactory but equally it is not clear that it is feasible (or worthwhile) to manipulate the data in any particular way. Instead, we have to be constantly aware of possible sources of bias in the sample of data at present available to us.

#### PUBLIC BUILDING IN ITALY FROM THE LATE REPUBLIC TO THE SECOND CENTURY AD

The history of the towns of Italy in the last years of the Republic and subsequently under Augustus and his successors in the first century AD was characterized by increasingly lavish and competitive public building. The precise rhythm of public building varied between different areas of Italy, however, in relation to the length of the tradition of urbanization in a particular area, the date at which its citizens received the Roman franchise, the potential wealth of its territory, and many other factors. Cities in Etruria or Magna Graecia, for example, had in many cases a long history of urban settlement, while other communities had been founded as Roman or Latin colonies in the early or mid Republic. In the second century BC, Roman magistrates helped to provide colonies with amenities which recalled those of the capital, as Romans and Italians began to adopt Greek styles of building, and the expansion of the Empire supplied the wealth to finance such initiatives. Towns in Latium were particular beneficiaries of this process.<sup>124</sup> Many other towns, however, especially those created in districts such as the central Apennines where settlement had traditionally been organized around villages, acquired their urban framework only in the first century BC, during the years when the populations of the former allied

<sup>124</sup> Torelli, M. 1983: 244; Gros and Torelli 1988: 151; Patterson, J. R. 1991*b*: 150; Lomas 2003: 37.

communities were being integrated into the political structures of the Roman state in the aftermath of their admission to Roman citizenship following the Social War.<sup>125</sup>

In general, though, the Augustan and Julio-Claudian periods can be seen as the high point of civic building across the Italian peninsula.<sup>126</sup> This was related both to the new confidence engendered in the years following Augustus' definitive victory in the civil wars, and the enthusiasm of local elites for following the lead given by Augustus and his associates in their acts of generosity both to the people of Rome and the communities of Roman Italy.<sup>127</sup> Many veteran colonies received gifts of buildings from Augustus or members of the imperial family. Octavian had made efforts to establish influence over communities previously loyal to Antony during the years leading up to the battle of Actium by means of acts of generosity,<sup>128</sup> and helping the cities of Italy contributed further to reinforcing the loyalty of *tota Italia* behind the Augustan regime. Individual benefactions on the part of emperors continued to benefit Italian towns in subsequent reigns, too.<sup>129</sup> Of greater importance for the embellishment of the towns, however, was the pattern of competitive benefaction which characterized the aristocracies of the Italian towns in this period.<sup>130</sup> Individual members of the elite, whether as magistrates or individual private citizens, sought to outdo their rivals in the local aristocracy in doing good for the citizens of their own community, whether a colony or a *municipium*.<sup>131</sup> Frequently their aim was also to outdo neighbouring cities, in providing the most sumptuous urban facilities. The intensity that rivalry between towns could reach is illustrated by an episode during the civil war of AD 69. When the amphitheatre at Placentia was set ablaze as a result of fighting between forces loyal to Vitellius and Otho, the people of the city jumped to the conclusion that it had instead been destroyed

<sup>125</sup> Torelli, M. 1983: 248–50; Gabba 1994: 63–103; Lomas 2003: 32–3.

<sup>126</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 328; Ward-Perkins, B. 1984: 3–13; Sommella 1988: 143–64; Gros and Torelli 1988: 209–12.

<sup>127</sup> Sommella 1988: 150–1.

<sup>128</sup> Keppie 1983: 114–15.

<sup>129</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 105–6; Gros and Torelli 1988: 209–12; Veyne 1990: 361–6; Boatwright 1989; Coarelli 2000; Patterson, J. R. 2003: 89–93.

<sup>130</sup> See recently Fagan 1999: 165–70.

<sup>131</sup> Keppie 1983: 116–17.

by the envious citizens of neighbouring communities (Tac. *Hist.* 2. 21).<sup>132</sup> In the same way the people of Puteoli and Capua, which were notorious rivals, supported opposite sides in the same conflict, following Vespasian and Vitellius respectively (Tac. *Hist.* 3. 57). Under the Republic, enthusiastic participation in civic life might not only contribute to the aristocrats' prestige at the local level, but potentially help the careers of those who ambitiously sought advancement in politics at Rome, and who would be relying on the support of their fellow-citizens in the *comitia tributa* or *comitia centuriata*. Under the early Empire, the populations of the Italian towns no longer had any direct political influence, but public building did allow the local elites to demonstrate the high-profile loyalty to the emperor which might help gain them imperial patronage and contribute to their eventual advancement into the ranks of the equestrian service, or even the Senate itself.<sup>133</sup>

After the first century AD the amount of new public building in the towns of Italy began to decrease. This process has been documented in detail from several different perspectives. Mrozek's analysis of the inscriptions commemorating public building shows a clear preponderance of examples from the first century AD, but fewer from the second and fewer still from the third century AD. The fact that this pattern is at odds with that of the chronological distribution of inscriptions generally (see above) suggests that we are here dealing with a real pattern of decline in the level of public building, rather than a purely epigraphic phenomenon.<sup>134</sup> A similar pattern is revealed by the documentation of building in Italy assembled on the basis both of epigraphic texts and archaeologically identified monuments by Jouffroy, who notes that the widespread building activity attested in the first century can be seen to decline in the second century, and even more drastically in the third.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>132</sup> See Lomas 1997: 33–4; Lomas 2003: 40–1.

<sup>133</sup> For the political advancement of the Italians, see Wiseman 1971: 13–32 and the regional studies in Panciera 1982. The links between building and political advancement are discussed by Torelli, M. 1983: 248 and, with some notes of caution, by Lomas 2003: 40. See also Ch. 3 for further discussion of the implications of social and political advancement of the elites on their communities.

<sup>134</sup> Mrozek 1984; MacMullen 1988: 5–7; see also Johnston 1985: 105.

<sup>135</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 328. Some criticisms have been advanced against Jouffroy's work (see e.g. the reviews by R. Duncan-Jones in *Journal of Roman Studies* 79 (1989), 233,

However, it is also clear that there are significant differences in the patterns identified between different types of monument. In the first century expenditure was, it seems, largely directed towards temples, theatres, amphitheatres, and major infrastructure projects such as aqueducts.<sup>136</sup> There seem to be links between these types of monument and the new ideological and social priorities established under the principate of Augustus, which members of the local elites were keen to follow.<sup>137</sup> A significant number of the temples listed by Jouffroy are related to the newly established imperial cult—shrines dedicated to ‘Rome and Augustus’ or to the Lares Augusti, for example,<sup>138</sup> as well as reflecting Augustus’ own well-attested enthusiasm for building and restoring temples at Rome (*RG* 19–21). Zanker has demonstrated how in the Julio-Claudian period the appearance of the forum of Pompeii was transformed by the multiplicity of buildings associated with the imperial cult, as well as statues and other monuments linked with the emperors and their families.<sup>139</sup> During the same period, basilicas and similar buildings at sites such as Veleia and Rusellae acquired sculptural groups depicting members of the Julio-Claudian family; these were typically located adjacent to or close to the forum and again contributed to the extent to which the emperor and his dynasty had a symbolic presence in the locations in the town most closely linked with civic activity.<sup>140</sup> Most striking, perhaps, is the substantial number of theatres—about sixty examples are known—constructed in the first century AD and, in particular, under Augustus. These can be seen not only as imitations of the Theatre of Marcellus in Rome, completed in 23 BC, but also as reflecting the importance of the theatre within Augustan ideology as a place for the gathering of the Roman people divided according to rank and status, a hierarchy reinforced by Augustus’ own *Lex Iulia*

and by Jacques 1989, with the comments in Coarelli 2000: 138). These illustrate the methodological difficulties involved in dealing with this material; but the book nevertheless contains a wealth of useful data.

<sup>136</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 63–105; see also Lomas 1997: 29–31; 2003: 34–5.

<sup>137</sup> Zanker 1988: 316–23.

<sup>138</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 73–82.

<sup>139</sup> Zanker 1988: 308–10, 326–7; 1998: 81–102.

<sup>140</sup> Saletti 1968; Saladino 1980; Roselle n.d.: 118–19; Cogitore 1992.

*Theatralis*.<sup>141</sup> Numerous amphitheatres were also constructed in the first century, while major infrastructural projects were undertaken either on the part of the emperors, as in the cases of the Venafrum aqueduct or the Serino aqueduct in Campania, or by wealthy individuals, such as C. Asinius Gallus, consul in 8 BC, who constructed an aqueduct at Teate.<sup>142</sup> The costs involved in such ambitious initiatives would have excluded those of more modest wealth.

By contrast, the evidence from the second century AD reveals a decline in all these categories of building, with the exception of what Jouffroy terms 'utilitarian structures'—baths, *curiae* (senate houses), basilicas, and the purpose-built market buildings known as *macella*—although the building of significant numbers of temples and amphitheatres did continue.<sup>143</sup> As Jouffroy herself notes, many of the documents recording the *curiae* and basilicas in the second century are records of civic business conducted in those locations, so it is quite possible that the buildings themselves may have been constructed much earlier.<sup>144</sup> The continuing importance of amphitheatres, and the increasing numbers of baths and *macella* being constructed, however, are of considerable interest. How should we explain the priorities of those building in the second-century cities?

An illustration—a generation earlier—of the trends which seem to be emerging from analysis of the second-century data comes from an examination of the rebuilding at Pompeii in the years after the severe earthquake of AD 62. When Vesuvius erupted seventeen years later, the degree to which the city's monuments had been reconstructed varied significantly, although it appears that subsequent earthquakes had caused further damage even where rebuilding had taken place.<sup>145</sup> The rebuilding of the Temple of Isis had been paid for by the 6-year-old N. Popidius Celsinus, assisted by his father, and the amphitheatre was again in use after some substantial restoration. An entirely new bath-complex, known as the Central Baths, had been constructed and the Forum Baths were in use. By contrast, the restoration of the

<sup>141</sup> Bejor 1979; Zanker 1988: 147–53; Gros and Torelli 1988: 222–4; Gros 1994. For the *Lex Iulia Theatralis*, see Rawson 1987.

<sup>142</sup> Corbier 1984: 252, 272.

<sup>143</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 322–5.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* 131–2.

<sup>145</sup> Cooley 2003: 23.



forum was not completed, though there is some disagreement about the extent to which the buildings to the east of the forum were being used at the time of the eruption.<sup>146</sup> It is clear, though, that places of entertainment and locations where the people could meet informally were a particular priority within the urban landscape.

## AMPHITHEATRES

Gladiatorial combat had been a familiar feature of Roman public life<sup>147</sup> since 264 BC, when Marcus and Decimus Brutus commemorated their father's death with a combat between three pairs of gladiators in the Forum Boarium (Livy, *Per.* 16; Val. Max. 2. 4. 7; Auson. *Gryphus Ternarii Numeri* 37).<sup>148</sup> The numbers of gladiators deployed in these funeral games gradually increased as time went on, reflecting the increasing level of political competition in Rome:<sup>149</sup> twenty-two pairs of gladiators fought at the funeral of M. Aemilius Lepidus in 216 BC, twenty-five pairs at that of M. Valerius Laevinus in 200 BC, and sixty pairs at the funeral of P. Licinius Crassus in 183 BC (Livy 23. 30. 15; 31. 50. 4; 39. 46. 2).<sup>150</sup> The favoured location for these fights was the Forum Romanum itself, which, probably in the 70s BC, was provided with a network of underground passages which allowed for dramatic appearances by the gladiators.<sup>151</sup> Temporary stands were set up to allow privileged spectators to view the action, and the characteristic oval or elliptical form of the later amphitheatre appears to derive from the design of these original stands; in the same way the

<sup>146</sup> See Zanker 1998: 124–33 with Dobbins 1994; Wallace-Hadrill 2000a: 296–8; and Cooley 2003: 23–35.

<sup>147</sup> In recent years there has been a wealth of writing both on the design and construction of the amphitheatre and on the role of the games in Roman society. For amphitheatres, see Jouffroy 1986: 134–7, 325; Golvin 1988; Welch 1994; Gros 1996: 317–45; Bomgardner 2000; Holleran 2003; Coleman 2003; Tosi 2003. For the games more generally, see esp. Ville 1981; Hopkins 1983: 1–30; Wiedemann 1992; Barton 1993; Plass 1995; Futrell 1997; Kyle 1998; Köhne and Ewigleben 2000.

<sup>148</sup> Wiedemann 1992: 5; Futrell 1997: 20–2.

<sup>149</sup> Patterson, J. R. 2000a: 45–8.

<sup>150</sup> See Ville 1981: 42–3; Wiedemann 1992: 6.

<sup>151</sup> Caretoni 1956–8; Coarelli 1985: 222–30; Giuliani and Verduchi 1987: 52–66 with Wiseman 1990b: 246.

*fora* of Italian towns were also typically laid out in a rectangular form (so Vitruvius tells us) to allow for the successful staging of gladiatorial combats (*De Arch.* 5. 1. 1–2).<sup>152</sup> It was not until 29 BC that Rome first acquired a purpose-built building to house gladiatorial shows, the amphitheatre of Statilius Taurus. One consequence of the repaving of the Forum Romanum under Augustus was the closure of the underground passages, and after about 9 BC imperial games mostly took place in the *Saepta*, the voting enclosure on the Campus Martius. It appears that this building was preferred to Statilius Taurus' amphitheatre for public spectacles because of its associations with Caesar, Agrippa, and Augustus himself, who had been involved in its recent restoration; Taurus' amphitheatre was seen more as a private building.<sup>153</sup> Caligula, who 'despised the amphitheatre of Taurus' but nevertheless used it for some shows (Cass. Dio 59. 10. 5; Suet. *Calig.* 18. 1), himself constructed a temporary amphitheatre and set about building a permanent one, but this scheme was abandoned by his successor Claudius.<sup>154</sup> In AD 57 Nero too constructed a wooden amphitheatre of great lavishness on the Campus, but this was in turn destroyed in the Great Fire seven years later (Tac. *Ann.* 13. 31; Plin. *HN* 16. 200; Suet. *Ner.* 12. 1).<sup>155</sup>

Temporary expedients of this kind were, however, to be definitively replaced by the Flavian Amphitheatre, the Colosseum, begun by Vespasian on the site of the ornamental lake in the grounds of Nero's Golden House, dedicated by Titus, and improved by Domitian. Like the nearby Arch of Titus, it served as a triumphal monument, built with the spoils of Vespasian and Titus' victory in Judaea, *ex manubis*.<sup>156</sup> It remained the primary venue for gladiatorial combat at Rome throughout the Principate.<sup>157</sup>

<sup>152</sup> Welch 1994: 69–78. For oval and elliptical designs, see Wilson-Jones 1993: 391–401.

<sup>153</sup> Taurus' amphitheatre: Golvin 1988: 52–3; Viscogliosi 1993; Tosi 2003: 12–13. The paving of the Forum: Coarelli 1985: 225–7.

<sup>154</sup> Palombi 1993a.

<sup>155</sup> See Golvin 1988: 55–6, 66–7; Palombi 1993b; Tosi 2003: 13.

<sup>156</sup> Alföldy 1995; Coleman 2003: 69.

<sup>157</sup> For recent work on the Colosseum, see especially Golvin 1988: 173–80; Conforto *et al.* 1988; Rea 1993; 1996; Gros 1996: 328–33; Gabucci 1999; Tosi 2003: 13–16; and now Hopkins and Beard 2005.

The history of the amphitheatre in Italy outside Rome had an interestingly different trajectory from that within the capital. Permanent amphitheatres are known to have been constructed in Italian towns many years before the building of Statilius Taurus' arena at Rome. Examples dating to the late second or early first centuries BC (the precise dating of these structures remains problematic) are known from Capua, Cumae, and several other sites in central and southern Italy,<sup>158</sup> while the earliest well-preserved and closely datable example, at Pompeii, was built in the years following the establishment of the Sullan colony, by the *Ilviri* C. Quinctius Valgus and M. Porcius.<sup>159</sup> Welch has argued that veteran colonists tended to be particular enthusiasts of gladiatorial combat, which provided not only an inspiring spectacle of military expertise but also a demonstration of skills in which legionaries of this period had been deliberately trained.<sup>160</sup> It is not surprising, then, that an amphitheatre should often have been one of the first buildings acquired by a new colony, which was then emulated by neighbouring communities. The link between colonization and amphitheatre building continued to persist into the era of the civil wars and the principate of Augustus. At Luceria, M. Vecilius Campus, a member of a leading local family, built an amphitheatre on his own land 'in honour of imperator Caesar Augustus', between 27 and 2 BC; the colony had most likely been established in the earlier years of Augustus' principate.<sup>161</sup> Similarly, the arena at Sutrium, unusual because it was excavated out of the natural tufa rock, seems to have been constructed around the same time as a colony was established at the town in the triumviral or Augustan periods.<sup>162</sup> Even into the imperial period the creation of a colony might be accompanied by the construction of a new (or embellished) amphitheatre. Puteoli, which acquired a substantial new amphitheatre under either Nero or Vespasian, was granted the title of colony by both of those emperors,<sup>163</sup> while the city of Capua

<sup>158</sup> Golvin 1988: 24; Welch 1994: 65–7; Gros 1996: 320.

<sup>159</sup> *CIL* 10. 852 = *ILS* 5627 with Golvin 1988: 24; Welch 1994: 65.

<sup>160</sup> Welch 1994: 63, 67–9.

<sup>161</sup> *AE* 1938: 110; Keppie 1983: 164–5; Golvin 1988: 76–7; Buonocore 1992: 107–8; Tosi 2003: 211–13.

<sup>162</sup> Golvin 1988: 40–1; Morselli 1980: 45–54; Keppie 1983: 169–70.

<sup>163</sup> For the debate on the date of the amphitheatre at Puteoli, see Golvin 1988: 180–1 (and Bomgardner 2000: 241 n. 48), arguing for a Flavian date on the basis of



Figure 2.11. Capua: the Anfiteatro Campano

similarly gained the title Flavia before AD 84, and a major new amphitheatre in the late first or early second century AD, probably later rather than earlier (see Fig. 2.11).<sup>164</sup> In the same way it is possible that there may be a link between the re-establishment of Paestum as a colony by Vespasian in AD 71,<sup>165</sup> and the restoration

the explicit statement of *CIL* 10. 1789 that the amphitheatre was built by the Colonia Flavia [Augusta] Puteolana *pecunia [sua]*. By contrast, Le Glay 1977: 106–9 holds that a new inscription recording gladiatorial games held in the presence of Nero by L. Cassius Cerealis, *curator operum publicorum et locorum*, refers to the inauguration of the new arena (which was then completed in later years). For discussion of this inscription, see also D’Arms 1975: 157–60. For Golvin, the arena referred to here is the earlier amphitheatre of Puteoli rather than the ‘Anfiteatro Flavio’. If the arena had been a gift of Nero, then the city of Puteoli might not have wanted to draw attention to the fact subsequently; hence Golvin’s argument is not necessarily watertight. For Puteoli as a *colonia*: Keppie 1984: 82, 95–7; Camodeca 1996: 99–100. The original amphitheatre is discussed in Caruso, del Corso, and Raiola Caruso 1980–1. See also Tosi 2003: 173–6.

<sup>164</sup> Capua as a *colonia*: see Keppie 1984: 95–7. For the date of the Anfiteatro Campano at Capua, see Golvin 1988: 204; Bomgardner 2000: 104–5; Tosi 2003: 132.

<sup>165</sup> See Keppie 1984: 101–4.

of the city's amphitheatre late in the first or early in the second century AD.<sup>166</sup>

There are frequently difficulties in establishing the chronology of amphitheatre building in Italy of the imperial period, particularly where explicit epigraphic evidence is lacking: often scholars have to rely on dates derived from styles of masonry or from the similarity of the plan of a structure to that of a more closely dated example such as the Colosseum, and both these stylistic criteria, while suggestive, can also be misleading.<sup>167</sup> The problems that sometimes arise are illustrated by the case of the amphitheatre at Casinum, where the building style (*opus reticulatum*) suggests an Augustan or early Julio-Claudian date for the monument, whereas the epigraphic evidence appears to fix its construction firmly in the late first century AD.<sup>168</sup> Besides, it should be emphasized that some towns (including Rome itself) made do with wooden structures well into the first century AD or even beyond. In AD 27, a temporary wooden amphitheatre which had been constructed at Fidenae, just to the north of Rome, collapsed with calamitous loss of life (Tac. *Ann.* 4. 62–3). Even in the reign of Antoninus Pius, an inscription from Saluzzo (south of Turin) reveals that a wooden arena had to be constructed to stage the annual games instituted by a benefactor's will, presumably held in a *vicus* within the territory of Pollentia.<sup>169</sup> Nevertheless, the general trend seems to emerge clearly enough. The number of permanent amphitheatres increases dramatically during the Julio-Claudian period, and significant numbers of such structures continued to be built (or rebuilt) in the Flavian period and then into the second century AD, with a particular density of examples in the regions of Samnium, Campania, Latium, Umbria, and Etruria.<sup>170</sup> Examples from the early Julio-Claudian period include the amphitheatre at Falerii, built by two patrons of the city late in the first century BC or perhaps early in the following century;<sup>171</sup> the arena built by Sex.

<sup>166</sup> For the amphitheatre at Paestum, see Golvin 1988: 195–6; Buonocore 1992: 111–12; Tosi 2003: 245–6.

<sup>167</sup> For discussion of dating criteria see Jouffroy 1986: 101–5; Golvin 1988: 71–3; Welch 1991: 273.

<sup>168</sup> See the discussion in Fora 1991: 210–15; Fora 1996: 87–8; Tosi 2003: 55–7.

<sup>169</sup> *CIL* 5. 7637 = *ILS* 5065: see Gregori 1989: 27–8.

<sup>170</sup> See Jouffroy 1986: 380.

<sup>171</sup> *CIL* 11. 3112, with Di Stefano Manzella 1981: 119; Papi 2000: 47–8; Tosi 2003: 409.

Pedius Lusianus Hirrutus, an equestrian prefect, at Teate Marruciorum, not long before AD 19;<sup>172</sup> the early first-century AD structure at Beneventum;<sup>173</sup> the amphitheatre at Alba Fucens, a bequest to his city by Q. Naevius Cordus Sutorius Macro, praetorian prefect under Tiberius, who died in AD 38;<sup>174</sup> and the amphitheatre of Claudian date built by the freedman M. Varenus Tyrannus at Praeneste.<sup>175</sup>

As we have seen, the first century was notable for its generally high level of public building in the towns of Italy, but within the context of the more general embellishment of the cities in this period, a variety of considerations lay behind the priority given to the building of amphitheatres. Amphitheatres were constructed in imitation of the monuments of Rome, to demonstrate loyalty to the cultural programmes of the emperors, to outdo neighbouring cities in prestige, and because of the central role played by the games in constructing the civic identities of the community itself—not to mention reflecting a general enthusiasm for the spectacles which took place there.

First, although the provision of amphitheatres was already fairly widespread in many regions of Italy by the Julio-Claudian period, the comparatively late construction of permanent amphitheatres at Rome also provided a model which Italian towns could be expected to imitate, just as they built theatres enthusiastically under the principate of Augustus. The building of the Colosseum under the Flavians clearly had a particular impact in this context. The direct involvement of the emperors in creating structures of such scale and impressiveness brought increased prestige to the provision of gladiatorial spectacles, while the elegance with which the exterior of the Flavian amphitheatre was designed, with a pseudo-colonnaded façade displaying the Tuscan, Ionic, and Corinthian orders, meant that by the Flavian period the amphitheatre as a piece of monumental architecture had come in a sense to form part of ‘high culture’ as well as a venue for populist entertainment.<sup>176</sup> The Colosseum was thus a monument which communities with a high opinion of their

<sup>172</sup> *CIL* 9. 3044 = *ILS* 2689: see Buonocore 1992: 108–9, associating the text with the remains of the amphitheatre discovered at Teate; Tosi 2003: 299–300.

<sup>173</sup> Giampaola 1991: 130–1; Tosi 2003: 299–300.

<sup>174</sup> *AE* 1957: 250, with Golvin 1988: 82–3; Buonocore 1992: 110; Tosi 2003: 262–3.

<sup>175</sup> *CIL* 14. 3010 = *ILS* 5629. See Fora 1996: 85–6; Tosi 2003: 90–1.

<sup>176</sup> Welch 1991: 273. *Mart. Spect.* 1. 1 compares the Colosseum with famous monuments of the past.

own distinction were keen to imitate. It is no surprise that Capua, a city which was not only famous as a centre of gladiatorial activity—Spartacus himself had trained here, at the barracks of Cn. Lentulus Batiatus (Plut. *Crass.* 8. 3. 1, Flor. 2. 8. 3)<sup>177</sup>—but which (according to Cicero, anyway) was in the late Republic even considered a potential rival to Rome (Cic. *Leg. agr.* 2. 86), came to acquire an amphitheatre which closely imitated the Colosseum.<sup>178</sup> By contrast, little is known of the appearance of Nero's amphitheatre on the Campus Martius, but its scale and lavishness, disapprovingly described by Tacitus, may well also have inspired emulation in the same way as the Colosseum did later. As so often, it is quite likely that Nero's achievements in the field of amphitheatre design were outshone for posterity by those of successors less innovative but more acceptable to the traditionalist aristocracy.<sup>179</sup> Unlike Nero, Vespasian and Titus successfully managed the delicate balancing act of providing entertainment for the masses without alienating the senatorial elite: Vespasian himself was believed not to like gladiatorial combat (Cass. Dio 65. 15. 2), but appealed to the authority of Augustus, the archetypal 'good emperor', as a precedent for the building of the Colosseum, 'discovering' (as Suetonius puts it) that the first *princeps* had intended to construct an amphitheatre in the centre of Rome (Suet. *Vesp.* 9).<sup>180</sup> Although Titus was more of an overt enthusiast for the games, engaging in banter with the crowd about the relative merits of different types of gladiator, he nevertheless succeeded in maintaining his *maiestas* and *aequitas*, and thus his credibility with the elite (Suet. *Tit.* 8. 2).

The influence of Flavian Rome on the building of amphitheatres in first-century AD Italy emerges in several different ways. Together with a desire to embellish the city and help their community in a generous way (and, presumably, to express enthusiasm for the games themselves), we can also see the building of amphitheatres by individual benefactors as in some sense a manifestation of loyalty to the new regime. Some of the amphitheatre builders can be seen themselves to have served the emperors, or benefited from their support.

<sup>177</sup> Golvin 1988: 149.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* 204–5; Bomgardner 2000: 90–2.

<sup>179</sup> Elsner 1994: 119–20.

<sup>180</sup> Coleman 2003: 70–3.

At Larinum, for example, the amphitheatre was built by a patron of the town, a former military tribune who reached the rank of quaestor, and whose career also apparently included the post of *flamen divi Titi*.<sup>181</sup> Similarly the amphitheatre at Urbs Salvia was constructed by L. Flavius Silva Nonius Bassus, consul in AD 81, who among other honours had been adlected into the patriciate by Vespasian and Titus. As patron of the community he provided the land for the project and paid for the building.<sup>182</sup> One of the most striking examples from this period is from Casinum, where the amphitheatre was built (or rebuilt) by Ummidia Quadratilla, a wealthy lady of senatorial family and local origins, who was well known for her enthusiasm for spectacles. Pliny tells us disapprovingly that she maintained a troupe of pantomime actors in her house; appropriately, she also restored the theatre at Casinum.<sup>183</sup> All these three benefactors, interestingly, come from the senatorial order, reflecting the vast expense involved in constructing an amphitheatre in this way. Just as the building of theatres and (of course) shrines associated with the imperial house reflected the loyalty of the Italian elites to the Augustan regime, so the building of amphitheatres at this time could perhaps be seen as representing a statement of adherence to the new programme of the Flavians.

Amphitheatre building continued in a significant way into the second century AD, even beyond the impetus provided by the advent of the Flavian dynasty. Some of these late first- and early second-century projects involved the construction of a new arena in towns which (so far as we can tell) did not possess them already, but others had as their main focus the construction of monumental new structures in cities which were already provided with more modest facilities, as at Puteoli and Capua. In the latter case, the emperors Hadrian and Antoninus took a hand.<sup>184</sup> Most projects were, however, concerned with the embellishment and improvement of an existing

<sup>181</sup> *CIL* 9. 731: see Golvin 1988: 254; Buonocore 1992: 114; De Tata 1990; Buonocore 2002: 411–21; Tosi 2003: 209–10.

<sup>182</sup> *AE* 1969–70: 183. See Golvin 1988: 194; Buonocore 1992: 112–14; 2002: 421–3; Tosi 2003: 343–4.

<sup>183</sup> *CIL* 10. 5183 = *ILS* 5628 with Plin. *Ep.* 7. 24. See Golvin 1988: 114; Fora 1991: 210–15; Fora 1996: 87–8. For the theatre at Casinum, see *AE* 1946: 174 with Fora 1992. On both: Tosi 2003: 52–60.

<sup>184</sup> *CIL* 10. 3832 = *ILS* 6309, with Boatwright 2000: 126.



structure, and are attested archaeologically rather than epigraphically: for example the redevelopment of the amphitheatre at Herdoniae in the early second century.<sup>185</sup> The standard of provision expected from an amphitheatre, and the scale and sophistication of the spectacles on display, had clearly increased substantially in the years following the construction of the Colosseum, and the more modest structures provided in some towns rapidly became out of date: arenas of the republican period tended to be primitive and unimpressive by comparison with their later counterparts, as architectural designs based on earthen embankments gave way to those with built substructures supporting the seating. When, probably under Domitian, the Colosseum was provided with a complex network of underground passages which allowed even more lavish and spectacular shows to be laid on,<sup>186</sup> some Italian towns too sought to imitate this development: the old arenas were no longer sufficient or their facilities appropriate to meet local expectations. The amphitheatre of Augustan date at Pula had been unusual in being provided with a single trench running the length of the arena, reminiscent of arrangements in the late republican Forum Romanum.<sup>187</sup> The massive amphitheatres at Capua and Puteoli were provided with sophisticated subterranean networks clearly based on those of the Colosseum itself.<sup>188</sup> No doubt there was also a continually increasing expenditure on lavish decorations and other features of the spectacles which can no longer be recovered archaeologically—curtains, uniforms for the protagonists, and so on.

Amphitheatres in Italian towns may only have been used on a few days a year,<sup>189</sup> and even the Colosseum was employed infrequently.

<sup>185</sup> For a synthesis of the evidence, see Golvin 1988: 76–223. Herdoniae: Mertens 1995: 207–10; Golvin 1988: 84; Tosi 2003: 206–8. For an epigraphically attested refurbishment (the restoration of the amphitheatre at Rudiae with public funds under Commodus) see *AE* 1958: 179.

<sup>186</sup> Golvin 1988: 176 with Coleman 1990; Coleman 1993: 58–60. The sea-battles said to have taken place in the arena at its inauguration in AD 80 could hardly have been staged if the elaborate underground passages were already in existence.

<sup>187</sup> Golvin 1988: 159.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.* 273; Bomgardner 2000: 91–2.

<sup>189</sup> If the model provided by the *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* (70–1) from Urso in Spain can be used for towns in Italy (as seems reasonable), officially organized games would take place on eight occasions per year (assuming the *Ilviri* and aediles joined forces

The *Historia Augusta* reports that a plan by Severus Alexander to hold games there on a regular monthly basis was not put into effect (SHA *Alex. Sev.* 43). Their impact on the civic landscape was, however, disproportionate to the amount of practical use made of them. The physical height of the amphitheatre meant that the arena bulked large on the city's skyline: 'amphitheatres must have towered over cities, much as cathedrals towered over mediaeval towns', as Hopkins put it.<sup>190</sup> Even when the amphitheatre was out of sight, the roar of the crowd gathered in the arena when games were taking place would have been audible throughout the city. The amphitheatre therefore had considerable importance as a symbol of its community.

For this and other reasons, competitiveness between communities was particularly strongly felt at the amphitheatre. At the games a community was on display to its rivals as well as its own citizens: a city's prestige within its region was at stake. The scale of some amphitheatres was such that they could accommodate very substantial audiences, which may well have been much larger than the population of the town they ostensibly served.<sup>191</sup> It was common for people to attend games held in neighbouring cities. Painted notices at Pompeii advertised shows at Nuceria, Nola, Puteoli, Herculaneum, Cumae, Atella, and Cales (the last named being over 50 km away from Pompeii itself): the texts were mostly found on walls and tomb-monuments outside the city gates, with a particular concentration in the cemetery outside the Porta Nocera, which led to the amphitheatre (and would thus have been visible to those attending games held at Pompeii).<sup>192</sup> On these occasions the existing tensions between communities, exacerbated by the brutality on display in the arena, might even lead to violence. In AD 59, abuse and then fighting broke out at the amphitheatre in Pompeii between the inhabitants of that city and the people of nearby Nuceria, who were attending a gladiatorial show, and the fighting evidently spread even beyond the

and held their games together, sixteen if they operated separately); to which might be added a number of games financed entirely by individual benefactors or held for commercial motives.

<sup>190</sup> Hopkins 1983: 2.

<sup>191</sup> For estimates of the capacity of amphitheatres, see Golvin 1988: 284–8.

<sup>192</sup> For these advertisements see Sabbatini Tumolesi 1980: 14–15, 91–110.

arena.<sup>193</sup> As a result, the holding of gladiatorial games in the town was banned for ten years (Tac. *Ann.* 14. 17).<sup>194</sup> Interestingly, colonists had been settled by Nero at Nuceria only two years previously (Tac. *Ann.* 13. 31),<sup>195</sup> and the events of AD 59 may be seen as a further indicator of colonists' enthusiasm for gladiatorial shows. Keppie plausibly interprets the Pompeian graffiti 'Campani victoria una cum Nucerinis peristis' as referring to the intervention of a contingent of men from Capua on the side of the Nucerni; it is striking that here too a colonial settlement had been established by Nero.<sup>196</sup> As we have seen, the rivalry between Capua and Puteoli was notorious, and this too is likely to have been reflected in the scale of the two cities' amphitheatres.

Rivalries within the community itself were also played out at the games, which, in the Italian towns as in Rome, had their own quasi-political dimension. At Rome under the Republic, although gladiatorial combats were often notionally connected with funerals, they also (like so many other features of Roman life) came to form an element in the political struggles of the capital. The provision of the regular *ludi* held in honour of the gods was the responsibility of the aediles but *munera* held to commemorate the deceased were at the discretion of individuals and depended in part on their generosity or ambition: holding memorable games was a good way of securing the favour of the voters. With the advent of the Principate, however, the provision of gladiatorial spectacles came increasingly under the control of the emperor, who was keen to avoid giving opportunities to members of the elite who might turn out to be potential rivals.<sup>197</sup> The responsibility of holding the regular *ludi* was transferred to the praetors; Augustus himself held lavish games, involving a total of 10,000 fighters on just eight occasions (*RG* 22), but at the same time he restricted the number of gladiators who could appear in the

<sup>193</sup> Scenes of fighting around the amphitheatre and the nearby palaestra are shown on the famous wall-painting which depicts the riot. See recently Donati 1998: 306.

<sup>194</sup> Some shows did nevertheless take place in this period: see Sabbatini Tumolesi 1980: 156.

<sup>195</sup> Keppie 1984: 81.

<sup>196</sup> *CIL* 4. 1293 = *ILS* 6443a; see Keppie 1984: 81. For another view see Moeller 1970.

<sup>197</sup> Wiedemann 1992: 1–8.

praetors' shows to sixty pairs (Cass. Dio 54. 2. 4).<sup>198</sup> Gladiatorial shows had always provided an opportunity for the people of Rome (or at least those of them who were able to obtain a seat to see the show) to express their opinion on public affairs (Cic. *Sest.* 106); under the Principate, they allowed the emperor to show his generosity to the people of Rome, but still enabled the people to express their enthusiasm for (or, alternatively, their disapproval of) the emperor's policies or behaviour.<sup>199</sup> The significance of this was substantial, because with the transfer of elections to the Senate in AD 14, the role of the Roman people in formal politics had now entirely disappeared; the typical occasions when the Roman people now gathered together were at the games rather than in the *comitia* on the Campus. The use of the *Saepta* for gladiatorial combats rather than for voting assemblies was symptomatic of the changing nature of public life; but the overt political associations of the *Saepta* (as indeed the Forum where the games had previously taken place), rather than the purpose-built amphitheatre of Statilius Taurus, underlines the continuing quasi-political importance of the games in the early Julio-Claudian period.<sup>200</sup> In the same way, the forum of an Italian town had traditionally acted as a venue for games (Vitr. *De Arch.* 5. 1. 1–2; 10. praef. 3), and even where the town had an amphitheatre, spectacles and displays might still take place in the forum, as for example in connection with the show laid on at the time of Augustus by A. Clodius Flaccus, which involved a *venatio* and procession through the forum of Pompeii.<sup>201</sup>

Although there are some indications of lively and contentious political activity in the towns of Italy in the imperial period—we learn that at Pisa at the time of the death of C. Caesar in AD 4, for example, no magistrates were in office 'due to the rivalries among the candidates'<sup>202</sup>—it seems unlikely that the *plebs* of the Italian towns had any more substantial a political role than their counterparts at Rome in this period.<sup>203</sup> However, the constraints on aristocratic

<sup>198</sup> Ville 1981: 119–23; Edmondson 1996: 79–81.

<sup>199</sup> Wiedemann 1992: 165–80.

<sup>200</sup> Edmondson 1996: 78.

<sup>201</sup> *CIL* 10. 1074d = *ILS* 5053. 4. See Sabbatini Tumolesi 1980: 18–19.

<sup>202</sup> *CIL* 11. 1421 = *ILS* 140.

<sup>203</sup> Mouritsen 1988: 68–9.

competition felt in the city of Rome as a result of the presence of the emperor did not apply to any significant degree in the towns of Italy,<sup>204</sup> so the provision of games continued to be a domain in which the local elites could seek to outdo their rivals before an audience comprising the populace of their city (and as we have seen, its neighbours). The amphitheatre thus became, like the forum and the other public spaces of the city, a locale for competitive benefaction, and thus a site of major political importance in the community.

There were various different circumstances in which games could be laid on in the towns of Italy. The standard pattern, as reflected in the *Lex Coloniae Genetivae*, was for the shows to be provided by magistrates as one of the obligations of their office. At Urso in Spain, the *Iiviri* were required to hold four days of gladiatorial shows (or *ludi scaenici*, at the preference of the *ordo decurionum*), adding no less than 2,000 HS of their own money to the 2,000 HS which were made available from public funds. The aediles, who were required to hold a similar number of games, likewise added 2,000 HS to the lesser sum of 1,000 HS from the colony.<sup>205</sup> However, it is clear that some magistrates spent considerably more than the minimum stipulated on their games, and the scale and impressiveness of the games provided was frequently recognized in the form of statues set up in their honour, or other indications of public esteem. For instance, in AD 249 P. Baebius Iustus, *Iivir* at Minturnae, laid on not one but two sets of games, one during his period of office and one afterwards. The first involved eleven pairs of gladiators, the defeated fighters to be killed, and ten 'savage bears' were put to death; on the second occasion three pairs of gladiators were displayed, and yet more bears. The *ordo* set up a statue in his honour, and he responded by distributing the sum of 3 *denarii* to each of the *decuriones*.<sup>206</sup>

Members of public bodies other than the city magistrates—such as the *seviri Augustales*—might also be expected to provide games as one of the responsibilities of office, although the evidence, predominantly derived from honorific inscriptions rather than legal documents, is

<sup>204</sup> Eck 1984: 141–2.

<sup>205</sup> *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* 70–1, with Ville 1981: 175–7.

<sup>206</sup> *CIL* 10. 6012 = *ILS* 5062 with Fora 1996: 71–3.

less clear-cut in their case.<sup>207</sup> One of the most notable illustrations of a benefaction of this kind is the tomb of Lusius Storax, a *sevir* of Teate, dated to the reign of Claudius. This depicts the deceased in the company of the city's magistrates, presiding over a gladiatorial combat, presumably games he had himself organized (and paid for).<sup>208</sup> Traditionalists might sneer at the effrontery of freedmen in putting on games,<sup>209</sup> but their generosity could be staggering. One *Augustalis* from Beneventum, P. Veidius Philocles, is recorded as having displayed 500 gladiators (though if so these may well have fought on several occasions, and the figure itself is suspect in the manuscript tradition).<sup>210</sup>

It was also possible for affluent individuals to provide games purely out of their own generosity (with the intention, or consequence, of increasing their popularity with the people of their community). These could be magistrates or ex-magistrates, other members of the local elites, or individuals designated as patrons of the community. Originally, as at Rome, the games might have been in honour of a family member who had recently died. The episode which took place at Pollentia in the reign of Tiberius, when the townspeople refused to allow the burial of a *primus pilus* unless his family held commemorative games, suggests that in some parts of Italy at least, the tradition of funerary games was still recognized, if not necessarily followed, in the Julio-Claudian period.<sup>211</sup> Indeed scenes of gladiatorial combat continued to be popular on funerary monuments in the central Apennines into the first century AD,<sup>212</sup> and gladiatorial combat was chosen as one of the images on the fictional tomb of Trimalchio.<sup>213</sup> However, the primary motivations behind the majority of spectacles of imperial date appear to have been political (in the broadest sense) rather than purely commemorative, and expenditure was rewarded with enhanced prestige. Games might be held

<sup>207</sup> Ville 1981: 188–93. For further discussion of the *Augustales*, see Ch. 3.

<sup>208</sup> Bianchi Bandinelli 1963–4: 57–99.

<sup>209</sup> See e.g. Mart. 3. 59.

<sup>210</sup> *CIL* 9. 1703 = *ILS* 5067: see Buonocore 1992: 49–50.

<sup>211</sup> Suet. *Tib.* 37.

<sup>212</sup> Faccenna 1956–8.

<sup>213</sup> Petron. *Sat.* 71.

to mark the completion of a building project,<sup>214</sup> the erection of a statue,<sup>215</sup> in completion of a vow made for the safety of the emperor,<sup>216</sup> or in honour of an imperial visit.<sup>217</sup> Sometimes a benefactor might leave money in his (or her) will to pay for regular games, such as C. Titius Valentinus from Pisaurum, who left the sum of a million sesterces to the town, 400,000 of which were to be used to pay for an annual banquet for the people to take place on his son's birthday, and 600,000 for a gladiatorial show to be held every five years.<sup>218</sup> In these circumstances, the town would appoint a *curator muneris*, who would be responsible for safeguarding the funds set aside and making the arrangements for the games; he might himself make an additional financial contribution and be honoured for this by the community.<sup>219</sup> Tacitus saw the two acceptable motivations for holding games as wealth (*abundantia pecuniae*) and ambition (*municipalis ambitio*) but it was also possible (and presumably highly lucrative) for an individual to organize spectacles for purely commercial reasons, as indeed happened in the case of the games at Fidenae in AD 27 which had such a disastrous outcome (Tac. *Ann.* 4. 62).

Games were therefore closely related to the other manifestations of public munificence which were (as will be discussed further in the following section) central to the activities of the municipal elites under the high Empire. One particularly interesting case is that of the *iuvenes* (a paramilitary organization primarily for young men of the local elite) who practised and displayed their manoeuvres in the amphitheatre.<sup>220</sup> Unsurprisingly, association with the *iuvenes* and involvement in amphitheatre building sometimes went together: at

<sup>214</sup> e.g. *CIL* 9. 1665, perhaps to be related to the completion of the *Thermae Commodianae* at Beneventum: see Buonocore 1992: 85.

<sup>215</sup> e.g. *CIL* 11. 6357 = *ILS* 5057 from Pisaurum: ten pairs of gladiators were displayed by T. Ancharius Priscianus on the occasion of the erection of a *biga* (a two-horse chariot statue) to his father, who had himself given eight days of shows during the course of his *Ilvirate*. See Gregori 1989: 34–5.

<sup>216</sup> e.g. *CIL* 4. 7989, with Ville 1981: 208.

<sup>217</sup> For the games held to mark Nero's visit to Beneventum, see Tac. *Ann.* 15. 34.

<sup>218</sup> *CIL* 11. 6377: see Gregori 1989: 28–9; Duncan-Jones 1982: 229.

<sup>219</sup> Another inscription from Pisaurum, *CIL* 11. 6369 (see Gregori 1989: 29) attests an individual who was later in charge of Titius Valentinus' fund: he held the title *curator calendari pecuniae Valentini*.

<sup>220</sup> For discussion of the *iuvenes* see Jaczynowska 1978 and Ginestet 1991.

Lucus Feroniae, the amphitheatre was constructed, probably in the earlier part of the second century, by M. Silius Epaphroditus, a freedman. Silius was also the magister and *patronus* of the local *iuvenes*, who honoured him with a statue.<sup>221</sup> Events in the amphitheatre thus formed an integral part of a wide variety of civic occasions: often gladiatorial games were accompanied by other forms of festivity and benefaction, and those who provided games for their towns contributed to other elements in the municipal fabric too. For example, a second-century AD inscription from Formiae records how C. Clodius Hilarus was honoured by his town's *ordo* with a *bisellium* (the right to sit in a special seat of honour on public occasions). To express his appreciation of this honour, he spent 25,000 HS on the provision of gladiatorial games, to which the *plebs* added the same amount. To commemorate all this, Clodius was honoured by the *Augustales* with a statue, and by the *decuriones* with *ornamenta decurionalia*: in gratitude for the statue, he offered bread and wine to everyone, and a distribution of 5 *denarii* to the *decuriones*, *Augustales*, and a mysterious group called the *regales*.<sup>222</sup> By contrast, L. Arrenius Menander, a *munerarius* and *patronus* of Herdoniae in the early part of the second century AD, was honoured with a statue by the *collegium fabrum tignuariorum*, and his wife by the *collegium* of the *cannophoroi*.<sup>223</sup>

One of the most impressive of these wide-ranging manifestations of generosity, however, is that of Q. Avelius Priscus Severus Severus Annanus Rufus, who was patron of the *municipium* of Corfinium, and had held numerous offices there in the second century AD. He gave gladiatorial games to commemorate his tenure of the office of *quinquennalis*, several sets of *ludi*, a subvention of 50,000 HS for the town's food supply; he donated 30,000 HS for the Balneum Avelianum for women, and laid on numerous banquets and distributions of money to all the citizens.<sup>224</sup> Less successful, by contrast, was a first-century benefactor from the Valsugana between Feltria

<sup>221</sup> The amphitheatre: *AE* 1962: 87 with Golvin 1988: 168; Gregori 1989: 81–3; Tosi 2003: 421–2. Honours for Silius: *CIL* 11. 3938 = *ILS* 6589, with *AE* 1962: 86.

<sup>222</sup> *AE* 1927: 124, with Fora 1996: 67–9.

<sup>223</sup> *AE* 1967: 93–5, with Buonocore 1992: 54–5.

<sup>224</sup> *AE* 1961: 109, with Buonocore 1992: 66–7.



and Tridentum. Like Avelius he provided a gladiatorial show and subsidized the price of food for his fellow citizens, and was granted the exceptional honour of a golden statue, but then fell out with the local *plebs* (described as ‘like locusts’), who attempted to drive him into exile.<sup>225</sup>

These competitive acts of generosity took place before a civic audience and were fully integrated into the structures of benefaction, prestige, and respect which were crucial to the public life of the towns: the beneficiaries were not only the *plebs* of the town (who nevertheless might take a leading role in acclaiming and honouring the benefactors who provided them with games), but also the political elite in the widest sense—the magistrates, *decuriones*, *Augustales*, and members of the *collegia*, all of whom had their own role in the hierarchy of the community, and received appropriate recognition at the celebratory banquets and distributions.

Although the games at Rome provided a quasi-political outlet for popular concerns, the emperors were at the same time keen to ensure that the hierarchies within the society of the capital were appropriately observed on these occasions. Legislation seeking to ensure that spectators at the theatre were seated according to rank, status, and gender was reinforced under Augustus, and efforts were made to extend these measures to the amphitheatre too;<sup>226</sup> they were in turn reinforced under Domitian.<sup>227</sup> Just as specified social groups—*equites*, *praetextati*, *paedagogi*, and others—had places allocated in the Colosseum,<sup>228</sup> so there are indications that the provision of reserved seating became a familiar practice in the amphitheatres of Italy too. All over the Empire, the front row of seats at the amphitheatre was reserved for any senators who might happen to want to see the games (this measure was the result of a scandalous incident at Puteoli when no one would give up his seat to a visiting senator: Suet. *Aug.* 44. 1); and it is likely that other parts of the arena too were designated for particular groups in society. Special places might be

<sup>225</sup> *CIL* 5. 5049 with Buonopane 1994: 162–5; see also Gregori 1989: 44–5, and esp. Martin 1996a.

<sup>226</sup> Rawson 1987: 86; Barton 1993: 114–16; Edmondson 1996: 84–95; Gunderson 1996: 125–6.

<sup>227</sup> Edmondson 1996: 99–100.

<sup>228</sup> Kolendo 1981: 304; Edmondson 1996: 84–7.

granted to individuals by decree of the *decuriones*,<sup>229</sup> as we can also see from the discovery in the amphitheatres at Pula, Ariminum, and Corfinium of inscribed names or initials denoting the authorized occupant of a particular seat.<sup>230</sup> At Urbs Salvia, by decree of the benefactor responsible for building the amphitheatre, 650 members of the *plebs* were given special seats.<sup>231</sup> In some cities of the Empire, *Augustales* and members of *collegia* seem to have sat together at the games,<sup>232</sup> though while the *collegia* were still considered potentially dangerous and subversive organizations, it might have been preferred to avoid this practice in the interests of public order. One of the consequences of the Pompeii riot was that illegally constituted *collegia* (who were blamed for the violence) were disbanded; later, however, the *collegia* were to become more respectable and could take an appointed place on public occasions.

As Edmondson has argued, the amphitheatre was a place not only where social hierarchies were on display, but also where these could be created and changed, as the status of individuals and social groups was visibly enhanced (or debased) by where they sat.<sup>233</sup> Social status (and its display) was as important in the cities of Italy as in Rome (as I will be exploring further in Chapter 3), and issues of social location and advancement can be seen to have been of particular importance in the high Empire. Hence it is no surprise that the construction and improvement of amphitheatres, where these hierarchies were negotiated, was a priority in the first century AD and into the second century. The amphitheatre was the place where all the citizens of the community came together to participate in an activity sanctioned at the highest level in the state; the shows on display demonstrated the rewards of military *virtus* as gladiators fought for their lives, the glory of Rome's empire as exotic beasts were brought into the arena for slaughter, and the penalties for crime as the condemned were executed before the assembled population. The scale of the events was

<sup>229</sup> e.g. *AE* 1927: 158.

<sup>230</sup> Pula: *CIL* 5. 86 = *Inscriptiones Italiae* 10. 1. 145–6; see Gregori 1989: 89–93. Ariminum: *CIL* 11. 432 with Gregori 1989: 93. Corfinium: *AE* 1984: 297, with Buonocore 1992: 123.

<sup>231</sup> Buonocore 1992: 113.

<sup>232</sup> Kolendo 1981: 310–11; Roueché 1993: 126–7.

<sup>233</sup> Edmondson 1996: 98–111.

naturally smaller than their counterparts at Rome, but the aims are likely to have been much the same: the inculcation of Roman values in the years following the unification of Italy and the inspiration of the young men with military ideals (though the number of serving or aspiring soldiers in the Italian towns at this period is likely to have been even lower than at Rome, with the exception of would-be praetorians, and possibly elite members of the *iuventus*). Even when the building of amphitheatres was no longer seen as a priority, and the number of new constructions declined, acts of generosity associated with the amphitheatre continued to take place in the towns of Italy; benefactors would lay on games when alive or leave sums of money to pay for shows after their death.

The events which took place in the amphitheatre thus highlight a variety of central concerns in Italy of the high Empire: social hierarchy and mobility within this hierarchy; loyalty to the imperial house and to the ideologies and social concerns it espoused; and generosity to one's fellow citizens and reciprocal acts of respect and honour. These concerns, as much as the fighting between gladiators and wild beasts, were being played out before the audience in the arena. The definition of the audience was important too: the sense that the games were taking place before an audience of fellow citizens was important, but the public of the amphitheatre was that of the neighbouring communities as well as that of a city's own territory, and a grand amphitheatre, and impressive events staged within it, provided one way for a city to stake a claim to regional leadership.

## PUBLIC BATHS

Public bathing<sup>234</sup> was one of the activities which defined Roman culture. However, like those of the gladiatorial games, the origins of public bathing at Rome are somewhat mysterious. There are literary

<sup>234</sup> As with amphitheatres, there has been an increased interest recently in Roman baths and bathing both with regard to their architecture and design, and as a more general social and cultural phenomenon. See in particular Pasquinucci 1987; DeLaine 1988; 1993 (reviewing recent work and current directions in research); Nielsen 1990; Yegül 1992: 30–47; DeLaine 1992; Gros 1996: 388–417; DeLaine 1997; Fagan 1999;

references to bathing in Rome from the end of the third century BC onwards, and the developed 'Roman baths' with their characteristic combination of hot, cold, and warm rooms, communal pools, and associated exercise areas, drew on a variety of traditions including the Greek baths known from Sicily and south Italy, and the gymnasia of the classical and Hellenistic Greek cities. There are, however, indications that the combination of wealth, cultural heterogeneity, and an innovative architectural tradition which characterized Campania in the second century BC was particularly important for the development of baths in this style. In fact some of the earliest extant examples come from that region, notably the second-century Stabian baths and the early first-century Republican Baths at Pompeii, and the baths at Cumae. There is also considerable literary testimony for the phenomenon of public bathing in Campania.<sup>235</sup> These earliest baths were comparatively modest in scale, but in the later Republic and even more under the Empire, the lavishly decorated *thermae* (as they came to be known: *balnea* were more modest establishments, often privately run)<sup>236</sup> came to provide facilities for sporting and leisure activities as much as for washing, and became important centres for the social life of the community. Repeated reference to bathing in literary sources as diverse as Seneca, Petronius, and in particular Martial, illustrates how the practice had become a familiar element in the urban lifestyle by the early imperial period.<sup>237</sup>

Although there were already many baths in Rome by the end of the Republic, the first of the large-scale *thermae* of Rome were those of Agrippa, which he bequeathed to the Roman people after his death in 12 BC. The baths were closely linked with the gardens located in this

DeLaine and Johnston 1999. The role of baths in the civic space of the towns of Italy in the high Empire is discussed by Zanker 1994. For a bibliography of recent work, see Manderscheid 2004.

<sup>235</sup> For the debate on the origins of Roman baths, see in particular DeLaine 1989; Nielsen 1990: 25–36; Yegül 1992: 48–91; Gros 1996: 390–3; and summarized in Fagan 2001.

<sup>236</sup> On the problems involved in distinguishing the differences between *balnea* and *thermae*, see Nielsen 1990: 3; Gros 1996: 388–9; Fagan 1999: 14–19. Fagan rightly stresses the importance of rhetoric in the usage: the term *thermae* tends to be an indication of luxury and sophistication, whether real or aspired to.

<sup>237</sup> Fagan 1999: 12–39, 45–55.

part of the Campus, while the nearby Stagnum and Euripus (an ornamental lake and channel leading to it) provided facilities for swimming; part of the complex, known as the *laconicum*, appears to have been an exercise area. The baths themselves, when combined with the other exercise areas nearby, provided facilities equivalent to those of a gymnasium.<sup>238</sup> Nero's baths, also located on the Campus, were famous for their luxurious decor and their high temperatures. 'What was worse than Nero? What better than Nero's baths?' as Martial asked (Mart. 7. 34). Again they contained elements of a gymnasium.<sup>239</sup> Those of Titus were opened in AD 80, together with the Colosseum with which they were closely linked, both built on the site of Nero's Golden House (Suet. *Tit.* 7. 3).<sup>240</sup> Unfortunately, our knowledge of the design and layout of these three major first-century bath-complexes at Rome is comparatively limited, due to the dense mediaeval occupation of the Campus Martius where two of them were located, and the fragmentary nature of the surviving remains of the *Thermae Titi*.<sup>241</sup> Thanks to archaeological investigations and the Severan Marble Plan of Rome, we fortunately know much more about the Baths of Trajan, on the Oppian hill above those of Titus, which can be seen to have been particularly influential in terms of bath design. Built on a platform which definitively destroyed the remains of the Golden House, the Baths of Trajan were characterized by a symmetrical layout around a central axis: not just the baths proper, but also the libraries, gardens, and exercise areas, formed part of a unified complex, surrounded by a single perimeter wall. Trajan's baths thus served as a model for even more extensive later structures such as the third-century Baths of Caracalla and Diocletian. The libraries and other sporting and cultural facilities, which had previously been ancillary to the provision of facilities for washing, were now seen as an integral part of the whole.<sup>242</sup>

Like the amphitheatre, the baths provided an environment where the emperor was on show to the Roman populace, and his behaviour

<sup>238</sup> Nielsen 1990: 43–4; Yegül 1992: 133–7; Fagan 1999: 107–10; Ghini 1999a.

<sup>239</sup> Nielsen 1999: 45–6; Fagan 1999: 110–12; Ghini 1999b.

<sup>240</sup> Yegül 1992: 139–42; Caruso 1999; Nielsen 1999: 46–7; Fagan 1999: 112–13.

<sup>241</sup> DeLaine 1992: 257.

<sup>242</sup> De Fine Licht 1990; Nielsen 1990: 50–2; Yegül 1992: 142–6; DeLaine 1992; Fagan 1999: 113–14; Caruso and Volpe 1999.

there was significant in determining how a particular ruler was viewed by contemporaries and portrayed for posterity. The literary sources lay considerable emphasis on baths in their accounts of the emperors, focusing not only on their construction of baths but also the ways in which their behaviour at the baths was symptomatic of their character: thus Titus, Hadrian, and Severus Alexander are said to have bathed with the people, illustrating their credentials as 'good emperors' (Suet. *Tit.* 8. 2; *SHA Hadr.* 17. 5; *Alex. Sev.* 42. 1).<sup>243</sup> By contrast 'bad' emperors tended to use baths as a venue for outrageous debauchery and luxurious behaviour.<sup>244</sup> Constructing baths was seen as a populist gesture, most notably in the case of Titus' baths and those of Trajan, as together they contributed to eliminating Nero's house from the urban landscape; but the elite enjoyed the baths too, and emperors sought to outdo their predecessors in the scale and refinement of the baths they provided, their lavishness increasing dramatically from the first century AD through to the fourth. The development of the imperial *thermae* should also be seen in the context of a parallel increase in the number of smaller-scale *balnea* in the city: the elder Pliny tells us that there were 170 *balnea* in Rome in the time of Agrippa, while the fourth-century regionary catalogue gives a figure of 856 *balnea* (Plin. *HN* 36. 121).<sup>245</sup>

Just as at Rome, the cities of Italy saw a dramatic increase in the number of baths during the imperial period. Compiling a definitive and chronologically ordered list of bath-buildings in Italy is a problematic business, as many are poorly published and/or dated, but the overall picture from the archaeological evidence seems clear: substantial numbers of bathhouses were constructed in the towns of Italy in the first century AD, and even more in the second century AD—the reverse, in fact, of the pattern emerging from amphitheatre building.<sup>246</sup> Likewise, analysis of the epigraphic record<sup>247</sup> reveals a significant increase in the number of texts recording the construction and

<sup>243</sup> See Fagan 1999: 118–23 for a discussion of these passages.

<sup>244</sup> Toner 1995: 62.

<sup>245</sup> Dunbabin 1989: 8.

<sup>246</sup> See the lists in Jouffroy 1986: 93–6, 125–9; and Nielsen 1990: 38–59 (who focuses primarily on those baths which are sufficiently well preserved for their layout to be analysed in architectural terms) with the cautionary comments of DeLaine 1999*b*: 67 n. 3.

restoration of baths from the first century AD into the second.<sup>247</sup> In fact, baths can arguably be seen as the most characteristic form of public building in the towns of Italy in the second century, aptly termed ‘il secolo delle terme’.<sup>248</sup>

Among the first-century examples known archaeologically, the baths at Teate, and those near the Capitol at Florentia, are particularly important;<sup>249</sup> first-century baths are also known to have been built at Volsinii, though the identity of the Prefect of Egypt responsible for them remains controversial.<sup>250</sup>

Numerous baths built or expanded in the second century are known, both epigraphically and archaeologically: at Herdoniae, for example,<sup>251</sup> at Venusia,<sup>252</sup> at Alba Fucens,<sup>253</sup> and at Ferentium (see Fig. 2.12).<sup>254</sup> At Falerii, Nummius Verus, a patron of the town under Trajan, constructed a *cella caldaria*.<sup>255</sup> At Corfinium, as we have seen, Q. Avelius Priscus Severius Severus Annaeus Rufus gave the town the *balineum Avelianum muliebre*, as well as undertaking many other acts of generosity, including the provision of gladiatorial games.<sup>256</sup>

Just as the spread of amphitheatres in the Italian towns in part reflects the development of venues for gladiatorial combat at Rome, so it is possible to identify close links between the development of increasingly sophisticated bathing establishments at Rome and the pattern which emerged in the towns of Italy—not only in terms of the increasing provision of urban baths, but also their layout and design. DeLaine notes that the proportion of space devoted to activities not directly connected to washing increases significantly in baths of the second century AD outside Rome, and argues that this reflects the substantial proportion of space devoted to ancillary activities

<sup>247</sup> The evidence is collected and reviewed in Fagan 1999, see esp. 134–5.

<sup>248</sup> Papi 2000: 126.

<sup>249</sup> Nielsen 1990: 48; Gros 1996: 399. For the baths at Teate (and their associated cisterns), see Cianfarani 1961: 309–12; Coarelli and La Regina 1984: 150–1; on Florentia, Maetzke 1941: 65–8.

<sup>250</sup> *CIL* 11. 7285 = *ILS* 8996 with Corbier 1983*b*: 749–53.

<sup>251</sup> Mertens 1995: 216; Favia, Giuliano, and Leone 2000.

<sup>252</sup> Greco 1981: 278; Marchi and Salvatore 1997: 20–3.

<sup>253</sup> Mertens 1969: 69–72; 1981: 55–6.

<sup>254</sup> Papi 2000: 127–9.

<sup>255</sup> *CIL* 11. 3100, with Papi 2000: 145–7.

<sup>256</sup> *AE* 1961: 109 with Buonocore 1987: 144–5.



Figure 2.12. Ferentium: the baths

within the Baths of Trajan.<sup>257</sup> Naturally there were few cities in Italy which could afford to consider building baths on anything like the scale of the imperial baths at Rome. The Baths of Neptune at Ostia, which were financed by Hadrian and Antoninus Pius at a cost of more than 2 million sesterces,<sup>258</sup> and the Forum Baths of the same town (almost twice as large as the Baths of Neptune, and no doubt twice as expensive) are exceptional,<sup>259</sup> as were the Thermae of Puteoli, another structure on a similarly large scale.<sup>260</sup> Ostia and Puteoli, after all, were among the chief ports of the Empire. However, other towns too sought to emulate the facilities on offer in the capital, and there was evidently an increase in expectations of the standard of provision offered. The increasing use of the term *thermae* in the second century to denote larger bath-complexes may be significant here: we find *thermae* attested at Pisa and Tarquinii in the second century, and references to the Thermae Commodianae at

<sup>257</sup> DeLaine 1992: 259–61.

<sup>258</sup> *CIL* 14. 98 = *ILS* 334; *SHA Ant.* 8. 3.

<sup>259</sup> DeLaine 1992: 274. For more 'typical' costs, see Duncan-Jones 1982: 157.

<sup>260</sup> D'Arms 1974: 119; Sommella 1978: 29–32; Valerio and Zucco 1980–1.



Beneventum.<sup>261</sup> These perhaps rivalled (or at any rate aspired to rival) the grand baths built by the emperors in the capital. At Lanuvium, similarly, we are told that the dilapidated *balnea* were replaced with *thermae* by the municipality in the reign of Septimius Severus.<sup>262</sup>

Several other possible motivations might lie behind the building of baths.<sup>263</sup> Some might be constructed with an entirely commercial motive. The modest fees for entry might only have generated a small profit, but operating a bath-house enabled the proprietor to make further income by operating stalls offering food, drink or services, or alternatively leasing these out to others.<sup>264</sup> Many bath-buildings (on which I propose to concentrate primarily here) were, however, built either by the city authorities themselves or by individual benefactors, to extend the facilities of their community. Pliny's correspondence with Trajan from Bithynia casts light on the importance of baths in contributing to the prestige of a town, in this case Prusa: he argues that the construction of a new bath will contribute to the *dignitas civitatis* and *seculi nitor*, and provide an ornament for the city (Plin. *Ep.* 10. 23–4, 70–1). Pliny himself bequeathed money to the town of Comum for the building of a bath (see below) so he would certainly have been aware of the ideological implications and the appropriate language for describing a project of this sort.<sup>265</sup> Baths were frequently referred to as among the *commoda* ('advantages') of a town and were thus an attractive choice for those seeking to increase or consolidate their reputation for munificence locally—the first-century baths at Volsinii were apparently built 'ob publica commoda', according to the commemorative inscription.<sup>266</sup> Similarly, at Forum Novum, P. Faianius Plebeius, who provided a water supply for the municipality, also provided water for the baths when it became clear that the location chosen for them lacked a suitable water supply, 'ne carerent

<sup>261</sup> Pisa: *CIL* 11. 1433 = *Inscriptiones Italiae* 7. 1. 17; Tarquinii: *CIL* 11. 3366; Beneventum: *CIL* 9. 1596 = *ILS* 5511.

<sup>262</sup> *CIL* 14. 2101 = *ILS* 5686.

<sup>263</sup> For an overview, see Ward-Perkins, B. 1984: 3–13; Fagan 1999: 128–75.

<sup>264</sup> DeLaine 1999a: 12; Meiggs 1973: 417; Fagan 1999: 33–4, 126–7.

<sup>265</sup> *CIL* 5. 5262 = *ILS* 2927 with Duncan-Jones 1982: 30–1.

<sup>266</sup> *CIL* 11. 7285 = *ILS* 8996.

commodo municipes...'.<sup>267</sup> As Cicero observed, it was incumbent on leading citizens to make sure the *commoda* of the people were not ignored (Cic. *Rep.* 1. 52); likewise, it was important for bathing facilities continually to be upgraded in order for the community not to be outdone by its local rivals.

In the late Republic baths tended primarily to have been constructed by the municipalities themselves, but under the Principate, individual benefactors took the leading role. Sometimes a town might combine funds from the public treasury with those donated by individuals. Thus at Cures Sabini, the restoration of the baths took place early in the second century AD 'by decree of the *centumviri* (the local council)' using a combination of public funds and a contribution of 3,000 HS from each of the *sevirales*.<sup>268</sup> A particularly striking example is the case of a *balineum* at Corfinium; it was begun by Ser. Cornelius Dolabella Metilianus, consul in AD 113, with his own money and on his own land, but he died before it was completed. The *possessores* of his estate, M. Atilius Bradua and M'. Acilius Aviola (themselves also consuls, in AD 108 and 122 respectively), contributed another 100,000 each, but this was still not enough, so the project was completed with 152,000 sesterces raised with the aid of a grant from municipal funds and a subscription from the populace.<sup>269</sup> Indeed we might argue that just as senators in the age of the Flavians sought to emulate the emperor by building amphitheatres, so the several examples known from the early second century AD of the construction or improvement of baths by senators—Pliny, L. Venuleius Apronianus at Pisa, and P. Tullius and his son at Tarquinii,<sup>270</sup> among others—may reflect an enthusiasm inspired by the example of Trajan's baths at Rome, as well as a desire to help their community. Of course, the high costs involved, likely to run into several hundred thousand sesterces, would have limited the number of those able to afford such a benefaction.<sup>271</sup>

<sup>267</sup> *CIL* 9. 4786 = *ILS* 5767, with Filippi 1989: 181–2.

<sup>268</sup> *CIL* 9. 4978 = *ILS* 5670; see Muzzioli 1980: 76.

<sup>269</sup> *CIL* 9. 3152 = *ILS* 5676; see van Wonterghem 1984: 162 and Duncan-Jones 1982: 224 n. 443.

<sup>270</sup> Pisa: *CIL* 11. 1433 = *Inscriptiones Italiae* 7. 1. 17, with Pasquinucci and Menchelli 1989b. Tarquinia: *CIL* 11. 3366 with Papi 2000: 155–9.

<sup>271</sup> See Duncan-Jones 1982: 157.

One notable difference between baths and amphitheatres was the much more regular use made of baths. Games (as we have seen) were held only on a limited number of occasions annually; by contrast, bathing was part of the day's routine for the affluent.<sup>272</sup> Furthermore, it was quite normal for a city to have a number of separate bath-installations, some of them modest *balnea*, others more grandiose *thermae*—while the immense cost of an amphitheatre meant that it was only in cities of exceptional wealth and importance, such as Capua and Puteoli, that a community might have more than one arena. Communities might thus benefit from aristocratic rivalry in acquiring several facilities. Even in AD 4, as we know from the inscription recording the acts of mourning for the recently dead Gaius Caesar, the town of Pisa had (plural) *balnea publica*.<sup>273</sup> Pompeii had only one bath-building, the Stabian Baths, at the beginning of the first century BC, but by the time of the eruption there were no fewer than seven.<sup>274</sup>

Among public monuments as a whole, baths needed particular attention and continual expenditure. Maintenance had to be constant and restoration was frequently needed; the presence of large quantities of water, and furnaces for heating the facilities, meant that they were particularly liable to the twin hazards of damp and fire. When disaster struck, extensive repairs might be needed. Some benefactors set aside money for the running costs and maintenance of the baths they paid for—such as Pliny himself, who left 300,000 sesterces for the decoration of the baths and 200,000 for their *tutela*, and a benefactor from Altinum, who left a fund of 400,000 sesterces to provide funds for the running costs of his bath, and 200,000 for maintenance,<sup>275</sup> but otherwise these costs would fall on the community as a whole, or on other, later benefactors. At Fanum in the second century, we find T. Varius Rufinus Geganius Facundus Vibius Marcellinus, an equestrian, rebuilding a bath which had been built by L. Rufellius Severus, and subsequently restored by the community, but then severely damaged by fire.<sup>276</sup> Another fire is attested at Paestum, where

<sup>272</sup> Nielsen 1990: 135–8.

<sup>273</sup> *CIL* 11. 1421 = *ILS* 140: 24.

<sup>274</sup> Fagan 1999: 56–68.

<sup>275</sup> Brusin 1928: 283–5.

<sup>276</sup> *CIL* 11. 6225 = *ILS* 5679.

M. Tullius Cicero Venneianus rebuilt the damaged *balneae novae*, which had originally been constructed by his father, the patron of the town.<sup>277</sup> Baths, too, were liable to more general hazards of life: a *patronus* of Ligures Baebiani was honoured for restoring the baths there, which had been damaged by an earthquake.<sup>278</sup>

Even where the resources or the enthusiasm for the further building of baths was lacking, benefactors could help their community with acts of generosity which were located in, or associated with, the baths; and these initiatives, typically on a rather more modest scale than major construction projects, also allowed the less well off to participate in the reciprocal relationships of benefaction and public honours. Normally those using the baths were expected to pay a modest fee (this defrayed the cost of fuel for the furnaces and thus ensured the baths did not represent a constant drain on the resources of the community).<sup>279</sup> However, a benefactor might offer free bathing to the citizenry of the town (or other groups as he chose), as Agrippa had done on the occasion of his aedileship (Plin. *HN* 36. 121).<sup>280</sup> An alternative was to provide free oil, used for the scraping of the skin during the bathing process, as Nero had done for senators and equestrians on the occasion of the opening of his baths in the Campus Martius (Suet. *Ner.* 12. 3).<sup>281</sup> L. Caecilius Cilo of Comum left 40,000 sesterces to his city in the first century AD so that oil could be distributed to the people in the *campus* and at all the *thermae* and *balneae*.<sup>282</sup> Some benefactors preferred to support the running costs of the baths, like T. Flavius Avitus Forensis from Misenum, who provided 400 cartloads of wood.<sup>283</sup>

As we have seen, the games held at the amphitheatre contributed in a significant way to creating, maintaining, and negotiating local hierarchies in the towns of Italy. How far did the baths relate to these all-important hierarchical structures? Some scholars have seen the baths as an equalizing and almost democratic element in Roman

<sup>277</sup> *AE* 1935: 28.

<sup>278</sup> *CIL* 9. 1466, with De Agostini 1984: 52; Johannowsky 1988.

<sup>279</sup> Blyth 1999; for bathing fees, see Nielsen 1990: 131–5.

<sup>280</sup> On the practice in general, see Cenerini 1987–8.

<sup>281</sup> See Fagan 1999: 162–3.

<sup>282</sup> *CIL* 5. 5279 = *ILS* 6728.

<sup>283</sup> *CIL* 10. 3678 = *ILS* 5689.

society.<sup>284</sup> The cost of admission to the baths might discourage the very poorest in society (not for nothing were they known as the *plebs sordida*, ‘unwashed *plebs*’: Tac. *Hist.* 1. 4) but not many others; the expense involved was proverbially low (Cic. *Cael.* 62), and benefactors, as we have seen, might on occasion provide free bathing. Besides, the bathers’ lack of clothes might be thought to contribute to an egalitarian environment: ‘the baths represented a hole in the ozone layer of the social hierarchy’<sup>285</sup> as Toner puts it. However, as Fagan notes, it seems unlikely that the local elites would have spent large sums of their money to create an environment where they and their counterparts might be abused and insulted by those poorer elements in society that they would normally go out of their way to avoid.<sup>286</sup> Besides, members of the elite would be clearly identifiable at the baths by the size of their entourage, the stylishness of their slaves and bathing equipment, and their wealthy jewellery,<sup>287</sup> not to mention the clients by whom they would frequently be accompanied.<sup>288</sup> It is striking, however, that obvious formal manifestations of hierarchy are avoided at the baths when it would have been comparatively easy to accommodate them. Interestingly, benefactions related to bathing—those concerning free oil or free bathing, for instance—tend to stress membership of the citizen body (*populus, municipes, or coloni*) as the chief criterion (or perhaps also membership of other related groups within the community, such as *incolae* or *hospites*, and sometimes even slaves),<sup>289</sup> rather than membership of the *ordo*, or the *Augustales*, as amphitheatre benefactions (or indeed, as we shall see, those involving feasts or distributions of food or money) tended to do. A third-century inscription from Veii records how Caesia Sabina provided a banquet for the mothers, sisters, and daughters of men of centumviral rank, and female citizens of all ranks, together

<sup>284</sup> Yegül 1992: 2; Toner 1995: 53–64, with the discussion in Fagan 1999: 206–19.

<sup>285</sup> Toner 1995: 57.

<sup>286</sup> Fagan 1999: 212–17. Acts of violence were not unknown at the baths, even between members of the elite: Plin. *Ep.* 3. 14. 7 records how the ex-praetor Larcus Macedo (who was subsequently murdered by his own slaves) was dealt a violent blow at the baths by an equestrian.

<sup>287</sup> Fagan 1999: 199–200, 215–16; Zajac 1999: 104.

<sup>288</sup> Fagan 1999: 217.

<sup>289</sup> e.g. *CIL* 9. 5074–5 = *ILS* 5671 (Interamnia); 14. 2978–9 = *ILS* 5672 (Praeneste). See Cenerini 1987–8; Nielsen 1990: 133; Fagan 1999: 160–1.

with free bathing and oil, to commemorate games and a banquet given by her husband to the men of the town.<sup>290</sup> There is little sign that *decuriones* (or any other elite group) were allocated special times for bathing (as in some places was done in the case of women bathers); rather, those who sought to claim special privileges at the baths were condemned for behaving in an outrageously high-handed way.<sup>291</sup> Indeed, the associations of the baths were complex. The evidence from Rome, suggesting that for the emperor to appear in person at the baths and ‘meet the people’ there was seen both as populist and as a commendable feature of the behaviour of the ‘good emperor’ (even if these encounters did not necessarily happen very often), is indicative, because normally behaviour designed to please the people and that pleasing to the elite was mutually incompatible. The baths provided entertainment for the people, but many of the cultural activities on offer at the baths—athletics, literature, art, music—were attractive to the elite too, and contributed to their sense of identity within the community.

Given this ambiguous status of the baths—open to (nearly) all, but also central to the elite culture of the towns—we ought perhaps to conclude that the ‘democratic’ features of the baths were more important with regard to the *ideology* of civic bathing than the reality of what actually happened at the baths. Those who built baths, or provided free bathing, were providing a service for the citizenry as a whole, and were seeking to stress the unity of the citizen body more than the differentials within it, just as banquets were in some sense egalitarian, even if the quality of food provided for the diners differed. It is tempting to suggest that there is a link between the increased enthusiasm for benefactions relating to baths in the second century AD, the increased involvement of the *Augustales* and *plebs* as beneficiaries of distributions,<sup>292</sup> and the tendency in honorific inscriptions of the latter part of that century to lay stress on the role of the *plebs* in honouring benefactors.<sup>293</sup> The emphasis placed on the people of the Italian towns seems a deliberate attempt to emphasize

<sup>290</sup> *CIL* 11. 3811 = *ILS* 6583 with Cenerini 1987–8: 214.

<sup>291</sup> Fagan 1999: 210–12.

<sup>292</sup> Mrozek 1968: 166.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.* 166–9 also notes a preference in the second century for the term *plebs* to denote the people of the community in place of *populus*, *municipes*, or *coloni*.

the ideal of the community, even if the reality was in many cases one of an increasing disparity between rich and poor as large estates increased in size, the importance of the free peasantry declined, and hierarchies were reinforced by means of tenancy and rural patronage. Rich and poor alike could be helped, without the dangers involved in subverting the established order.

The importance of the baths was primarily social: here Romans were able to enjoy a pleasurable and relaxing environment, and pursue intellectual and sporting interests as well as the practical matter of getting clean.<sup>294</sup> Peculiar to Roman culture, they came to symbolize civilized living wherever Roman rule was established or admired. Like the amphitheatre, the baths represented an environment where the achievements of Rome's greatness were on display. The baths represented human domination of the elements, water and fire;<sup>295</sup> the fine marbles used to decorate the rooms and pools were brought from all over the Mediterranean, and reflected Roman control of the known world.<sup>296</sup> Baths, like the aqueducts which supplied them, were supposed to contribute to the health, as well as to the happiness, of the citizens of the town. But the baths were also, according to the prevailing ideology, a facility for the whole community, without the overt emphasis on status that distinguished many of the other public spaces of the city.

### THE MACELLUM

Attending the baths came to form a regular feature of a wealthy Roman's day, occupying part of the afternoon before dinner.<sup>297</sup> Food was available at the baths themselves, and the baths were often the venue at which dinner invitations were sought and issued; a visit to the baths was seen as an enjoyable preliminary to a fine

<sup>294</sup> Dunbabin 1989.

<sup>295</sup> Zajac 1999: 101.

<sup>296</sup> Paton and Schneider 1999: 296.

<sup>297</sup> See e.g. Suet. *Vesp.* 21; Plin. *Ep.* 9. 36.

dinner.<sup>298</sup> Also central to the world of entertainment and hospitality was the *macellum*.

The *macellum* was a familiar feature in the towns of Italy in the high imperial period.<sup>299</sup> A purpose-built enclosed market-building, it was typically designed around a central courtyard, with alcoves or stalls opening off a central space. There are various shapes and forms—many consist of a square or rectangular portico, with shops or booths opening onto the central court—but often *macella* included circular elements. In some cases the courtyard itself was round, as at Herdoniae (see Fig. 2.13) or Alba Fucens for example,<sup>300</sup> or there may have been a circular feature, a *tholos*, well or fountain head for example, which formed the centrepiece of the courtyard, as in the case of the celebrated ‘Temple of Serapis’ at Puteoli.<sup>301</sup> The origin of the term *macellum* is disputed—some scholars relate it to the Greek *makellon*, meaning ‘an enclosure’,<sup>302</sup> others to the Semitic root *’kl*, suggesting ‘a place connected with eating’, which may imply a Punic origin for the monument.<sup>303</sup> In either case, the development of the *macellum* is to be associated with the increasingly cosmopolitan urban society of late third-century BC Rome. The word is first attested early in the following century, in the comedies of Plautus.<sup>304</sup> We first hear of a specific building called *macellum* at Rome in 209 BC, when Livy records that it was rebuilt after a fire, together with some *tabernae* and the *atrium regium* (Livy 27. 11. 16). The implication is that this was not a new structure, but rather a reconstruction of an existing monument, which must therefore have been built earlier in the third century, evidently as a result of the removal of market stalls from the Forum in an effort to make the chief public space of the city more salubrious.<sup>305</sup> This *macellum* was located

<sup>298</sup> Yegül 1992: 33–40; Fagan 1999: 22–4.

<sup>299</sup> For the *macella* of Italy, see especially De Ruyt 1983: 253–9; also Jouffroy 1986: 44–6, 86–8, 123–5; Frayn 1993; Gros 1996: 450–64; Marengo and Paci 1990; De Ruyt 2000.

<sup>300</sup> Herdoniae: see De Ruyt 1983: 80–8; 1976. Alba Fucens: De Ruyt 1983: 30–4; Mertens 1969: 65–9; 1981: 72.

<sup>301</sup> Puteoli: De Ruyt 1983: 150–8; Sommella 1978: 70.

<sup>302</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 225–35; 2000: 180.

<sup>303</sup> Gaggiotti 1990*a*, *b*.

<sup>304</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 236.

<sup>305</sup> See Varro, cited at Nonius Marcellus 853L, with Morel 1987: 135.





Figure 2.13. Herdoniae: the *macellum*

between the Forum and the Subura, in the area behind that occupied by the later 'Basilica Aemilia'; excavations carried out in the 1980s revealed traces of a paved open space which is interpreted as its courtyard.<sup>306</sup>

In the Augustan period, however, a new *macellum* was built, the Macellum Liviae, which occupied the area outside the Porta Esquilina formerly occupied by the Forum Esquilinum;<sup>307</sup> and in the reign of Nero this was supplemented by the Macellum Magnum, a massive portico with central *tholos* constructed in AD 59 on the Caelian hill (Cass. Dio 62. 18. 3).<sup>308</sup> Meanwhile the importance of the Macellum

<sup>306</sup> For the history of the Macellum at Rome, see De Ruyt 1983: 158–63, 246–52; Coarelli 1985: 151; Pisani Sartorio 1996*a*. Gros (1996: 450) sees the events of 209 BC as the beginning of a new phase rather than the rebuilding of an existing structure. The recent excavations are discussed in Tortorici 1991: 37–9.

<sup>307</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 163–72; Pisani Sartorio 1996*b*.

<sup>308</sup> See De Ruyt 1983: 172–84; Pisani Sartorio 1996*c*. The location of the Macellum Magnum has now been identified under the site of the military hospital on the Caelian: see Carignani *et al.* 1990: 79–80.

behind the Forum declined. It was restructured in the Flavian period, and disappeared altogether with the building of the Forum Transitorium under Nerva.<sup>309</sup>

The chronology and geographical distribution of the *macella* in the towns of Italy are difficult to reconstruct precisely, for a variety of reasons. The layout of the *macellum* was subject to local variations, and never took on a single canonical form, though certain types of layout were to become predominant.<sup>310</sup> Interestingly, Vitruvius never refers to the *macellum* in the discussion of monumental buildings in his *de Architectura*.<sup>311</sup> The overall number of *macella* known from Italy is also substantially smaller than that of bath-buildings, for example—about 26 *macella* compared to more than 170 baths.<sup>312</sup> The chronological distribution of archaeologically identified and/or epigraphically attested *macella* is nevertheless very interesting.

The earliest examples date from the second half of the second century BC, notably the first *macellum* at Alba Fucens,<sup>313</sup> while at Aletrium in Latium, the *macellum*—along with a water supply, baths, *campus* and basilica, and other monuments too—formed part of the exceptionally generous benefaction made to the town by L. Betilienus Varus towards the end of that century, funded apparently from the profits of trade in olive oil in the Aegean.<sup>314</sup> Other examples, such as those from Brundisium<sup>315</sup> and Buxentum,<sup>316</sup> date to the late republican and Augustan periods; and a few, such as the one at Marruvium, can be dated to the earlier part of the first century AD.<sup>317</sup> There are, however, several important examples known from the latter part of that century and the second century AD, which appears to have been the high point for the building of *macella* in the imperial period. Important *macella* were constructed (or lavishly restored) in the

<sup>309</sup> Morselli and Tortorici 1989: 237; Pisani Sartorio 1996a.

<sup>310</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 284–9; Gaggiotti 1990b: 784–7.

<sup>311</sup> Gros 1996: 452.

<sup>312</sup> Figures from Marengo and Paci 1990: 128–32 (*macella*); DeLaine 1999b: 67 n. 3 (baths).

<sup>313</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 25–30.

<sup>314</sup> *CIL* I<sup>2</sup> 1529 = 10. 5807 = *ILS* 5348 = *ILLRP* 528. See Gasperini 1965: 16–19; Zevi 1976.

<sup>315</sup> *CIL* I<sup>2</sup> 3173 = *ILLRP* 558; De Ruyt 1983: 47–8.

<sup>316</sup> Bracco 1983.

<sup>317</sup> *CIL* 9. 3682 = *ILS* 5582; Letta and D'Amato 1975: 256.

Flavian period at Pompeii and Puteoli, apparently after the earthquake that devastated this part of Campania in AD 62. The market-building at Pompeii appears to have been restored and functioning again by the time of the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79, demonstrating the priority given to the activities which took place within it.<sup>318</sup> The construction of the *macella* at Herdoniae and Aeclanum early in the second century appears to have been linked in part to the increased importance of those cities when the Via Traiana connecting Beneventum and Brundisium was constructed early in the second century AD, and they found themselves on the main road between Rome and the eastern half of the Empire.<sup>319</sup> In other cases new *macella* replaced earlier structures devoted to marketing: at Alba Fucens, for example, the republican building was replaced by a much more extensive second-century AD *macellum*,<sup>320</sup> and similarly the second-century *macellum* at Paestum seems to have replaced an earlier fish market, remains of which were found under the town's basilica.<sup>321</sup> Another new *macellum* from the second century is known from Aesernia, where L. Abullius Dexter, magistrate and patron of Aesernia under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, also built a *chalcidicum* and *porticus*,<sup>322</sup> while a rebuilding of the Augustan building at Saepinum also appears to have taken place in the second century.<sup>323</sup> The second-century *macellum* at Praeneste apparently lent its name to a region of the city.<sup>324</sup>

As with the other forms of building already discussed, it is very likely that the creation and development of the *macellum* at Rome served as a model for the towns of Italy. The existence of fish markets at Paestum and at Cosa, both of them Latin colonies of 273 BC, may reflect the Forum Piscatorium at Rome, which predated the

<sup>318</sup> Puteoli: Sommella 1978: 70. Pompeii: Dobbins 1994: 668–85.

<sup>319</sup> Herdoniae: De Ruyt 1976; De Ruyt 1983: 80–8. Aeclanum: *CIL* 9. 1169 = *ILS* 5584, with De Ruyt 1983: 17–21.

<sup>320</sup> Alba Fucens: Mertens 1969: 65–9; De Ruyt 1983: 30–4. Note, however, that Coarelli and La Regina (1984: 80) prefer an early first-century AD date for the later building.

<sup>321</sup> Paestum: Greco and Theodorescu 1980: 17–18; De Ruyt 1983: 125–9.

<sup>322</sup> Aesernia: *CIL* 9. 2653 and 2653a = *ILS* 5560a, with Buonocore 2002: 460–1.

<sup>323</sup> Saepinum: *CIL* 9. 2475 = *ILS* 5583. See Matteini Chiari 1982: 163–6.

<sup>324</sup> *CIL* 14. 2946 with 2937, 14. 2972 = *ILS* 6253.

Macellum, just as the other public monuments of the colonies—*curia*, forum, *comitium*—reflected those of the City.<sup>325</sup> The earliest examples of *macella* can be seen as reflecting the increasing sophistication of the public spaces of Rome (and also, of course, those of the cities of the Greek world), while the first-century examples fit naturally into the context of the development of urban structures in the towns of Italy in the years which followed the Social War. In particular, the *macellum* at Puteoli, and the building excavated underneath the church of San Lorenzo Maggiore at Naples and identified as the *macellum* of that city, have been seen as reflecting the design of the Macellum Magnum at Rome.<sup>326</sup> The further enthusiasm for building *macella* in the towns of Italy in the Flavian and Antonine periods could likewise be seen as inspired by the influence of that monumental structure. Some have argued that the complex known as the ‘Markets of Trajan’ adjacent to the Forum of Trajan at Rome (its ancient name is unknown) should be considered a *macellum*, given its commercial function and the definitive disappearance of the Macellum itself under Nerva; but its impact appears rather to be primarily in terms of the architectural design of curved spaces (as seen for example in the *macella* of Herdoniae and Alba Fucens) rather than as a model which was eagerly followed in itself.<sup>327</sup>

Nevertheless, there are significant differences between the role and location of the *macella* within the Roman and Italian contexts which deserve examination. At Rome, the twin factors governing the location of the *macella* seem to have been on the one hand a desire to remove the sale of foodstuffs from the Forum proper, and on the other to establish the new *macella* in locations which were more convenient for consumers based in the primarily residential areas of the city. These were in peripheral positions, on the Caelian and the Esquiline, which were more easily supplied with goods from the hinterland of Rome.<sup>328</sup> Even the ‘Markets of Trajan’ were primarily approached from the Quirinal rather than from the ceremonial space of the Forum of Trajan itself, onto which they abutted. In the towns

<sup>325</sup> Cosa: Brown 1980: 36. See Gaggiotti 1990*b*: 788–9.

<sup>326</sup> De Simone 1986: 245–7; De Ruyt 2000: 182.

<sup>327</sup> Gros 1996: 456–8; De Ruyt 2000: 181.

<sup>328</sup> Coarelli 1986: 42–3; Morel 1987: 137–9.

of Italy, however, the *macellum* was typically located at the very centre of the community, on or near the forum of the city. Of course there are exceptions—the *macella* of Ostia and Puteoli, for example—but these market-buildings, in port cities, were appropriately located closer to the harbour. At Pompeii, Herdoniae, Alba Fucens, Saepinum, and Paestum, the *macellum* either opened directly on to the forum or was separated from it by a single building such as the basilica.<sup>329</sup>

In commercial terms there were good reasons for locating the *macellum* in what we might assume to be one of the busiest public spaces in the city. On the other hand, we might expect the smells, rubbish, and general squalor associated with a market to be out of keeping with a dignified public space such as the forum. As Wallace-Hadrill has noted in the case of Pompeii, activities associated with eating, drinking, and sex seem to be excluded from the forum, and the *macellum* seems a strange exception to this pattern, even though the disreputable activities are arguably taking place out of sight within the confines of the building.<sup>330</sup> Cicero in his *De Officiis* refers to ‘fishmongers, butchers, cooks, poulterers, and fishermen’ together with ‘perfumers, dancers and stage performers’ as pursuing the most disgraceful of trades (*Cic. Off.* 1. 150): the former are precisely the types of people who occupied the *macellum*, and which we might reasonably expect to be banished from the central public space of the city.

So why was the *macellum*, deliberately marginalized at Rome, so strikingly a central element in the *fora* of the Italian towns? The answer, I would suggest, lies in the centrality of the *macellum* and the activities associated with it to the civic life of Italy in the high Empire, but also the complex of attitudes to trade and trading which we can detect in the Italian context at this time.

As with the other civic buildings of the time, the building or restoration of *macella* in the second century was typically financed by city magistrates, patrons, or other benefactors, such as Abullius Dexter at Aesernia, the patron of the colony of Praeneste who built the *macellum* there, or the benefactor at Aeclanum who left money

<sup>329</sup> De Ruyt 1983: dépliant 2 illustrates this point effectively.

<sup>330</sup> Wallace-Hadrill 1991: 244–5; 1995, esp. 55.

for the decoration of the town's *macellum* in his will. Like a bath-building, a *macellum*, once established, might produce an income for the city in the form of rents charged to traders,<sup>331</sup> but providing a source of revenue for the city was unlikely to be the primary motivating factor in building one. Rather, a *macellum* was considered a notable civic amenity;<sup>332</sup> a town (other than Rome) might have one or at most two examples. It is important at this point to distinguish between the *macellum* and the other forms of market which existed in Italy at this time. Market stalls might be set up in public spaces in a city such as the forum, and in a larger town there would be numerous *tabernae* distributed throughout the city, for sales as well as manufacture.<sup>333</sup> There were also *nundinae*, periodic markets which moved from town to town on a regular cycle, as revealed by a series of inscriptions which come predominantly from southern Latium and northern Campania.<sup>334</sup> We also know that rural markets existed on some large country estates, which served to supply the tenants of those estates and to sell their produce.<sup>335</sup> There were thus many places in and around the Roman city where food could be bought. The *macella*, by contrast, were permanent buildings where the sale of specialist, luxury produce predominated. The literary record lays stress on the sale of fish and meat at the *macellum* and the design of *macella*, with purpose-built basins and counters, reflected this.<sup>336</sup> Both these products were traditionally linked with the appetites of the rich because of their cost and scarcity. Although small fish could easily be obtained, shoals of larger species were infrequent in the Mediterranean, so catching a large fish of the type favoured by gourmets was a rare and unusual event, reflected in its cost at the market.<sup>337</sup> Likewise, the raising of animals specifically for meat

<sup>331</sup> DeLaine 1999a: 12.

<sup>332</sup> Frayn 1993: 7–8.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid. 1–11.

<sup>334</sup> Degrassi 1963: 300–6 with Gabba 1988: 147–50; Frayn 1993: 38–41; De Ligt 1993a: 111–17; Morley 1996: 166–74; Lo Cascio 2000b.

<sup>335</sup> Gabba 1988: 150–8; De Ligt 1993a: 156–7, 202–5; De Ligt 1993b; Cracco Ruggini 2000.

<sup>336</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 313, 317.

<sup>337</sup> Purcell 1995: 136; Davidson 1997: 186–90; Garnsey 1999: 6, 116–17. On fishing in the Mediterranean more generally, see Horden and Purcell 2000: 190–7.

in the comparatively arid Mediterranean landscape was mainly the preserve of the elite, and the costs again reflected this.<sup>338</sup> To a large extent, then, the *macellum* was a venue for the ostentatious expenditure of members of the elite, who might even visit the *macellum* themselves to check personally the quality of food on offer.<sup>339</sup> Numerous literary anecdotes stressing the outlandish sums spent by gastronomes on expensive food are set in the *macellum*: Seneca, for example, records how a mullet presented to the emperor Tiberius was at his instructions auctioned at the *macellum*, and rival bids reached the sum of 5,000 sesterces (Sen. *Ep.* 95. 42). At the same time, the presence of a market for luxury foods in the centre of the city could be seen as a statement of the wealth and status of the community as a whole; the prestige of the town was enhanced by having ready purchasers for such expensive goods.

This close association with elite lifestyles goes some way to explain the central location of the *macellum* in many Italian cities. Almost by definition the *macellum* was a closed space, providing security for the expensive goods stored within it, and this arguably allowed closer civic supervision of the trading activities that went on within it than would have been possible in other forms of market. That the civic authorities were interested in the potential extravagance on the part of consumers and over-pricing on the part of traders is illustrated by an anecdote in Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*: on the way to the baths, Lucius stops at the *forum cuppedinis* (a term used for a market for luxury goods)<sup>340</sup> to buy fish, knocks the trader down from his original price, but then encounters an old friend, now serving as aedile (with responsibility for the market). When he hears the cost of the fish, however, the aedile abuses the trader and orders the fish to be crushed underfoot, much to Lucius' dismay (Apul. *Met.* 1. 24–5).<sup>341</sup> The story not only provides a vignette of life in the *macellum*, but also demonstrates the links between the *macellum* and baths in the lifestyle of the affluent Roman.

There are also indications that the activities which took place within the *macellum* were integrated into the broader civic structures

<sup>338</sup> Corbier 1989; Garnsey 1999: 122–7.

<sup>339</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 367–72.

<sup>340</sup> Tortorici 1991: 39–40.

<sup>341</sup> See the discussion by Davidson 1997: 188–90.

of the community. The location of the *macellum* in the forum, close to the chief temples of the city, brought it into close contact with civic religion. Indeed, meat sold at the *macellum* might originate from animals sacrificed at the temples as well as those butchered for 'secular' purposes. Those members of the elite present at a sacrifice would partake of the sacrificial meat, otherwise it might be sold.<sup>342</sup> This was a particular cause of anxiety to Christians, and one which St Paul was keen to allay.<sup>343</sup> Likewise, the operations within the *macellum* might take place under the tutelage of the genius of the imperial house: the *macellum* at Pompeii had its own shrine to the imperial family, and there were similarly statues of members of the imperial family at the *macellum* at Puteoli in the third century AD.<sup>344</sup> Far from being marginal, the *macellum* was closely integrated into the world of civic ritual and politics in the cities of Italy. This, I would suggest, is particularly the case in the later first and in the second century AD, a period when banqueting and sociability can be seen to take on an increased importance in the civic context.

### BANQUETS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

To summarize, then, the overall level of public building in the towns of Italy appears to decline in the second century AD from the high level reached in the first century, but within that general pattern we can see that particular attention was devoted to particular types of building—amphitheatres, baths, and *macella*. However, other manifestations of generosity also benefited the towns of Italy and their populations in the same period.<sup>345</sup> Duncan-Jones and Mrozek have shown that in the second century the number of inscriptions recording public banquets and distributions of food or money (known as *sportulae*) reaches its highest level. Banquets predominate in the first

<sup>342</sup> Scheid 1988: 269; Corbier 1989.

<sup>343</sup> 1 *Corinthians* 10: 25. See Isenberg 1975; De Ruyt 1983: 376–8.

<sup>344</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 157, 324–5.

<sup>345</sup> For persistence in patterns of benefaction into the third century AD, see Jacques 1984: 719–22.



century AD and the first half of the following century, after which cash distributions appear to be more common.<sup>346</sup> Sometimes the two types of benefaction—the erection of a building, and the holding of an entertainment or distribution—were combined, as when the construction of a public building was celebrated with a feast. When Pliny dedicated a temple at Tifernum Tiberinum, for example, he held an *epulum* to mark the occasion (*Ep.* 4. 1. 6).

Why this increasing enthusiasm for banquets and distributions? In part the trend away from public building may have been due to the way in which towns were gradually acquiring a full complement of such buildings: granted, a community might acquire more than one set of baths, and restoration was a constant concern, but a certain tailing off in building was perhaps inevitable, in the absence of major changes in forms of public life such as those brought about later by the official recognition of Christianity. Just as trends at Rome influenced patterns of building, however, so more general patterns of generosity in the capital influenced the benefactors of the Italian towns. The emperors were keen to maintain peace and loyalty among the urban *plebs* of Rome, and acts of generosity in the form of distributions of food and money formed as important an element in this strategy as the provision of entertainment in the circus and the amphitheatre. As Fronto observed, ‘the emperor knows . . . that the Roman people are held in check by two things above all, the corn-supply and the shows’ (*Princip. histor.* 17). To the regular provision of free grain for the *plebs frumentaria*<sup>347</sup> was added occasional, but still substantial, *congiaria* (distributions of money) which typically took place on occasions of celebration, such as the accession of a new emperor.<sup>348</sup> Indeed the emperors were keen to monopolize this form of generosity within the city of Rome.<sup>349</sup> Different emperors provided generosity in different forms, reflecting the different personae they wished to construct for themselves. For instance Augustus

<sup>346</sup> Mrozek 1984; 1987: 17–24, 27–8, with MacMullen 1988: 5–7; Duncan-Jones 1965: 218; 1982: 138–44. See also Pasqualini 1969–70 for further discussion of this data.

<sup>347</sup> Rickman 1980: 179–97; Garnsey 1988: 236–9.

<sup>348</sup> Veyne 1990: 391. See *RG* 15 for an account of Augustus’ acts of generosity to the *plebs*.

<sup>349</sup> Veyne 1990: 389.

ordered the guests at his formal dinners with strict attention to rank, reflecting the concern for hierarchy within the body of Roman citizens also displayed in his legislation for the theatre (Suet. *Aug.* 74). Nero preferred *sportulae publicae* (distributions of food) to banquets, but this policy was reversed by Domitian, who abolished the *sportulae*, replacing them with *cenae rectae* (formal dinners) and *cenae publicae* (state banquets) at which (it was said) Romans of all ranks participated, though the reality of this ideal may be doubted (Suet. *Ner.* 16. 2, *Dom.* 7. 1).<sup>350</sup> Trajan was praised by Pliny for his affable and approachable conduct at dinner (Plin. *Pan.* 49. 4–6). More generally, the increasing use of banqueting in public, and distributions, as forms of benefaction in the towns of Italy, may thus be seen as a reflection of the practice on the part of individual patrons in first-century Rome, attested in the literary sources, of distributing small quantities of food and cash to their clients (Juv. 1. 95–116), as well as the grandiose benefactions of the *princeps* himself. ‘Bread’ was provided as well as ‘circuses’, and the buildings in which the latter took place.

Recent studies of the phenomenon agree that the motivation behind banquets and distributions of this kind was primarily political rather than charitable; the beneficiaries received food or money on the grounds that they were citizens of a town, or belonged to specifically defined groups within the community, rather than on the basis of need.<sup>351</sup> Indeed, most of the resources distributed on these occasions went to the upper echelons of the local community, in particular the *decuriones* or *Augustales*, in a deliberately hierarchical pattern. In a distribution, *decuriones* might typically receive 12 sesterces (HS), and the *Augustales* 8 HS but the ordinary people of the town only 4 HS (though the members of the *collegia* might well be given special treatment).<sup>352</sup> A distribution of food or money, just like the building of a public monument, had the primary effect of illustrating the generosity of the donor, but it might also be a means of emphasizing the prestige of the upper class and the

<sup>350</sup> D’Arms 1984: 338–44; 1990: 308–11.

<sup>351</sup> Mrozek 1987: 102–4; Woolf 1990: 204–11.

<sup>352</sup> Mrozek 1987: 105, with the review by P. Garnsey in *JRS* 79 (1989), 232; Duncan-Jones 1982: 141; Goddard 1989; Woolf 1990: 214–15.

distinction of a town as a whole. Depending on the size of the body of recipients, however, it could potentially cost a great deal less than the building of a public monument. Duncan-Jones's analysis of building costs and *sportulae* in Italy shows that while a building might typically cost several hundred thousand sesterces (the median figure attested is 300,000 HS),<sup>353</sup> the vast majority of foundations set up to support banquets and distributions cost less than 20,000 HS, and *ad hoc* distributions carried out on specific occasions would have cost much less.<sup>354</sup> Few of the larger schemes post-date the reign of Marcus Aurelius.<sup>355</sup> The crucial factor was the size of the urban population or the number present when the banquet or distribution took place; the *decuriones* might receive larger individual gifts than the members of the *plebs*, but their number was limited, normally a hundred or less.<sup>356</sup> Apuleius, we are told in his *Apology*, held his marriage at his country villa rather than in the town of Oea in order to avoid demands for *sportulae* from the citizens (Apul. *Apol.* 87. 10); however, the population of the town, estimated at 22,250 free citizens by Duncan-Jones,<sup>357</sup> was much larger than that of most Italian towns, where a distribution or feast might cost a fraction of the expense involved in setting up a public building. It is probably no accident that few examples of distributions are known from northern Italy, where the urban populations were typically much larger.<sup>358</sup>

Distributions in kind might have had further attractions for benefactors. In the first and second centuries AD, imports of wine into Italy increased dramatically, and the disappearance of the Dressel 2–4 amphora type suggests that there was little long-distance commerce in Italian wine after the middle of the second century AD.<sup>359</sup> No doubt the inhabitants of the Italian cities, in particular Rome, now consumed much of this wine, transported to the city in the 'Spello'

<sup>353</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 124–5.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid. 171–84.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid. 354–6.

<sup>356</sup> For 100 or 30 as the typical membership of the *ordo*, see Duncan-Jones 1982: 283–6. We now know that there were sixty-three *decuriones* at Irni: *Lex Irnitana* 31, in Gonzalez 1986. See also Nicols 1988, and the discussion below in Ch. 3.

<sup>357</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 144, 266–76.

<sup>358</sup> Mrozek 1987: 31.

<sup>359</sup> Panella 1981: 65; Tchernia 1986: 272–84; Panella 1989; Panella and Tchernia 1994.

amphorae,<sup>360</sup> but landowners may often have been left with large surpluses. One way of disposing of this would have been as an accompaniment to public banquets or as part of a distribution of *crustulum* and *mulsum*, cakes and honeyed wine; a solution which would have brought prestige to the donor as well as absorbing an otherwise useless surplus.<sup>361</sup> The importance of this sort of gift in kind is shown by an inscription from the reign of Antoninus Pius which records that in addition to giving substantial cash legacies to the town of Petelia in Bruttium, M'. Megonius Leo donated a vineyard (producing Aminean wine) to the *Augustales* of the town, so that its produce could be used for banquets and reduce the cost to the individual *Augustales*, who might otherwise be unwilling to take on this office.<sup>362</sup> Distributions thus offered an opportunity for benefactors to display their generosity at limited cost to themselves, and it is significant that the heyday of the distributions was the latter part of the second century AD, which was (as will be discussed further in Ch. 3) a period characterized in particular by a broadening of the class of benefactors. Whereas the construction of public buildings was so expensive that only a very few within the community could undertake it, the increasing popularity of distributions and their lower cost reflected the involvement of a much wider cross-section of the populace in civic benefaction; wealthy freedmen as well as *decuriones* and senators; women as well as men.<sup>363</sup> The occasions on which the distributions took place, typically the birthday of a member of the elite family, or the dedication of a statue, tended to reinforce the position of the whole family as a source of support for the community, as well as the individual concerned.

Although inscriptions recording distributions are more numerous, those recording civic banquets are of particular interest, as dining and commensality were central to the establishment and maintenance of social hierarchies within the ancient city. Food can be seen more generally as an indicator of wealth and status, both of which were of crucial importance in Roman Italy. 'The communal meal

<sup>360</sup> Purcell 1985: 13–15.

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.* 14.

<sup>362</sup> *CIL* 10. 114 = *ILS* 6469 with Bossu 1982.

<sup>363</sup> Mrozek 1987: 74–6.

functions simultaneously as an instrument of social harmony ... and as a mechanism of social control,' as D'Arms put it;<sup>364</sup> in particular, dining together or giving food can be seen as an act cementing the bond between patron and client. Food-distributions and banquets thus had a particular appropriateness where a benefactor sought to establish him or herself as a patron to the whole community; the smaller the community, the more likely the event was to succeed in terms of reinforcing ties of dependence.<sup>365</sup>

Like distributions, civic banquets were organized in such a way as to emphasize the prestige of the local elite, and their hierarchical structure also mirrored the organization of private dinners and dinners held by *collegia*, in which moving from one's allocated places was an offence punishable by a fine.<sup>366</sup> At Surrentum, for example, *decuriones* were entertained to a *magna cena*, while the populace received only a distribution of *crustulum* and *mulsum*.<sup>367</sup> At Iuvanum, the *decuriones* and their sons, together with the *Augustales* and their sons, received a *cena*, while the *plebs* received an evidently less grandiose *epulum*.<sup>368</sup> On these occasions, it is worth noting that members of the curial class under the age of 25, who could not normally serve as *decuriones*, could still take their share, and on occasion the wives and children of *decuriones* could participate too.<sup>369</sup> In many cases, the inscriptions specify that the members of the curial class are to dine together in public, presumably in *triclinia* set up in the forum or another highly visible location.<sup>370</sup> The banquets thus served in part to reinforce the dignity of the ruling families, upon whose financial support the communities largely relied, and thereby to cement their loyalty to the town.

It is striking, nevertheless, that it was thought appropriate for *any* kind of dinner or distribution to be given to the ordinary citizens of

<sup>364</sup> D'Arms 1984: 339.

<sup>365</sup> On food and patronage, see Woolf 1990: 212–13. For large-scale distribution of agricultural products to clients, see Whittaker 1985: 59.

<sup>366</sup> *CIL* 14. 2112 = *ILS* 7212, with Garnsey 1999: 135–6.

<sup>367</sup> *CIL* 10. 688; compare also *CIL* 9. 3160 (= *ILS* 6530) from Corfinium, using different terminology for the dining arrangements for each category of guest.

<sup>368</sup> *CIL* 9. 2962.

<sup>369</sup> *Dig.* 50. 2. 6; Mrozek 1987: 86.

<sup>370</sup> *In publico*: *CIL* 9. 4971 = *ILS* 6560; 11. 4815 = *ILS* 6638; 14. 2795 = *ILS* 272; *publice*: 14. 2793 = *ILS* 5449. See Mrozek 1987: 47.

the towns, if the main point of the exercise was to express gratitude and respect to the *decuriones* and *Augustales*; after all, benefactors could quite easily (and less expensively) have organized dinners for the *decuriones* alone and ignored the *plebs* altogether. In fact, the wide spread of the recipients laid stress on the community as a whole: those attending gained a share of these benefactions because they were citizens of a particular town. The commensality involved in these occasions promoted the idea that the participants were fellow-citizens, even though in practice the quality and quantity of food received by the different classes within that community differed markedly. The pattern is very similar to that identified in the amphitheatres of the Italian towns in this period: the whole community was the beneficiary when gladiatorial games were held, but the hierarchies within that community were reinforced at the same time. The recurrence of images of banqueting on funerary monuments (most apparently dating to the mid or later first century AD) is interesting in this context. Just as Petronius' Trimalchio wanted a dinner he had organized at a cost of two *denarii* a head depicted on his tomb-monument, with him distributing coins from a bag and 'the people enjoying themselves' (Petron. *Sat.* 71), so reliefs from several locations in Italy, most likely derived from funerary monuments, represent banquets plausibly interpreted as public *cenae* or *epula*. Diners are seen reclining around tables on monuments from Sestinum and Este, while a relief from Pizzoli (near Amiternum) shows two groups of diners, one reclining and one sitting, reflecting the differing statuses of the participants.<sup>371</sup> Likewise, a monument from Asculum depicts a benefactor distributing money to men and children, perhaps in the context of a public banquet. He is represented standing on a dais, accompanied by a female figure, probably to be identified with his wife, and an official who is apparently checking the recipients off on a list (and presumably making sure they are entitled to the benefaction).<sup>372</sup> Two reliefs found at the site of a Roman villa at La Pellegrina, near ancient Saturnia in Etruria, apparently depict both

<sup>371</sup> Bianchi Bandinelli 1970: 67; Ghedini 1990; Compostella 1992, whom I follow in identifying these dinners as manifestations of euergetism rather than private funerary meals. See now especially Dunbabin 2003: 72–85.

<sup>372</sup> Veyne 1959.

gladiatorial and banqueting scenes, and may well come from the same tomb-monument.<sup>373</sup> Both civic dinners and gladiatorial spectacles went together in the minds of benefactors, and sometimes (as we have seen) games and dinners were laid on as part of the same display of generosity; both can be seen as indicators of the continuing importance of civic loyalty and civic identity in the towns of Italy from the first century into the second, and perhaps beyond.

The distributions of food and money so characteristic of the later second century AD seem therefore to have provided prestige for the benefactors, honour for the *decuriones* and other elite and sub-elite groups in the Italian towns, and an occasional windfall for the mass of poorer inhabitants. But most significantly, they encouraged the idea that the city formed a community of fellow-citizens. Even if they took place only occasionally, and their form minimized the cost for the donors, these feasts maintained the continuing identity of the community by means of ritualized feasting.

In this context, the importance of the *macellum* as a focus of attention in the late first and second centuries AD becomes even more clear. Banquets were an important feature of not only private entertainment, but also public events that involved the whole community. The *macellum* was the source of some at least of the foods to be consumed on those occasions.<sup>374</sup> Varro notes that in the later Republic, the dinners of *collegia* at Rome had become so numerous that they had driven up prices in the *macellum* (*Rust.* 3. 2. 16), while Julius Caesar arranged contracts with the *macellarii* for provisions for the grand banquet he gave in memory of his late daughter, together with a gladiatorial show, though in the event his own household staff were heavily involved too (*Suet. Iul.* 26). The *macellum* was a symbol not only of elite consumption, but also of elite generosity.

## THE CHANGING FACE OF THE IMPERIAL CITY

Several interconnected trends can be identified in this examination of the changes in the urban fabric of the Italian towns in the second

<sup>373</sup> Pollard 1998.

<sup>374</sup> De Ruyt 1983: 370.

century AD. First, the importance of the city of Rome as a model for the Italian cities, not only in the Augustan period, but also in the years which followed: the Colosseum, the imperial *thermae*, and the Macellum Magnum all served to inspire the Italian elites to imitate them in their own communities. A more general trend identifiable in the city of Rome from the mid Republic onwards was an increased specialization of public space. Special locations were increasingly provided for activities—entertainment, marketing—which had previously formed some of the numerous functions of the Forum. This tendency reached a peak in the early Empire, as multiple imperial *fora* were built at Rome—by Caesar, Augustus, Vespasian (the ‘Temple of Peace’), Nerva, and Trajan—in addition to the traditional Forum Romanum. These new public spaces were primarily ceremonial in character. The multiplication of public spaces can also be detected in Latium as early as the last century BC—Praeneste and Tarracina could boast more than one forum in this period—and further developments of this kind took place in the early Empire.<sup>375</sup> At Arretium—perhaps not coincidentally the home town of Maecenas, a close associate of the *princeps*—the forum was decorated with statues and *elogia* recalling those of the Forum of Augustus at Rome.<sup>376</sup> Other towns too acquired similar sets of statuary, which may also be indicative of new *fora* on the Augustan model, or at least public buildings like that of Eumachia at Pompeii, which recalled the Augustan monuments at Rome.<sup>377</sup> Volsinii (modern Bolsena), extensively excavated in the 1960s–1970s by the École Française, also appears to have had more than one forum. The excavated forum dates back only to the mid/late first century AD, while that of the republican period is thought to have been in a completely different part of the city. What is particularly striking is that all traces of commercial activity seem deliberately to have been excluded from the forum of imperial date. Some shops which had previously existed on the site were covered over by work on the new forum; new *tabernae* and a public latrine were constructed outside the new forum precinct, which was separated from the rest of the city by a

<sup>375</sup> Coarelli 1982: 155, 321–2; Gros and Torelli 1988: 221.

<sup>376</sup> Sommella 1988: 163; Degrassi 1937: 57–67.

<sup>377</sup> Degrassi 1937: 68–70; Zanker 1998: 93–102.



series of steps and a lockable gate.<sup>378</sup> Major towns such as Puteoli and Beneventum likewise acquired more than one public space.<sup>379</sup>

The importance of the Roman models in these cases is clear, and the emulation of the latest initiatives of the emperors could be justified in terms of expressions of loyalty to the regime, as well as architectural fashion. Arguably trends in monumental building were also linked, to some extent at least, with the local realities of the Italian towns. These communities were in general anxious to avoid acquiring buildings which were of little utility to the community and/or likely to be a long-term drain on civic resources.<sup>380</sup> If funds were potentially short, and local authorities concerned about unnecessary building projects (as it appears they usually were) it seems unlikely that such expensive buildings as amphitheatres, baths, and *macella* would have been set up without having at least some connection to priorities and concerns of a local nature, as well as manifesting loyalty to the *princeps* on the part of the benefactor or community.

One significant trend in this respect is the decline in the importance of formal political participation in the Italian towns of the high Empire, as at Rome. Nevertheless, interaction between elite and people, though less formal in style, continued to take place in physical settings and ideological contexts which were identifiably civic in character. These included the amphitheatre and the baths, and the banquets and distributions which became increasingly popular in the second century AD, with provisions supplied, most likely, by the *macellum*. In all these cases, the provision of entertainment for the mass of the people was combined with a keen awareness of hierarchy within the citizen body—to a lesser extent at the baths, but more overtly in the seating plan at the games, and at feasts and distributions where the food and money the participants received was expressly allocated according to wealth and status. Together, amphitheatres, baths, and *macella* contributed to an urbanism based on sociability and conviviality. Not just utilitarian buildings,

<sup>378</sup> For the excavation of the forum and its environs at Volsinii, see Hallier, Humbert, and Pomey 1982; Gros 1983.

<sup>379</sup> Gros and Torelli 1988: 221; Torelli, M. R. 2002: 113–14.

<sup>380</sup> Johnston 1985: 115–17.

they acted as symbols of urbanity and sophistication, helped to maintain loyalty to the community, and to inculcate civic values and traditions beyond those associated with formal politics. Tacitus defined *humanitas* among the Britons in terms of *porticus et balinea et conviviorum elegantiam* (porticoes, baths, and elegant dinners: Tac. *Agr.* 21); aptly, as his *Agricola*, written at the end of the first century AD, was reflecting current urban ideals and practices in Italy.

The increasing importance of these amphitheatres, baths, and *macella* in the urban fabric can be traced across the peninsula. At Alba Fucens, a wealthy patrician house was destroyed in order to build the amphitheatre in the 30s AD.<sup>381</sup> At Puteoli, the amphitheatre became a major focal point for the city, where roads from hinterland and port converged, in addition to the traditional centres of civic life within the limits of the old Latin colony.<sup>382</sup> Zanker has shown that at Ostia the baths, together with the clubhouses of the *collegia*, came to form an increasingly important focus of urban life.<sup>383</sup> Elsewhere, too, the construction of baths had a major impact on the appearance of the city. At Atri, we can see that the building of the baths involved a major reorganization of the urban layout;<sup>384</sup> while at Volsinii in the first century AD, buildings had to be purchased and then demolished in order to create the new baths.<sup>385</sup> The baths also became a location for honouring and commemorating the distinguished: a series of dedications to emperors were set up in the baths at Telesia, for example.<sup>386</sup> By late antiquity, the baths, which in most towns continued to be maintained, can be seen as a major focus of civic activity. In the fourth century we hear that statues were sometimes transferred here from other, now less frequented, parts of the cities: *ex locis abditis*;<sup>387</sup> at Luni, the basilica near the forum was replaced in late antiquity with a set of baths and a basin for keeping fish: leisure and gastronomy were replacing the formal politics of the early imperial

<sup>381</sup> Mertens 1981: 47.

<sup>382</sup> Gros and Torelli 1988: 228; Sommella 1978: 81–4.

<sup>383</sup> Zanker 1994.

<sup>384</sup> Azzena 1987: 86.

<sup>385</sup> *CIL* 11. 7285 = *ILS* 8996.

<sup>386</sup> DeLaine 1999b: 73.

<sup>387</sup> See for example *CIL* 9. 1588 = *ILS* 5480 (Beneventum); 10. 3714 = *ILS* 5478 (Laternum), with Curran 1994: 49.

city.<sup>388</sup> The towns of Italy were being transformed by what we might term the 'urbanism of sociability'.<sup>389</sup>

Another dimension of this drift away from the formal public spaces of the city is the way in which the private houses, or the villas, of the elite were gradually becoming more important in terms of the relationships between the local aristocracies and the populace of the cities of Italy. The changing layout identified in houses of the imperial period, and the decreasing emphasis on the *atrium* in favour of the audience room, tends to contribute to the picture of the aristocratic house as a centre of patronage. The entertainment of clients was increasingly concerned with the provision of meals and food, and dining rooms thus came to form a central element of the aristocratic house, too.<sup>390</sup> There is some evidence that houses and villas began to take on some of the traditional roles of the forum as a locale for honouring notable citizens. This trend must be connected in part to the monopoly of public commemoration enjoyed by the emperor in Rome, which meant that for the senatorial elite activities previously characteristic of public space now had to take place in more private contexts.<sup>391</sup> This was particularly true in the capital, where the honorific tablets presented to civic patrons were displayed within the honorand's house, for example, but there are indications of similar practices in Italian contexts too.<sup>392</sup> For example, a villa investigated outside Saepinum in Samnium produced a series of dedications by the citizens of Saepinum to the sons of C. Fufidius Atticus, who was married to Neratia Marullina, a member of the most distinguished local family. This must have been associated with one of the Neratius family's rural estates, but the dedication was (we might think) in a form more appropriate to a public rather than a private space.<sup>393</sup> The villa of the Volusii Saturnini at Lucus Feroniae in Etruria, where the *lararium* contained a series of inscriptions commemorating the achievements of members of the family, pro-

<sup>388</sup> Frova 1985: 62–3.

<sup>389</sup> Zanker 1994; 2000.

<sup>390</sup> Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 51–7; Ellis 1988: 575; 1991: 119–20; 2000: 69, 182–3.

<sup>391</sup> Eck 1984: 141–2.

<sup>392</sup> Nicols 1980*b*; see Eck 1997: 171–2, 185.

<sup>393</sup> Gaggiotti 1984–5; Eck 1996: 307.

vides a possible parallel.<sup>394</sup> Similarly, the embellishment of rural villas with baths and mosaics which can be detected in some areas of rural Italy in the second and third centuries AD may also have been at the expense of the cities, as landowners preferred to spend their money on their own villa than on providing their community with civic amenities; the effect would have been particularly pronounced in those areas such as Lucania and northern Etruria which were characterized by a low density of urban centres.<sup>395</sup> At the same time, the tombs of the wealthy became less ostentatious than they had been in the late Republic and the early years of the Empire; these now tended to be set up at a distance from the city and from roads, often on the deceased's own rural estates.<sup>396</sup>

We know that in the early second century, city authorities were concerned about the impact on the cities of markets set up on the estates of the wealthy, from a case reported by Pliny. In AD 105, Ti. Claudius Augustanus Alpinus L. Bellicius Sollers, a former praetor, asked the Senate for permission to hold a market on his estate in the territory of Vicetia (modern Vicenza). The city was strongly opposed to this proposal and paid a substantial sum to an advocate to oppose the request, but in view of the influential support behind Bellicius the advocate failed to attend the second session of the Senate at which the proposal was to be discussed (Plin. *Ep.* 5. 4; 5. 13. 1–5). Pliny is interested in the episode largely with regard to the responsibilities of an advocate, and the business under issue appears not to have been unusual: he calls it a *res parva* (*Ep.* 5. 4; 1). The vigorous opposition to the proposal on the part of the Vicentini, however, suggests that from their point of view Bellicius' request was no trivial matter. The creation of the market on a nearby rural estate strengthened the bonds of patronage of the landlord over his tenants, and would no doubt have been seen by them as a valuable innovation. However, it could also have reduced the city's income from local market dues, as well as making it more difficult and expensive to obtain the food needed to keep the urban population fed, by diminishing the supply of produce at the city's own market, and pushing up prices there by

<sup>394</sup> Eck 1996: 299–302; Bodel 1997: 26–32.

<sup>395</sup> Di Giuseppe 1996: 237–8; Terrenato and Saggin 1994: 479; Terrenato 1998: 100.

<sup>396</sup> Von Hesberg 1994: 55–9; Bodel 1997: 20–6.

reducing competition. Development of rural markets could therefore be seen as potentially detrimental to the finances of the city, as well as helping also to diminish its primacy over the territory.<sup>397</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The evidence collected in this chapter cumulatively suggests that the forms of civic life were changing in the high Empire: the focus was being directed away from formal politics, and buildings associated with formal politics were much less favoured by benefactors. Instead, there was a preference for monuments which would contribute to maintaining civic identity through the gathering of the citizens in a sociable context, whether at the baths, at the games, or for public or private banquets. At the same time, the domestic spaces, and private estates, of the cities of Italy were becoming more important as a setting for activity, whether political or economic, which might in former times have taken place within the urban context. Collectively these trends add up, I would suggest, not to a generalized decline in the cities, so much as a process of civic transformation, as the priorities of benefactors and communities changed across time, reflecting changing social and economic structures.

At the same time, it is clear that in this period finance for civic initiatives was a cause of increasing concern both to the towns, which relied increasingly on private benefactions rather than civic funds for public building,<sup>398</sup> and also to the central authorities at Rome. One of the responsibilities of the *curatores rei publicae*, which we know to have been initiated in the second century, on a temporary or more long-term basis, was to safeguard municipal finances, and in particular a town's properties and buildings;<sup>399</sup> equally, benefactors were concerned lest their gifts were abused and frittered away (Plin. *Ep.* 7. 18). At the same time, examination of the three case-studies in the earlier part of the chapter reveals a range of patterns within the cities

<sup>397</sup> Gabba 1988: 150–4; De Ligt 1993a: 205–24; 1993b; Vera 1995: 338.

<sup>398</sup> Jouffroy 1977; 1986: 462–4.

<sup>399</sup> Camodeca 1980; Jacques 1983; Jacques 1984: 295–300; Sartori 1989.

of Italy, ranging from prosperous continuity to striking decline, caused by a range of factors, economic and political. The next chapter explores the various mechanisms and strategies devised by the towns in an effort to ensure their continuing well-being and ward off disaster, and how these related to broader trends in the social history of Roman Italy.

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## Social Mobility and the Cities of Italy

### INTRODUCTION: THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL ELITES

Several intersecting trends emerge from the preceding discussion of rural and urban change in Italy of the imperial period. There is considerable variation in patterns of rural settlement across the areas that have been surveyed, although it is fair to say that the predominant situation is one of declining numbers of rural sites, related to a growth in large estates. The rapidity and severity of this trend vary significantly between different regions, and in some areas continuity or indeed growth in site numbers can be identified. In the cities, the overall level of building declined from the first into the second century AD, though within this general picture, a particular preference for those buildings associated with social gatherings can be traced, with amphitheatres, baths, and *macella* being particular focuses of attention. Again, significant differences can be identified between individual cities. There are also some indications that rural villas, in some areas at least, took on some roles traditionally played by the urban centres, in terms of providing locations for honouring the local aristocracy, and venues for marketing; at the same time, rural villages became increasingly important as centres of habitation. These interrelated trends appear, from several different perspectives, to be contributing to a picture of gradually declining importance of the civic centres. Nevertheless, the continuing importance in the second century of banquets, and distributions of money and food, demonstrates that the towns—or some of them—did continue to be the focus of acts of generosity on the part of individual citizens, while initiatives such as the holding of games and the provision of bathing

facilities both underline the importance of the city as the object of loyalty on the part of benefactors and emphasize the role of collective festivity as a defining feature of civic life. All these tendencies, taken together, represent a significant restructuring of civic space and reordering of civic ideals, with an increased emphasis on public sociability in place of formal politics.

Crucial to the well-being of their cities was the financial situation of the local elites and their ideological commitment to their communities; and the enthusiastic participation of the local senators (otherwise known as the *curia* or *ordo decurionum*) was of particular importance. Indeed the eventual decline of the municipal system has often been linked with the impoverishment and alienation of this curial class, described by Alföldy as 'the backbone of the system of Roman rule.'<sup>1</sup> The political system of the towns of Italy was modelled on the tripartite structure of the Roman Republic, with political authority divided between magistrates, senate, and people, although there was some variation between towns in terms of the structure, number, and titles of magistracies.<sup>2</sup> In practice, however, the contribution of the people of the Italian towns was largely limited to the election of magistrates, and there too their scope was restricted: real power in local affairs resided with the magistrates and (predominantly) with the local senate. The responsibilities and duties of that body are outlined in the late first-century BC and first-century AD charters of the Spanish towns of Urso, Malaca, Salpensa, and Irni, which can with appropriate caution be taken to reflect contemporary practices in Italy.<sup>3</sup> Beyond their formal administrative responsibilities, however, magistrates and *decuriones* made significant contributions to the finances of the cities, both directly and indirectly.

One of the weaknesses of the municipal system was the often meagre sources of income available to the cities.<sup>4</sup> Some communities owned property outside Italy: we know that both Arpinum and

<sup>1</sup> Alföldy 1985: 130.

<sup>2</sup> For an outline of the municipal system, see the (now rather out of date) account of Abbott and Johnson 1926: 56–68; also Liebenam 1900; Reid 1913; Jacques 1984, and (for municipal statutes) Crawford, M. H. 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Hardy 1912; Gonzalez 1986; Crawford, M. H. 1996: 393–454.

<sup>4</sup> For discussion of civic finances, see Abbott and Johnson 1926: 138–51; and for the implications, Whittaker 1994: 135–6.



Atella had possessions in Gaul, for example, and Cicero stresses the importance of these estates to the financial condition of the towns. 'All the fortunes of that *municipium* depend on the rent from that land' as he comments in the case of Atella (Cic. *Fam.* 13. 7. 1–2; 13. 11. 1). Capua owned extensive estates in Crete, which had been given to the town by Octavian as compensation for the loss of public land in its territory, which had been distributed to veterans. According to Velleius, this land produced a revenue of 1,200,000 sesterces, and it was still being exploited in the time of Dio (Vell. *Pat.* 2. 81. 2; Cass. Dio 49. 14. 5). Other towns owned some properties within their own, or nearby, territories: to judge by the evidence of the Trajanic alimentary table it appears that some 5 per cent of the land in the territory of Veleia was owned by that municipality, while the neighbouring town of Luca held substantial possessions in Veleia's territory.<sup>5</sup> These estates would produce regular, if perhaps normally unspectacular, incomes for the towns. Where a town did not have substantial landholdings, however, its main sources of income were unreliable and unpredictable: fines, fees, and market duties. It is in this context of limited availability of resources that the contributions of individual members of the local elites to the finances of the towns must be seen.

These contributions took place within various different contexts. By definition magistrates and *decuriones* were wealthy men, as there was a property qualification for membership of the *ordo*. The *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* from Urso lays down that the *Ilviri* and aediles of the town were each obliged to contribute a minimum of 2,000 sesterces to defray the expenses of games, and it seems that requiring magistrates to contribute a *summa honoraria* to civic funds in this way was normal practice in Italy; these funds were frequently used for public building or dinners, if not directly for games.<sup>6</sup> Membership of the *seviri*, *Augustales*, or *seviri Augustales* also seems to have entailed a similar payment, in some towns at least.<sup>7</sup> It is less clear whether those admitted to the *ordo decurionum* in the first century AD would have been obliged to pay a similar sum, but this does seem to have

<sup>5</sup> Duncan-Jones 1976: 8.

<sup>6</sup> Garnsey 1971: 323–5; Duncan-Jones 1982: 147–55.

<sup>7</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 152.

become normal practice by the second century; many of those joining the *ordo* would have been ex-magistrates in any case.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps more important than these regular but comparatively modest payments—which must usually have been consumed by the games or other entertainments to which they were notionally directed—were the other forms of generosity displayed by magistrates or *decuriones* as individuals. Sometimes individuals might make a voluntary gift to their community as an expression of gratitude for election to an office, rather than as an obligatory *summa honoraria*. As discussed in Chapter 2, individual members of the local elites were also responsible for financing building projects. In fact, in the first and second centuries AD, a preponderance of building projects appears to have been privately financed in this way, though there are a few cases, at Puteoli and Capua for example, where larger towns were able to fund major buildings out of their own resources. Sometimes both private and public finance were combined. An inscription from Corfinium, dated to the second quarter of the second century AD, provides an illustration. Ser. Cornelius Dolabella Metilianus built baths on his own land with his own money; M. Atilius Bradua (consul in AD 108) and M. Acilius Aviola (consul AD 122), his heirs, then gave 100,000 HS to the project. Finally the *res publica* and *populus* of Corfinium made a further contribution of 152,000 HS.<sup>9</sup> However, there is a clear dropping-off of instances of building using private resources in the third century, although the problem of maintaining the existing structures remained. At this stage, we find the restoration of monuments predominantly being carried out using civic funds.<sup>10</sup> Even in the first century BC, Cicero thought it worth noting that the town of Arpinum relied entirely on the rents from its lands in Gaul ‘for the maintenance of its sacred temples and public buildings’ (*Fam.* 13. 11. 1).

Banquets and distributions were by definition private, rather than public, initiatives, and here too the local elites were the main protagonists in the early and high Empire. The financial contribution they made to their cities, whether in the form of obligatory payments

<sup>8</sup> Garnsey 1971; Duncan-Jones 1982: 148 n. 2.

<sup>9</sup> *CIL* 9. 3152 = *ILS* 5676, with Buonocore 1987: 111–12; Fagan 1999: 292.

<sup>10</sup> Jouffroy 1986: 105–7, 137–40, 152–3; Fagan 1999: 142–54.

or individual acts of generosity, was therefore very considerable. The condition of these elites was crucial not only with regard to the well-being of the cities themselves, but also their territories, in which they typically owned extensive properties. In order to understand the history of both cities and territories, it is therefore essential to examine the changing profile of the municipal elites in some detail, and look in particular at the phenomenon of social mobility within Italian society in the first and second centuries AD. This complex pattern of social promotion (and demotion) was potentially of great significance for the Italian towns and their territories, given that they occupied a central position in the network of career paths—both those that led from the *ordo* upward into the equestrian order and the Senate, and from the lower social orders of the Italian towns into the *ordo*.

#### SOCIAL MOBILITY IN IMPERIAL ITALY

Roman society under the Republic was strictly defined in hierarchical terms. Status was defined both financially and juridically, according to the privileges and obligations laid down for the different groups within society. The opportunities for mobility were limited, except where created by windfall income, which might be derived from military service overseas, or the social upheavals resulting from civil war. Indeed, it could be argued that this absence of flexibility was a significant factor behind the eventual collapse of the Republican system.<sup>11</sup> Under the early and high Empire, the basic principles ordering society remained the same. The *Tabula Heracleensis* describes how, when the census was taken, each male citizen had to provide his name, the name of his father or patron, his voting tribe, and an account of his wealth—in public, we must assume, and after swearing an oath. The information was then recorded in the public records of the town.<sup>12</sup> Civic life, as we have seen, provided numerous occasions on which the differences between ranks in Italian society

<sup>11</sup> Patterson, J. R. 1993: esp. 105–8.

<sup>12</sup> *Tab. Herac.* 142–56, with Crawford, M. H. 1996: 388. See also Brunt 1987: 15–16.

were openly paraded: at the theatre, where *decuriones* had their own seats away from the mass of the *plebs*; and at formal dinners, where the quality and quantity of food served differentiated the participants of different ranks.

Paradoxically, in the light of this continual public reinforcement of the hierarchies of rank and status, social mobility was also an essential feature of life in the Italian towns. Studies of the Roman Senate in the late Republic and early Empire have demonstrated that despite its aura of exclusivity, constant replenishment from below was necessary if numbers were to be kept up. There were high rates of mortality at Rome even among the wealthy, the expense involved in maintaining a senatorial lifestyle was considerable, and the Roman system of partible inheritance would mean that whereas families with few children would risk none of them surviving, and the family's property passing to more distantly related heirs, the estates of those with large numbers of surviving children would be split up between them, possibly meaning that none would inherit enough to enable them to satisfy the senatorial property qualification. Furthermore, the risks of civil war, and—under the Empire—imperial displeasure and consequent exile or death, would make life particularly hazardous for those embarking on public life.<sup>13</sup> The risk of falling out of favour with the emperor may have been lower in an Italian municipality than at Rome, and the mortality rate is likely to have been less severe in smaller towns,<sup>14</sup> but it is clear that the basic position was very similar. The life expectancy of the local elites was of the order of 20–30 years at birth,<sup>15</sup> the legal system was the same, and significant levels of upward mobility were therefore essential to the maintenance of the *ordo*. A further impetus to this process was the fact that mobility was possible beyond the *ordo*, by contrast to the Roman Senate (with the exception of that handful of senators who were to rise to the rank of emperor). New blood had therefore to be brought into the *ordo* by means of the magistrates elected annually (just as the quaestorship provided an entry to the Senate at Rome) and by the adlection of other individuals to the *ordo* as the need arose.

<sup>13</sup> Hopkins 1983: 120–200.

<sup>14</sup> Manchester 1992: 12 for the persistence of acute infections in a large community; also Scheidel 1999: 280.

<sup>15</sup> Scheidel 1999: 263–6.

Under the Empire, the potential avenues for social mobility also increased in number and variety: typically the advent of an autocracy tends to promote high levels of mobility, as rulers seek to promote those loyal to them personally, with limited regard for their position in the conventional hierarchies.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, Roman society underwent a process of increasing structural differentiation. Specialism in military service, in the professions, and in the increasingly important imperial bureaucracy allowed many new ways for the ambitious to advance. This process was encouraged by the background of competition between the imperial house and the senate, which provided rival sources of patronage for the upwardly mobile. The increasing professionalization of the Roman army following the disasters of the third century came to encourage this process further; and imperial initiatives which sought to restrict social mobility by making service on municipal councils obligatory merely served to encourage those who were affected to seek higher honours.<sup>17</sup> Social mobility, then, was one of the defining features of the history of imperial Italy, in the absence of major incidents of *histoire événementielle*; and one of the chief dynamic forces in the history of the peninsula in the first three centuries AD, despite (or because of) the increasing concern of the authorities to emphasize the differences between *honestiores* and *humiliores*.<sup>18</sup>

The municipal elites of the Italian towns had a pivotal role to play in this complex pattern of advancement and demotion. Town councillors and magistrates could advance further up the social hierarchy by becoming equestrians or senators, or take leading roles in the imperial bureaucracy. Their places in the civic administration were taken by other upwardly mobile individuals, both of free birth and of slave ancestry, whose descendants might in turn advance still further.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, the population below the curial class was itself divided hierarchically to a significant degree. As Purcell noted: 'Roman society is too often presented as a senatorial and equestrian upper-class, far below which comes the teeming mass of *ingenui*,

<sup>16</sup> Andreski 1968: 137.

<sup>17</sup> Hopkins 1974: 111–17; 1978: 74–96. See also Pleket 1971; Weaver 1974.

<sup>18</sup> Garnsey 1970: 234–59.

<sup>19</sup> For general treatments of social mobility in this period, see Alföldy 1985: 94–133; Gara 1991.

*peregrini*, *liberti* and *servi*. There was, however, a finely stratified sequence of status between the *eques* and the slave.<sup>20</sup> Most visible within this group were the *seviri* or *Augustales*, magistrates and members of *collegia*, *apparitores* and members of the *familia Caesaris*; these too have to be studied while investigating the general phenomenon of social mobility.

Clearly, then, an understanding of the circumstances and consequences of mobility is crucial for our understanding of the financial and social structures of the Italian towns. This chapter looks first at the phenomenon of promotion beyond the *ordo*, and its impact on the communities of Italy; then at the extent to which upward mobility of groups below the *ordo* was able to provide an alternative source of resources and commitment to the urban ideal which could compensate for the loss of its more traditional supporters.

## THE EQUESTRIAN ORDER AND THE SENATE

The golden age for the entry of Italians into the Senate (and into the equestrian order) was in the Augustan and Julio-Claudian periods. During the reign of Vespasian, over 80 per cent of senators whose origin is known were Italian.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, some 366 out of 547 equestrians of the Julio-Claudian period whose origins can be reconstructed can be identified as Italians.<sup>22</sup> Thereafter the proportion of Italians decreases as that of the provincials rises, but substantial numbers of Italians continued to enter both the Senate and the equestrian order during the second century AD.<sup>23</sup> The proceedings of a conference held in Rome in 1981 on *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio* provide a wealth of data which allow an examination of these trends, and a series of valuable essays charting the rise of local elites to senatorial rank.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Purcell 1983: 126–7.

<sup>21</sup> See Hammond 1957; Hopkins 1983: 184–93; Chastagnol 1992: 155–68. For expressions of caution about figures of this kind, see, however, Talbert 1984: 32.

<sup>22</sup> Demougin 1988: 520.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* 552.

<sup>24</sup> Panciera 1982.

In the latter years of the Republic, and the principate of Augustus, there was a complex variety of patterns between different parts of Italy with regard to recruitment into the Senate, based (among other factors) on the current and past political status of the community (whether it was a *municipium* or a colony, when it had acquired Roman citizenship, how developed its urban structures were); its alignment in the political struggles and civil wars of the first century BC; its physical accessibility to Rome, and the extent to which its local elites were able to exploit the patronage of the political classes at Rome; and the wealth of a city's territory, and how far its agricultural base could support the senatorial ambitions of local families.<sup>25</sup>

The same was also true of the imperial period, with a significant level of variation identifiable between different regions of Italy in terms of the pace of promotion of local elites. Even within the Augustan regions (used by the contributors to the 1981 conference to subdivide the mass of material examined) substantial variations emerge: between coastal, central, and northern parts of Etruria, for example, reflecting the differing patterns of urban development and economic organization which can be traced back in these areas to archaic times;<sup>26</sup> or between the plains of Assisi, Gubbio, and the Tiber basin in *Regio VI* (Umbria) on the one hand, and the mountainous hinterland beyond.<sup>27</sup> The central Apennines provide a case in point: the first man from the Paeligni to reach senatorial rank, Q. Varius Geminus,<sup>28</sup> did so in the time of Augustus, whereas the nearby communities of the Marsi and Marrucini had sent senators to Rome much earlier.<sup>29</sup> Southern Italy produced limited numbers of senators, and few of those were from towns which maintained strong Greek traditions.<sup>30</sup> Partly these diverse trends must be due to the artificial nature of the Augustan regions themselves (the quasi-suburban Tibur being included in *Regio IV* together with the wildest areas of Samnium, for example), but the general pattern of complexity is clear.

<sup>25</sup> Wiseman 1971: 13–19, 24–32.

<sup>26</sup> Torelli, M. 1982*b*: 285; Spivey and Stoddart 1990: 56.

<sup>27</sup> Gaggiotti and Sensi 1982: 246, 257. For the geography of Umbria see now Bradley 2000: 48–53.

<sup>28</sup> *CIL* 9. 3305 = *ILS* 932.

<sup>29</sup> Wiseman 1971: 25; Torelli, M. 1982*a*: 170–1.

<sup>30</sup> Wiseman 1971: 23; Camodeca 1982; Lomas 1993: 159–60.

Under the Empire, the political status and history of a community continued to be a significant factor in the promotion of its citizens to senatorial rank. Residents of colonies, in particular, seem to have been under-represented in the Senate.<sup>31</sup> Roman colonies of the early and mid Republic were small in scale, with an overtly military rationale, so the limited advancement of their citizens is perhaps not too surprising, but comparatively few senators are known from the larger and richer Latin colonies either. This may be due both to the egalitarian distribution of land within their territories (though the amount of land allocated reflected the status of the colonists), but perhaps more significantly also to the fragmentary nature of the data about the origin of senators of the Republic by comparison with their counterparts in the early Empire. In other words wealthy individuals from these communities may have reached the Senate, but too early to be identified systematically.<sup>32</sup> The implication of both of these trends would be that few members of the local elites of these communities joined the Senate under the Empire. Similarly, there are indications that comparatively few men descended from those who settled in the veteran colonies of the late Republic and Augustan era reached the Senate in the decades which followed. In these cases, the redistribution and fragmentation of landholdings which took place when the colonies were created served to retard the development of large estates in a way which delayed the large-scale acquisition of wealth by local elites and their advancement to the higher offices of state. Since estates already in the hands of senators were exempted from confiscation by the triumvirs, as were very small properties, it is likely that middle-range properties were most affected (Cass. Dio 48. 8. 5).<sup>33</sup> By contrast, communities which became *municipia* after the Social War tended to produce more senators under the early Empire than the colonies did. Typically, communities in Italy first produced senators three generations after their citizens acquired the Roman

<sup>31</sup> Wiseman 1971: 14–15; Licordari 1982: 13; Torelli, M. 1982a: 171–2; Gasperini and Paci 1982: 211; Gaggiotti and Sensi 1982: 245. For comparison of indigenous and colonial elites in the western Empire, see Syme 1958b: 1–23.

<sup>32</sup> Wiseman 1971: 15; Torelli 1982: 171–2; Bradley 2000: 234–5 on the situation in Umbria.

<sup>33</sup> Gabba 1994: 206–7.



citizenship.<sup>34</sup> Unlike their counterparts in the *Ager Romanus*, the local elites of the post-Social War *municipia* had limited opportunity to send senators to Rome earlier in the Republic, but at the same time could potentially have amassed sufficient landed wealth to make advancement a realistic possibility. Again, there was significant variation between and within regions: on the whole, the more mountainous and marginal the district, and the later urbanized forms of settlement were adopted, the slower the local elites were to reach the Senate.<sup>35</sup> Conversely, ready contact with Rome and the Roman elite seems to have been a significant factor in early access to Roman politics, as illustrated by the large number of senators from Latium known in the republican period.<sup>36</sup> One consequence of this early advancement, however, was a correspondingly early decline in numbers of senators originating from the area.

Just as alignment in the political struggles of the first century BC, and the support of a Pompey or a Caesar, played a vital part in the advancement of individuals under the late Republic, and the promotion of their communities, so the influence of the emperor came, in the first century AD, to be of crucial importance. The support of Capua for Vitellius seems to have been detrimental to the progress of such local families as the Velleii and Vinicii as the Flavian dynasty emerged victorious from the struggles of AD 69.<sup>37</sup> By contrast, at least one family from Sabine territory seems to have benefited from the patronage of the Sabine emperor Vespasian: Sex. Vettulenus Cerealis and his brother, from Reate, both reached the consulship in the 70s AD.<sup>38</sup>

Clearly a full study of upward mobility beyond the municipal *ordo* needs to look not only at those who achieved senatorial rank but also those for whom advancement to the equestrian order marked the limit of their success, and Demougin's work on that order in the Julio-Claudian period is complementary to these studies of the senatorial elite.<sup>39</sup> Equestrians of Italian origin come mostly from

<sup>34</sup> Wiseman 1971: 13.

<sup>35</sup> Gaggiotti and Sensi 1982: 257.

<sup>36</sup> Wiseman 1971: 28; Licordari 1982: 10–15.

<sup>37</sup> Cébeillac-Gervasoni 1982: 66–7.

<sup>38</sup> Syme 1979: 330–2; Torelli, M. 1982a: 173, 194–5.

<sup>39</sup> Demougin 1988; 1992.

Campania, Latium, and *Regio IV*, comprising Samnium and Sabine territory, but also the great cities of Venetia and Histria in northern Italy. The areas which appear to have produced fewest equestrians were Bruttium, Lucania, and Liguria, though this may in part also reflect the more general distribution pattern of inscriptions across Italy.<sup>40</sup>

Demougin's analysis, however, reveals a significant number of *equites* coming from some areas (such as Aemilia) which produced comparatively few senators,<sup>41</sup> as well as other cities, such as Brixia and Verona, which produced many of both.<sup>42</sup> Likewise, some cities, such as Pompeii, from which no senators are definitely known,<sup>43</sup> have nevertheless produced records of numerous equestrians.<sup>44</sup> Here, interestingly, stylish apartments were advertised as *cenacula equestria*.<sup>45</sup> Of course the wealth of evidence at Pompeii is exceptional, and the figure for equestrians perhaps out of line for that reason; we can, however, hypothesize that the situation in neighbouring (and larger) Puteoli was similar, though the number of specifically attested equestrians in the Julio-Claudian period is surprisingly low.<sup>46</sup>

Several possible explanations of this phenomenon can be offered. In some cases, an important community might have sent senators to Rome early, but under the Empire produced mostly equestrians; or the commercial basis of individual fortunes of the wealthy in coastal towns might have discouraged them from senatorial careers, as seems to have been the case at Pompeii or Puteoli. Alternatively, differing patterns of landholding, with diverse proportions of large and middle-sized estates in the territories of the cities, may have been significant. The comparatively egalitarian land distribution in a veteran colony may by the Julio-Claudian period have resulted in several medium-sized (equestrian) estates rather than one massive (senatorial) holding, as subdivision of some of the territory temporarily slowed the inexorable if gradual process of estate agglomeration. This

<sup>40</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 339.

<sup>41</sup> Donati 1982; Demougin 1988: 520–31.

<sup>42</sup> Alföldy 1982.

<sup>43</sup> Torelli, M. 1982*a*: 171; Camodeca 1982: 126–7.

<sup>44</sup> Demougin 1988: 527.

<sup>45</sup> *CIL* 4. 138 = *ILS* 6035. See Pirson 1997: 168–9, and Pirson 1999: 17–18.

<sup>46</sup> Camodeca 1982: 105–6, 127–9; Demougin 1988: 507.

brief survey of the varying patterns of social promotion in Italy demonstrates the close relationship between the patterns of mobility within the local elites and the histories of the individual communities. The economic and political condition of the city contributed to helping or hindering the advance of its most notable citizens. However, it is also clear that the advancement of the local elites in itself tended to have a significant impact on the histories of the cities and their territories.

### ELITE MOBILITY: A CASE STUDY

Some of the key elements in encouraging elite mobility in the early Empire can be illustrated from the life of one T. Flavius Vespasianus, an individual whose background and early career were in many ways not untypical of the moderately well off in Italy in this period, but exceptional in that his career ultimately led him to imperial power as the emperor Vespasian, and is thus documented in some considerable detail.

Suetonius provides a variety of stories about the emperor's family background and early years (Suet. *Vesp.* 1–4).<sup>47</sup> Vespasian's grandfather, T. Flavius Petro, was a citizen of Reate in Sabine territory, and a centurion or *evocatus* in the Pompeian army in the civil wars; he then acted as a banker;<sup>48</sup> his wife Tertulla owned estates at Cosa. In the version preferred by Suetonius, Petro's son T. Flavius Sabinus is alternatively described as a *primus pilus*, a centurion who left the service through illness, or else a man who did not serve in the army at all. He then collected taxes in the province of Asia (where he gained credit for his honesty) and lent out money in the territory of the Helvetii. Although it appears that he was not an *eques*, he must have been close to that status in terms of his wealth.<sup>49</sup> Flavius Sabinus married Vespasia Polla, daughter of Vespasius Pollio from Nursia,

<sup>47</sup> See the commentary of Jones, B. W. 2000 *ad loc.*; Homo 1949: 7–8; Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 106; Nicols 1978: 1–12; and (esp.) Levick 1999: 4–13.

<sup>48</sup> Andreau 1987: 375–6; 1999: 51–2.

<sup>49</sup> Demougin 1992: 245–6.

three times military tribune and *praefectus castrorum*, whose brother became a praetorian senator, thus marrying into a family with higher status than his own. Vespasian served as military tribune and was then elected to the aedileship on the second occasion on which he stood for the post; although his experience as aedile of the emperor Caligula had not been a happy one (the emperor had him covered with filth from the streets, which he was responsible for cleaning), as praetor he sought to gain Caligula's favour by proposing that those condemned to death for conspiring against the emperor be denied burial. Vespasian also had a long-term liaison with Antonia Caenis, a freedwoman who served as personal attendant to Caligula's grandmother, and this would potentially have enhanced his access to court circles; Antonia Caenis was to become notorious in Vespasian's reign for her involvement in the sale of offices (Cass. Dio 65. 14. 3). Suetonius further notes that Vespasian's wife Flavia Domitilla was the daughter of a man from Ferentium who was 'not more than a quaestor's scribe' (*Vesp.* 3),<sup>50</sup> and records that at one point Vespasian became so impoverished that he had to mortgage his estates to his brother (T. Flavius Sabinus, urban praefect in AD 69), and was reduced to selling mules (*Vesp.* 4. 3).

It would obviously be unwise to rely too much on the literal accuracy of Suetonius' account of Vespasian's early life: the biographer himself provides several different versions of certain crucial elements in the story. Vespasian's character and background were not ideologically neutral issues. The emperor himself would have been keen to emphasize the contrast between the degenerate court of the Julio-Claudians and the traditional virtues of his Sabine upbringing (witness the story that he became unpopular with Nero as a result of falling asleep during the emperor's performances: *Vesp.* 4. 4), while his enemies would seek to emphasize his low birth. The multiplicity of versions preserved in Suetonius must to some extent reflect this myth-making process.<sup>51</sup> However, epigraphic discoveries in Umbria tend to confirm certain elements in the story: one inscription from

<sup>50</sup> Purcell 1983: 136.

<sup>51</sup> See Saller 1980: esp. 82, for the problems involved in dealing with anecdotal material of this kind. For Vespasian's image, see Dench 1995: 107; Levick 1999: 65–6; Mellor 2003: 70–3.

Spoletium is a dedication, probably set up by Vespasia Polla, to Caligula (perhaps aptly in view of Vespasian's own attested efforts to curry favour with the emperor);<sup>52</sup> while another inscription, from Nursia, seems to commemorate Vespasius Pollio, the emperor's maternal grandfather.<sup>53</sup>

The whole story graphically illustrates some of the main features of upward mobility in this period: the potential importance of military service, in particular the rank of centurion and *primus pilus*; the contribution of financial activities (banking, moneylending, and tax-collecting) to acquiring the wealth essential for mobility; the creation of a property portfolio which extended across the territories of several towns (the Flavii Vespasii were active in Nursia, Spoletium, and Reate, had properties in Cosa, and presumably acquired them in Ferentium too as a result of Vespasian's marriage); the expense of the senatorial lifestyle, which almost led Vespasian into bankruptcy; the importance of marriage in allowing promotion beyond the boundaries defined by status (a financier marries the daughter of a military tribune, the daughter of a *scriba* marries a senator). Both formal (Vespasian's efforts to gain the support of Caligula) and informal patronage (the fact that Vespasia Polla's brother was already a senator; Vespasian's association with Antonia Caenis) were of central importance.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF ELITE MOBILITY

### The Territory

Four main elements contributed to the advancement of the local elites into the Senate and equestrian order: luck, ambition, patronage, and wealth; and in the case of the Senate, electoral support.<sup>54</sup> The first two considerations were doubtless of major importance, but defy analysis; patronage was undoubtedly crucial, but the beneficiaries of

<sup>52</sup> *CIL* 11. 4778.

<sup>53</sup> Cordella and Criniti 1988: 29, 58–9.

<sup>54</sup> For others see Hopkins 1983: 154.

it tended not to make overt reference to the fact, so its influence in particular cases usually tends to be obscure. ‘Those who consider themselves wealthy ... think it as bad as death to make use of a patron or be called clients’, as Cicero put it (*Cic. Off.* 2. 69). Under the Republic, the gathering of electoral support by members of the Italian elites was a complex process. Although in part it involved the ambitious local aristocrats using their authority to mobilize support from the populations of their home city and of neighbouring communities, there were other techniques too: speeches before the Roman people, campaigning in the city of Rome, the cultivation of influential individuals, as well as displays of generosity in the form of entertainment, games, and (sometimes) bribery, not to mention intimidation and other more sinister techniques of influence over the voters in the *comitia centuriata* or the *comitia tributa*. *Novi homines*, unlike their noble rivals, were unable to make much of distinguished ancestors and their achievements in their canvassing, so they tended to stress their own military prowess, their oratorical expertise, and their individual adherence to high standards of morality.<sup>55</sup>

After the death of Augustus, the electoral process was in effect transferred to the Senate, although the decisions reached continued to be formally ratified by the *comitia*. This did not see the end of electoral competition—lavish entertainment and even bribery continued to be a feature of campaigning in elections, and led both to a senatorial clampdown on ‘holding dinners, handing out presents, and depositing money with agents’ in the early second century AD, as Pliny’s correspondence reveals (*Plin. Ep.* 6. 19, with 3. 20)—but the support of the emperor became of crucial importance to an individual’s candidature, and was essential in the case of those who sought the consulship, as the emperor personally appointed all consuls. In the case of appointments to the lower magistracies, the emperor might designate an individual as *candidatus Caesaris*, thus ensuring an unproblematic passage through the political process for a man he favoured; he might forbid someone to stand for office; or he might

<sup>55</sup> See in particular the *commentariolum petitionis* attributed to Q. Cicero. For more general discussion of campaign strategy in the late Republic, see e.g. Millar 1998: 216; Yakobson 1999: 184–227; Patterson, J. R. 2000a: 53–7. For the electoral strategies of the ‘new men’ see in particular Wiseman 1971: 95–142, and now the discussion in Mouritsen 2001: 118–23.

permit them to stand without giving specific support to their candidature.<sup>56</sup> It was those in this latter category who would be competing with each other most energetically, in particular at the level of the praetorship, where in the first century AD there were significantly fewer offices to be filled than in the earlier stages of the *cursus honorum*. In AD 60, the contention between the candidates for the praetorship was so intense that Nero resolved the problem by appointing the unsuccessful candidates to legionary commands.<sup>57</sup> In their campaigning these candidates drew on the support of influential senatorial 'power-brokers', such as Pliny, whom we see campaigning on behalf of protégés such as Julius Naso, apparently seeking the quaestorship, and Erucius Clarus, who sought election to the tribunate (*Ep.* 6. 6; 2. 9).<sup>58</sup>

Although the main route of entry to the Senate under the Empire was, as it had been in the Republic, via election to a magistracy, the emperor had considerable scope for independent initiative in the recruitment of senators: an individual might be granted the *latus clavus*, the right to wear a broad purple stripe on the toga, bestowed on those about to undertake a senatorial career, or adlected to a rank equivalent to that of the holder of a particular magistracy (though this latter *beneficium* seems to have been used sparingly).<sup>59</sup> Likewise, since twenty quaestors were elected annually, and every year twenty younger men intending to advance to a senatorial career were appointed to junior magistracies known as the vigintivirate with a view to their subsequently advancing to the quaestorship, the emperor in practice had considerable influence over entry to the Senate.<sup>60</sup> Official posts other than magistracies held by members of the senatorial order, such as the command of legions, or civilian curatorships, were also in the gift of the emperor.<sup>61</sup>

When we turn to the equestrian order, the role of the emperor continues to be of central importance, reflecting the complementary

<sup>56</sup> Millar 1992: 301–6; Saller 1982: 42–6.

<sup>57</sup> For the importance of the praetorship, see Talbert 1984: 19–20. For the events of AD 60, see Tac. *Ann.* 14. 28.

<sup>58</sup> Millar 1992: 303.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* 291–6; Saller 1982: 50–1; Talbert 1984: 11–16.

<sup>60</sup> Saller 1982: 42; Talbert 1984: 13–14.

<sup>61</sup> Saller 1982: 44–5; Millar 1992: 309–13.

roles of senatorial and equestrian officials within the imperial system.<sup>62</sup> Although it appears that possession of a minimum property requirement was sufficient to allow the holder to be termed an *equus*, the emperor was responsible for the grant of the honour of the *equus publicus* ('public horse', supposedly allowing the equestrian to take part in the *transvectio equitum*, a procession of knights at Rome) and membership of the judicial panels known as *decuriae*, both of which grants conferred particular distinction within the order, though their significance in practical terms is likely to have been very limited.<sup>63</sup> Appointment to offices held by equestrians—which ranged from the three vital posts of prefect of Egypt, prefect of the corn-supply, and praetorian prefect, through the governorships of small provinces, to procuratorships connected with the running of the emperor's estates or provincial finance—were again among the *beneficia* which might be conferred by the emperor, although military tribunes might also be appointed by individual military commanders.<sup>64</sup> To sum up: although there was still evidence of considerable competition for magisterial office under the high Empire, and that this was particularly lively at certain specific levels of the *cursus honorum*, it remains generally true that the patronage of the emperor was vital to an individual's prospects, whether within the senatorial or the equestrian order. It would, however, be impossible for the emperor to know all those who might seek, or be suited for, senatorial or equestrian office, so the influence of 'power-brokers' with access to the emperor was of considerable importance in this context, as it was they who would draw the attention of the emperor to favoured candidates, thus increasing their own influence and contributing to the coherence of the whole system.<sup>65</sup>

The unlucky, the modest, and those without heavyweight patrons might on occasion succeed in gaining high office, but without wealth political ambitions, or a desire to hold an administrative position, were hopeless.<sup>66</sup> Wealth was central to the definition of those suitable for membership of the senatorial and equestrian orders. The emperor

<sup>62</sup> Brunt 1983: 42–52.

<sup>63</sup> Here I follow Millar 1992: 283–4 (see Saller 1982: 51–3 for a different view).

<sup>64</sup> Saller 1982: 46–50; Brunt 1983.

<sup>65</sup> Saller 1982: 73–8.

<sup>66</sup> For senatorial wealth under the Empire, see in particular Talbert 1984: 47–53; Duncan-Jones 1982: 17–32; and now Andermahr 1998; for equestrian estates, Paci 1999.



Claudius characterized those suitable for promotion to the Senate as ‘the flower of colonies and municipalities everywhere, that is good and rich men.’<sup>67</sup> For Maecenas, according to the speech given him by Dio, senators were ‘the most well-born, the best and the wealthiest men’, while equestrians were described as ‘those holding second place in each location as regards birth, virtue and wealth’ (Cass. Dio 52. 19. 1–4). In the Empire, membership of the Senate required wealth of not less than 1,000,000 sesterces (Cass. Dio 54. 26),<sup>68</sup> while the minimum requirement for membership of the equestrian order was 400,000 sesterces. Pliny records making a gift of 300,000 sesterces to his friend Romatius Firmus, a decurion at Comum, to enable him to reach the equestrian order (*Ep.* 1. 19). In general there are few specific references to the property qualification required for service as one of the *decuriones*. The municipal law from Tarentum defines this in terms of the number of roof-tiles on the would-be councillor’s house (1,500 in this case)<sup>69</sup> but under the Empire the qualification was laid down in terms of a cash figure. Pliny specifically tells us here that the qualification at Comum was 100,000 HS, and there are indications from a passage in Petronius’ *Satyricon* that the same qualification was in use at Puteoli (*Sat.* 44). No doubt the level of the property qualification for membership of the *ordo* was considerably less in smaller towns, but the qualification for equestrian status was the same across the Empire.<sup>70</sup> Property of a value to a substantial degree higher than was necessary for membership of the local *ordo* had therefore to be obtained by the would-be senator or *eques*.

In addition to the basic property requirement, the expenses involved in achieving advancement could potentially be substantial, as we have seen: would-be senators who wished to acquire the support of the emperor or among possible patrons had to adopt an appropriately lavish lifestyle involving, for example, generous entertainment of one’s peers and the maintenance of a suitably grand *domus* at Rome (Tac. *Ann.* 3. 55).<sup>71</sup> These costs would have been particularly

<sup>67</sup> *CIL* 13. 1668 = *ILS* 212 col. 2. 4.

<sup>68</sup> Talbert 1984: 10–11; Chastagnol 1992: 31–3.

<sup>69</sup> *Lex Tarentina* 28 with Crawford, M. H. 1996: 310.

<sup>70</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 147, 243.

<sup>71</sup> For the aristocratic *domus* under the principate, see the numerous entries s.v. *domus* in E. M. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, ii. For discussion, see Patterson, J. R. 2000b: 261–2; Wallace-Hadrill 2000c.

substantial for those without an existing base at Rome; a man whose father had already entered the Senate would most likely already have such a property, while a *novus homo* would need to acquire one. Bribery, where practised, would add to the cost of achieving office, whether it was directed to the voters in the Senate or influential individuals, such as Antonia Caenis under the reign of Vespasian, who were able to provide senatorial or equestrian offices in exchange for payment. Some even paid intermediaries to obtain the *latus clavus*,<sup>72</sup> and there are several references in the sources to money changing hands in exchange for an appointment in the imperial household (Suet. *Otho* 5. 2; *Vesp.* 23. 2). The possibility of advancement beyond the *ordo* would thus depend to a significant extent not only on the support of influential patrons, but also on the resources available to the ambitious individual or his family. The acquisition and the deployment of the funds necessary for access to the senatorial or the equestrian orders also had potentially significant implications for the communities from which those with political ambitions were drawn.

The resources of the elites of the Italian towns were derived primarily from landholding. Agriculture was of the greatest importance, but there were also other ways in which income might be derived from their rural estates, such as the exploitation of clay-pits for the manufacture of bricks, amphorae, or other forms of pottery.<sup>73</sup> The renting out of urban properties was considered risky, but could potentially produce substantial returns.<sup>74</sup> Increased wealth might result from the acquisition of more land, whether inside the city's territory, or outside it, by gift, the purchase of additional properties, inheritance, or through marriage contracts. Alternatively, additional wealth might be generated by means of the more intensive and effective exploitation of land already held, through new agricultural techniques, the cultivation of more lucrative crops, or by adopting more efficient ways of running an estate. Both these scenarios might well contribute to changes in forms of landholding, and in particular to the development of large estates, characteristic of many areas of

<sup>72</sup> Talbert 1984: 54.

<sup>73</sup> D'Arms 1981: 65–6; Steinby 1982: 234–6; Harris 1993.

<sup>74</sup> Garnsey 1998: 63–76; Frier 1980; Parkins 1997: 92–3.

Italy in this period. Income originally derived from sources outside agriculture could also be invested in land to ensure both respectability and income over the longer term. Such wealth might be acquired through money-lending, and associated financial activities (Sen. *Ep.* 41. 7, Plin. *Ep.* 3. 19. 8);<sup>75</sup> from beyond the bounds of the city, through trade or commerce;<sup>76</sup> through windfall gains, for example as a result of successful and lucrative warfare;<sup>77</sup> through service in the upper ranks of the army, as a *primus pilus* for example, who would receive equestrian rank and a donative of 600,000 sesterces on retirement;<sup>78</sup> or via an administrative post in the equestrian service, for which the pay ranged between 60,000 and 300,000 HS per annum.<sup>79</sup> These possibilities would not always be available, though: a landlocked territory with meagre natural resources and poor road and river communications would allow limited opportunity for making money through trade, or the exploitation of natural resources such as building materials which were costly to transport, by comparison with a seaport or a town with good river transport.<sup>80</sup> There were of course exceptions to this—the involvement of the elites of the central Apennines in trade in the Aegean in the second century BC, for example.<sup>81</sup> A small town with a limited population would provide few opportunities for the exploitation of the urban property market; the cautious and defensive foreign policies of an emperor, or deployment to a peaceful corner of the Empire, might mean that few potentially lucrative campaigns were available for the ambitious soldier, confined to inglorious small-scale struggles against impoverished enemies or grander campaigns under the closely controlling eye of the *princeps*.<sup>82</sup> Likewise, although a post as *procurator* of the imperial properties was notoriously seen as a short-cut to wealth

<sup>75</sup> Andreau 1999: 9–29.

<sup>76</sup> D'Arms 1981; Whittaker 1985.

<sup>77</sup> For warfare as a route to social mobility in the late Republic, see Patterson, J. R. 1993: 101–4.

<sup>78</sup> Dobson 1970: 105–6.

<sup>79</sup> Pflaum 1974: 59–63.

<sup>80</sup> For discussion of the role of transport costs in the economy of Italy, see Morley 1996: 63–8; Laurence 1999: 95–108.

<sup>81</sup> Wilson, A. J. N. 1966: 99–121; Crawford, M. H. 1985: 178–9.

<sup>82</sup> See Cornell 1993 on the gradual change in patterns of warfare from the late Republic through to the early Empire.

(Tac. *Ann.* 16. 17), imperial policy was no doubt sometimes successful in restricting the possibility of exactions from the provincials by a governor (especially where a province was under the direct control of an emperor's nominee), and in any case the most potentially lucrative appointments tended to be achieved towards the end of a man's career.<sup>83</sup> *Delatores*, denouncing plots and other crimes against the person of the emperor, might make a good living (they were rewarded by the emperor and might receive a proportion of the condemned man's estate), but this was achieved at the cost of general unpopularity among their class. Agricultural land, to sum up, was the basic resource common to all members of local elites; and the only substantial, respectable, and reliable source of income likely to be available to the elites of the smaller inland rural communities.

Where little possibility existed of acquiring additional wealth from outside the community, this would have led to an approximation of what might be described as a 'zero-sum society': one man's advancement would have been achieved largely at the expense of his fellow-citizens, with rivalries and hatreds within the community a likely result.<sup>84</sup> Upward mobility for some would have entailed downward mobility for others; large—though not necessarily contiguous—estates would develop in the territory, while some families would drop out of the *ordo* into a state of comparative poverty. Upward mobility on the part of the elites, in the smaller rural communities, would thus lead to a general tendency towards the agglomeration of estates, and, perhaps, more effective exploitation of the land. However, in communities with wider links to the outside world, the greater possibility of obtaining income from outside the boundaries of the city would enable mobility to take place without such dramatic effects on the social and economic structure of the community. Upward mobility into the senatorial and equestrian orders, when it happened, undoubtedly had had more impact on small, landlocked communities than large ones, which were in general more flexible in responding to this form of change.

<sup>83</sup> Brunt 1990: 73–6.

<sup>84</sup> See the discussion at Dyson 1992: 14.

## The City

What was the effect of mobility beyond the *ordo* on the home communities of the ambitious and successful? The implications of elite advancement to the senatorial and equestrian orders on a city and its resources need to be investigated in further detail.

We might envisage that at first the cities were likely to benefit from the process of elite mobility. Certainly a chronological link can be traced between episodes of vigorous civic building and periods at which the upward mobility of the local elites was most apparent, most notably in the late Republic and the Augustan period. This can be explained in terms of the general upsurge in urbanism in the years following the Social War, as formerly allied Italian communities became integrated as *municipia* in the structures of the Roman state,<sup>85</sup> and by a transfer of elite activity in mountainous regions of Italy from the scattered *pagi* and *vici* which constituted the traditional model of settlement to the developing urban centres.<sup>86</sup> Related to this was a desire on the part of local elites to gain the support of their fellow-citizens for their own political ambitions, both locally and at Rome.<sup>87</sup> Two contrasting scenarios can be suggested, one referring to major towns, with large territories and/or access to external resources, the other to smaller communities inland. In the first of these, it is likely that there would have been several families within the community who had the resources and the ambitions to aim at social promotion and senatorial office. These would have been engaged in competition with each other within the civic context; and a larger citizen body would make control of the local political process by any one family or faction difficult. Leading citizens would need to ensure that their local support did not desert them in favour of rivals; hence acts of generosity could in part be an outcome of political rivalry. In the smaller towns, by contrast, there would have been fewer competing families (e.g. at Saepinum, where the Neratii became predominant), but the community would rely on these to provide whatever public monuments and other facilities it could

<sup>85</sup> Gabba 1994: 63–103.

<sup>86</sup> Torelli, M. 1983: 248–50; Patterson, J. R. 1991: 155–7.

<sup>87</sup> Phase of ascent: Torelli, M. 1982a: 176.

not afford from public resources. For families in such a situation, it might in some ways have been more rational (in terms of their economic self-interest) to conserve resources rather than spend them on acts of generosity to the local population; but no doubt there was also a feeling of *noblesse oblige*, and potential rivalries with neighbouring towns, if not within the community itself, would also have contributed. Besides, acts of generosity to the community might have contributed to defusing feelings of resentment at their near monopoly of power.<sup>88</sup> Under the Empire, there were of course significant differences in the strategy which needed to be adopted by the ambitious: demonstrated loyalty to the ruling house would have been of particular importance in gaining support from the emperor and those close to him, and the enthusiasm demonstrated by the Italian elites for forms of monument and ideological programmes favoured by the emperors has already been noted. Emperors themselves were keen to encourage acts of generosity—Pliny tells us specifically that Nerva encouraged all citizens to *munificentia* (*Ep.* 10. 8. 1)—so long as they did not threaten to outdo their own initiatives in this direction. With building in the city of Rome now an imperial monopoly, the main arena in which the senators could compete was in the cities of Italy.<sup>89</sup> The need to impress the emperor might be felt in particular at the beginning of a man's career, but it would also have been advantageous to continue to attract the emperor's attention for the right reasons. At the same time, the ambitious would seek to draw themselves to the attention of influential power-brokers, and generous support of their community in a way which also impinged on residents of nearby, rival communities, as for example where an impressive new amphitheatre or a lavish set of baths was constructed, was one effective way of doing that.

In other ways too, the achievement of senatorial or equestrian rank by its citizens can be considered to have been a benefit for the towns, as it brought them closer access to the structures of power at the centre of the Empire, of crucial importance in a society in which patronage was so effectively embedded. Given that discretion might have been expected, some of the inscriptions expressing thanks to

<sup>88</sup> Dyson 1992: 14.

<sup>89</sup> Eck 1984: 141–2.

local senators for their successful lobbying on the part of their home communities are quite strikingly frank. At Tergeste, for example, L. Fabius Severus was honoured by the community with a golden equestrian statue in commemoration of his numerous (and successful) acts of advocacy at the court of Antoninus Pius.<sup>90</sup> A century later, M. Caecilius Novatillianus of Beneventum was gratefully honoured by the council of his city, 'which had always been defended by his *patrocinium*, exercised both publicly and privately'.<sup>91</sup>

Membership of the Senate, and active participation in the administrative offices customarily assigned to equestrians, would, however, have required regular attendance in Rome or in the provinces: the departure of newly promoted senators and equestrians from their local milieu could potentially be detrimental to the well-being of their cities, in the long term if not necessarily immediately. This was not just a matter of physical absence: senators were relieved of the obligation to take on *honores* and carry out *munera* in their native city, Rome now being regarded as their new *patria*.<sup>92</sup> Of course not all those who were promoted actually left their communities. Those who were members of the equestrian order by virtue of their wealth, but did not take on equestrian office, could continue to live in their home community and serve it as magistrate or member of the local *ordo*.<sup>93</sup> Even senators might serve as municipal magistrates either before or during a career at a higher level. This practice is best attested in areas close to Rome, where we find several men of high rank taking on municipal office at towns such as Tibur, for example.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, there was a significant risk that without the obligation to do so, and given the multitude of competing claims on their resources, those appointed to senatorial or equestrian offices would no longer support their home towns to any substantial extent. As we have seen, Italian towns relied on the local elites not only for administration and leadership, but for contributions of all kinds to civic life, whether the *summa honoraria* which they paid on entering magistracies, or acts of generosity such as the construction of

<sup>90</sup> *CIL* 5. 532 = *Inscriptiones Italiae* 10. 4. 31 = *ILS* 6680.

<sup>91</sup> *CIL* 9. 1571; 1572 = *ILS* 2939.

<sup>92</sup> Eck 1996: 175.

<sup>93</sup> Brunt 1983: 50; Demougin 1994: 376.

<sup>94</sup> Eck 1996: 204–6.

buildings, organization of gladiatorial shows, and the distributions of food and money. If a substantial proportion of a territory was in the hands of senators or equestrians, and these were largely absent and unconcerned with the town, access on the part of the city to the profits from a large sector of the city's territory could potentially be dramatically reduced, as its resources were being consumed in Rome (or in the provinces) rather than within the local community. In these circumstances the departure of some of a community's wealthiest citizens for Rome or the provinces would potentially have been disastrous for its well-being. How far was this the case?

There are several indications that in the first and second centuries AD an increasing proportion of land (and, therefore, resources) in the territory of Italian cities was coming under the control of those with interests based outside those cities. For instance, the *Ligures Baebiani* alimentary table reveals that significant proportions of land in the territory of that city were in the possession of large landowners.<sup>95</sup> Chief among them was the emperor himself, who appears to have been the single largest landowner in the vicinity of *Ligures Baebiani*, in possession of some 12 per cent of peripheral estates recorded on the alimentary table.<sup>96</sup> The emperor's portfolio of property had been built up since the time of Augustus, and came to include not only arable land, but also flocks of sheep which were driven up and down the *tratturi* of Italy between their summer and winter pastures,<sup>97</sup> and 'industrial' enterprises like the brickworks of the Tiber valley, which during the second century AD came to fall increasingly into the hands of the imperial house.<sup>98</sup> The emperors acquired property not just as the result of the process of marriage, but also as gifts and by inheritance: it became customary for the wealthy to make the emperor a co-heir with their wives and children. Suetonius records that Augustus received the staggering sum of 1,400,000,000 sesterces in legacies (*Aug.* 101. 3).<sup>99</sup> Other estates were acquired by means of confiscation

<sup>95</sup> For discussion of patterns of land distribution as revealed by these documents, see Duncan-Jones 1976; 1990: 121–42.

<sup>96</sup> For imperial properties, see Crawford, D. J. 1976; Millar 1992: 175–89; Coarelli 2000: 138–9, 145–8; Small, Volterra, and Hancock 2003: 185–96.

<sup>97</sup> Corbier 1983a; Millar 1992: 187–8.

<sup>98</sup> Steinby 1982; Migliario 1988: 47–9.

<sup>99</sup> See Millar 1992: 139–44, 153–8.



after their former owners were condemned, often on dubious pretexts.<sup>100</sup>

In the same way, senators who were not natives of Italy—an increasing proportion during the late first and early second centuries AD—sought to acquire properties in the peninsula, both as investments and as attractive rural residences where they could enjoy *otium*. The phenomenon seems to have been particularly marked from the reign of Trajan onwards, since that emperor, and subsequently Marcus Aurelius, explicitly sought to encourage senators from overseas to own property in Italy. Many of them acquired estates in the immediate periphery of Rome (Plin. *Ep.* 6. 19; SHA *Marc.* 11. 8).<sup>101</sup> A group of villas on the Via Latina to the south-east of the city has convincingly been identified as being the properties of wealthy senators from overseas;<sup>102</sup> similarly, the villas of several senators of Spanish origin have been identified in the vicinity of Tivoli.<sup>103</sup> Many estates in the middle Tiber valley, along the coastline of southern Etruria, and in Campania, also appear in the mid Empire to have belonged to families who originated outside those regions.<sup>104</sup> The impact of this phenomenon seems to have been comparatively less apparent in the interior of Italy—much land around Ligures Baebiani appears to have been in the hands of a limited number of interrelated families of comparatively local origin<sup>105</sup>—but it becomes more marked in those areas closer to the capital. The names of freedmen recorded around Amiternum and Marruvium suggest that a significant proportion of the land here was in the control of the great senatorial families, with the greater exploitation of the area around the Fucine Lake in the early second century AD, resulting, apparently, in more external ownership of the territory around Marruvium.<sup>106</sup> Many of these wealthy estates across Italy came in turn to form elements in the imperial holdings.

Together these trends would have contributed, in differing degrees according to local circumstances, to reducing the proportion of land

<sup>100</sup> Crawford, D. J. 1976: 40; Millar 1992: 165–74.

<sup>101</sup> Andermahr 1998: 44–53.

<sup>102</sup> Coarelli 1986: 45–55.

<sup>103</sup> Syme 1958a: 602.

<sup>104</sup> Gaggiotti and Sensi 1982: 257–8; Torelli, M. 1982b: 285; Andermahr 1998: 111–15.

<sup>105</sup> Champlin 1981: 246–54, 262.

<sup>106</sup> Segenni 1987; 1990.

in Italy in local hands, and it appears that the social and political advancement of the local elites helped this tendency still further. By the early second century, much of the territory at Ligures Baebiani was in the control of a small number of individuals and families: some 3.5 per cent of landowners, it has been estimated, owned 21.3 per cent of the land. Champlin has identified seven owners of equestrian rank, three or more of whom may have been senators: they include L. Neratius Marcellus, twice consul, and other men prominent in the administration of the Empire in the Flavian period.<sup>107</sup> It is highly unlikely that all these men's holdings were in the vicinity of Ligures Baebiani, though. Wealthy Romans of the high Empire typically held land in the territory of several cities, partly as a result of the piecemeal way in which holdings were built up, by means of marriage (which was itself frequently undertaken with political advancement in mind), gift, and inheritance.<sup>108</sup> For the landowner, this pattern had its attractions, as it enabled him to spread the risks of property ownership in a way analogous to that traditionally favoured (on a much smaller scale) by the Mediterranean peasantry. In an environment where localized climatic conditions could potentially be disastrous, it was prudent to cultivate a variety of crops in as many different locations as was practicable.<sup>109</sup> Pliny worried about having too many estates in one place, instead preferring to own properties in different parts of Italy; when hail damaged the crops in his Tuscan estates, and the prices to be obtained for his produce north of the Po were low, he joked that the only one of his estates producing a return was that on the seashore near Laurentum, where he did his writing (*Ep.* 3. 19. 4; 4. 6). Likewise, the Neratii, who appear as neighbours at Ligures Baebiani, also had properties at Saepinum and probably Larinum too, and marriage connections at Telesia and Aeclanum.<sup>110</sup> The fragmentation of the estates into separate *fundi* also enabled the landowner to detach units of his landholdings for the purpose of dowries, gifts or inheritances without major disruption to the exploitation of the property as a whole.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Champlin 1981: 256–63.

<sup>108</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 323–5.

<sup>109</sup> Foxhall 1990: 112.

<sup>110</sup> Torelli, M. 1982a: 176–7; Andermahr 1998: 350–1.

<sup>111</sup> Parkins 1997: 97–102.

When this pattern led to the concentration of land in the hands of a local individual, this could work to the advantage of his ambitions for advancement. In other circumstances, estates formerly belonging to local families might, as a result of marriage or inheritance, fall into the hands of a landowner originating from another town, to which he may have felt a greater loyalty and attachment. In both cases, the well-being of the town would depend to a significant extent on the degree of commitment to it felt by the landowner and his family, which might well be one of many potential claims on his generosity. The community was in competition not only with the landowner's interests in Rome, but also with other towns with which he had connections and for which he felt attachment and responsibility, not to mention the demands and requirements of his own family. Extensive information is available about the finances of the younger Pliny, which illustrates these patterns. Pliny's extensive wealth, estimated at some 20,000,000 HS, resulted from the combination of properties which had formerly belonged to his mother, father, and uncle. He himself had no children, for whom he might have wanted to provide dowries (in the case of daughters) or assure the possession of the senatorial census (in the case of sons), although we know that he did provide dowries for the children of at least two friends.<sup>112</sup> He was, however, able to provide generous support for two cities, Comum and Tifernum Tiberinum. The benefactions he made to Comum, his home town, included baths, a library, and an alimentary fund;<sup>113</sup> he also built a temple at Tifernum, where he happened to own other estates (*Ep.* 10. 8).<sup>114</sup> Pliny should be seen as a comparatively affluent senator, although some of his counterparts were even wealthier.<sup>115</sup> A senator whose wealth was closer to the lower limit of one million sesterces, with several children, would by contrast have had much more difficulty in making substantial benefactions to his home town, let alone others in whose territories he owned properties. There are frequent references to 'poor' senators in the sources for the early Empire, who sometimes approached the emperor for support.<sup>116</sup> It is difficult to imagine that these would have been able to

<sup>112</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 28.

<sup>113</sup> *CIL* 5. 5262 = *ILS* 2927.

<sup>114</sup> On Pliny's benefactions, see Duncan-Jones 1982: 27–31.

<sup>115</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 17–18, 343–4; Talbert 1984: 47–53.

<sup>116</sup> See discussion at Talbert 1984: 48–53.

help towns in whose territories they owned estates to any significant extent. A less affluent *equus* would have been in a similar, if not worse, position.<sup>117</sup> Again, the poorest towns, which had least in the way of civic resources and which relied most on their benefactors, would have been most seriously affected by the relative ‘poverty’ of local senators and equestrians.

At Ligures Baebiani, although the evidence of the alimentary table suggests that several senators and equestrians of local origin had estates in the area, they are mentioned as owners of peripheral holdings—adjacent to those mortgaged to the scheme—rather than direct contributors to the alimentary scheme. One exception is the young Neratius Corellius, apparently the son of Neratius Marcellus, who contributed a modest estate of 22,000 HS:<sup>118</sup> perhaps his youth made him an appropriate representative of this distinguished family, given that the scheme was intended to help poor children at Ligures Baebiani. Indeed their interests seem to have gravitated primarily towards neighbouring towns. Several seem to have had closer connections with Beneventum, with family members represented on the *ordo* there, or Saepinum (in the case of the Neratii) than with Ligures Baebiani itself. As Champlin rightly observes, it is quite possible that they are contributing to public or private alimentary schemes elsewhere, but their support for the one at Ligures Baebiani is, so far as the surviving parts of the table allow us to conclude, non-existent.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, Dal Cason’s analysis suggests that in the time of Trajan only a small number of landowners in the territory were from Ligures Baebiani itself, although these were involved to a comparatively high degree in the alimentary institution, no doubt reflecting their particular concern for their own community.<sup>120</sup>

The extent to which senators did in fact maintain close relations with their cities of origin, or those where they owned property, is clearly crucial, but difficult to demonstrate clearly, as Eck underlines.<sup>121</sup> The epigraphic record reveals that many senators did maintain a continuing interest in their home communities, reflected in

<sup>117</sup> Paci 1999.

<sup>118</sup> *CIL* 9. 1455, 2. 14.

<sup>119</sup> Champlin 1981: 263.

<sup>120</sup> Dal Cason 1997: 541–5.

<sup>121</sup> Eck 1996: 175–212.

their service as magistrates and acts of generosity, and this was reflected in the honorific language used in the commemorative inscriptions set up to thank them. An anonymous senator from Beneventum was touchingly thanked for his 'exceptional affection towards his *patria* and its citizens'.<sup>122</sup> We might imagine that many of these benefactions, to home towns in particular, were carried out during, or soon after, the rise to prominence of the donors, though there are examples of links continuing thereafter. The Neratii continued to support the town of Saepinum long after their rise to distinction.<sup>123</sup> It would be too schematic, therefore, to argue that the promotion of local elites beyond the *ordo* was always detrimental to the well-being of a city. Promotion of leading local citizens was, however, only one component in the gradual trend towards an increase in the amount of land in the hands of those based outside the towns; given the demographic and legal background, there was always likely to be a high turnover of property.<sup>124</sup> The problem from the perspective of the towns was the unpredictability of the support likely to be forthcoming from large landowners with tenuous connections to a city. In favourable circumstances they might receive a bath or other public building: the costs of building projects of this kind meant that realistically only senators and equestrians would be in a position to finance such an initiative. Alternatively, they might find the landowners either (for whatever reason) uninterested in the well-being of the town, or more concerned about financing their own family or their political ambitions than supporting a town to which they might (or might not) have some form of sentimental attachment. One possible strategy which might be pursued by the towns was to cultivate those members of elite families who for whatever reason stayed in (or returned to) their town. Some senators left Rome in old age and retired to Italian towns, like the poet Silius Italicus, who died in Naples (Plin. *Ep.* 3. 7); others abandoned the capital for political or philosophical reasons. How far these groups were willing to help the towns is unclear; likewise whether there were significant numbers of sons of senators living in the towns enjoying inherited

<sup>122</sup> *CIL* 9. 1592 = *ILS* 1126.

<sup>123</sup> Eck 1996: 212 n. 58.

<sup>124</sup> Jongman 2002: 55 n. 23.

membership of the *ordo senatorius* (and with it exemption from *honores* and *munera*) but avoiding the risks involved in politics at Rome.<sup>125</sup> The downwardly mobile would be less likely to be able or willing to help, we might surmise, than their upwardly mobile counterparts.

## RESPONSES TO CHANGE: CONSOLIDATING ELITE SUPPORT

### Civic Patrons

One way in which the cities could cultivate supporters and reward benefactors was for the *decuriones* to designate them as *patroni* of the community.<sup>126</sup> The regulations from Urso and Malaca in Spain reveal that this required a formal resolution passed by a substantial proportion of the *ordo*: at Urso a majority of at least fifty *decuriones* present (or with the votes of no fewer than three-quarters of the *ordo*, if the proposed patron was of senatorial rank). At Malaca, a majority of two-thirds of the *decuriones* present was required.<sup>127</sup> A deputation was then sent to the individual selected to persuade him to accept appointment. If he did, a formal record of the decree was inscribed on bronze and displayed in the patron's house.<sup>128</sup> Several of these decrees have survived, including a text honouring T. Pomponius Bassus, patron of Ferentinum in Latium, which was recovered from the remains of Pomponius' house on the Quirinal at Rome in the sixteenth century,<sup>129</sup> and another from Peltuinum in the territory of the Vestini in the central Apennines.<sup>130</sup> In AD 223, the *album* of

<sup>125</sup> Hopkins 1983: 166–71, 191–3 with Jacques 1990: 425–8, who, however, plays down the importance of this latter group.

<sup>126</sup> For city patrons see Harmand 1957 (but note the critical review by E. Badian in *Latomus* 17 (1958), 774–7); Nicols 1980*a, b*, Duthoy 1981, 1984*a, b*, 1984–6; Salway 2000: 133–48.

<sup>127</sup> *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* 97, 130; *Lex Malacitana* 61.

<sup>128</sup> Nicols 1980*b*: 537.

<sup>129</sup> Ferentinum: *CIL* 6. 1492 = *ILS* 6106 = Sherk 1970, no. 9; for the findspot, see Eck 1995; 1997: 169–70, 185.

<sup>130</sup> Peltuinum: *CIL* 9. 3429 = *ILS* 6110 = Sherk 1970, no. 20. See also Sherk 1970: 76.

Canusium, a list of members of the council of that city, records that the community had no fewer than thirty-nine senatorial and equestrian patrons, in addition to whom there may have been others who were also members of the local aristocracy and so not listed separately on the *album*.<sup>131</sup> Over 400 other inscriptions also record the patronate of a city. Typically these are statue-bases or other honorific monuments,<sup>132</sup> reflecting the importance of the erection of public statuary as a means of honouring patrons (or other benefactors) of a community. The statue might be in marble, bronze, or even gilded, depicting the honorand standing, on a horse, or in a chariot; ideally it would be located in a busy area of the city, *celeberrimo in loco*, so it could be seen by all.<sup>133</sup>

Under the Republic, the relationship between a city and its patron was primarily political in nature. The city would rely on the patron to act on its behalf at Rome, protecting it against policies which were detrimental to its interests, and the patron in return could rely on the community's support when he (or his friends) stood for office.<sup>134</sup> Under the changed circumstances of the Empire, the popular vote was no longer as valuable a commodity to the patron as it had been under the Republic, but influence at the centre of Roman government continued to be of crucial importance in maintaining the interests of the town, and the *patronus* continued to play an important part in acting on its behalf. Pliny, for example, was approached through a friend to act on behalf of the people of Firmum in a legal case, and he apparently envisaged that this would lead to a longer-term relationship between himself and the town (Plin. *Ep.* 6. 18).<sup>135</sup> We have already seen how L. Fabius Severus was able to achieve several important privileges for Tergeste by his intervention with the emperor.<sup>136</sup> An individual designated *patronus* might reasonably be expected to provide similar support for his community, but also to help the town in more tangible ways, for instance by contributing

<sup>131</sup> Salway 2000: 133–4.

<sup>132</sup> See Duthoy 1981; 1984–6: 122 for the nature of the epigraphic record.

<sup>133</sup> For the range of possibilities, see Martin 1996*a, b*; Stewart, P. 2003: 86–91.

<sup>134</sup> Harmand 1957: 88–148; Duthoy 1984–6: 121; for an illustration of how political influence at Rome could be used on behalf of an Italian city, see Terrenato 1998: 106–9.

<sup>135</sup> Nicols 1980*a*: 378–9.

<sup>136</sup> On interventions of this kind, see Millar 1983; 1992: 433–4.

a building or performing another benefaction for the town. Pliny, who had been appointed patron of the town of Tifernum Tiberinum at a young age, *paene adhuc puerum*, tells us that he expressed his gratitude by building a temple for the town (*Ep.* 4. 1). Appointing a high-status individual as patron of the town was thus a way in which a potential benefactor might be encouraged to direct his generosity towards the community, as opposed to other calls on his resources. Alternatively, someone who had already made a gift to the town might be made patron as an expression of thanks, and with the hope that they would reciprocate the honour bestowed on them with further acts of generosity in the years to come. An inscription from Corfinium illustrates one possible sequence of events: an individual (whose name is unfortunately lost) was appointed *patronus* of the town together with his sons, and commemorative bronze tablets prepared. Accepting the honour, he entertained the *decuriones*, their wives and children, and the whole of the *populus* to a dinner. The *decuriones* then honoured him with a statue, upon which the benefactor set up a foundation to finance an annual distribution of money on the occasion of his birthday. That some anxieties remained in the benefactor's mind about the relationship nevertheless is suggested by a clause requiring that if for any reason the distribution did not take place, the fund should be forfeited to the nearby (and, presumably, rival) city of Sulmo.<sup>137</sup>

There were thus a variety of possible scenarios for the appointment of the patron.<sup>138</sup> Pliny's appointment as patron at Tifernum followed on his inheritance of his uncle's estates in the territory of the town; in this case, it is clear the *decuriones* of Tifernum were keen to cement links with the new owner of extensive holdings in the territory of their city, and their initiative was duly rewarded.<sup>139</sup> The circumstances leading to the appointment of T. Pomponius Bassus as patron of Ferentinum were rather different. Bassus, a senator, had visited the town to set up an alimentary scheme in AD 101 or 102, and was then asked if he would take the town into 'the *clientela* of his *amplissima domus*'.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>137</sup> *CIL* 9. 3160 = *ILS* 6530, with Buonocore 1987: 114–15.

<sup>138</sup> Duthoy 1984a.

<sup>139</sup> Nicols 1980a: 368–9.

<sup>140</sup> *CIL* 6. 1492 = *ILS* 6106 with Duthoy 1984a: 23–4.



Duthoy has undertaken a detailed analysis of the patrons whose careers and activities are recorded, revealing significant shifts in patterns of recruitment to these positions between the first and the third centuries AD.<sup>141</sup> In general there was a preference for senators as patrons—clearly the more distinguished, affluent, and better connected the patron, the better. However, if suitable (or willing) senators were unavailable, the towns might appoint *equites* (either those holding imperial offices, or those who possessed enough land to achieve the equestrian census but were content to base their activities in their local town), or members of the aristocracy of the town itself; or notables from nearby communities. The vast majority of patrons, especially in the first century, were of local origin or, like Pliny at Tifernum, owned estates locally. So a major aim of the towns seems to have been to tie the local magnates into long-term support of their community; though between the first and third centuries AD, the numbers of patrons originating from outside the individual cities seem gradually to have increased.<sup>142</sup> At the same time, there was a gradual increase in the proportion of members of local aristocracies holding the patronate, while patrons of higher status and holding more distinguished positions declined in number.<sup>143</sup>

This pattern might be seen as implying increasing desperation on the part of the city authorities, as they cast wider and wider, and further down the social spectrum, in their attempts to recruit those who would be willing to take on the responsibilities of a patron in exchange for the admiration and gratitude of the community, and this was sometimes, no doubt, the case. However, the pattern of recruitment of patrons also reflects some broader trends: the increasing numbers of senators from outside Italy; the concentration of landholdings meaning that wealthy individuals might have possessions in several different towns; the growth of some cities in Italy at the expense of others, reflected in the development of an urban hierarchy. It is striking that where a patron is a member of the municipal aristocracy in a neighbouring town, the town concerned is almost always more important than the 'client' city.<sup>144</sup> For

<sup>141</sup> Duthoy 1984*a*; 1984–6.

<sup>142</sup> Duthoy 1984*a*: 41.

<sup>143</sup> Nicols 1980*a*: 381–2; Duthoy 1984–6.

<sup>144</sup> Duthoy 1984*a*: 35.

example, men from Venafrum and Casinum are known to have acted as patrons (and *curatores rei publicae*) of Interamna Lirenas.<sup>145</sup>

Two possible strategies were thus available to the towns. They could use the patronate as a means of tying those who owned extensive properties in the territory more closely to the community—in particular those whose senatorial or equestrian duties were liable to take them away temporarily or permanently. It was a particularly effective way of establishing links between those who came to acquire land in the territory, through inheritance or marriage, and a community with which they might not have had previous ties; or maintaining a relationship with an individual whose main focus of interest was a neighbouring (and perhaps more important) town. Alternatively, and less frequently, the town might seek support from a man of eminence external to the community with whom they had already some contact.<sup>146</sup> How far these strategies worked would no doubt have varied from place to place, but the patronate was a potentially significant element in the towns' efforts to maintain relations with the local landowners, and draw on their resources for the good of the community as a whole.

### Cultivating Elite Families

It was common for several members of an elite family to hold the patronate of a particular town: sometimes the appointment of an individual as patron would also be extended to his family and descendants.<sup>147</sup> Some of these might be female: as the position of patron was not a magistracy, and it did not involve membership of the *ordo*, except in an honorific capacity (patrons headed the *album* of *decuriones* at Canusium), there was no obstacle to appointing a female patron.<sup>148</sup> For example, Nummia Varia was appointed *patrona* at Peltuinum in AD 242,<sup>149</sup> and female patrons are also known from Tarquinia and Pitinum Pisaurense, near Pisaurum on

<sup>145</sup> e.g. *CIL* 10. 4860; 10. 5197 = *ILS* 4093.

<sup>146</sup> Duthoy 1984a: 46.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.* 48; Salway 2000: 140.

<sup>148</sup> For *patronae*, see MacMullen 1980; Nicols 1989.

<sup>149</sup> *CIL* 9. 3429 = *ILS* 6110.

the Adriatic. In all these cases, interestingly, the text of the inscription makes reference to the benefactions or achievements of the male relatives of the *patrona*. We hear of the earlier support for the town on the part of the parents of Nummia Varia, while the husband of Abeiena Balbina was *quinquennalis* at Pitinum. The husband of Domitia Melpis, patron of Tarquinii, had served as *curator rei publicae* of the town, and restored the baths, in which Domitia Melpis was honoured with a statue.<sup>150</sup> Women had in the first and second centuries taken a leading role, not only in the religious life of their city—Nummia was a *sacerdos*—but also on occasion in providing benefactions for their towns, as illustrated by the case of Ummidia Quadratilla at Casinum, and the estimated 10 per cent of distributions and banquets known to have been initiated by female benefactors.<sup>151</sup> They were honoured in appropriate terms by the community.<sup>152</sup> Female benefactors are also attested in the world of the *collegia*, holding positions such as *patrona collegii* or *mater collegii*.<sup>153</sup> However, from the limited evidence available, it seems that female patrons and benefactors had a particularly high profile in the third century AD. A particularly striking case is that of Caesia Sabina of Veii. When her husband held games and a banquet in the mid third century, she organized a dinner for the mothers, sisters, and daughters of the *centumviri* and for the women of the town, and provided free oil and admission to the baths.<sup>154</sup> This level of activity perhaps reflects in part the greater visibility of female members of the imperial family in that period, such as Julia Domna, the wife of Septimius Severus.<sup>155</sup> The activities of these eminent women, and the town's concern to honour them, are therefore not necessarily an indication of a shortage of male benefactors, but reflect an endeavour on the part of the towns to honour—and strengthen their relationships with—not only distinguished local individuals, male and female, but their families collectively.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Abeiena Balbina: *CIL* 11. 6354 = *ILS* 6655. Domitia Melpis: *CIL* 11. 3368 (with 11. 3367 = *ILS* 1180 for the activities of her husband Q. Petronius Melior).

<sup>151</sup> Mrozek 1987: 74.

<sup>152</sup> Forbis 1990.

<sup>153</sup> Clemente 1972: 188–90.

<sup>154</sup> *CIL* 11. 3811 = *ILS* 6583. See Mrozek 1987: 76.

<sup>155</sup> MacMullen 1980: 216–17; Nicols 1989: 123–4.

<sup>156</sup> Nicols 1989: 137–8; Martin 1996b.

The growth of large estates, linked with the advancement of members of their local elites to superior rank, was potentially detrimental to the well-being of the towns. It was thus essential for the communities to cultivate the leading men in the territory, to try to ensure that they supported their local city; and the towns sought to cultivate their families too. The success with which they were able to do this, and mobilize alternative sources of financial and other support, was of major importance in determining the extent to which the structures of civic life successfully persisted in a particular community, though there were, of course, many other variables.

#### RESPONSES TO CHANGE: WIDENING CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Of central importance in municipal life was the city council, the *ordo*, which played a vital role in the organization and financing of civic amenities. Like the Roman Senate, the *ordo* in an Italian town needed continual replenishment from below; and the advancement of the wealthier elements in the local elite into the equestrian order or the Senate must have increased that need. Filling the gaps that opened up with the departure of the upwardly mobile was a major challenge for the cities, but also an opportunity to recruit new blood and revitalize civic activities.

The members of the *ordo* served as the local government of a city and its territory, and the city's magistrates either entered its ranks on election by the people of the city or (later) were drawn directly from its number. By virtue of belonging to the *ordo*, an individual would also achieve a more distinguished status within the community, becoming (in the terminology used from the mid second century AD onwards) one of the *honestiores*. Legal privileges under Roman law attached to membership of the curial class, most notably from the reign of Hadrian onwards: *decuriones* were not liable to the death penalty even when convicted of murder, and furthermore could not be tortured, crucified, sent to the mines, or thrown to the wild beasts (unlike the members of the lower classes). This appears to reflect an awareness on the part of the imperial authorities of the central role

played by the curial classes in ensuring peace and good order within the Empire.<sup>157</sup> Magistrates and councillors had special places of honour at the theatre and the games; their distinction in the community was reflected in the more generous shares they received at public banquets. They wore special dress, and magistrates in particular were surrounded by an entourage of attendants paid for by the community.<sup>158</sup>

The basic principles of the municipal system are common across the cities, although some interesting (and important) diversities can be identified. There was widespread use of a financial entry qualification to the *ordo*, reflecting the basically oligarchic nature of the institution, though, as we have seen, it is very likely that the level of the qualification would have varied from place to place. Likewise, although traditionally the number of 100 councillors has been seen as the standard size of the *ordo*, it is now clear that there was significant variation in this regard too.<sup>159</sup> At Irni in Spain, we now know for certain that the *ordo* consisted of sixty-three members 'by the law and custom of that *municipium* before the passage of this statute'.<sup>160</sup> More evidence for variety comes from Castrimoenium (near modern Marino in the Alban Hills), where an inscription refers to the building of a shrine 'by decree of the *XXXviri*', who are assumed to have constituted the city's *ordo*.<sup>161</sup> Besides, twenty-six of the town's councillors are recorded as having been present when a public burial plot was granted to M. Iulius Monimus, a benefactor of the city.<sup>162</sup> This seems to confirm the view that the *ordo* at Castrimoenium was small, since an attendance of 26 would be nothing to boast about if it consisted of 100 members in total. The *centumviri*<sup>163</sup> attested at Cures Sabini, Veii, and Forum Novum, which provide the most explicit indication of councils with 100 members, may well owe their title more to

<sup>157</sup> Garnsey 1970: 83–4, 154–62, 242–5; Jacques 1984: 571–3.

<sup>158</sup> Abbott and Johnson 1926: 66; Garnsey 1970: 244.

<sup>159</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 283–4; Nicols 1988; Mouritsen 1998*a*: 231–8.

<sup>160</sup> *Lex Irnitana* 31, with Gonzalez 1986: 208.

<sup>161</sup> *CIL* 14. 2458 = *ILS* 3475.

<sup>162</sup> *CIL* 14. 2466.

<sup>163</sup> Veii: *CIL* 11. 3801 = *ILS* 2692; *CIL* 11. 3805 = *ILS* 6579; *CIL* 11. 3807–9 = *ILS* 6582a–c; *CIL* 11. 3811 = *ILS* 6583; *CIL* 11. 3814, 7746. Cures: *CIL* 9. 4952 = *ILS* 3702; *CIL* 9. 4959 = *ILS* 460; *CIL* 9. 4970 = *ILS* 6559; *CIL* 9. 4973, 4976, 4978 = *ILS* 5670. Forum Novum: Filippi 1989: 184–6.

antiquarian and historical associations rather than to arithmetical accuracy.<sup>164</sup> Both Cures (in Roman tradition the home town of both Titus Tatius, leader of the Sabines, and Numa, Rome's second king) and Veii (the main rival of Rome in the early years of the Republic, until its defeat in 396 BC) had close links with the history of early Rome (Livy 1. 13. 5; 1. 18. 1; Plut. *Num.* 3. 4);<sup>165</sup> likewise, both towns had shrunk to a fraction of their former sizes by the end of the Republic. Strabo says Cures, once an important city, is now a *komion* (Strab. 5. 3. 1) while Propertius paints a poignant picture of a shepherd playing the pipes within the deserted landscape which was once the city of Veii (Prop. 4. 10. 27–30).<sup>166</sup> Caesarian veterans were established at Veii, and perhaps some additional settlers under Augustus,<sup>167</sup> while land-distribution may also have taken place at Cures at around the same time.<sup>168</sup> The city of Veii was reconstituted as the *Municipium Augustum Veiens* by Augustus, and both benefited from substantial building projects in the Augustan period.<sup>169</sup>

In the light of this evidence both of the towns' antiquity and of the continuing interest in their well-being on the part of Caesar and then Augustus, it is tempting to suggest that the choice of the title *centumviri* should be seen as an archaizing initiative, reflecting the tradition that the Senate of Romulus had 100 members (Livy 1. 8. 7; Dion. Hal. 2. 12. 1), rather than the imposition of a standard format.<sup>170</sup> Forum Novum, a small centre nearby, may have adopted the title in imitation of its more ancient neighbours.<sup>171</sup> Whatever the situation may have been in theory, it is clear that in practice 100 *decuriones* did not always appear on occasions when the *ordo* was supposed to gather. When a dinner was held at Cures in honour of

<sup>164</sup> See Mouritsen 1998a: 234–5; Patterson, J. R. 2004a: 69–70 for further discussion.

<sup>165</sup> Ogilvie 1965: 79.

<sup>166</sup> Cures: Muzzioli 1980: 76. Veii: Liverani 1984: 43; 1987: 157.

<sup>167</sup> Veterans at Veii: see Keppie 1983: 98, 104; Jones 1963b; Harris 1971: 310–11; Liverani 1984: 43; 1987: 144.

<sup>168</sup> Muzzioli 1985: 52.

<sup>169</sup> Veii: Liverani 1987: 144–6. Cures: Reggiani 1985: 89.

<sup>170</sup> Ogilvie 1965: 64, in his discussion of the Livy passage, refers to the *centumviri* at Veii and Cures as possible parallels for the Romulean senate of 100; but it may rather be that the Senate of Romulus was the model for these local senates of Caesarian or Augustan date.

<sup>171</sup> For recent archaeological investigation of the site, see Gaffney, Patterson, and Roberts 2001.

the birthday of a benefactor, ten *triclinia* were allocated to the *decuriones*. Since a *triclinium* held nine diners, this meant that a maximum of ninety people could have attended.<sup>172</sup> Similarly, when, in AD 26, the *centumviri* of Veii met at the Temple of Venus Genetrix in Rome to honour an imperial freedman, C. Julius Gelos, only thirteen members of the *ordo* actually turned up.<sup>173</sup>

This variety of sizes among local councils should cause little surprise. Just as traditional local titles for magistrates continued to exist in some Italian cities even after the widespread creation of *municipia* in the peninsula in the first century BC, and the development of the general pattern whereby colonies were run by *IIviri* and *municipia* by *IIIviri*, so we might expect some diversity in municipal constitutions.<sup>174</sup> A size of *ordo* would be chosen which would fit local circumstances, in particular the status of the community before the grant of citizenship, and the size and wealth of the urban centre and its territory. The choice of a small *ordo* at Castrimoenium may have been affected by all these considerations. The community was evidently a very small centre, in an area which was dominated by the large villas of wealthy Romans<sup>175</sup> including, interestingly, one belonging to Bellicius Sollers, whose plans for a rural market at Vicetia caused such problems for that town;<sup>176</sup> and the creation of a *municipium* here seems to have taken place under Sulla, as part of a general reorganization of the former Ager Romanus after the extension of the franchise to Rome's Italian allies.<sup>177</sup>

This analysis reveals a complex picture: since the size of the *ordo* in a city, and the financial requirements necessary to serve on that body, were determined by a variety of different factors ranging from the size and wealth of the city and its territory to the extent of imperial patronage of the community, the issue becomes of more than antiquarian interest. It was potentially of crucial importance in determining the long-term prosperity (or lack of it) of a community, especially where a city relied on contributions from councillors,

<sup>172</sup> *CIL* 9. 4971 = *ILS* 6560, with Duncan-Jones 1982: 284–5; Mouritsen 1998a: 236.

<sup>173</sup> *CIL* 11. 3805 = *ILS* 6579.

<sup>174</sup> Laffi 1973: 52; Campanile and Letta 1979; Laffi 1983.

<sup>175</sup> Ashby 1910: 260–78; Lissi Caronna 1973.

<sup>176</sup> Cracco Ruggini 1987: 257–8; Andermahr 1998: 179–82.

<sup>177</sup> Laffi 1973: 44; Coarelli 1981: 112–14.

voluntary or obligatory. The appropriateness of the structures existing in a particular community to the economic resources available could be of major importance in determining whether the municipal government was potentially a source of pride and prestige, or a constant drain on the community. If the *ordo* was too large in relation to the territory and its resources, either the entry qualification would have to be fixed very low, or there would be a constant shortage of councillors and persistent problems of recruitment; too small an *ordo*, on the other hand, might potentially be detrimental to the prestige of the community *vis-à-vis* other cities, and alienate those sections of the local elite who would thereby be excluded from the prestige that membership of the *ordo* brought with it. The size of *ordo*, and the level of the entry qualification required from *decuriones*, had therefore to be balanced carefully with the level of superstructure that the community could support.<sup>178</sup> Considerations other than those of economic rationality affected the prestige-fixated communities of Roman Italy, however, and the inherent weaknesses that this caused were to store up difficulties for some cities in the long term.

The formal requirements for entry to the *ordo* in the towns of Italy are deduced from the *Tabula Heracleensis* and the Flavian municipal laws from Malaca, Salpensa, and Irni. These reveal that entry to the *ordo* might be by two routes; indirectly, by election to a junior magistracy (usually the quaestorship, but sometimes the aedileship) and subsequent admission *ex officio* to the *ordo*; or by direct adlection, for example as a substitute for a decurion who had died or been expelled from the *ordo*. No one under the age of 30 (*Tabula Heracleensis*)<sup>179</sup> or 25 (Malaca)<sup>180</sup>—the change from 30 to 25 seems to reflect an initiative of Augustus<sup>181</sup>—could be elected to a magistracy, unless they had gained exemption by virtue of their military service; bankrupts, and those convicted of certain crimes, were forbidden to stand for election, as were members of certain discreditable professions, in particular auctioneers and those involved in the

<sup>178</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 287.

<sup>179</sup> *Tab. Herac.* 89.

<sup>180</sup> *Lex Malacitana* 54.

<sup>181</sup> Morris, J. 1964: 316–17.



organization of funerals. Freedmen were not allowed to join the *ordo*, but there was no restriction on their sons doing so. The often-attested title of the *Ilviri quinquennales* (who served as the municipal censors) implies that a *lectio ordinis* took place every five years; but according to the *Tabula Heracleensis*, the annual *Ilviri* or *IIIviri* were responsible for filling vacancies in the *ordo*; the *Lex Irnitana* reveals that if the number of *decuriones* fell below sixty-three, a day would be determined on which action would be taken to fill up the vacancies.<sup>182</sup> As the law stresses the urgency of doing so, it is difficult to imagine that vacancies would be left for up to five years without any action being taken.<sup>183</sup> In both these systems, the appointment of magistrates and the adlection of councillors represent an important element in the local political process. Those who hoped for advancement into the *ordo* could achieve their ambition either by standing in the annual elections for junior magistrates, or by seeking adlection into the *ordo* as replacements for those who had died, been expelled, withdrawn from civic life—or themselves advanced to higher social and political status beyond the *ordo*, relinquishing their local responsibilities in doing so.

The character of political activity in the Italian cities, and in particular patterns of promotion into the *ordo*, have been the subject of a great deal of recent debate, much of it concentrated on two bodies of evidence. A wealth of material casting light on local politics has been preserved in the form of electoral inscriptions painted on the walls of Pompeii, destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79. This can be related to the inscriptions recovered from the surrounding cemeteries, and the archives of wax tablets such as those of Caecilius Iucundus, found in and around the city, not to mention the extensive information provided by the excavations of the city, to create a detailed picture of the Pompeian elite. The study of this material has in the past been confused by over-imaginative identifications and reconstructions, and many of the texts have been lost, making the field a difficult one for the non-specialist.<sup>184</sup> Used with

<sup>182</sup> *Lex Irnitana* 31.

<sup>183</sup> Jacques 1984: 573–83.

<sup>184</sup> See the critique of Pompeian epigraphic studies in the earlier part of the twentieth century by Mouritsen 1988: 11–13, 23–7; also Franklin 2001: 3–7.

care, however, the evidence from Pompeii potentially allows us a uniquely detailed view of political life in that city in the years leading up to the eruption.

The document known as the '*album* of Canusium' is also of major importance. Found outside the town of Canosa in southern Italy in 1675, and now in the archaeological museum at Florence, the bronze tablet lists the membership of the *ordo* in AD 223 in a town which, though not named on the document, is assumed to be ancient Canusium.<sup>185</sup>

One difficulty in dealing with this material is that of how far the situations revealed at Pompeii or Canusium should be seen as typical of towns elsewhere in Italy. A prior issue is how 'typical' the towns themselves were. While bearing in mind the basic point that all Italian towns have their own histories, and generalization is risky, we can sketch out certain characteristics for both Pompeii and Canusium. Jongman's discussion of the population of the city concludes that Pompeii was 'probably bigger than most Roman towns'.<sup>186</sup> Pompeii's coastal location, its importance as a centre of trading and commercial activity, and the wealth of its territory and the villas which surrounded the town, combine to suggest that it may have been one of the larger centres in Roman Italy. Similarly, it is worth noting that Canusium was granted colonial status in the reign of Antoninus Pius, and the colony received a water supply from the celebrated Greek senator, sophist, and benefactor Herodes Atticus.<sup>187</sup> With its location near the southern end of the *tratturo* connecting northern Apulia with the central Apennines, the town was well placed to profit from the trade in wool and the production of woollen garments: Canusine cloaks were highly prized. It was also located on the Via Traiana between Beneventum and Brundisium, and is likely to have benefited from the building of the road, in the same way as nearby Herdoniae. Salway concludes that Canusium may have been characterized by an 'above-average prosperity'.<sup>188</sup>

<sup>185</sup> *CIL* 9. 338 = *ILS* 6121 (an abbreviated version); see Chelotti *et al.* 1990: 45–68; Cassano 1992: 780–2. For a brief account of the discovery of the document and its subsequent history, see Salway 2000: 115–18.

<sup>186</sup> Jongman 1988: 55–7.

<sup>187</sup> *CIL* 9. 344 = *ILS* 5188; with Grelle 1993: 121–43.

<sup>188</sup> Grelle 1981: 212–25; 1993: 89–106; Salway 2000: 118–20.

How typical is the political situation revealed in the two towns? Several references to the use of painted electoral propaganda in the epigraphy of other towns in Italy implies that one of the most striking features of political life at Pompeii—the painting of electoral and other notices on walls—was paralleled elsewhere. Usually these are sepulchral inscriptions, which warn *scriptores*, *candidati*, or *munerarii* not to write on the tombs.<sup>189</sup> It is hard, however, to judge whether the level of political competition at Pompeii in the period leading up to the eruption was paralleled in other Italian towns. An inscription from the city of Pisa listing posthumous honours decreed to Gaius Caesar, recording that ‘because of *contentiones candidatorum*’ no magistrates had been elected at the time of Gaius’ death in AD 4, suggests a vigorous pattern of political struggle, at least on that occasion.<sup>190</sup> The *album* of Canusium is the only such document surviving from Italy, and it should be underlined that the data from Pompeii and Canusium come from periods nearly a century and a half apart. Nevertheless, these two cases provide us with snapshots of two cities in different parts of Italy at different times, and allow us the opportunity to look much more closely at patterns of social promotion at Pompeii and Canusium than is possible from the somewhat heterogeneous material available from elsewhere, largely derived from funerary and honorary inscriptions.<sup>191</sup> Both of these cities were comparatively prosperous, able to draw on the extensive natural resources of their territories, benefiting from effective communications, and fully integrated into the broader economic structures of Italy. The situation revealed at Pompeii and Canusium can, with appropriate caution, be taken to reflect the broader situation in towns of above-average affluence.

Given their importance for maintaining the health of the *ordo*, and the wider implications of upward mobility for the social history of the Italian towns in the imperial period, the systems of election and adlection assume particular significance. Should local politics (and in

<sup>189</sup> See the discussion by K. Zangemeister in *CIL* IV (1871), p. 10. The inscriptions in question are: *CIL* 5. 1490 = *ILS* 8207a (Aquileia); 9. 3331 (Superaequum); 10. 6193 (Formiae) (referring to *scriptores*); 11. 575 = *ILS* 8206 (Forum Popilli); 11. 4126 (Narnia) (referring to *candidati* and *munerarii*).

<sup>190</sup> *CIL* 11. 1421 = *ILS* 140.

<sup>191</sup> Garnsey 1975: 168.

particular, the elections to the quaestorship and/or aedileship, which allowed entry to the *ordo*) be seen as an expression of free political choice by the people of the city through free elections, or more as a ritualized manifestation of elite control? Again, the situation at Pompeii has received most attention, because the wealth of painted electoral slogans has been seen as an indicator of lively struggles as rival politicians sought to influence uncommitted voters. Recent analyses of Pompeian politics, although coming to rather different conclusions, tend to agree in playing down the importance of the popular vote: both Jongman and Mouritsen, for example, argue independently that there was limited scope for the population of Pompeii to express their opinion electorally. This is not to say, of course, that the role of the people had no importance at all: canvassing and acts of generosity to the local populace were clearly of some importance. Jongman, following Franklin's view that elections to the duumvirate were uncontested, argues that prospective candidates had to have the support of the sitting members of the *ordo*.<sup>192</sup> Mouritsen's analysis of the electoral *programmata* demonstrates, however, that there were on average some 2.3 known candidates for the duumvirate annually, in the years between the earthquake which took place in AD 62 and the eruption of Vesuvius. The equivalent figures for the aedileship elections were 3.6 and in the five-yearly elections to the office of *Ilvir quinquennalis*, 4; all these figures might need to be increased, given the incomplete nature of the evidence.<sup>193</sup> This picture suggests that although there were few candidates for the duumvirate, the necessity to have held the aedileship first would have reduced the numbers of possible candidates, and other hopefuls might have died between the two offices; the fact that the average of candidates per year was *more* than two suggests that the elections were indeed contested. However, the elections to the aedileship (which at Pompeii was the office that led to admission to the *ordo*) and for the highly honorific office of *quinquennalis* attracted more competition, presumably because of the advancement and/or prestige such success might bring.<sup>194</sup> In general, it seems that although

<sup>192</sup> Jongman 1988: 312–17; Franklin 1980: 119–24.

<sup>193</sup> Mouritsen 1988: 43–4.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.* 1990: 143–4.

the people of the Italian towns did (in the first century AD, at least) continue to be able to contribute in a modest way to the political process in their cities, choosing between rival candidates from those put forward from the elite, and politicians continued to seek their support, there were other ways of influencing the outcome of an election. Competition (or alliances) between different elements in the local elite were probably more significant in local politics than the free expression of popular opinion, and patronage played a major role: the electoral inscriptions can thus be seen as 'symbolic expressions of the competitive character of the local elite'.<sup>195</sup>

The second way of replenishing the *ordo* in response to the death or further advancement of its members was by means of adlection. The extent to which this was necessary would have depended largely on the size of the *ordo* in a particular town, and the number of magistracies which allowed access to the *ordo*. In those towns which had an *ordo* of 100 members, demographic necessity would require that substantial numbers of councillors would have to be adlected. Jongman calculates that if two elected magistrates entered the *ordo* at Pompeii annually, and we assume a life expectancy at birth of 24.7, the *ordo* would in practice have normally consisted of only some fifty-five members; on a more generous assumption of a life expectancy of 33.9, the *ordo* would have had sixty-three members—in both cases far short of the figure of 100 traditionally assumed to have been the norm in Italian towns. The shortfall would have had to be made up by adlection if an *ordo* of 100 members was to be maintained. Comparatively few men are known from the epigraphic record of Pompeii to have been adlected to the *ordo* without having held a magistracy, and the natural conclusion to be drawn is that the *ordo* at Pompeii (whose size is not specifically attested) in fact held considerably fewer than 100 members.<sup>196</sup>

No doubt circumstances would have differed widely between communities across Italy, among other factors according to the varying sizes of the *ordo* in different towns. The case of Canusium is of particular interest, because here we have preserved a full record

<sup>195</sup> Mouritsen 1990: 149; see also Mouritsen 1998a: 247–8.

<sup>196</sup> A possibility floated by Jongman 1988: 320, and proposed more forcefully by Mouritsen 1997: 79.

of the entire *ordo* in the year AD 223. Altogether 164 names are listed on the *album*: patrons of senatorial and equestrian rank appear first, and are followed by the members of the *ordo* according to status within that body—former *quinquennales*, those adlected into that status, those who had served as *Ilviri*, aediles, and quaestors, and then at the end thirty-two men described as *pedani* and twenty-five as *praetextati*. The latter were apparently the sons of local *decuriones*. Like their counterparts at Rome, the *laticlavii*, they gained honorific status by virtue of their father's membership of the *ordo*, and were admitted to that body in an honorific capacity, but without being liable to political or administrative responsibilities.<sup>197</sup> If the thirty-nine men named as patrons and the *praetextati* are left out, the number listed becomes 100 altogether, who constituted the active members of the *ordo*.

Given the demographic constraints laid out above, considerable numbers would have to be adlected in order to achieve a total of 100 members for the *ordo*. These were the *pedani*. Examination of their names and their relationships to other individuals listed on the table reveals that they were in general of inferior social rank to the other members of the *ordo*;<sup>198</sup> some of this group were probably sons of freedmen, but it is difficult to be sure since one of the diagnostic tests typically used to identify this group, the use of a Greek cognomen, may be misleading in the case of Canusium where the inhabitants are known to have used both the Greek and Latin languages (Hor. *Sat.* 1. 10. 30). Most likely the magistrates were now selected from this group (and from the *praetextati*) rather than being elected by the popular assembly: it is difficult to imagine both election on the traditional model and large-scale adlection operating side by side, as the second would seem to make the first unnecessary.<sup>199</sup> If so, the role of patronage was now of even more importance in terms of political advancement, as patrons manoeuvred within the *ordo* to have their protégés adlected to that body, or selected as magistrates; the populace as a whole did, however, maintain a collective

<sup>197</sup> Garnsey 1998: 22; Kleijwegt 1991: 304–11.

<sup>198</sup> Jacques 1984: 520–6; Jongman 1988: 326–9; Mouritsen 1998a: 244–7; Scheidel in Garnsey 1998: 26.

<sup>199</sup> Garnsey 1998: 23–4; Mouritsen 1998a: 248.

importance, and were particularly involved in honouring benefactors of the city.<sup>200</sup>

Two strategies were available to the cities in recruiting new members for the *ordo*. Both were compatible with each other, and both were evidently in use at Canusium. They might seek to ensure the continuing participation in civic life of the families of the traditional elites, or seek to bring in men from families which had not previously served on the council. The first strategy was followed by allowing the sons of members of the local elite to enter the *ordo* as *praetextati*. In exceptional circumstances—such as an expression of thanks for a generous benefaction—they might go so far as adlecting children to full membership of the *ordo*, as we see in the case of N. Popidius Celsinus, aged 6, who was adlected into the council at Pompeii *gratis* as an expression of thanks for his restoration of the Temple of Isis after the earthquake in AD 62.<sup>201</sup> Similarly the son of L. Stennius Silvester, *augustalis* and *sevir* at Telesia, who died at the age of 16, had already been adlected to the *ordo* at nearby Ligures Baebiani.<sup>202</sup> Rather than implying a desperate shortage of *decuriones*, these initiatives appear to have been responses to acts of generosity, or preemptive honours for families whose support the councillors were keen to encourage, and can be related to other initiatives, such as the grant of the patronate, aimed at cementing good relations between leading local families as a whole and the community.

Beyond this group, there were several potential sources of new recruits to the *ordo*. These might include free landowners (in particular men who had previously been active in subordinate communities within the city's territory, rather than the city itself); military veterans; wealthy freeborn immigrants resident in the community; and those sons of freedmen who had acquired sufficient wealth (and appropriate patronage) to enable them to enter the *ordo*.<sup>203</sup> The relative proportion of these different groups among the new recruits is, however, likely to have been variable.

<sup>200</sup> Jacques 1984: 393–4.

<sup>201</sup> *CIL* 10. 846 = *ILS* 6367, with Kleijwegt 1991: 319–20; Zanker 1998: 126–7.

<sup>202</sup> *AE* 1975: 206.

<sup>203</sup> Garnsey 1975: 167.

### Free Landowners

This group, comprising those who owned land in the city's territory but whose families had not previously participated in the *ordo*, must always have been one of the chief sources of new members. In particular, those who lived in, or had been involved in supporting, the subordinate communities in the territory of the city could have been induced to transfer their activities to the urban centre itself. This scenario is especially apparent in those areas of Italy, notably the central Apennines, where we see village settlement continuing to be an important element in the organization of the territory into the latter years of the Republic and the Augustan period. In these areas, the epigraphic record reveals members of the local elites first active as magistrates (and benefactors) in the *pagi* and *vici* of the territory, and then, with the development of municipal centres, transferring their activities to the town. A striking example is the case of the Caidii from the territory of Sulmo. C. Caidius Praesens is recorded on an inscription found at Scanno, to the south of the modern town of Sulmona, as being *decurio primus a Betifulo*—the first councillor from Betifulum.<sup>204</sup> Betifulum is thought to have been a *pagus* in the territory of the municipality of Sulmo, so we here have an example of a family transferring their attention from the local *pagus*-centre to the municipality itself.<sup>205</sup> In north Italy, towns such as Brixia had vast territories with indigenous populations 'attributed' to the urban centres: these too provided a reservoir for potential recruits to the local elite.<sup>206</sup>

### Veterans

Veterans were a major source of recruits for local councils in the civil war period: fortunes were won in the fighting, and centurions in

<sup>204</sup> *CIL* 9. 3088. See Patterson, J. R. 1991: 153 for a previous discussion, which needs correcting. The office recorded on *AE* 1968: 149, from La Regina 1968: 435–6, commemorating L. Caidius Afer, is now shown by the photographs in Forni 1979 and in Buonocore 1988: 68–9 to be *IIIvir aedilis*, one of the municipal magistracies of Sulmo, rather than *IIIvir aedilis*, which had been thought to have been a local magistracy at Betifulum.

<sup>205</sup> For a discussion of the location of Betifulum—possibly not at Scanno—see van Wousterghem 1984: 302; Buonocore 1988: 18, 27.

<sup>206</sup> Mollo 2000*b*: 2, 345–7.



particular received generous grants of land when they were settled in colonies by the triumvirs or by Augustus.<sup>207</sup> According to Appian, even an offer of the decurionate in their own cities was insufficient to mollify disaffected centurions and military tribunes in Octavian's army in 36 BC: they wanted land instead (App. *B.Civ.* 5. 128). When a colony was established, members of a legion were settled together, and their former officers and centurions were well placed to provide leadership of the community in civilian life (Tac. *Ann.* 14. 27). Even ordinary soldiers might reach the lower echelons of the *ordo*. We hear of one soldier, together with an ex-centurion, adlected among the *decuriones* at Ateste, and veterans might on occasion even hold municipal office.<sup>208</sup> Although those who gained promotion as centurion or *primus pilus* could advance as far as the equestrian order, benefiting from levels of pay which were fifteen times those of an ordinary soldier in the case of a centurion, or sixty times in the case of a *primus pilus*,<sup>209</sup> in general military careers seem to have been much less important as a route to membership of the *ordo* in the Italian cities of the high Empire than they were in the civil war years. There were several reasons for this. First, the pay and conditions associated with military service became increasingly unattractive to Italians in the early Empire. There was a dramatic decline in the numbers of men from Italy serving in the legions between the time of Augustus and the early second century; only a handful of Italian soldiers are known thereafter.<sup>210</sup> Many Italians did, however, continue to enter the Praetorian Guard, though the overall number of men serving in that body was only a small percentage of the Roman army as a whole. Those few who did serve in the legions might well prefer not to return to Italy after a career spent on the frontiers but instead to settle in the provinces with the family they had established during their years of service.<sup>211</sup> The emperors of the first century AD—most notably Nero and Vespasian—did settle veterans in Italy, at Tarentum, Antium, and Paestum for example, but these communities

<sup>207</sup> See Keppie 1983: 104–12 and Patterson, J. R. forthcoming for further discussion of the impact of colonization on Italian communities.

<sup>208</sup> Keppie 1983: 108–9.

<sup>209</sup> For military pay, see Speidel 1992: esp. 100–5.

<sup>210</sup> Forni 1953: 65–71; Mann 1983: 49, 63.

<sup>211</sup> Mann 1983: 61–3.

were not particularly successful, and there are indications that after a few years many of the colonists had drifted away. Military diplomas belonging to men who had served in the Misenum fleet and settled at Paestum have been found as far away as Thrace and Moesia, suggesting that provincials stationed in Italy might prefer to return to their homes at the end of their service.<sup>212</sup> Only occasionally are there indications that these veterans or their sons might have become members of the local *ordo* or been elected to municipal office, as with Salvius Celer, a veteran of Legio IV Scythica, who became an aedile and *IIVir quinquennalis* at Tarentum after thirty years' service,<sup>213</sup> or C. Annaeus Pastor, son of a veteran of the Praetorian Guard, who became *IIIVir iure dicundo* at Reate.<sup>214</sup>

Even if veterans did settle in Italian towns, they were exempted from *munera*, and so could readily have escaped service in the *ordo* had they wanted to.<sup>215</sup> Despite this, there were still men who had served in the legions who took on the role of decurion, either out of a sense of civic responsibility or desire for prestige. For example, C. Amarfius Saturninus, who served in Legio II Parthica in the third century AD, was not only decurion at Ligures Baebiani himself, but was followed into the *ordo* by his son and grandson, and became patron: he was honoured by the *collegia* of *dendrophori* and *fabri* in the town 'on account of his exceptional affection towards the citizens both individually and collectively'.<sup>216</sup>

## Migrants

Given the traditional openness to migration espoused by the Romans (as discussed in Ch. 1) it seems likely that at least some individuals pursued social advancement by moving to a new (and larger) town, though the majority of migrants would probably have been of lower status and thus (initially anyway) not likely to be taking a leading role in civic affairs.<sup>217</sup> We know that the port of Puteoli had a

<sup>212</sup> Keppie 1984: 101–3.

<sup>213</sup> *AE* 1969/70: 133 with Keppie 1984: 85.

<sup>214</sup> *CIL* 9. 4754 with Keppie 1984: 93–4.

<sup>215</sup> Millar 1983: 85–6; Jacques 1984: 634.

<sup>216</sup> *CIL* 9. 1459.

<sup>217</sup> Morley 1996: 174–6; Broadhead 2001.

cosmopolitan population which included Jews and Syrians, and the city would have attracted migrants from closer at hand too; D'Arms suggests that the destruction caused by the eruption of Vesuvius may have led to an influx from southern Campania in the later Flavian period, the rich as well as the poor.<sup>218</sup>

### Sons of Freedmen

Freedmen were not allowed to enter the *ordo*—though they might be awarded the honorific *ornamenta decurionalia* or *decurionatus*<sup>219</sup>—but their sons were, and there has been much discussion in recent years about the extent to which this category of recruits formed a significant element in the councils of the Italian cities. There were several ways in which an ex-slave might acquire the wealth and patronage necessary to enable his son to enter the *ordo*. His former master, who might be a private citizen or even the emperor, might have given or bequeathed land to him; alternatively or additionally, he might have built up wealth through trading or commercial activities, and then invested the money gained in land.<sup>220</sup> These activities might have been undertaken as an 'independent freedman', freed in such a way as to require minimal ties of obligation to his former master; or as a representative of a freeborn owner who for reasons of personal choice or social convention preferred not to involve himself too directly in the money-making activities in question, but was happy for the freedman to take some of the profits from the operation.<sup>221</sup> In practice it is hard to distinguish these two categories very clearly. That the upwardly mobile descendants of freedmen formed an identifiable group is implied by a passage in Tacitus which draws attention to the widespread involvement of ex-slaves and their descendants in public life. 'Very many knights, and numerous senators,

<sup>218</sup> Frederiksen 1984: 330; D'Arms 1970: 139; 1974: 113–14.

<sup>219</sup> Gordon 1931: 66; Kleijwegt 1992: 132–5.

<sup>220</sup> D'Arms 1981: 104–8.

<sup>221</sup> For the concept of the 'independent freedman' (defined in terms of his wealth (enough to join a *collegium* or to set up an epigraphic monument) and public responsibilities (within the *collegia*, or the *Augustales*, for example)) see Gordon 1931; Garnsey 1998: 37–9.

have such an origin' (*Ann.* 13. 27). In Tacitus' account, this viewpoint is expressed by those favourable to a sympathetic treatment for freedmen, so it appears not to represent the widely attested prejudice against those of servile origin among the Roman upper classes, and is all the more convincing as a result.

To what extent were these different sources of new blood drawn on by the cities of Italy? There must have been some variation across time. The Augustan period and the years immediately following saw a significant number of army veterans becoming *decuriones*, and the general trend towards elite participation in the life of towns rather than in *vici* or *pagus*-centres in the same period, but the declining numbers of Italians serving in the army and diminishing elite activity in the subordinate communities meant that these potential sources of support became less and less significant. The promotion of freedmen's sons into the *ordo* is particularly attested in the second century, by contrast, although their high profile in this period must result in part from the pattern of epigraphic commemoration at that time, in which freedmen can be seen to have been particularly active.<sup>222</sup> The advancement of the families of freedmen is best seen as a long-term process.<sup>223</sup>

Another important consideration must have been the availability of different sources of wealth within the city's economy. In an inland community which relied solely on the resources of its own territory, upward mobility must have been largely a consequence of a redistribution of land within the territory, primarily, it must be assumed, as a consequence of inheritance or marriage settlement. Here, we must assume, new candidates for the *ordo* must have been mostly free residents who acquired land by one of these means, or, alternatively, the sons of freedmen who had built up a substantial *peculium* and been bequeathed significant holdings of land.<sup>224</sup> We might cite the case of L. Neratius Diadumenus, evidently an ex-slave of the Neratius family of Saepinum, who contributed a modest estate to the alimentary scheme at Ligures Baebiani.<sup>225</sup> Traditional village-based

<sup>222</sup> Gordon 1931: 70–1; for the epigraphic background, see Mouritsen 1997.

<sup>223</sup> Silvestrini 2000: 447.

<sup>224</sup> See Fabre 1981: 278–82 for inheritance by freedmen.

<sup>225</sup> *CIL* 9. 1455, 2. 8.

structures persisted longer in the mountainous areas of Italy than elsewhere: during the early years of municipalization in these areas leading citizens in the *pagi* and *vici* might have formed a substantial proportion of those who entered the *ordo*.

Similarly a community with good communications and access to major local and external markets would have been more likely to be a destination of wealthy immigrants. The case of Mediolanum, with an extensive and wealthy territory, well placed for trading activities, is a case in point.<sup>226</sup> Commerce and trade would allow additional scope for the activities of freedmen, whether independent, or dependent, just as members of the local elites themselves could exploit the diverse economic possibilities either directly or indirectly.<sup>227</sup>

Ostia has traditionally been seen as a good example of this latter pattern. Earlier views suggesting major upheavals in the make-up of the local elite—for example Meiggs's suggestion that the composition of the *ordo* at Ostia changed significantly from the Flavian period onwards as a consequence of the increase in activity at the port following the building of Claudius' harbour, with an increasing number of immigrants and descendants of freedmen participating formally in the administration of the city—are now seen to be somewhat exaggerated.<sup>228</sup> The structure of the municipal system made a certain level of turnover within the elite inevitable. Although the proportions may be less dramatic than previously thought, a significant presence of men of freedman descent (13 per cent) can, however, be detected in the *ordo* here, at Pompeii (some 21 per cent in the latter years before the eruption), at Puteoli (15 per cent), and also at Beneventum. That many of these men did not rise above the lower ranks of the *ordo* is suggested by the fact that they were identified solely as decurions on funerary or honorific monuments: evidently they belonged to the local equivalent of the *pedani* at Canusium.<sup>229</sup> The same pattern can be seen at an earlier period in Puteoli.<sup>230</sup> The case of Beneventum is particularly interesting, as the

<sup>226</sup> Garnsey 1998: 45–62.

<sup>227</sup> Gordon 1931: 75–6.

<sup>228</sup> Meiggs 1973: 203–8.

<sup>229</sup> Mouritsen 1997: 80, with Gordon 1931: 69–70 and Garnsey 1975: 178 for earlier estimates.

<sup>230</sup> D'Arms 1974: 110–13; 1981: 139–40.

data reveal a significant presence of descendants of ex-slaves in an inland town as opposed to a port, which we might expect to allow more opportunities for advancement to those outside the traditional elite; furthermore, a greater proportion of sons of freedmen known from there achieved municipal magistracies than in the other towns already listed. However, Beneventum (as we have seen) was a town of regional importance situated at the confluence of the Sabato and Calore in a strategically and commercially important position in one of the few east–west routes through the southern Apennines, so this high level of slave ancestry should not surprise us in this context, even considering the city’s inland position. The size and wealth of these towns and their territories, and the resources on which they could draw, may perhaps suggest that the larger-sized *ordines* apparent here were more appropriately matched to the circumstances in the cities: there is a striking parallel between the size of the *ordo*, the number of *decuriones adlecti* attested, and the number of sons of freedmen reaching the decurionate. By contrast there is little or no sign of *decuriones* descended from freedmen in the smaller community of Amiternum in the central Apennines, where the evidence for freedmen has been carefully scrutinized.<sup>231</sup> A negative result is hardly surprising, given the fragmentary nature of the evidence, but it is also likely that more ex-slaves gained social advancement from an urban than a rural background. Larger urban populations led to higher levels of craft specialization, and many of the professions followed by town-based freedmen, such as teaching and medicine, were particularly lucrative. Some towns, however, exempted teachers and doctors from *munera*, which might have limited the extent to which these men’s resources could be drawn on to help the community.<sup>232</sup> Interestingly, the *Digest* provides for the recruitment of low-status traders into the *ordo* in the event of a shortage of other candidates (50. 2. 12). These sons of freedmen were being recruited as a deliberate policy by the *ordo* (or elements within it) rather than being foisted upon the unwilling councillors by the votes of the populace: the councillors could deploy their patronage and political skills in support of the candidates they favoured.

<sup>231</sup> Segenni 1990: 31.

<sup>232</sup> Jacques 1984: 645–6; Gara 1991: 355–6.

Another available strategy, which we can see being implemented at Canusium, was to increase the size of the *ordo*. The *ordo* of 100 in the town appears not to have been the traditional figure, but the result of a deliberate policy of expansion. Indeed it can plausibly be argued that the occasion for inscribing the membership of the *ordo* on bronze in AD 223 was the granting of imperial permission for such an enlargement.<sup>233</sup> Parallels from Bithynia suggest that enlarging the *ordo* was a technique used elsewhere in the Empire (Plin. *Ep.* 10. 112), and an example can also be found in northern Italy, where local tribal leaders are allowed to join the *ordo* at Tergeste.<sup>234</sup> Such an initiative had considerable attractions for a city, as the new recruits to the *ordo* would be required to contribute *summae honorariae*, to the benefit of the town's finances; the Pompeian text discussed above records specifically that Popidius Celsinus was adlected to the *ordo* free of charge. Similarly the grant of *ornamenta decurionalia* to freedmen would have had financial benefits for the town.<sup>235</sup> It is easy to see how such moves would have been attractive as short-term responses to financial stringency, but they may also have been to the long-term detriment of the prestige of the *ordo*.<sup>236</sup>

The picture that emerges from an examination of the evidence for mobility into the *ordo* is therefore a complex one. Clearly upward mobility was structurally essential for the effective functioning of the municipal system. Without drawing on the classes below the *ordo*, the body of *decuriones* would simply have dwindled away. There were groups within the Italian cities which could be drawn on as sources of new blood to the *ordo*, but their availability would have varied significantly across time and from place to place. Veterans and those rising from the *pagi* and *vici* gave way to other groups from the early first century AD onwards; sons of freedmen would have entered the *ordo* in different degrees according to the possibilities of deriving wealth from trade or commerce in a particular locality. These 'new men' entered the *ordo* at first by means of election, but adlection was of increasing importance. However, like the Senate at Rome,<sup>237</sup> the

<sup>233</sup> Salway 2000: 169–70.

<sup>234</sup> *CIL* 5. 532 = *Inscriptiones Italiae* 10. 4. 31 = *ILS* 6680.

<sup>235</sup> Kleijwegt 1992.

<sup>236</sup> Mouritsen 1998*b*: 250.

<sup>237</sup> Hopkins 1983: 112; Badian 1990.

*ordo* was far from homogeneous: evidence from many towns suggests that there was a core comprising the old landed families within the territory, which tended to control the most senior offices, and whose influence persisted over several generations. Below this group, there was a more changeable body of lower-status councillors, whose wealth lay in the lower levels of the property qualification, who tended to occupy less prestigious positions, and whose place in the *ordo* was most precarious. They might potentially drop out of it as easily as they had entered.<sup>238</sup> Analysis of the *ordo* at Puteoli tends to confirm this hypothesis: here too members of several major local families can be traced from the late Republic through to the second century AD.<sup>239</sup>

Two forces seem therefore to have operated within the politics of the Italian towns: the effects of patronage on the one hand as the ruling families sought to promote their own relatives and clients, and to keep control of local affairs, and on the other the structural demographic and financial pressures which meant that new members were continually being recruited to replace those who had died or left the *ordo* through impoverishment or further advancement.

How far were the patterns of upward mobility into the *ordo* successful in enabling the towns to cope with the difficulties brought about by the further advancement of the traditional landed elites? This depended on a variety of factors. Larger towns with substantial landed resources, good communications, and access to trade networks could potentially produce a considerable depth in manpower for the *ordo*, both free men and those descended from slaves. Smaller landlocked towns had much more limited potential in this respect. One major difficulty was that promotion to the *ordo* was a process that took at least a generation in the case of ex-slaves, and often longer; yet more if magisterial rank was to be achieved. Larger cities had more options and could afford to wait several generations for new men to advance through the social hierarchy of their city.

<sup>238</sup> Jacques 1984: 536–7; Mouritsen 1988: 116–22; Jongman 1988: 328–9; Demougin 1994; Mollo 2000*b*: 346; Franklin 2001: 198–207.

<sup>239</sup> D'Arms 1974: 107–8.



## THE AUGUSTALES

The cities needed the continuing support of the upwardly mobile as well as the existing elites, but while they were keen to cultivate members of the traditional ruling families, and incorporate the sons of freedmen into the ruling class, at least to a limited extent, important sectors of the population were formally excluded from participation in the *ordo*, notably the ex-slaves themselves.

However, promotion into the *ordo* was not the only type of upward mobility available to those below the traditional ruling classes of the Italian cities. In particular, the series of positions in civic life bearing a variety of titles such as *seviri*, *seviri Augustales*, *Augustales*, and *magistri Augustales*—and many more—represented a goal which could be reached not only by the sons of freedmen, but in many cases by the ex-slaves themselves.

For simplicity I refer to these numerous individuals—attested in over 2,500 inscriptions—collectively as *Augustales*, although there are in fact some significant diversities in terms of chronology and status associated with the different terminologies. *Augustales* are referred to only infrequently in the literary sources, however.<sup>240</sup> One notable exception is Petronius' *Cena Trimalchionis*, in which the chief character, Trimalchio, is himself a *sevir Augustalis*; he dines with the *fascēs* of office as a backdrop to his dining room, and the *sevirate* features prominently in the text to appear on his tomb-monument, for which he is making detailed plans (*Petr. Sat. 71*).<sup>241</sup> Otherwise, a group of institutions which was clearly of great importance in terms of the day-to-day affairs of the Italian cities is largely invisible in the literary texts. In addition, few buildings in the Italian towns can be definitively associated with the *Augustales*, the most notable exception being a building at Misenum, comprising a richly decorated hall and adjacent rooms opening onto a courtyard, which contained several statues of members of the imperial family, and is identified as the 'temple of Augustus which belongs to the *Augustales*' by an inscription.<sup>242</sup> A structure at Ostia, and others in Oriculum,

<sup>240</sup> Duthoy 1978: 1258.

<sup>241</sup> D'Arms 1981: 108–9.

<sup>242</sup> Ostrow 1985: 75–6; Amalfitano, Camodeca, and Medri 1990: 254–61.

Rusellae, Tibur, and Herculaneum, have also been identified as having links with the local *Augustales*.<sup>243</sup> As a result of this comparative lack of literary and archaeological data, and of the predominance of second-century AD material in the epigraphic corpus, many issues relating to the origin and the early functions of the *Augustales* are obscure. Nevertheless, the aspect of their activities with which we are concerned primarily here—the roles of these bodies in the civic life of the second century AD—are well attested, and the importance of the *Augustales* in that context is clearly apparent.

The years following the establishment of the Augustan principate saw a striking transformation in the public spaces of the towns of Italy, as more and more buildings associated with the imperial cult were constructed. At Pompeii, by the time of the eruption, there were no fewer than four monuments of this kind on the east side of the forum, either directly concerned with emperor cult or inspired by Augustus' building programme in Rome: the 'Eumachia building', the building known, probably incorrectly, as the 'sanctuary of the *genius* of Augustus', the 'imperial cult building', and the shrine of the imperial family in the *macellum*.<sup>244</sup> Although the *Augustales* have conventionally been associated with this blossoming of imperial cult in the towns of Italy, since their title apparently links them with the first *princeps*, their precise role in the cult of the emperor, and the nature of their ritual activities, is unfortunately very unclear.<sup>245</sup> Scholars are increasingly coming to wonder whether they had any specifically 'priestly' function at all, other than the involvement in civic religion which was part and parcel of a public position in an ancient city.<sup>246</sup> Rather than being confined to one particular group within the community, reverence for the imperial house seems to have been integral to all aspects of public life, and, to a significant extent, of private life too, as Zanker's work in particular has shown.<sup>247</sup> The terminology used is also confusing. The terms *seviri* or *seviri Augustales* suggest a college of six magistrates on the analogy

<sup>243</sup> Meiggs 1973: 219–20; Dareggi 1982: 8–11; Ostrow 1985: 76–82; Gradel 2002: 229.

<sup>244</sup> Zanker 1988: 319–22; 1998: 81–102; Dobbins 1996; Small 1996; Gros 2000.

<sup>245</sup> Fishwick 1991: 609–16.

<sup>246</sup> Abramenko 1993; Beard, North, and Price 1998: i. 357–8; Gradel 2002: 229–30.

<sup>247</sup> Zanker 1988: 265–95.

of the *IIViri* or *IIIViri* who were the chief magistrates of a colony or a *municipium*. However, many of the texts referring to the *Augustales* suggest that they formed a much larger body, who were given honorific status on occasions such as public banquets.<sup>248</sup> The most likely explanation is that the *Augustales* began as panels of individuals appointed for a given time, but gradually a larger group evolved which consisted of those who had formerly been *Augustales*, and who continued to be treated with deference and respect in the community, in much the same way as the former magistrates in the *ordo decurionum*. This evolution proved to be beneficial both to the towns, which could draw on the resources in the possession of this group after the end of their term in office, and to the *Augustales* themselves, who were thus able to extend the time in which they held a position of prestige within the community.<sup>249</sup>

In the past scholars have tended to interpret the different titles given to the *Augustales* as reflecting more-or-less different functions. The *seviri*, because they appear to have had more freeborn recruits into their ranks than the other groups, and because their title does not make specific reference to Augustus, have traditionally been thought to be a different sort of body from the other groups among the *Augustales*.<sup>250</sup> Abramenko has now shown, however, that the most significant distinction between the *seviri* and the other bodies is that the *seviri* tend to be earlier in date.<sup>251</sup> As a result, it no longer seems necessary to argue for radically different functions for *seviri* and *seviri Augustales*, for example. As with civic magistracies and city councils, there was a wide variety in local tradition and practice with regard to the titles given to the *Augustales*. Over forty different titles of positions with a social location similar to that of the *seviri*, *seviri Augustales*, and *Augustales* have been identified. Many of these titles are attested at a very limited number of places.<sup>252</sup> This is not surprising, given the importance of local initiative in the development of institutions within a broader framework. Instead, it seems best to treat the different groups within the *Augustales* together, focusing on

<sup>248</sup> Duthoy 1978: 1265–74.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.* 1271–3.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.* 1264.

<sup>251</sup> Abramenko 1993: esp. 22–8.

<sup>252</sup> Duthoy 1976: 193.

those aspects of their role in civic life in the second century for which most evidence survives.

What emerges most clearly is that the *Augustales* were regarded collectively as a 'second *ordo*', below the status of the *ordo decurionum*, but still having a prestigious role to play in the community.<sup>253</sup> An inscription from Trebula Mutuesca, unfortunately damaged, apparently records how C. Abelasius Proculeianus was adlected, possibly among the *seviri Augustales*, 'by decree of both orders'; his sons went on to become *decuriones* in the town, and his grandsons magistrates.<sup>254</sup> Similarly, in AD 140 a benefactor at Gabii made a gift of 10,000 sesterces for distribution to the *ordo decurionum et sevirum Augustalium*.<sup>255</sup> The *Augustales* thus seem to have occupied a position in some ways analogous to that of the equestrians at Rome, an affluent group with social prestige but without formal participation in the political structures of the community.<sup>256</sup>

*Augustales* were distinguished in their capacity as the givers of games by the dress they wore—the *toga praetextata*—and by symbols of power such as the *fasces* and the *sella curulis*, a special chair otherwise used by magistrates. Frequently, these symbols were represented on their tomb-monuments.<sup>257</sup> They were also accompanied by lictors. In Petronius' account of the banquet at Trimalchio's house, a knock at the door by a lictor causes consternation, as the guest fears that the praetor of the city has arrived, but the visitor turns out to be one of Trimalchio's fellow *seviri*, Habinnas the stone-mason (*Sat.* 65). The visible marks of distinction underline not only the achievement of the individuals in question, but also the way in which the status of the *Augustales* was seen as mirroring that of the magistrates and the *decuriones* of the city. Furthermore, the position of *Augustalis* was assigned by the *ordo decurionum*, which appointed suitable candidates, normally over the age of 25 (again parallel to the requirement for membership of the *ordo*);<sup>258</sup> while particularly favoured (or generous) individual *Augustales* might also be given the particular

<sup>253</sup> Mollo 2000a: 357.

<sup>254</sup> *CIL* 9. 4891.

<sup>255</sup> *CIL* 14. 2795 = *ILS* 272.

<sup>256</sup> Duthoy 1978: 1273.

<sup>257</sup> Schäfer 1989: 54, 218–21.

<sup>258</sup> Duthoy 1978: 1266–9, 1281–2.

honour of *ornamenta decurionatus*. There was thus a high level of integration, both in symbolic and in practical terms, between the *ordo decurionum* and the *Augustales*.

At formal banquets and when food and money were being distributed, the *Augustales* were frequently given special treatment, at a level above that of the *plebs*, but below that of the *decuriones*. Similarly, the prestige attaching to the rank of the *Augustales* was reflected in the contribution, both financial and otherwise, they might make to civic life. They were expected, in recognition of their appointment, to contribute a *summa honoraria*, like that paid by a magistrate or (in the second century) one of the *decuriones*, though in individual cases they might, as a favour, be exempted from this requirement by a decree of the *decuriones*. Newly appointed *Augustales* often expressed their gratitude for the honour bestowed on them by holding games, or by making a further gift to the community. This might be a statue, a building (or part of one), or a contribution towards a road-building scheme.<sup>259</sup> For example, C. Herennius Philo[...], who served as *Augustalis* and *sevir Augustalis* at Reate and Regium Lepidi, gave games and distributions at Cliternia.<sup>260</sup> At Saepinum, M. Annius Phoebus financed the rebuilding of the *macellum, ob honorem Augustalitatitatis et bisellii* (the grant of the honour of a special throne);<sup>261</sup> C. Neratius Epinicus (evidently a freedman of the celebrated local family of the Neratii) dedicated a statue to the *genius municipii Saepinatium* and organized a distribution to *decuriones, Augustales*, and *plebs*, again *ob honorem Augustalitatitatis*.<sup>262</sup>

The social status of the *Augustales* is an issue of particular interest. Among individuals attested as *Augustales* and *seviri Augustales*, freedmen predominate: some 80–90 per cent are ex-slaves.<sup>263</sup> Of the *seviri* known, by contrast, some 40 per cent are of free birth. This latter statistic has in the past been used as an additional argument to differentiate the *seviri* from the other *Augustales* and suggest that they had a completely different role, but recent research suggests that the *seviri* tend to be earlier in date than the individuals holding

<sup>259</sup> Ibid. 1269–70, 1283; Buonocore 1995: 124–5.

<sup>260</sup> *CIL* 9. 4168.

<sup>261</sup> *CIL* 9. 2475 = *ILS* 5583.

<sup>262</sup> *CIL* 9. 2440.

<sup>263</sup> Duthoy 1974: 135–6.

other positions, and may therefore be equivalent to those later known simply as *Augustales* and *seviri Augustales*.<sup>264</sup>

This predominance of freedmen is very significant for the understanding of the role of the *Augustales* in urban society. Since freedmen were excluded from the *ordo*, service in the body of *Augustales* provided the only way in which the wealthy and ambitious freedman could engage in public life, though his sons would be able to enter the *ordo* in due course. Many of those attested as *Augustales* appear to have acquired wealth through trade, manufacture, or commerce, and the creation of the *Augustales* likewise had the effect of allowing the city to draw upon the resources gained by these means. The institution thus provided a means of acquiring additional prestige for the wealthier among the city's freedmen, as well as an opportunity for the city to exploit their enthusiasm for participation in civic life. It contributed to the cohesion of the community and diminished internal tensions by allowing upward mobility without subverting the traditional hierarchies of the community.<sup>265</sup> The role of acts of generosity and competitive benefaction among the *Augustales* would also have provided a training ground for these aspects of municipal politics.

In this context, the presence of the freeborn among the *Augustales* is particularly significant, as it implies there were those beyond the class of upwardly mobile ex-slaves who thought the status of *Augustalis* worth acquiring. These might have been free men whose wealth originated from activities thought inappropriate for a member of the *ordo*, or individuals whose wealth and influence were not sufficient to enable them to enter the *ordo*, but nevertheless sought involvement in public affairs. In the territory of Brixia, many freeborn *seviri Augustales* were of local indigenous origin; some of them subsequently went on to serve as *decuriones* themselves.<sup>266</sup> Alternatively, they might have been the sons of freedmen who had themselves served as *Augustales*, and either lacked the resources to enter the *ordo*, or deliberately preferred to maintain a family tradition rather than advance to a position in the *ordo decurionum*.<sup>267</sup>

<sup>264</sup> Abramenko 1993: 22–3.

<sup>265</sup> D'Arms 1981: 127–8.

<sup>266</sup> Mollo 1997: 342–3; 2000a: 351–3.

<sup>267</sup> Duthoy 1995: 440.

A striking number of the freeborn *Augustales* attested are known to be from northern Italy.<sup>268</sup> Conversely, there are very few from the southern regions of the peninsula. Of the 250 individual *Augustales* attested in *Regio IV*, Samnium, only six are freeborn, and three of these come from a single town, Nursia, suggesting that local factors may be significant here.<sup>269</sup> Together with the generally earlier dating of the *seviri*, who include free citizens in their numbers to a greater extent, this pattern suggests that in the Julio-Claudian period, and in particular in north Italy, the cities looked first to free citizens to serve as *Augustales*, but thereafter there was an increasing emphasis on freedmen. This may in part reflect the higher profile freedmen have in the epigraphy of the second century AD, but it may also be related to a lack of suitably wealthy free individuals who were ready and willing to serve as *Augustales*, and (in the north) the social advancement of the freeborn indigenous elites.<sup>270</sup> No specific property qualification is known for entry to the *Augustales*, but the evidence for *summae honorariae* and the widespread practice of giving additional gifts to the town and its citizens *ob honorem Augustalitatis* suggests that a certain level of wealth was a prerequisite.<sup>271</sup> The cities of the north, with their populous and extensive territories, and comparatively later engagement in Roman political structures (and thus later political advancement of their local elites) would have been able to maintain a broader landowning aristocracy longer than the smaller, and older, cities in the central and southern regions of Italy.<sup>272</sup> By contrast the latter, having a smaller population to draw on, and diminishing local resources, might have sought to involve local freedmen at an earlier stage. Within this broad picture there are, of course, significant variations and exceptions. The area around the Bay of Naples appears to have taken a leading role in the development of the institution of the *Augustales*, with contributory factors including the wealthy Campanian hinterland, the complex economy of major ports such as Puteoli, the frequent presence in the area of the emperors and their households, and the social and economic

<sup>268</sup> Abramenko 1993: 18–20.

<sup>269</sup> Buonocore 1995: 124.

<sup>270</sup> Mollo 2000a: 356.

<sup>271</sup> Ostrow 1985: 69–70.

<sup>272</sup> Mollo 1997; 2000a, b.

integration of the whole area with the capital.<sup>273</sup> The comparatively early appearance of the *Augustales* in the cities of southern Etruria may similarly be linked to the extensive presence of imperial freedmen in that region, noted above: the individual wealth of these men was of particular importance, and they may well also have wanted to demonstrate their loyalty to the imperial house.<sup>274</sup>

The role of the *Augustales* thus appears to complement that of the *decuriones*, providing a stratum within local society subordinate to the *ordo*, but still privileged in relation to the mass of the *plebs*. How extensive were these bodies? The evidence for numbers of *Augustales* in the Italian cities is, like evidence for other aspects of their institutions, somewhat inconclusive, but it appears that numbers of *Augustales* in the cities varied as much as, if not more than, those of *decuriones*. Reconstructions of the figures on the basis of distribution schemes range from approximately 20 at Petelia and Cures to 200 or more at Puteoli and Ostia. Altinum and Spoletium, both substantial towns, had about 100 *Augustales* each, Reate and Aletrium rather less. In general it is likely that there was a loose correspondence between the size of the *ordo* and the number of *Augustales* in the town. Similarly, the size of the *ordo* and the number of *Augustales* loosely reflect the number of inhabitants in the town. Petelia, a small town in Bruttium, near Croton, is known to have had a small *ordo*, of perhaps thirty members; Puteoli and Ostia were among the largest cities in Italy, and are likely to have had proportionally sized *ordines*. The exception is the case of Cures, where the arrangements for a banquet suggest a figure of ninety *decuriones* and twenty *Augustales*, though as we have seen, the *centumviri* here appear to be more notional than real.<sup>275</sup>

In general there seems to be a close relation between large numbers of *Augustales*, a large *ordo*, a large territory, and significant levels of advancement of the civic elites into the equestrian and senatorial classes. The cities with the most *Augustales* attested tend to be either the great cities of the north—Brixia, Verona, Mediolanum—or the major ports of the south, crucial to the supply of Rome—Ostia

<sup>273</sup> Ostrow 1985; D'Arms 1970.

<sup>274</sup> Ostrow 1985: 84–5.

<sup>275</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 284–7, with Mouritsen 1998a: 236 on the case of Petelia.



and Puteoli.<sup>276</sup> The smaller inland cities not only tended to have smaller *ordines*, but also fewer *Augustales*, as at Petelia.

The diverse forms of recruitment, and the differing nature and extent of the contribution of the *Augustales* in the cities of Italy, was thus related to several factors. In the northern cities, the extensive urban territories and the broader pattern of landholding meant that free men, not able (or wishing) to enter the *ordo*, might serve their community in the *Augustales* instead. Elsewhere, freedmen predominated. In the major ports, and other towns with a substantial level of trade and commerce, a significant factor behind their number and collective importance among the *Augustales* was undoubtedly the complexity of the urban economy. At Puteoli, for example, a wide variety of manufacturing and commercial activities can be identified among those known to have served as *Augustales*.<sup>277</sup> The wealth of these 'independent freedmen', on which Trimalchio was apparently modelled, was such that they could aspire to a leading role in the community, but their status as ex-slaves excluded them from the *ordo decurionum*; service among the *Augustales* was beneficial both to their own self-image and to the finances and facilities of the town. It is likely, however, that downward mobility was as important as upward mobility, reflecting the precarious nature of the finances of many independent freedmen by contrast to the greater continuity brought about by inherited landed wealth.

The 'independent freedmen' were not the only source of recruits for the *Augustales*, though: freedmen with closer links to their former owners might also enter that group. Since men were appointed to the *Augustales* by the *ordo decurionum*, patronage by members of that order would have been essential to the rise of the ambitious. This might have been the formal patronage exercised by an ex-master over an ex-slave, or alternatively (perhaps probably in the case of the 'independent freedmen') the informal type of relationship more likely to be represented by the participants as *amicitia*. It is not surprising to find that many of the *Augustales* attested in the smaller inland communities are evidently the ex-slaves of leading local families: Neratius Epinicus at Saepinum, for example. At Marruvium and

<sup>276</sup> Duthoy 1978: 1258.

<sup>277</sup> D'Arms 1981: 128–33.

Amiternum, many of the *IIIviri Augustales* and *seviri Augustales* are apparently ex-slaves of local landowners.<sup>278</sup> In these cases, the patronage of local landowners was likely to be coupled with wealth predominantly derived from local property-holding, where limited commercial opportunities were available.

The extent to which the activities and generosity of the *Augustales* were able to compensate for the increasing pressures on the resources derived from a city's territory would thus largely depend on how far their wealth was sourced from outside the territory of the city, and how far from landed wealth within it. In the former case, a significant influx of wealth was possible; in the latter, the consequence was less likely to be a substantial increase in wealth as the recuperation of a small sector of a city's resources, in the hands of freedmen, which otherwise would have been beyond the reach of the city. The *Augustales* allowed the towns to maintain the elitist ideal of a freeborn *ordo*, while at the same time exploiting the ambitions and resources of those born in servitude.

It was not always easy to find *Augustales*, however, as the provision made for them by M'. Megonius Leo at Petelia suggests. Megonius, who served as magistrate, patron of the city, and patron of the *Augustales*, gave a sum of money, a vineyard, and another property in order to provide candelabra and lamps for the dinners of the *Augustales*, and wine to accompany them, so that 'in this way relieved of the expenses, people will more easily come forward to take on the burden of the post of *Augustalis*'.<sup>279</sup> We must envisage in a small town like Petelia the wealth available to the local *Augustales* was limited, and they were able to make only a limited contribution to its finances.<sup>280</sup> In one of the major ports, or inland centres of the north, the *Augustales* must typically have been very much more affluent.

Even below the level of the *Augustales*, social mobility can be identified as a significant dynamic force within civic life. Just as there were extensive links between the 'two orders', as the *ordo* appointed the *Augustales*, and individual members of the *Augustales* might be granted *ornamenta decurionalia*, so there were also links

<sup>278</sup> Segenni 1990: 30; 1987: 445–6.

<sup>279</sup> *CIL* 10. 114 = *ILS* 6469, with Bossu 1982.

<sup>280</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 286.

between the *Augustales* and the complex network of institutions and offices that characterized the *collegia* of the Italian towns. These too had an important role to play in the Italian cities of the high Empire, and their contribution in supporting and helping to maintain their civic institutions was, as we shall see, a significant one.

### THE COLLEGIA

*Collegia* were popular associations which derived their identity from links with a particular cult, membership of a particular profession, residence in a particular area of a city, or sometimes all three. Since the monumental study of Waltzing at the end of the nineteenth century, they have received comparatively little scholarly attention, and this has meant that their importance in civic life—which was considerable—has been unduly neglected until quite recently.<sup>281</sup> Much of this discussion has tended to concentrate on the problem of how far the *collegia* had a professional or economic role to play within the towns of Italy (or the Empire more generally). M. I. Finley famously observed that ‘in no sense were they [the *collegia*] guilds trying to foster or protect the economic interests of their members, nor did they reveal a trace of the hierarchical pattern of apprentice, journeyman and master that characterized the mediaeval and early modern guilds.’<sup>282</sup> The key phrase here is ‘did they reveal’, which is a function of the type of evidence we have available. *Collegia* of republican date are known primarily from literary writers outraged by their activities in the chaotic years of the late Republic, in particular under the leadership of Clodius, and records of legal measures initiated to restrict the disruption for which they were blamed,<sup>283</sup> though the

<sup>281</sup> Waltzing 1895–1900; Waltzing 1892 and Breccia 1910 are also useful. Other important studies are by F. M. de Robertis, esp. 1971; L. Cracco Ruggini, esp. 1971; 1973; Ausbüttel 1982; and O. van Nijf (1997) which has much valuable discussion of *collegia* in the west as well as in the eastern portion of the Empire, which is the main focus of the book. Van Nijf 2002 illuminatingly compares the *collegia* of the Roman West with the Dutch civic guards of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

<sup>282</sup> Finley 1985: 81.

<sup>283</sup> Flambard 1981; Vanderbroeck 1987; Lintott 1999: 77–83.

occasional epigraphic references to *collegia* in Italian towns, at Praeneste for example, suggest that they were already a significant presence in the second century BC.<sup>284</sup> For much of the latter period of the Republic, and the early years of the Empire, the *collegia* stood on the margins of legality. Severe restrictions were placed on their activities from the 60s BC onwards, by the Roman authorities, who were concerned that their position outside the formal political structures of the state might allow them to subvert the established order. Many *collegia* were banned by the Senate in 64 BC, and restrictions—with exceptions for bodies which were of ancient origin or public utility—were reimposed by Julius Caesar and then Augustus (Asc. 7C, 75C; Suet. *Iul.* 42. 3; *Aug.* 32. 2).<sup>285</sup> *Collegia* were blamed for the riot in the amphitheatre in Pompeii in AD 59 (Tac. *Ann.* 14. 17), and even in the early second century AD, Trajan was concerned about the establishment of a fire brigade at Bithynia in case it turned into a disruptive *hetairia* (Plin. *Ep.* 10. 33–4). This climate of anxiety about the activities of the *collegia* necessarily meant that only the most respectable were publicly commemorated, and apart from data from legal texts,<sup>286</sup> our knowledge of the imperial *collegia* comes almost entirely from inscriptions: statue-bases, tomb-monuments, decrees conferring the office of patron, or regulations for the administration of the association. It is not surprising therefore that our picture of the *collegia* is a somewhat partial one.

Furthermore, van Nijf has recently cast doubt on both elements in Finley's contrast between ancient *collegia* and mediaeval guilds, on the one hand arguing that *collegia* did in fact occasionally intervene to help the financial interests of their members, and on the other drawing attention to trends in recent scholarship on mediaeval Europe which tend to play down the specifically economic role of the guilds and instead emphasize their role in religion and sociability within the mediaeval town.<sup>287</sup> The discussion which follows deliberately avoids the problem of the 'professional' nature of the *collegia*, instead focusing on those aspects of their activities about which we

<sup>284</sup> *ILLRP* 103–7. See Waltzing 1895–1900: i. 85–9; Cracco Ruggini 1971: 69–71.

<sup>285</sup> Cracco Ruggini 1971: 73–7; Frascchetti 1990: 216–17; Royden 1988: 4–8.

<sup>286</sup> For restrictions on the *collegia* in the imperial period, see *Dig.* 47. 22. 1–4.

<sup>287</sup> Van Nijf 1997: 11–18.

are best informed by the ancient sources, namely those concerned with the support of private individuals and contributions to public life: in particular banqueting, funeral provision, and participation in acts of patronage and reciprocation.

Some *collegia* derived their identity primarily from their feasting or funeral activities. These were not necessarily mutually exclusive, however: the *convictores* of Fanum, 'who were accustomed to dine together', had their own place of burial.<sup>288</sup> Others were named after particular religious cults, or trades, but even in these cases their funeral and convivial functions often seem to have been of great importance. The most detailed account of these is provided by an inscription dating to AD 136, which preserves the regulations of the *collegium* of Diana and Antinous at Lanuvium. This quotes the senatorial decree allowing authorized clubs to meet regularly for ritual purposes and to collect subscriptions for a burial fund, laying down entry fees and regular subscriptions payable by members of the *collegium*, provisions to be made in case of a member's death, and rules for the day-to-day activities of the club, which include the dates of the annual dinners, and the fines payable in the event of members behaving badly at table.<sup>289</sup> A similar text from Rome dated to AD 153 records a gift by Salvia Marcellina to the *collegium* of Asclepius and Hygia: she presented a shrine with a pergola, a statue of Asclepius, and a roofed terrace for dining, together with the sum of 50,000 HS for the distribution to club members of money, bread, and wine on specified days. The meeting place of the *collegium* was located between the first and second milestones of the Via Appia, so it must have been in an area densely occupied by tombs.<sup>290</sup> Likewise, *collegia* associated with specific trades or professions made arrangements for the burial of their members. The *lanarii* of Brixellum, for example, had their own cemetery.<sup>291</sup> Both slaves and freedmen were members of *collegia*, but the documentation indicates a predominance of freedmen. Most magistrates of *collegia* appear either to have been

<sup>288</sup> CIL 11. 6244 = ILS 7312a.

<sup>289</sup> CIL 14. 2112 = ILS 7212. On the funerary activities of the *collegia* see recently Ausbüttel 1982: 59–71; Hopkins 1983: 211–17; Flambard 1987; Patterson, J. R. 1992; van Nijf 1997: 31–69; Perry 1999; Patterson, J. R. 2000b: 277–80.

<sup>290</sup> CIL 6. 10234 = ILS 7213.

<sup>291</sup> CIL 11. 1031 = ILS 7290.

freedmen themselves, or of servile descent.<sup>292</sup> In general, the members of the associations seem to have been drawn from the upper echelons of the urban *plebs* and can best be characterized as ‘employers’ rather than ‘employees’. This is implied by the costs involved in belonging to a *collegium* (for which see below), and reflected in the level of generosity shown to *collegia* members as part of formal distributions or banquets. Thus an inscription dated to the reign of Commodus records that during a distribution at Urvinum Maturense organized by C. Vesnius Vindex, patron of the town, the *decuriones* received 20 HS, the members of the *collegia* 16 HS, and the *plebs* 12 HS;<sup>293</sup> at Verulae in 197, *decuriones* and *seviri* received 16 HS each, *dendrophoroi* 12 HS, and the *populus* 4 HS.<sup>294</sup> At a distribution in Pisaurum, *decuriones* again received 20 HS, but *collegia* members 8 HS and the *plebs* in general only 4 HS.<sup>295</sup>

The organization of the *collegia* consciously recalled that of the urban communities, and this is illustrated by the terminology they used (*Dig.* 3. 4. 1): the clubs had *decuriones* and annual officers known as *aediles*, *curatores*, *magistri*, or *quaestores*, supported by *scribae* or *viatores*; the rank-and-file members of the club were known as the *plebs* or *populus*.<sup>296</sup> Just as the citizens of the broader community were organized according to carefully defined hierarchies, so the organization of the *collegium* too was hierarchical in nature. The ban on members moving from their designated places at banquets revealed by the laws of the *collegium* at Lanuvium was not intended only to discourage disorderly conduct at dinner, but to prevent members from disrupting the hierarchy at table.<sup>297</sup>

In order to finance their various activities, the dinners, funerals and other ceremonies, and also the maintenance of the club’s premises, the *schola* or *templum*, the *collegia* needed regular sources of funds. Often these were supplied by the members, in the form of an entry fee and monthly dues;<sup>298</sup> but clubs regularly needed to draw on

<sup>292</sup> Royden 1988: 230 with Purcell 1992; van Nijf 2002: 307–9.

<sup>293</sup> *CIL* 11. 6053.

<sup>294</sup> *CIL* 10. 5796 = *ILS* 6268.

<sup>295</sup> *CIL* 11. 6378.

<sup>296</sup> Royden 1988.

<sup>297</sup> Van Nijf 1997: 110.

<sup>298</sup> Flambard 1987.

additional resources, and in particular they sought benefactions from well-wishers. Just as the towns appointed patrons who had contributed to civic finances, or would (it was hoped) do so generously in the future, so the clubs too appointed patrons; the *collegium* of *fabri tignuarii* at Luna had no fewer than fourteen.<sup>299</sup> Most patrons of *collegia* were members of the local elites; others were senators or *equites* who could use the patronage of a *collegium* as a means of keeping in touch with their town of origin, and the clubs were keen to extend the relationship to embrace members of their families, too.<sup>300</sup>

In many ways, then, the activities of the *collegia* can be seen to parallel on a smaller scale those of the civic community. Their association with civic government was not only indirect, however. *Collegia* were closely associated with a particular community: often the name of the town formed an element in the formal title of the *collegium*.<sup>301</sup> An anonymous benefactor at Beneventum, who undertook various acts of generosity including the restoration of the *Thermae Commodianae* and the *Porticus of Diana* following widespread destruction as a result of a fire, was also described as *reparator collegiorum*.<sup>302</sup> Together with the *decuriones* and the *Augustales*, the members of the *collegia* formed, in the second and third centuries, one of the three central groups in civic life.<sup>303</sup> Again, the arrangements followed when food or money were distributed show their collective positions in the urban hierarchy, as well as those of the individual members: at the top were the *decuriones*, followed (or equalled) by the *Augustales* and then the members of the *collegia*. As well as organizing festive and funerary activities for the benefit of their own members, we also, as a result, find the *collegia* playing an increasingly important role in civic life.<sup>304</sup> They set up statues to the emperors and benefactors, for example, acting on behalf of the populace as a whole; thus at Ariminum, we find the *fabri* (builders) and *centonarii* (rag-makers) joining with the *vicani* of the seven

<sup>299</sup> *CIL* 11. 1355a = *ILS* 7227.

<sup>300</sup> Clemente 1972, esp. 167–91.

<sup>301</sup> Waltzing 1895–1900: ii. 175–83.

<sup>302</sup> *CIL* 9. 1596 = *ILS* 5511.

<sup>303</sup> Waltzing 1895–1900: ii. 183–4.

<sup>304</sup> Van Nijf 2002: 315–17.

urban *vici* to honour C. Sentius Valerius Faustinianus, *Ilvir*, 'because he satisfied all the desires of the *plebs*'.<sup>305</sup> Three particular groups of *collegia* seem to have had a particularly high profile in public life: the *fabri*, *centonarii*, and *dendrophoroi* ('tree-carriers', associated with the cult of Cybele).<sup>306</sup> Their importance was such that in some towns they were referred to collectively as the 'three *collegia*',<sup>307</sup> as at Cemenelum, or the *collegia principalia*, as at Sentinum.<sup>308</sup> Evidence from the provinces suggests that these bodies may also have had a ceremonial role to play, for example in civic processions.<sup>309</sup>

The impact of the *collegia* on the urban landscape can be seen most clearly at Ostia, where a series of club-houses has been identified across the city, the *schola* of the *fabri tignuarii* being located in the immediate vicinity of the city's forum. This comprised a shrine, a kitchen, and a series of dining rooms.<sup>310</sup> Clearly the complex economy and cosmopolitan society of Rome's port meant that the number and vigour of the local *collegia* were exceptional, but even from the fragmentary data derived from selectively excavated urban centres elsewhere in Italy, the *collegia* can be seen as a significant urban presence. Buildings identified with *scholae* have been discovered on or adjacent to *fora* at several sites; others were located close to city gates or along well-frequented routes through the city, as at Mediolanum and Puteoli. These central locations acquired by the *collegia* for their *scholae*—often abutting directly onto the formal political space of the city—demonstrate the importance of the bodies that met there.<sup>311</sup> That the *collegia* would meet together in other urban contexts is suggested by the Lanuvium text, which lays down that on the birthdays of Diana and Antinous the *quinquennalis* (chief magistrate) should provide oil for members of the club while they bathe together.<sup>312</sup>

<sup>305</sup> *CIL* 11. 418, with Waltzing 1895–1900: i. 510–12.

<sup>306</sup> Salamito 1990; van Nijf 1997: 176–8.

<sup>307</sup> *CIL* 5. 7905; 5. 7881 = *ILS* 1367.

<sup>308</sup> *CIL* 11. 5749 = *ILS* 7221.

<sup>309</sup> Van Nijf 2002: 322–3.

<sup>310</sup> Bollmann 1998: 284–8; van Nijf 2002: 327–8. For the *fabri tignuarii* at Ostia more generally, see DeLaine 2003.

<sup>311</sup> Meiggs 1973: 324–6; Zanker 1994: 273–7; Bollmann 1998: 200–3.

<sup>312</sup> *CIL* 14. 2112 = *ILS* 7212.



It is striking that this widespread activity on the part of the *collegia* in the Italian towns is attested primarily in the second and early third centuries AD. This may in part be a consequence of the greater abundance of inscriptions in general in this period, in particular those set up by those below the landed elite to commemorate their lives and, in the case of ex-slaves, their acquisition of citizenship. However, the setting-up of inscriptions for public view can in itself be seen as a significant statement of involvement in civic life, and an emulation of the characteristic activities of the traditional elites.<sup>313</sup> One element in the greater level of activity attested may well be the increasing financial independence the *collegia* acquired in the imperial period: by the reign of Marcus Aurelius they were allowed to hold funds in common, to receive legacies, and to manumit slaves (*Dig.* 3. 4. 1; 34. 5. 20; 40. 3. 1–2).<sup>314</sup> This is also the very period when central concern seems to be mounting about the financial affairs of the cities, as shown by the appointment of *curatores rei publicae*; and when the smaller scale and more varied type of benefactions and the different statuses of the benefactors indicate an increasing level of participation in acts of civic generosity, beyond the confines of the traditional landed elites. As the cities sought to broaden the base from which they obtained financial contributions, the *collegia* too—now increasingly respectable—were to a greater extent directly integrated into the civic life of the towns, just like the *Augustales*. This process benefited the self-image of the *collegia* members, and in particular of their leaders, as the *collegia* acquired an established role in the city; but the process also potentially contributed to the well-being of the civic institutions, as the *collegiati* could be seen as representing an underexploited, if comparatively modest, financial resource.

Two potential models of the contribution which might have been made by the *collegia* may be sketched out.

In those communities where either members of the traditional elites were unenthusiastic about performing civic duties, or patterns of upward mobility had deprived the town of committed and supportive landowners, the *collegia*, like the *Augustales*, might

<sup>313</sup> Van Nijf 1997: 26–8; see also Mrozek 1973; 1988; Duncan-Jones 1982: 350–7; MacMullen 1982; Meyer 1990.

<sup>314</sup> Waltzing 1895–1900: ii. 431–75.

potentially play an important part in civic life, in particular helping to mediate between the people and the benefactors of the city. Active *collegia* are attested even in some of the smallest towns: the *dendrophoroi* at Antinum in the territory of the Marsi, for example, who are found honouring patrons of the town as well as their own patron.<sup>315</sup> The latter, a man called Sex. Petronaeus Valerianus, expressed his thanks by holding a distribution at which the members of the *collegium* of the *dendrophoroi* were given 12 HS apiece. This was a more generous figure than the amount granted to the *decuriones*, who received 8 HS, or the *seviri Augustales* (6 HS), the departure from the usual practice reflecting the particular attachment of the benefactor to the *dendrophoroi*. The extent to which the *collegiati* would themselves have been able to make a significant contribution to civic finances may have been limited in such a context, given their individual social and economic location even below the ranks of the *Augustales*, and the restricted scope for the acquisition of resources from beyond the confines of the territory in an inland centre. However, spreading the expense across the members of the *collegium* in this way would have enabled the towns to make a meaningful expression of gratitude to their benefactors, in the hope of future support from them or their families.

A rather different pattern can be identified in larger towns. This emerges most clearly in the cities of Gallia Cisalpina, which were on a vastly more extensive scale than those of peninsular Italy.<sup>316</sup> These towns had grown dramatically during the last century of the Republic and then afterwards, with an influx of population from the south.<sup>317</sup> Urban territories along the Po plain were much larger than their counterparts further south, due both to the nature of the landscape and the small number of pre-existing independent communities at the time of Rome's conquest of the region; sometimes indigenous populations were 'attributed' to the urban centres.

<sup>315</sup> *CIL* 9. 3836; 3837; 3842 = Letta and D'Amato 1975, nos. 180, 183, 179 respectively.

<sup>316</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 275; Chilver 1941: 50–60. La Regina 1970–1: 453–4 provides some suggestive estimates of the surface areas of cities, ranging from Antinum (39,000 sq. m) to Augusta Taurinorum (482,000 sq. m). For benefactions in Cisalpina, see Lussana 1950.

<sup>317</sup> Wiseman 1985: 107–9; Broadhead 2000. See Scagliarini 1991 for one example of suburban transformation in the Po valley in the second century AD.

These extensive agricultural resources led to a broader distribution of wealth outside the confines of the political elite, while the substantial city populations necessarily led to a more complex urban economy.<sup>318</sup> Here, distributions were rare, because of the scale of the urban populations;<sup>319</sup> but the *collegia* (in particular the three major bodies, *fabri*, *centonarii*, and *dendrophoroi*) operated alongside the traditional political organs of the community, and provided a quasi-political experience, and opportunity for euergetism, for the large sub-elite population.<sup>320</sup> The *collegium* of the *fabri* at Mediolanum may have had 1,200 members,<sup>321</sup> and MacMullen estimates that up to a third of a town's male population may have been members of *collegia*;<sup>322</sup> a wide range of *collegia* is attested at Brixia too.<sup>323</sup> The degree of social autonomy among the *plebs* of the Cisalpine towns is likewise illustrated by the large numbers of funerary foundations set up there by individuals below the local elites.<sup>324</sup> We might envisage a similar pattern in the major centres in southern Italy; as at Ostia, there was a wide range of *collegia* at Puteoli;<sup>325</sup> at Beneventum the associations with the highest profile have names associated with divinities, such as the *Mercuriales* and *Martenses*.<sup>326</sup>

Here, as in the major northern cities, membership of the *collegia* was, like service in the *Augustales*, a potential route to social and political advancement.<sup>327</sup> If the ranks of the *Augustales* were in some areas partly filled with free citizens, with limited opportunity for ambitious freedmen, then the *collegia* would have provided a forum for this latter group to a still greater extent.

It is instructive to draw a parallel with the rapid development of towns in eighteenth-century England. Clark wrote: 'economic expansion . . . may generate serious stresses and strains in society: high levels of immigration; social problems including social instability;

<sup>318</sup> Chilver 1941: 45–50; Bekker-Nielsen 1989: 20–32.

<sup>319</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 360.

<sup>320</sup> Salamito 1990: 173–4.

<sup>321</sup> *CIL* 5. 5869 = *ILS* 6730; Waltzing 1895–1900: ii. 207.

<sup>322</sup> MacMullen 1967: 174.

<sup>323</sup> Mollo 2000*b*: 295–336.

<sup>324</sup> Andreau 1977: 199, 204–8.

<sup>325</sup> Meiggs 1973: 311–36; Waltzing 1895–1900: iii. 432–43.

<sup>326</sup> e.g. *CIL* 9. 1682 = *ILS* 6502; *CIL* 9. 1684 = *ILS* 6503; *CIL* 9. 1685 = *ILS* 6504; *CIL* 9. 1686; 1687 = *ILS* 7362; *CIL* 9. 1707–10. See Torelli, M. R. 2002: 218–19, 240.

<sup>327</sup> Clemente 1972: 224.

and the formless sprawl of ribbon-development and suburbs to house the new inhabitants.<sup>328</sup> In this context, clubs and associations played a part in integrating the new inhabitants into civic life.<sup>329</sup> In the same way, the growing importance of the *collegia* in first-century BC Rome can plausibly be linked to the influx of population in that period.<sup>330</sup> The members of the *collegia* were the wealthier elements within the *plebs*; urban growth led to increasing profits for the artisans and traders of the city, leading to an increasing influence on their part and a growing differentiation between them and the destitute who flooded into Rome. Part of this additional wealth financed the development of *collegia*. Such a positive view of the origin of *collegia*—as a source of stability and support for the people of Rome, rather than a source of disorder and sedition—may perhaps lie behind the tradition, preserved in Plutarch, that King Numa was the originator of these bodies.<sup>331</sup> The same would have been true of the cities of Cisalpina, or indeed any cities where substantial urban growth took place; urban prosperity brought greater wealth to social groupings just below the traditional elite, and this was reflected in the increasingly active role of such bodies as the *fabri*, *centonarii*, and *dendrophoroi*, as well as the *Augustales*, and those sons of freedmen who were to enter the ranks of the *decuriones*. Arguably the *collegia* now allowed control of the *plebs* under the indirect patronage of the elite and were no longer appropriately seen as subversive and dangerous bodies, but now a part of the ‘establishment’ themselves.

The social structure of the Italian cities under the Empire can thus be seen as in terms of a spectrum of statuses between the wealthiest senators at the top and the most oppressed slaves at the bottom. Few could emulate the family of the emperor Pertinax, which rose from slave to emperor in two generations, via a career as a teacher and service in the army (SHA *Pert.* 1). For example, few magistrates of *collegia* entered the *ordo*, and then only at the lower end of that body, occupied by the *pedani*.<sup>332</sup> At the middle of this spectrum, however,

<sup>328</sup> Clark 1986: 5.

<sup>329</sup> Clark 1986; compare Thompson, E. P. 1980: 456–69 on the friendly societies of the Industrial Revolution.

<sup>330</sup> Hopkins 1978: 96–8; Brunt 1987: 376–88; Morley 1996: 33–9.

<sup>331</sup> Gabba 1984: esp. 85.

<sup>332</sup> Royden 1988: 232–3.

there was considerable scope for both advancement and demotion, and significant overlap in terms of status. A member of the equestrian order might hold municipal office; an *Augustalis*—who might be freeborn or an ex-slave—might hold *ornamenta decurionalia*, and his son might enter the *ordo*; another *Augustalis* might be the president of a *collegium*. Central to these patterns of advancement was the role of patronage, as magistrates and decurions (or the presidents of *collegia*) exercised their influence on behalf of their protégés, as happened equally in the Senate at Rome. The combination of a hierarchical social structure, with advancement controlled by the influence of patronage, provided an avenue for the ambitious without subverting the basic organization of society. At the same time, the existence of a hierarchy of statuses within the city allowed it to draw on the talents and resources of its members across the social spectrum for the benefit of the community as a whole. The existence of the *Augustales* and the *collegia* helped to socialize the upwardly mobile into the civilized nexus of patronage, benefaction, and reciprocal honours that characterized the Roman city, and allowed their members to participate in civic affairs to their own benefit and that of the community more generally.<sup>333</sup> While the towns were keen to reinforce the ties of affection and deference which bound their leading citizens to them, with varying degrees of success, they also exploited the competitive instincts and dynamism of those who sought advancement from *below* the *ordo*. Just as in the late Republic and early Empire the advancement of the local elites to senatorial rank had been accompanied by extensive benefaction and public building, now in the second century it was the upwardly mobile below the *ordo*—notably the *Augustales* and *collegiati*—whose activities contributed, albeit to a lesser extent, to the embellishment of the cities, and the development of the sociable world of dinners and banquets, with the images of the imperial house omnipresent, which characterized life both within these groups and in the broader civic context beyond.

It is no coincidence that the groups within urban society which have the highest profile in the second century—the *Augustales* and *collegiati*—are precisely those who are now engaged in competition

<sup>333</sup> For the use of praise language in thanking benefactors, see Forbis 1996: esp. 3–4, 91–103.

for advancement—in their case, below the *ordo* rather than beyond it. ‘Competition’ is the appropriate word here, because not all the established members of the local elite did undergo the same competitive process. At Canusium, as we have seen, the sons of existing members were given special treatment. The degree of competition and the extent of the civic benefits that this generated varied of course according to both the number of competitors and the resources available to them; both of which were in effect a consequence of the resources available to the city more generally, hence a greater liveliness in larger centres with access to more substantial wealth. The scale of benefaction and generosity naturally diminished if the leading protagonists were men of less wealth than their first-century predecessors. Building projects gave way to distributions and banquets, which created a temporary splash but cost less; and events such as the distribution of *crustulum* and *mulsum* could even be used for the disposal of produce in kind. Nevertheless, the most striking feature of these benefactions is that they take place within the civic context: the city is the focus of the benefactors’ intentions, and the recipients are defined by belonging to the same community.

## CONCLUSION

Analysis of patterns of benefaction, and of the role of the *Augustales* and *collegia* in the Italian towns, enables us to see the developments of the second century as constituting a significant transformation in the urban structures of Roman Italy. The increasing fashion for banqueting, and distributions of food, made benefaction a possibility for those beyond the traditional elite; less affluent groups within the social structure of the city—the *Augustales* and the *collegiati*—could now participate in competitive benefaction, as well as the traditional local aristocracies. The way in which these distributions emphasized the differences in status between the various elements in the civic population, and in particular gave prestige to the dignity of the *decuriones*, *Augustales*, and *collegiati*, may also have helped to encourage the comparatively well off, but reluctant, to participate in civic life.

In places where members of the traditional elites moved away from their home town in search of political advancement, or were otherwise unable or unwilling to help their community, the cities sought to fill the gap by broadening the class of people who might be encouraged to contribute to civic life. Those with some wealth but lower status than the traditional elites, notably ex-slaves, now took on an increasingly high profile; at the same time, the town councils also sought to pursue help from beyond the *ordo*, seeking to recruit patrons for the city from the ranks of senators, *equites*, and the *decuriones* of other cities, or even to seek the favour of the emperors through respect for the imperial divinities, and the erection of statues and honorific inscriptions to them. The promotion and advancement of traditional urban aristocracies was thus in part counterbalanced by the generosity of those further down the social scale; and this led to a reinforcement of the civic ideology. In a large city, the *collegia* would have been substantial organizations, with a collective importance which transcended the limited wealth of their individual members: their involvement in civic life can be seen as a symptom of urban growth and prosperity, rather than weakness.

Of course, the differing urban traditions in different parts of Italy, the variety of agricultural resources and potential markets, and many other factors all played their part in determining how far these attempts to broaden civic responsibility and seek support from outside the community succeeded in staving off decline in individual cities.

None of the strategies adopted by the towns was a foolproof method of reviving the fortunes of an ailing community, and in the case of the cities with limited resources they must have made little difference. However, the efforts of some towns to maintain a form of civic life must have paid off and averted the kind of total collapse that befell Cosa, instead allowing a limited, but still significant, level of activity to continue into the third century.

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## Conclusion

### MODELLING SOCIAL CHANGE AND URBAN PROSPERITY

Traditionally the situation in the towns of Italy in the second century has been seen in terms of more-or-less serious decline, paralleling the problems in the countryside brought about by increasing levels of competition to Italian agriculture from overseas, and the decline in the slave mode of production.<sup>1</sup> Certainly some towns, like Cosa, did indeed decline in a dramatic manner: occupation outside the forum there seems to have ceased almost entirely after the mid second century AD, apart from a brief and largely unsuccessful attempt to revive the town in the early third century. On the other hand, it is also possible to identify cities where public buildings continued to be constructed through the second and even into the third centuries AD—Beneventum, Puteoli, Capua, for example—and which have continued to be important regional centres to the present day.

Despite the strongly hierarchical elements in the social structure of the towns of Roman Italy, social mobility played an important—indeed crucial—part in the history of the peninsula in the imperial period. Italians advanced from municipal office and membership of the *ordo* to gain equestrian and senatorial rank: in fact the first and second centuries formed the high point for the recruitment of Italians into these orders. In turn they were replaced in their municipal responsibilities by those with backgrounds below the curial class. This advancement of the Italian elites had several potential benefits

<sup>1</sup> For discussion, see e.g. Giardina 1997: 233–64; Schiavone 2000.



for their towns: in particular, access to the centres of power at Rome, the emperor as well as the Senate, for their communities; and the possibility of benefactions on a generous scale. There were, however, risks too: that new responsibilities at Rome or in the provinces would divert the interest (and resources) of the Italian elites away from their home communities; and that the processes of marriage and inheritance within the highest levels of the Roman elite would lead to substantial tracts of land falling into the hands of those without ties of birth or affection to the community. The case of Bellicius Sollers and his rural market near Vicetia illustrates the kind of difficulties the towns might suffer, especially where a landowner sought to establish the importance of his estate centre at the expense of the local town. Bellicius, whose family had strong associations with the neighbouring (and, no doubt, rival) town of Verona, also owned properties in the territory of Vicetia. Far from helping this community, however, his establishment of a rural market was feared to be so detrimental to the interests of the town that the Vicetini engaged an advocate at considerable cost to oppose it in the Senate. Likewise, Bellicius' political influence was deployed in favour of his own self-interest, rather than for the benefit of the town in which some of his holdings lay.<sup>2</sup> How often this kind of 'nightmare scenario' for the towns was enacted is hard to tell, of course—some senators were extremely supportive of the towns in whose territories they owned land—but it did represent a significant risk. The unpredictability of the situation was the main difficulty.

One further consequence of upward mobility (achieved or desired) was the need to maximize wealth to finance the increasingly ostentatious lifestyles and acts of generosity which were incumbent on the holders of these new positions, at whatever level, and to gain further advancement. This might in itself have significant consequences for the agricultural structures of the territory, as landowners sought to maximize revenue, exploit estates more intensively, or adopt new methods of farming.

<sup>2</sup> For Bellicius' career and activities, see Pflaum 1960: i. 160–3; Birley 1981: 289–91; de Ligt 1993*b*; Cracco Ruggini 1987: 255–8; Andermahr 1998: 179–81, and above, in Ch. 2.

Where there were difficulties of this kind, the well-being of the community depended significantly on how far other resources, from within or beyond the community, could be marshalled to fill the gap. Support from the emperor was likely to be erratic and unpredictable: an emperor might help a city after a disaster (as around the Bay of Naples following the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79) but personal attachment, respect for a community's history, or pure whim could be important too. The towns made efforts to ensure that, so far as possible, local landowners and their families supported their communities. Local notables, male and female, were elected as civic patrons; children of the local nobility were given special access to the *ordo* and other exceptional privileges. Gratitude for the support of these notables was expressed in the form of honorific decrees and statues erected in public places. Wealthy individuals might initially be flattered by an approach from a town to become its patron, but the status of patrons gradually declined as senators and equestrians became increasingly hard to recruit to these positions, and *decuriones* from other towns were chosen instead.

At the same time, the towns also sought support from families who had not previously participated in local public life, freeborn or of slave descent, by promoting them into the *ordo*, appointing them as *Augustales*, or drawing on their collective goodwill towards the town as members of *collegia*. Even the townspeople (*populus* or *plebs*), whether en masse or divided up into the *collegia* to which substantial numbers belonged, were engaged in the ritual exchange of gratitude and gifts which formed a central part of civic life under the emperors, honouring benefactors and patrons.

The Augustan period was one of enthusiastic building activity, encouraged by the *princeps* and exploiting the newly peaceful conditions in the peninsula. In particular, many towns acquired theatres, and buildings associated with the imperial cult came to have a significant impact on public spaces, especially *fora*. Substantial infrastructure projects were also carried out. Important changes in the *form* of civic life can, however, be detected in the second century AD, in relation to patterns of public building. Those benefactors who constructed buildings for their towns displayed a preference for amphitheatres and baths; others, rather than finance buildings, preferred to distribute money or food to their fellow-citizens, or to hold public

banquets. The importance of the *macellum* in the second-century city relates both to this increased emphasis on collective sociability, and to its centrality to the world of civic entertainment. On one level these trends can be seen to reflect contemporary patterns of imperial generosity at Rome, with the provision of bread, games, and baths for the masses of the capital being emulated in the Italian context by those who were excluded from acts of public building at Rome by the emperor's monopoly of influence. Within the more local context the benefactions serve symbolically to bring the community together within an appropriately hierarchical context, and to reinforce the prestige of magistrates, benefactors, and others active in civic life. This focus on showing respect and gratitude to those contributing to the welfare of the city extended to the *Augustales* and the *collegiati*, who are given special treatment at banquets and on other public occasions. The increasing emphasis on sociability thus also serves to underline, and reward, the contributions being made by those across the community, and the focus is on the city itself, particularly significant at a time where there are indications that the importance of the rural villa and nucleated rural settlement was tending to increase. The ethos of the Italian communities in this period combined a traditionalist stress on hierarchy and social difference—ex-slaves being rigorously excluded from membership of the *ordo*, for example—with a practical flexibility, allowing a wide cross-section of the community, of free and servile birth, to be involved in the essential task of honouring the community's patrons and supporters, and themselves contributing to its maintenance. This ties in with concerns in second-century legislation about the appropriateness of admitting traders to the *ordo* in the absence of landed gentry, the changing balance of the law in favour of buyers within trading relationships, and an increased willingness on the part of those who had obtained their wealth through commerce to flaunt rather than conceal the fact.<sup>3</sup> It seems difficult to imagine that the *Augustales*, *collegiati*, and so on, often freedmen, who took an increasingly important part in maintaining continuity in civic tradition in the second century, could have played such a crucial role in civic life and at the same time been subjected to the same sort of negative social

<sup>3</sup> D'Arms 1981: 97–120; Frier 1983; Paterson 1998: 153–5; Mouritsen 1997: 62–3.

attitudes as implied by the elitist literature of late republican and early imperial Rome.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, the support of both male and female benefactors was welcomed by the communities.

Consolidating the support of the traditional elite, and drawing on the affluent and ambitious from across the community, were therefore two interrelated strategies which might be pursued by the cities. Clearly, however, these strategies might work more or less effectively within differing urban contexts.

## TWO MODELS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The complexity of the geographical, cultural, and economic patterns found in different areas of Italy make it highly unlikely that any single overall model can plausibly be advanced to explain the history of Italian towns under the Principate. The degree to which towns prospered (or declined) was the result not only of the more general social, economic, and military situation under the high Empire, but also of numerous local factors. They varied widely in terms of their physical size, their population, the extent of resources provided by their territories, and the degree to which other sources of income were available from beyond the immediate territory of the city, by means of trade, manufacture, and commerce. Another significant consideration was the proportional size of its municipal hierarchy in relation to the town's productive capacity. Likewise, the degree of access a town had to effective patrons, whether the emperor or other wealthy individuals, varied enormously from place to place; and the circumstances in which a community had first been established, and its subsequent political history, had potentially important implications for the well-being of the community as a whole and of its elites in particular. Some towns, by virtue of their limited resources and expensive superstructure, might have been in a state of crisis almost from the day of their foundation; others survived as major centres into the Middle Ages, and even to the present day.

<sup>4</sup> D'Arms 1981: 162–3.

The clearest way of setting out the possible parameters of success and failure is by demonstrating how they might have worked within two 'ideal cities', laying out two contrasting (and highly schematic) models.

1. *A large town*, with a substantial urban population (perhaps into the tens of thousands), and a wealthy and extensive territory. It may indeed have gained some of this territory at the expense of its neighbours due to colonial settlement schemes in the late Republic. Benefiting from good communications by land or sea (perhaps being a flourishing port or major road junction), it would have ready access to resources both within and beyond its immediate territory. Such a community would be likely to have an extensive traditional elite comprising wealthy individuals with substantial resources based on landed wealth, but also the possibility of significant numbers of affluent freedmen, whether 'independent', or closely linked to their former owners. These might also derive their wealth from land, or alternatively from crafts supported by the substantial urban population, and trade and commerce extending beyond the city itself. Significant numbers of the local elite would be likely to advance into the senatorial or equestrian order, but the extensive resources of the territory would mean that other landed gentry would be available to take their place. The complex urban economy would provide a body of wealthy men of less traditional background who can be drawn on for membership of the *Augustales* and leading roles in the *collegia*, together with less affluent landowners; they (and in the case of ex-slaves, their descendants) would in due course be able to enter the *ordo*. Cities approximating to this model might include major ports such as Puteoli and Aquileia, notable north Italian cities such as Patavium, Verona, Brixia, and Mediolanum, and important inland towns in the south, including Beneventum and Capua. The extensive resources available to a city of this type, both in terms of finance and the depth of support within the local elites, broadly defined, would make the community resilient in the long term even where the advancement of leading local families meant that some of them reduced their engagement with civic affairs. The roles of the *Augustales* and the *collegiati* would complement those

of the *ordo*, rather than in any sense replacing it, contributing structures which would provide order and support for the urban populace.

2. The contrasting case is that of a *small town*, with a population of less than 1,000. Its territory was small in scale, perhaps infertile or mountainous, or may have been reduced in size due to the effect of colonial settlement schemes in neighbouring towns. Poor communications would allow limited opportunity for trading or access to resources from outside the territory; diversion of main roads could contribute to the marginalization of the town. In these circumstances the local elite would be made up predominantly of landowners, with few freedmen having the opportunity to accumulate resources beyond those derived from agriculture. Wealth would lie in a few hands; with limited possibilities for the acquisition of resources from beyond the city, only the joining of estates by means of inheritance or marriage would provide scope for further personal advancement. In these circumstances, if extensive tracts of land were to fall into the hands of men based outside, or unconcerned with, the city, the effect on the well-being of the community could be severe. In the absence of a substantial population of affluent freedmen, or other groups of the upwardly mobile, the *Augustales* or *collegiati* would be correspondingly less able to make a substantial contribution to civic life, but they might nevertheless support the *ordo* to a limited extent in maintaining a level of civic activity, for example helping to express gratitude to benefactors, and organizing and participating in public banquets. Cities falling into this category might include Petelia in Bruttium: those Apennine towns with minimal populations actually resident at the urban centre itself, such as Iuvanum, would have been particularly vulnerable in this situation. Some small urban centres such as Saepinum, which enjoyed the long-term patronage of the Neratii,<sup>5</sup> were nevertheless able to benefit from the continuing support of local landowners.

<sup>5</sup> Andermahr 1998: 350–1.

## THE GROWTH OF LARGE ESTATES AND CHANGES IN THE URBAN HIERARCHY

The process of agglomeration of rural estates in the hands of the wealthy, which can clearly be identified as taking place across Italy under the high Empire from the alimentary tables, Pliny's *Letters*, and the evidence of rural field survey, represents a phenomenon of considerable long-term importance. As well as indicating the combination of estates at the local level, the evidence shows that some landowners at the beginning of the second century AD were in possession of extensive property portfolios which extended across the boundaries of individual cities, as well as including properties in different regions of Italy.<sup>6</sup> This was partly no doubt a result of deliberate policy—'it seems safer to deal with the uncertainties of fortune in different localities' as Pliny puts it (*Ep.* 3. 19. 4)—but was also accelerated by intermarriage between landed families in different towns, and the reproductive strategies adopted by the elites in order to keep their properties intact. Indeed, marriage, adoption, and inheritance would frequently take place within the landowners' home districts, leading to the creation of an aristocracy which can increasingly be seen as regional, rather than purely municipal, in its scale and orientation. For example, we know that Pliny owned estates at Tifernum and perhaps also at Hispellum, as well as around Comum, and a residential property on the Laurentine coast south of Rome.<sup>7</sup> His mother-in-law, Pompeia Celerina, owned properties in the neighbouring towns of Ocriculum, Narnia, and Carsulae, all three towns located on the Via Flaminia, and also at Perusia (Plin. *Ep.* 1. 4. 1);<sup>8</sup> Pompeia's husband Q. Fulvius Gillo Bittius Proculus, consul (perhaps in AD 98), appears to have been related by adoption to M. Fulvius Gillo (consul in 76) from Montebuono in the territory of Forum Novum, adjacent to that of Ocriculum.<sup>9</sup> Fulvius Gillo's colleague as suffect consul in the latter part of AD 76, Galleo Tettienus

<sup>6</sup> Andermahr 1998: 87–102.

<sup>7</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 19–24; Andermahr 1998: 383–6.

<sup>8</sup> Andermahr 1998: 391–2.

<sup>9</sup> Torelli, M. 1982*a*: 195–6; 1982*b*: 292; Andermahr 1998: 275.

Petronianus, had properties at Asisium: he seems to have adopted as his son Galleo Tettienus Severus M. Eppuleius Proculus Ti. Caepio Hispo, himself to become consul early in the second century, who married Annia Quartilla from Perugia; Caepio Hispo, perhaps another relative, owned land at Mevania.<sup>10</sup> A picture emerges from this area of Umbria and the Sabina of a closely knit group of wealthy landowners, tied to each other by marriage and/or adoption together with public service shared under the patronage of the Sabine emperor Vespasian. Champlin has similarly identified a close nexus of high-status families among the owners of brickworks in the area around Oriculum and Horta in the era of Trajan.<sup>11</sup>

This trend was to have a major impact on the urban centres of Italy. One consequence was an increased hierarchization of urban settlements, not only as regards population, but also in more abstract terms of status. Migrants from the countryside tended to aim for Rome itself, or failing that, for one of those regional centres with an economy and population already substantial enough to allow further growth. In the same way, smaller towns would in turn look to the aristocracies of larger centres in their search for patrons: these individuals might eventually find themselves approached by several communities in an area, no doubt also reflecting their own widely spread landholdings. Nomination of *curatores rei publicae* would follow a similar pattern. In regions where there was a dense network of small towns, the regional centres would develop at their expense, not only in terms of population, but also of wealth and euergetism. Already in the early Empire, we can trace this in the way in which games were provided not solely for an individual city, but for the populations of surrounding communities too; generous individuals might occasionally be found holding a position such as that of *sevir Augustalis* in more than one town.<sup>12</sup> Gradually the region, rather than the territory of a municipality or a colony, was to become central to official perceptions of the Italian peninsula too: Augustus formally divided the peninsula into *regiones*, and by the end of the third

<sup>10</sup> Gaggiotti and Sensi 1982: 263–4; Andermahr 1998: 193, 450.

<sup>11</sup> Champlin 1983; 1993: 56. For further discussion of these issues, in the context of the Tiber valley, see Patterson, J. R. forthcoming.

<sup>12</sup> *CIL* 9. 2658 = *ILS* 6517: M. Celerius Corinthus served as *sevir Augustalis* in the neighbouring towns of Aufidena and Aesernia in Samnium.



century a network of *correctores* had been established, whose responsibilities mirrored those of provincial governors.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, the gap in terms of wealth between the largest landowners and the municipal aristocracies was growing steadily.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, the increasing significance in the mid and late Empire of routes to social advancement which were unrelated to the political structures of the towns reduced their importance for the ambitious. This is especially clear in the case of the increasingly professional army of the third century and the growing bureaucracy of the late Empire—though the roles of the *familia Caesaris* in the Julio-Claudian period, and the *apparitores*, can be seen to represent the beginning of this tendency.<sup>15</sup> Just as new roads like the Via Latina had bypassed Fregellae and Interamna, so the new social structures of the late Empire bypassed the municipal elites. The upwardly mobile in the third century and beyond could look to a variety of potential routes to advancement which avoided the cities altogether.

#### CITY AND COUNTRY IN REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE: ETRURIA, CAMPANIA, SAMNIUM, AND LUCANIA

It is time to return to the key areas with which we began: coastal Etruria and northern Campania, South Etruria, Samnium, and Lucania, to sketch out the relationships between rural change and urban development across a range of geographical and political contexts. Despite what may appear at first sight a certain sameness in patterns of urban building across Italy, encouraged on the one hand by the example of the emperors at Rome and on the other by the competitive manifestations of loyalty on the part of the local elites, and the limited scope for making regional comparisons given the nature of the epigraphic and archaeological data available, some distinctive regional patterns can nevertheless be identified.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Thomsen 1947; Nicolet 1991: 171–8, 202–4.

<sup>14</sup> Whittaker 1994: 139–41.

<sup>15</sup> Hopkins 1974: 110–11, 113–14.

<sup>16</sup> Lomas 2003: 30.

With regard to Cosa, we are in the fortunate position of having archaeological evidence of high quality from both city and territory. As we have seen, the falling numbers of rural sites in the territory in the early Empire closely paralleled the decline of the urban centre during the first century AD. Although a particular disaster lay behind the original abandonment of the town in the 60s BC, the lack of integration between urban centre and territory even after its revival was to prove detrimental to both: absentee landlords were little concerned with the urban centre, and its depopulation meant it could neither serve as a source of labour when the economic basis of the villas was restructured, nor as a market for their produce.<sup>17</sup> Beyond Cosa, by contrast, greater stability can be detected in the city and territory of Saturnia, which continued to exist as an independent centre (for a while, anyway), and (to an even greater extent) further to the north, in the territories of Volaterrae and Pisa, where survey has revealed a striking continuity of settlement in the countryside into late antiquity.

The situation in the towns of coastal Etruria can be compared with that of Sinuessa and Suessa Aurunca in northern Campania. The pattern of rural settlement revealed by survey here is strikingly similar to that of the Ager Cosanus: both areas were substantially reliant on the production of wine for export, and there are indications that in the late Republic large parts of northern Campania were likewise in the ownership of members of the Roman senatorial elite, including Sulla, Pompey, and Cicero.<sup>18</sup> Decline in the number of villas is already apparent here in the first century AD. As regards the towns, Sinuessa, a Roman colony situated on the coast, was particularly dependent on the wine business: indeed broken amphorae were even used for building purposes in the town:<sup>19</sup> it too seems to show early signs of decline.<sup>20</sup> The parallel to Cosa is a striking one. By contrast, Suessa Aurunca, which was only a few kilometres further inland, appears, like Saturnia, to have had a rural economy diversified enough to survive the upheavals in the wine trade, with the

<sup>17</sup> Ikeguchi 1999–2000: 16–18.

<sup>18</sup> Arthur 1991*a*: 155; 1991*b*: 66–8.

<sup>19</sup> Arthur 1991*a*: 155–6.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 158; Pagano 1990; Crimaco and Gasperetti 1993.

additional support of Matidia, sister of Sabina, the wife of the emperor Hadrian,<sup>21</sup> although there are indications of some contraction in settlement there too.<sup>22</sup>

Cosa, so easily accessible by sea, can with some justification be seen as part of the economic territory of Rome,<sup>23</sup> and in many ways its fate parallels that of the ancient towns within the more immediate hinterland of the city of Rome, such as Veii and Capena, which lost both their political and economic *raison d'être*, and much of their population, as the capital became the main focus of the district. The area inhabited in the imperial period at Cures Sabini was only one-fifth the size of the archaic settlement,<sup>24</sup> and in the same way the inhabited area at Capena shrank substantially during the imperial period.<sup>25</sup> In AD 26, the *centumviri* of Veii, rather than gathering in their own city, held a meeting at the Temple of Venus Genetrix in Rome;<sup>26</sup> by the third century a villa had been built within the city walls.<sup>27</sup> As we have seen, the demand for agricultural products generated by the city of Rome, the complexity of its productive economy, and the attractions of South Etruria as a place of residence for those with interests in the city, help to explain the high (and, in some areas, increasing) levels of rural settlement in the imperial period, even while the local towns were in decline. Nevertheless considerable efforts were made to support the towns, both by the emperors themselves and by the members of the imperial household who lived in the surrounding areas in quite large numbers.<sup>28</sup> As at Cosa, imperial estates came to form an important part of the landscape; while they, like the senatorial estates which preceded them, had in many ways a detrimental effect on the economies of the local communities, the presence in the locality of affluent and ambitious members of the imperial household helped in other ways to maintain the continuity of local civic identities. Emperors, too, were keen to support towns which were of

<sup>21</sup> *CIL* 10. 4744–7: see Arthur 1991*b*: 55–6.

<sup>22</sup> Arthur 1991*a*: 158.

<sup>23</sup> See recently Morley 1996: 178.

<sup>24</sup> Muzzioli 1980: 40.

<sup>25</sup> Camilli and Vitali Rosati 1995: 410–12; Turchetti and Bartolini 1995.

<sup>26</sup> *CIL* 11. 3805 = *ILS* 6579.

<sup>27</sup> Papi 2000: 174.

<sup>28</sup> Patterson, J. R. 2004*a* for further discussion.

ancient historical importance—Veii was revived by Augustus as the *Municipium Augustum Veiens*, for example, and helping the ancient towns was also a way in which later emperors could demonstrate their respect for ancient traditions and reinforce their credentials within Italy. Gallienus, who may have had family links with the town, was commemorated by Falerii as *redintegrator coloniae Faliscorum*,<sup>29</sup> and a series of initiatives was undertaken to help the ailing city of Cosa.

Both Samnium and Lucania were far from Rome and characterized by comparably mountainous territory. Both regions had also suffered major upheavals in the latter years of the Republic, with the campaigns of Sulla and the depredations of Spartacus adding to the destruction in the countryside wrought first by the presence of Hannibal and then the Social War. In Samnium the pattern of decline in rural sites during the first two centuries AD is very clear, and even more pronounced in the mountains than in the foothills leading down to the Adriatic, probably in relation to the expansion of large-scale pastoralism in this period; by contrast, the now substantial body of survey evidence from Lucania, just to the south, indicates a continuity in site numbers in some areas, and in others a rise in the number of settlements. Some of these appear to be villages rather than villas. One significant difference between Samnium and Lucania was, however, the density (or otherwise) of urban settlement in the two districts. Samnium was characterized by a dense network of small towns, with some rather larger centres on the periphery of the region (e.g. Venafrum, Larinum) and one major city (Beneventum). Bekker-Nielsen has calculated that the average distance between urban centres in Samnium, Augustan *Regio IV*, varies between 15.8 and 22.8 km.<sup>30</sup> By contrast, towns in Lucania and Bruttium, *Regio III*, were much more thinly spread: the equivalent inter-centre distance here is 35 km. In this context, the development of village sites in Lucania under the Empire can be seen as filling the gaps

<sup>29</sup> Liverani 1987: 144–5; Papi 2000: 205–12.

<sup>30</sup> Bekker-Nielsen 1989: 22–5. Bekker-Nielsen's calculations are based on Pliny's list of towns in the third book of his *Natural History*, which contains some errors, but the figures are nevertheless very striking. Mattingly and Witcher (2004) use the data in the *Barrington Atlas* (2000).

between the scattered municipalities, providing a base for the provision of services to the rural population, and also serving as a place of residence. Where towns were comparatively thinly spread, the villas of the wealthy—the emperor in particular, who had extensive holdings in the region—and the villages where the rural population lived were of considerable importance in the articulation of the territory, and the organization of its production, without generating the infrastructure of public monuments which elsewhere helped to satisfy the local aristocrats' desire for prestige, and simultaneously consumed their resources.<sup>31</sup> The comparative infrequency of urban centres in Lucania, for example, may thus have helped to contribute to the continuity of rural settlement. Indeed there may be more general links between continuity of rural settlement and a low level of urbanization in a particular region. In northern Etruria (where as we have seen, there is a strikingly greater continuity of rural settlement than further to the south) the average distance between towns is 30.8 km, and as Witcher has noted, villages played an important role in the rural landscape under the Empire.<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, the area around Venusia,<sup>33</sup> just inside Apulia but one of the most substantial towns in the region, which, like Beneventum to the north, was the site of a third-century Latin colony, demonstrates a gradual decline in numbers of rural sites in the second century, in a pattern more akin to that found in other areas of Italy than those found in Lucania. Like Beneventum, Venusia and Canusium continued to be cities of some importance into late antiquity;<sup>34</sup> the less important centres, already characterized by a low level of population, and reliant to a significant degree on the support of individual families (such as the Neratii at Saepinum), were in a much more difficult position. Indeed, much of the growth of such regional centres will have been at the expense of their smaller neighbours, as they became attractive destinations for migrants and continued to be major centres of elite activity.

<sup>31</sup> Carlsen 1988: 143.

<sup>32</sup> Witcher forthcoming.

<sup>33</sup> Marchi and Salvatore 1997: esp. 12.

<sup>34</sup> Volpe 1996: 85–114.

CITY AND COUNTRY IN MICROCOSM: LIGURES  
BAEBIANI

The histories of city and country in early imperial Italy can be seen to be intertwined in a complex series of ways. The well-being of the urban centre depended not just on the resources produced in its territory, but on the comparative density of urban settlement in the region, the place of a town within regional hierarchies, the commitment to the community of individual aristocrats and their families, the scope for support from outside the ranks of the traditional elites, and the availability or otherwise of imperial support. The adjacent towns of Beneventum and Ligures Baebiani can be seen as a microcosm of this relationship. Part of the territory of its smaller neighbour, Ligures Baebiani, was incorporated into the territory of Beneventum when the triumvirs established their colony there, and the latter became one of the major cities in southern Italy, as we have seen. The Trajanic alimentary table shows how estates in the territory of Ligures Baebiani were combined, through marriage, inheritance, and purchase; by the early second century many of the local landowners were primarily associated with Beneventum, and there were a number of imperial estates in the territory;<sup>35</sup> those landowners based at Ligures Baebiani were, however, involved to a greater degree in supporting the alimentary scheme. We may imagine that migration to Beneventum, with its imperial patronage, wealthy elite, and complex economy, as well as to Rome, became a familiar pattern for the poorer citizens. Efforts were nevertheless made to maintain civic life at Ligures Baebiani: statues were set up in honour of the emperors,<sup>36</sup> and a bathhouse was built (and rebuilt) in the third century.<sup>37</sup> The town recruited patrons, one of whom restored the baths following an earthquake, and was duly honoured by the *ordo* and *populus* on account of his munificence.<sup>38</sup> A boy from nearby

<sup>35</sup> *CIL* 9. 1456 = *ILS* 3806, with Iasiello 1995, and on the alimentary table (*CIL* 9. 1455).

<sup>36</sup> *AE* 1988: 390 with Patterson, J. R. 1988: 173 (Pertinax); *CIL* 9. 1457–8 (Gordian III and Furia Sabinia Tranquillina).

<sup>37</sup> Johannowsky 1988: 839.

<sup>38</sup> *CIL* 9. 1466.

Telesia was adlected into the *ordo decurionum*.<sup>39</sup> The town had *Augustales*,<sup>40</sup> and the local *collegia* of *fabri* and *dendrophori* were also active: in the late second century they honoured the patron C. Amarfius Saturninus 'on account of his outstanding affection toward the citizens both individually and collectively'.<sup>41</sup> Ultimately the town was to be abandoned, probably in the later fourth century,<sup>42</sup> but it was not from want of effort by its citizens.

<sup>39</sup> *AE* 1975: 206.

<sup>40</sup> *CIL* 9. 1461.

<sup>41</sup> *CIL* 9. 1459; also 1463.

<sup>42</sup> Johannowsky 1988: 839.

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